

**Non-Citizen Soldiers:
Explaining Foreign Recruitment by Modern State Militaries**

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More than a century after citizen armies became an international norm, nearly two dozen states actively recruit foreigners into their militaries. Why do these states skirt the strong citizen soldier norm and continue to welcome foreigners? To explain this practice, we first identify two puzzles associated with foreign recruitment. The first is practical: foreign recruits pose loyalty, logistical, and organizational challenges that domestic soldiers do not. The second is normative: non-citizen soldiers lie in a normative gray zone, permitted under the letter of international law but in tension with the spirit of international norms against mercenary armies. Next, we survey foreign military recruitment programs around the world and sort them into three broad types of programs, each with its own primary motivation: importing expertise, importing labor, and bolstering international bonds. We explain these categories and explore three exemplar cases in depth: Australia, Bahrain, and Israel. Our findings suggest that foreign recruitment can affect a state's military operations by allowing militaries to rapidly develop advanced capabilities, by reducing the political risk associated with the use of force, and by expanding a state's influence among former colonial and diaspora populations.

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Introduction

In 2015, the United Arab Emirates deployed hundreds of troops to battle Iranian-backed Houthi forces in Yemen. Despite the Emirati flags on their uniforms, many of these soldiers were not Emirati nationals. Former Australian officers commanded Emirati units, and hundreds of Colombians, Chileans, Salvadoreans and Panamanians helped fill the ranks of special forces teams.² The UAE is not alone in its foreign recruitment. France has long turned to foreigners to serve as legionnaires, the United Kingdom routinely deploys Nepalis serving in the British Gurkha Brigade, and Australia poaches pilots, intelligence officers, and submariners from the American, British, and Canadian militaries. These are hardly isolated cases – in all, nearly two dozen states around the world recruit foreign nationals explicitly for military service.

These recruitment programs are puzzling for two reasons. First, there is a strong and widely accepted norm that modern states should rely on citizen soldiers for national defense.³ Strictly speaking, foreign recruitment does not violate international law – anti-mercenary conventions were designed to counter the stereotypical soldiers of fortune who serve outside the formal command structure of state militaries. The United Nation’s International Convention Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing, and Training of Mercenaries, for instance, does not prohibit the use of foreign recruits that become "a member of the armed forces of a party to the

² Emily B. Hager and Mark Mazzetti, “Emirates Secretly Sends Colombian Mercenaries to Yemen Fight,” *The New York Times*, November 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/world/middleeast/emirates-secretly-sends-colombian-mercenaries-to-fight-in-yemen.html>.

³ Barry Posen, “Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power,” *International Security* 18, no. 2 (October 1993): 80–124; Deborah Avant, “From Mercenary to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War,” *International Organization* 54, no. 1 (January 2000): 41–72; Sarah V. Percy, “Mercenaries: Strong Norm, Weak Law,” *International Organization* 61, no. 2 (April 2007): 367–97.

conflict[.]" But foreign recruitment poses thorny normative questions for states about their troops' motivations and the relationships between soldiers and those they are charged to defend. In other words, recruiting foreigners lies in a normative gray space between the letter and the spirit of the law. Second, citizen army norms developed, in part, for a host of practical reasons. States that rely on foreign military labor may struggle to control or motivate soldiers without deep national ties. They may face significant challenges administering armies composed of foreigners who bring various languages, customs, and conceptions of military service. Relying on foreign-recruited soldiers may also open their military operations up to interference or exploitation by other governments. Given these normative and practical concerns, what motivates states to recruit foreigners to fill their ranks? For those that do, how do they navigate this normative gray space – that is, how do they explain these programs given the strong citizen army norm?

We argue that states recruit foreigners in three broad ways, each with a separate logic: *importing expertise*, *importing labor*, and *bolstering international bonds*. In the first type, states like Australia with high tech or rapidly modernizing militaries procure expertise by recruiting a small number of foreigners with specific technical expertise gained during service in their home state militaries. By hiring foreigners with highly specialized training, like pilots, intelligence professionals, and submariners, states can quickly acquire capabilities that would otherwise take years to develop indigenously. In the second type, states import large quantities of military labor. In some cases, states like Bahrain have small or potentially disloyal populations and face both internal and external security risks. Other states in this category may have large populations but turn to foreigners to build a politically expendable force that can be deployed on unpopular or risky missions without generating domestic criticism. When states import military labor, foreign

recruits need not possess specialized technical or leadership skills as they are used simply to fill ranks, provide a politically expendable force, or serve in a coup-proofing role. Third, some states recruit from ethnic diasporas or from former colonies not because the soldiers provide direct value but because they reinforce international relationships. In some cases, like Israel's recruitment in the Jewish diaspora, this behavior serves an almost entirely symbolic role, fostering a wider transnational identity. In other cases, like Moscow's recruitment in the former Soviet sphere, states use these symbolic bonds more instrumentally, recruiting foreigners to mark patron-client relationships.

Regardless of the strategic motivations militaries may have, states must still offer normative justifications for their use of non-citizen soldiers. These explanations help states navigate around the normative gray space surrounding foreign recruitment. Some states have a domestic military culture where the use of foreign-recruited personnel is seen as a normal practice. These states often have a historical reliance on foreigners in both the military and commercial spheres, helping to normalize the use of non-citizen labor. Other states have broader conceptions of citizenship and nationality, opting to include large diaspora populations rather than just passport holders living within the confines of a state's geographic borders.

We consider individuals to be foreign recruits when they meet two criteria. First, prior to recruitment into a state's military, individuals must have no genuine connection with the state they serve, such as citizenship or long-term residency. Military service for long-term foreign residents is generally uncontroversial and not seen as a form of mercenary or foreign recruitment.⁴ Second, foreign recruits must be integrated into the state's uniformed military. This

⁴ Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Avant, "From Mercenary to Citizen Armies"; P. W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military*

definition fixes the discussion to the normative gray zone mentioned above. The first requirement means that recruiting foreigners clearly violates the spirit of international norms against non-citizen soldiers, but the second means that doing so does not violate the letter of anti-mercenary conventions which exclude foreigners integrated into a state's armed forces. Our definition excludes private military contractors and military personnel who are seconded to another state's forces because these groups face different practical and normative expectations of loyalty. Although contractors and advisors often play important roles in training, support, and security, their contracts generally clearly define the activities and risks that they can expect to face.⁵ By contrast, states generally have much greater control and discretion over their own uniformed personnel. When contractors fall through on agreements, they might be sued or fined, but soldiers typically face far harsher punishments for dereliction of duty.⁶ Contracted or seconded personnel also pose different normative questions. An oath of enlistment demands greater loyalty to a state than an economically-motivated commercial contract, and seconded personnel are generally viewed as loyal first to their home state.

Understanding when and why states use foreign recruits has important theoretical and policy implications. From a theoretical perspective, our findings shed light on the conditions that lead states to behave in ways that are at tension with international norms and explain how states navigate through this normative gray space. Existing studies examine the development of the

Industry (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007); Percy, "Mercenaries" These key works on mercenaries do not find objections to the recruitment of permanent residents.

⁵ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*; Erik Prince, *Civilian Warriors: The Inside Story of Blackwater and the Unsung Heroes of the War on Terror* (New York: Portfolio, 2014).

⁶ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 158–62.

citizen army norm and its codification into international law,⁷ but do not assess why and how states act in ways that run counter to this norm. Our findings provide insight on both instrumental and cultural factors that explain state deviation from the citizen army norm. More broadly, we suggest that states will skirt strong norms when doing so has instrumental benefits and when legal definitions allow states to easily justify their conduct as acceptable under international law.

The project also contributes to research on military recruitment strategies and civil-military relations. A large body of literature examines the use of foreign fighters by non-state forces⁸ and the state use of mercenaries⁹ and private military contractors,¹⁰ but little academic attention has been paid to the recruitment of foreigners by state militaries. The work that does examine the use of foreign recruits are typically historical studies of a single organization like

⁷ Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns*; Avant, “From Mercenary to Citizen Armies”; Percy, “Mercenaries”.

⁸ Kristin M. Bakke, “Help Wanted?” *International Security* 38, no. 4 (April 2014): 150–87; Ben Rich and Dara Conduit, “The Impact of Jihadist Foreign Fighters on Indigenous Secular-Nationalist Causes: Contrasting Chechnya and Syria,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 2 (February 2015): 113–31; Jason Lyall, “Why Armies Break: Explaining Mass Desertion in Conventional War (Paper in Progress),” n.d.; Sarah Zukerman Daly, *Organized Violence After Civil War: The Geography of Recruitment in Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2014).

⁹ Avant, “From Mercenary to Citizen Armies”; Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns*; Percy, “Mercenaries.”

¹⁰ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*; Sean McFate, *The Modern Mercenary: Private Armies and What They Mean for World Order* by Sean McFate (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

the French Foreign Legion or the British Army's Brigade of Gurkhas.¹¹ Our project develops a more generalizable framework to explain this military recruitment practice and provides evidence that military recruitment strategies can influence how a state employs its forces.

From a policy perspective, foreign recruitment can shape a state's military capabilities and willingness to use force. The recruitment of foreigners with specialized expertise allows a state to quickly enhance its military capabilities, while the recruitment of foreigners as labor can make it easier for a state to use its forces both at home and abroad. In the domestic sphere, recruiting foreigners reduces ties between the military and local population, potentially increasing the willingness of troops to violently quell uprisings and coups. Foreign recruitment also lessens the likelihood that leaders will suffer political repercussions for launching unpopular overseas operations. By outsourcing national defense to foreigners, body bags of fallen troops are sent offshore rather to families and friends at home who have a say at the ballot box.

Drawing from interviews with current and former foreign recruits, recruiting materials, media reporting and historical documentation on exemplar cases, we examine the puzzling phenomenon of foreign military recruitment and explain why and how states integrate foreigners into their ranks. First, we track the formation of international law and norms governing foreigners in state militaries. Second, we sort the diverse set of foreign recruitment programs into three broad types and explore the strategic logic behind each. We dig into how these states, motivated by practical needs, justify admitting foreigners into their militaries. Third, we conclude by discussing the policy implications of foreign recruitment and outline possible pathways for future research.

¹¹ Byron Farwell, *The Gurkhas* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990); Douglas Porch, *The French Foreign Legion: A Complete History of the Legendary Fighting Force* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2010).

Noncitizen Soldiers as a Puzzle

The Decline of Noncitizen Soldiers

Through most of recorded history, rulers depended heavily on foreign mercenaries to meet their military needs. Leaders in classical Egypt, Carthage, Rome and China relied on mercenaries for warmaking and protection, as did European kings and nobles from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries.¹² Over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, the changing nature of warfare, state, and society drove European leaders to eschew mercenaries in favor of citizen soldiers.

The consolidation of state power over increasingly larger swaths of territory after the 1648 Peace of Westphalia demanded larger armies to project state power.¹³ Using mercenaries to fill the ranks of these expanding armies proved prohibitively expensive.¹⁴ The development of easier-to-use weapons, like the musket and cannon, soon allowed states to cheaply and quickly staff armies with members of their domestic population instead of specially trained foreign military talent.¹⁵

At the same time, European rulers and intellectuals also began to re-imagine the relationship between state and citizen. As subjects became citizens with defined rights and obligations to their home country, military service was increasingly seen as an opportunity to transmit social values and skills across a broad swath of society, promote nationalism, and serve

¹² William Urban, *Medieval Mercenaries* (London: Frontline Books, 2016).

¹³ Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992* (Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992).

¹⁴ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 30.

¹⁵ Robert L. O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men: A History of War, Weapons, and Aggression*, 1st edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 111.

as a "school for the nation."¹⁶ Recruiting foreigners, therefore, undermined civic participation, jeopardized the social contract, and threatened a state's monopoly on the use of force.¹⁷ The increased salience of citizenship also led states to question whether mercenary recruitment undermined state neutrality. States were increasingly held accountable for their citizens' actions throughout the nineteenth century, raising concerns that mercenary activities would be perceived as state acts of aggression.¹⁸ To protect themselves from other states seeking recourse for actions committed by mercenaries, many states enacted domestic legislation that made it illegal for their citizens to serve as mercenaries.¹⁹

By the mid-nineteenth century, European militaries had all but stopped allowing foreigners to serve, with two notable exceptions. First, foreigners volunteered to fight under foreign flags during the mass ideological conflicts in the first half of the 20th century. Thousands of Europeans and Americans fought in the Russian and Spanish Civil Wars, and many Americans served in Allied militaries before Washington entered the First and Second World Wars.²⁰ Second, European states relied heavily on foreign legions and soldiers recruited from their colonies to defend overseas possessions and to participate in other operations. These

¹⁶ Ronald R. Krebs, *Fighting for Rights: Military Service and the Politics of Citizenship* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006); Posen, "Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power".

¹⁷ Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns*, 77–97.

¹⁸ The 1907 Hague Conventions eventually codified the obligations of neutral powers and proscribed neutral states from allowing foreign military recruitment or staging in neutral territory. The Hague Conventions, however, do not require states to prevent individuals from becoming mercenaries in another state.

¹⁹ Thomson, 84–88.

²⁰ For instance American volunteer pilots flew in the French Air Service Lafayette Escadrille during World War I and the Royal Air Force Eagle Squadrons in the early days of World War II.

groups, which include units like the French and Spanish Foreign Legions and the British Brigade of Gurkhas, not only fought in colonial wars, but also served alongside domestically-recruited troops during both World Wars.²¹

The period of decolonization following World War II led to a spike in mercenary activity as thousands of individual soldiers of fortune fought on behalf of both colonial powers and independence movements, particularly in Africa. The chaos wrought by foreign mercenaries in the Biafran War and Rhodesian War reignited a debate about the practice and led several African states to demand formal prohibitions of mercenary activity. As a result of these pressures, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued a series of resolutions in the late-1960s and early-1970s that condemned mercenary activity, called for domestic legislation to block mercenary recruitment and training, and demanded its member states to "take all necessary measures to eradicate from the African continent the activities of mercenaries."²² The UN General Assembly echoed the OAU with resolutions that declared the use of mercenaries "against movements for national liberation and independence" to be a criminal act and demanded that states "enact legislation declaring the recruitment, financing and training of mercenaries in their territory to be a punishable offense and prohibiting their nationals from serving as mercenaries."²³

These resolutions signaled growing international dissatisfaction with the resurgence in mercenary activity, but they were non-binding, did not define the term mercenary, and did not

²¹ Farwell, *The Gurkhas*; Porch, *The French Foreign Legion*.

²² Organization of African Unity Convention for the Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa.

²³ United Nations, "General Assembly Resolution 2465: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," December 1968.

yet reflect customary international law.²⁴ Further, the OAU and UN resolutions focused on the use of mercenaries during wars of independence, without addressing the use of foreigners in other contexts. These shortcomings were finally addressed in the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. The Additional Protocol explicitly removed the right of mercenaries to be treated as combatants, denied prisoner of war protections to mercenaries, and defined mercenaries as any person who:

- (a) Is specially recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict;
- (b) Does, in fact, take a direct part in the hostilities;
- (c) Is motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, is promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party;
- (d) Is neither a national of a Party to the conflict nor a resident of territory controlled by a Party to the conflict;
- (e) Is not a member of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict; and
- (f) Has not been sent by a State which is not a Party to the conflict on official duty as a member of its armed forces.

This definition, which was later incorporated into the UN's International Convention Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing, and Training of Mercenaries, proscribed the use of the type of mercenaries that had ravaged Africa but allowed states to continue inducting foreigners into their military ranks. Since the definition's provisions are cumulative, an individual who is a

²⁴ Todd S. Millard, "Overcoming Post-Colonial Myopia: A Call to Recognize and Regulate Private Military Companies," *Military Law Review* 176, no. 1 (June 2003), 26.

member of the armed forces of a party to the conflict cannot be considered a mercenary, even if he or she is recruited abroad, participates in active hostilities, and does so for private material gain. Notably, members of a state's armed forces were excluded from the mercenary definition not because states wanted to protect their foreign legions or the practice of foreign recruitment but rather to prevent domestically-recruited soldiers from losing prisoner of war protections if wrongly accused of being mercenaries.²⁵

Although anti-mercenary conventions codified the legality of foreign recruitment into state militaries, the practice declined substantially. This makes sense – though distinct from mercenary use, recruiting foreigners poses many of the same practical and normative challenges that mercenarism did, making it puzzling why so many states still engage in the practice.

Practical Concerns

There are several practical concerns associated with allowing foreigners to serve in state militaries. Although foreign recruits integrated into a state's armed forces are not *de jure* mercenaries, they possess many of the same unappealing characteristics that policymakers sought to eliminate by outlawing mercenarism. Recruiting foreigners for military service makes a state vulnerable to disloyal troops and international manipulation, even when foreign recruits are fully integrated into a state's military command structure. These issues are particularly challenging during wartime or contingency environments when coordination and streamlined operations are critical.

The foremost concern with foreign-recruited troops is loyalty. The success of an armed force demands that soldiers sacrifice to achieve broader strategic goals. They must forgo

²⁵ Percy, "Mercenaries," 376–77.

extortion, abuse, and score-settling of local populations.²⁶ Because foreign recruits and mercenaries are typically removed from the local population and motivated by financial rewards, they have gained a historical reputation for deserting and committing abuse at far higher rates than citizen soldiers. As described by Percy and others,²⁷ foreign mercenaries had a long and sordid history of pillaging, desertion, and intransigence throughout the centuries preceding the gradual decline of mercenary armies. Machiavelli's invective against mercenaries summarizes these concerns: "Mercenaries and auxiliaries are useless and dangerous ... they are disunited, ambitious and without discipline, unfaithful, valiant before friends, cowardly before enemies ... they have no other attraction or reason for keeping the field than a trifle of stipend, which is not sufficient to make them willing to die for you."²⁸ The classic Chinese war text *Wei Liaozi* offers a similar appraisal, arguing that "the nominal strength of mercenary troops may be 100,000, but their real value will be not more than half that figure."²⁹

Placing foreign recruits under a state's command and control infrastructure is meant to address these concerns but often does little to ensure loyalty of soldiers with little genuine connection to the states for which they fight. Evidence from studies of intrastate and interstate

²⁶ Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*; Thandika Mkandawire, "The Terrible Toll of Post-Colonial Rebel Movements in Africa: Towards an Explanation of the Violence Against the Peasantry," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 40, no. 2 (2002): 181–215; Stathis N. Kalyvas, "The Ontology of Political Violence: Action and Identity in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (2003): 475–94; Daly, *Organized Violence After Civil War*; Lyall, "Why Armies Break"; Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*.

²⁷ Percy, "Mercenaries".

²⁸ Niccolo Machiavelli, Christian Gauss, and Regina Barreca, *The Prince*, ed. E. R. P. Vincent, trans. Luigi Ricci, Signet Classics edition (New York: Signet, 2008).

²⁹ Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (New York: Basic Books, 2007).

wars suggests that even highly structured and hierarchical militaries often struggle to command troop loyalty unless those soldiers already have a strong loyalty to their employers. State and non-state armies typically rely on preexisting social connections and a baseline level of national or ethnic loyalty to recruit, monitor, and motivate their recruits.³⁰ Absent these social and ethnonational networks, even extremely well-organized and hierarchical armies face mass desertion, defection, or even mutiny.³¹

During the early twentieth century, for instance, colonial troops serving in the British and French armies often mutinied against their imperial masters in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.³² These troops used the very weapons and training provided by European states in attempts to overthrow or challenge them, often when colonial troops perceived they were being exploited by European leaders.³³ Mutinies are not the only risk posed by foreign-recruited troops. The United Arab Emirates' military recruited large numbers of Sudanese and Jordanians in the 1980s but abruptly dismissed them in the lead-up to the First Gulf War, believing them to be a potential risk due to their governments' support of Iraq.³⁴ More recently the UAE's military

³⁰ Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*; Daly, *Organized Violence After Civil War*.

³¹ Lyall, "Why Armies Break."

³² Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War: 1911-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

³³ We thank an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point. Although colonial troops do not strictly meet our definition of foreign recruits – because colonial subjects have ties to the state for which they serve prior to entering military service – they share many characteristics with non-citizen soldiers (i.e. the lack of a common language and culture with the imperial state).

³⁴ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE: Challenges of Security* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), 353.

attempted to send Colombian recruits into combat in Yemen, only to have them resist orders en masse, arguing that their contracts did not cover combat deployments. Even major combat bonuses were not enough to buy their loyalty in wartime.³⁵

Even when foreign recruits are fully loyal to the cause, they may bring with them radically different language, culture and ideology that can make integration difficult. To overcome these challenges, the Israeli Defense Forces, which recruits only foreigners of Jewish descent with a working knowledge of Hebrew, employs a large number of non-commissioned officers known as *mashakit aliyah* tasked with helping foreign recruits navigate language, cultural, and ideological barriers.³⁶ These cooperation and loyalty problems are by no means insurmountable for well-structured militaries but substantially raise the costs of recruiting foreigners.

The second major practical concern with recruiting foreigners is the risk of external influence over a state's military policies and operations. States that rely on foreigners expose themselves to the possibility that foreign governments will attempt to cut off access to recruiting pools or control the actions of their citizens serving abroad. During the Falklands War, for instance, Britain's use of Nepalese-recruited Gurkhas led Argentina to accuse Britain of violating mercenary laws and called on Nepal to end Gurkha recruitment.³⁷ At the time, Nepal argued that Gurkhas were not mercenaries and refused to limit Britain's recruitment of Nepalis. In contrast,

³⁵ Agence France Presse, "UAE Sending Colombian Mercenaries to Yemen: Sources," *Daily Mail (UK)*, December 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3366710/UAE-sending-Colombian-mercenaries-Yemen-sources.html>.

³⁶ Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, *Military Service Manual*, 7th Edition (Publications Department, 2016).

³⁷ Tony Gould, *Imperial Warriors: Britain and the Gurkhas of Nepal* (London: Granta Books, 1999), 372.

when Maoists assumed control of Nepal's government in 2006 they initially pledged to halt Britain's recruitment of Gurkhas, whom they claimed were being used as mercenaries.³⁸ An inability to recruit manpower could leave a state without sufficient forces to carry out operations, potentially generating battlefield consequences or shifting the regional balance of power.

States that recruit foreign personnel also open themselves to criticism from the international community. The existence of a strong citizen soldier norm provides critics with fodder to condemn a state's use of foreign recruits. Indeed, many critics label foreign recruits as "mercenaries" even though personnel integrated into a state's military are not mercenaries under international law. Human rights organizations, for instance, widely criticized Bahrain's use of foreigners to quell protests during the Arab Spring, and members of the Australian public have called for war crimes investigations of retired Australian officers serving in UAE's military.³⁹ This sort of attention can constrain a state's ability to carry out operations, and could potentially lead troop supplier states – eager to avoid negative attention – to bar their citizens from serving abroad.

³⁸ "Gurkha Fighters Take on Nepal's Maoist Rulers," *South China Morning Post*, 8 February 2009, <http://www.scmp.com/article/669265/gurkha-fighters-take-nepals-maoist-rulers>.

³⁹ Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," December 2011; Mujib Mashal, "Pakistani Troops Aid Bahrain's Crackdown," *Al Jazeera*, 30 July 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/07/2011725145048574888.html>; Sophie McNeill, "Decorated Australian Soldier Faces Questions About Yemen War," *ABC News*, 14 February 2016, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-08/yemen-civil-war-questions-role-australian-soldier-mike-hindmarsh/7141638>.

Normative and Legal Concerns

These practical concerns may also play a role in motivating several normative concerns surrounding the use of non-citizen soldiers. Although international law does not proscribe the recruitment of foreigners for service in state militaries, the practice still raises normative and legal issues.⁴⁰ These concerns primarily surround the consequences of hiring foreigners without a genuine connection to the state for which they serve. While citizen armies often represent a cross-section of civil society, foreign recruitment introduces personnel who may have little in common with those they are charged to defend. Foreign recruits bring with them their own cultures, religions, and values, which can shape their interactions with the state's population. In some cases, these differences have little day-to-day impact on operations, but still raise questions about the motives behind an individual's service. Personnel recruited from abroad likely hold few of the values – such as patriotism – that typically motivate people to enlist in their home state's military. Instead, foreign recruits may have more personal motivations for enlisting, which runs counter to the notion of armies as a means for citizens to fulfill civic obligations or as a "school for the nation."

In other cases, differences between foreign-recruited troops and the civilian population can raise serious moral questions about the use of force. This is particularly true when the military plays a role in maintaining internal security. Military personnel without familial or cultural ties to the domestic population may have fewer reservations about using force against local civilians, increasing the risk of human rights offenses. Indeed, a large body of literature suggests that individuals are more prone to carry out violent acts against ethnic or national

⁴⁰ Percy (2006, 378) offers a contrasting opinion and suggests that, "the perception that permanently incorporated foreigners are not mercenaries is perfectly in line with the norm against mercenary use."

outgroups.⁴¹ Foreign recruits may view themselves as different from the local population or may simply lack the social ties to cooperate effectively with the population.

In addition to normative concerns for states that use foreign recruits, the potential for foreign recruits to violate the law of armed conflict or to carry out human rights offenses might also be legally problematic for states that supply military labor. Specifically, supplier states could, under certain conditions, have legal responsibility for violations of international law carried out by their nationals serving in foreign militaries. The Hague Convention and Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions declare that a state is responsible for "all acts committed by persons forming part of its armed forces," which seemingly places responsibility for any legal transgressions on the state employing foreign recruits.⁴² Customary international law, however, permits states to be held accountable for violations committed by private individuals if a state acknowledges and adopts these actions as their own.⁴³ In other words, a state might be held accountable for the actions of its nationals serving in a foreign military if the state helps recruit personnel and subsequently sanctions their behavior.⁴⁴ In most cases of foreign recruitment,

⁴¹ Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985); Russell Hardin, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Julian Wucherpfennig et al., "Ethnicity, the State, and the Duration of Civil War," *World Politics* 64, no. 1 (2012): 79–115; Mkandawire, "The Terrible Toll of Post-Colonial Rebel Movements in Africa".

⁴² Hague Convention (IV), Article 3 and Additional Protocol 1, Article 91.

⁴³ International Law Commission Draft Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, Article 11.

⁴⁴ The International Law Commission Draft Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts makes a clear distinction between endorsement/approval and adoption. For an act of an individual to be attributed to a State, the state must not simply express verbal approval for the act. Instead, the state must "adopt" the

individuals seek out enlistment opportunities on their own without assistance from their home state government. In these cases, troop supplier states have little responsibility under international law. There have been recent cases, however, where entities affiliated with the government of one state appeared to assist with recruitment of military personnel for another state,⁴⁵ or provided formal government approval for their nationals to serve overseas.⁴⁶

Even if foreign recruits do not take part in actions that violate human rights or the law of armed conflict, using them may still raise concerns about the neutrality of their home states. Under contemporary conceptions of neutrality, neutral states must not allow belligerent powers to recruit personnel or organize forces on neutral soil. A neutral state, however, is under no legal obligation to prevent its nationals from individually "crossing the frontier...to offer their services to one of the belligerents."⁴⁷ Since most foreign recruitment today involves individuals seeking out employment with another state's military, the neutrality of recruit supplier states is generally not at stake. However, when state-affiliated entities are involved in the recruiting process, the state's neutrality may be called into question. This is unlikely given that supplier states

act, which "carries with it the idea that the conduct is acknowledged by the State as, in effect, its own conduct." A state's "adoption" of its nationals conduct in a foreign military may be difficult to prove, making it unlikely that supplier states will face consequences for sending and supporting personnel.

⁴⁵ Saba Imtiaz, "Overseas Employment Services: Fauji Foundation Headhunts for Bahrain's Security Units," *The Express Tribune (Pakistan)*, 11 March 2011, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/130961/overseas-employment-services-fauji-foundation-headhunts-for-bahrains-security-units/>.

⁴⁶ Paul Toohey, "Retired Major General Mike Hindmarsh Now Leads up the UAE's Elite Presidential Guard," *The Daily Telegraph*, June 2017, <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/retired-major-general-mike-hindmarsh-now-leads-up-the-uaes-elite-presidential-guard/news-story/d7b30e632e041ff410645aeb6c345b5e>.

⁴⁷ Hague (V), Article 6

governments likely take steps to distance themselves from direct involvement with the recruitment of personnel for another state's military.

Despite the existence of a strong citizen soldier norm, states appear to construct domestic narratives that overcome normative concerns about the foreign status and financial motivations of recruits. These narratives sometimes cite the historic use of foreign personnel in both the military and civilian sectors. Indeed, many states that employ foreign recruits today depended on foreigners for defense during their days as protectorates or colonies. Over time, the practice of foreigners providing defense may have become ingrained as normal in a state's military culture. To be sure, culture does not cause or determine state behavior, but it can make certain behaviors more acceptable than others, shaping the means by which states choose to build their military capabilities.⁴⁸ Other narratives highlight the enduring relationship between a specific group of foreigners – such as the Gurkhas or an ethnic diaspora – and a nation's national security.⁴⁹ It appears that the practical or symbolic requirement for these forces combined with the lack of a legal proscription on foreign recruitment allows states to avoid internalizing the citizen army norm and continue filling their ranks from abroad.

Three Logics of Foreign Recruitment

If recruiting foreigners into a military is both practically challenging and normatively questionable, why do so many states do so? We find that states tend to recruit foreigners in three broad ways. First, some states *import expertise*, recruiting expert personnel from other militaries

⁴⁸ Severine Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 29.

⁴⁹ Percy, "Mercenaries," 377.

in order to fill specific gaps in leadership or technical capabilities. Second, some states *import labor*, recruiting large numbers of largely unskilled soldiers. Third, some states recruit only specific members of ethnic diaspora or citizens of former colonies in order to *bolster specific international bonds*.

In this section, we survey every current foreign military recruitment program in the world and sort each program into one of the three categories based on the program's scope and admissions criteria. We then explore the logic and implications of each category: what pressures drive states to recruit foreigners in that way, how foreign recruitment affects the military in practical terms, and how states navigate the normative gray space surrounding foreign recruits. We first explore these topics cross-nationally by assessing the commonalities of the countries that pursue each type of program as well as similar countries that do not recruit foreigners. We then investigate one exemplar recruitment program in each category, drawing from in-depth historical analysis and interviews. For these cases, we chose three programs (in Australia, Bahrain, and Israel) which represent the broader commonalities of the category and have attracted domestic and international attention in recent years.

We argue that each of these types of programs is driven by a distinct logic; the states that pursue each strategy tend to share similar features, international or domestic threat environments, and domestic characteristics, and tend to encounter similar practical and normative implications when implementing foreign recruitment programs. States that import expertise tend to be high-tech militaries looking to rapidly and cheaply adapt to new technologies or respond to pressing or emerging security threats. Integrating foreign experts can pose cultural and linguistic challenges but avoids some of the limitations of using seconded officers or contractors. States that import labor tend to either face significant security threats or be small, wealthy states, which

typically lack sufficient populations to deal with security threats – particularly if the population is untrustworthy because of ethnic tensions. Importing foreign soldiers can enable states to undertake unpopular deployments or, more troubling, to crack down on domestic populations. States that use foreign recruitment to bolster bonds typically do so as part of a larger campaign to connect with identity groups, typically when that identity is in doubt. These states leverage and twist citizen-soldier norms to make a statement, sometimes for primarily ideological reasons (as in the case of Israel) and other times for primarily instrumental reasons to demonstrate a willingness to defend members of the identity group from perceived threats (as in the case of Russia).

Before proceeding, it is worth pointing out that these typologies are not mutually exclusive. At a given point in time, states may recruit foreigners in any or all of the ways described above. Further, the logic behind a single recruitment program may shift over time, moving from one category to another. Israel's recruitment of foreign volunteers, for instance, has shifted from importing expertise and labor to signaling strong ties with a broader Jewish community. In the late 1940s, Israel recruited more than 3,500 *Machalniks* (foreign volunteers) to bolster its military manpower and capabilities. Both Jewish and non-Jewish World War II veterans with specialized expertise helped the new state rapidly develop air, naval, and medical capabilities, while other veterans and foreigners served as imported labor to expand the ranks of Israeli ground forces. By the end of the War of Independence, the difficulty of paying and integrating foreigners led the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) to reduce importing labor and focus primarily on importing individuals with specialized skills.⁵⁰ Today, the IDF recruits foreigners

⁵⁰ Yaacov Markovitzky, *Machal: Overseas Volunteers in Israel's War of Independence* (Jerusalem: World Machal, 2003): 20.

primarily to reinforce a wide-reaching Israeli identity rather than to build up numbers or expertise.⁵¹ It is also worth noting that the programs listed below may not be a complete list: our survey includes every case in which we have official documentation or solid journalistic reports of an ongoing program to recruit foreigners into a state's uniformed military. That said, we believe this to be the most complete record of foreign military recruitment programs to date.

Imported Expertise

The first reason states may recruit foreigners is straightforward and practical: they need personnel to fill specialized roles that are difficult to fill or develop domestically. We count four states that have small foreign recruitment programs that explicitly require prospective recruits to have particular preexisting skills. These states recruit foreign specialists for many of the same technical roles. Australia and New Zealand both specifically target linguists and communications experts. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand all recruit foreign pilots. A similar program in the United States (MAVNI) actively recruits and expedites citizenship for permanent residents (which does not qualify as foreign recruitment by our definition) to fill many of the same roles: translators and medical professionals.⁵² In other cases, foreign personnel with specialized leadership experience may be recruited to fill more strategic posts responsible for commanding

⁵¹ Similarly, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain's Gurkha brigades were used as a source of effective and loyal military manpower, occupying posts in British overseas territories as well as several theaters during both World Wars., Gould, *Imperial Warriors*. Today, the British Army maintains only a token force of 2,800 Gurkhas, just 3-percent of the Army's total active duty personnel, in part as a statement about the enduring legacy of the British Empire and Britain's commitment to the Gurkhas who have long served the crown., *The Military Balance 2017*, vol. 117 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2017)

⁵² U.S. Army. "Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI)." GoArmy.com recruitment materials. <http://www.goarmy.com/benefits/additional-incentives/mavni.html>.

key segments of a state’s military. The United Arab Emirates, for instance, recruited a former Australian special forces general to lead its Presidential Guard.⁵³ Due to the narrow and highly specialized nature of the recruitment, these programs typically recruit no more than a few hundred foreigners per year, a small fraction of their total military manpower.

Table 1: States Recruiting Foreigners for Specific Skills

Australia	Linguists, Submariners, Engineers, Pilots, Doctors, Intelligence, Special Forces
Canada	Pilots
New Zealand	Communications, Doctors, Engineers, Pilots
United Arab Emirates	High-ranking officers, Special Forces

(Sources: Australia,⁵⁴ Canada⁵⁵, New Zealand⁵⁶, UAE⁵⁷)

So what might drive a state to import expertise to fill specialized roles? A state’s security needs can change rapidly based on shifts in the threat environment. A potential rival’s military modernization or a shift to a more aggressive foreign policy, might lead a state to acquire new military technology to counter the perceived threat. Specialists are often required to operate this new equipment. A state may also face emerging security threats in a new location, creating a need for linguists and regional experts. A country may also, during the course of a conflict,

⁵³ McNeill, “Decorated Australian Soldier Faces Questions About Yemen War.”

⁵⁴ “Overseas Applicants for the Australian Army,” *Australian Army*, n.d., <https://m.defencejobs.gov.au/recruitment-centre/can-i-join/citizenship/army/>.

⁵⁵ Bruce Champion-Smith, “Hiring Foreign Pilots Helps Bottom Line, Air Force Says,” *Toronto Star*, July 2014, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/07/30/hiring_foreign_pilots_helps_bottom_line_air_force_says.html.

⁵⁶ “Overseas Applicants: Roles,” *New Zealand Defence Force Defence Careers*, n.d., <http://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/reenlist-overseas/overseas-applicants/roles>.

⁵⁷ Rori Donaghy, “Revealed: The Mercenaries Commanding UAE Forces in Yemen,” *Middle East Eye*, 23 December 2015, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/mercenaries-charge-uae-forces-fighting-yemen-764309832>.

experience a sudden demand for doctors, civil engineers, or military strategists to initiate military operations, replenish lost personnel, or develop strategy for a final push to victory. Rather than invest in the time-consuming and costly process of training domestic experts, states may expedite the process by importing specialists from overseas to fill vacant billets or as a stop gap measure to train the first crop of domestic experts.

Foreign military recruitment, however, is not the only means by which states can update their high-end military capabilities. States can hire private military firms as advisors or to carry out critical missions, send their personnel to gain expertise at foreign military schools or exercises, or rely on troops seconded from foreign militaries. While hiring private military firms or employing seconded officers allows states to quickly acquire technical or leadership expertise, and sending troops to foreign training helps develop indigenous capacity, there are several potential pitfalls associated with each of these alternate strategies. Civilians from private military firms may be reluctant to serve in combat and may be more costly than traditional military forces. Contractors and seconded officers may be prohibited from providing certain military services by their home state governments. Attendees at foreign military training and exercises might not receive unfettered access to the most advanced tactics or equipment. Despite these limitations, contractors and seconded officers have been widely used to bolster military capabilities, and states routinely send their best and brightest troops to foreign military academies and training institutions. Croatia, for instance, reportedly relied on American military contractors to help plan operations during its war of independence,⁵⁸ seconded Royal Air Force

⁵⁸ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 126–27.

officers flew missions for the Sultan of Oman,⁵⁹ and thousands of foreign personnel attend U.S. service academies and war colleges, military occupational training, and exercises each year. Recruiting and integrating foreigners into a state's military, however, offers the distinct advantage of providing a state with greater control over personnel with these specialized skills.

This logic explains a few commonalities in the countries that have recruited foreigners for these specialist positions. First, all of these states are high-income and have technically advanced military capabilities – such as modern aircraft, submarines, or air defense systems – that require expert operators. Australia and the UAE are also among the top purchasers of U.S. military hardware.⁶⁰ Second, each of these programs has expanded substantially since the beginning of the Global War on Terror. Since 2001, ongoing global counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations have created immediate demand for personnel with specialized technical, language, and medical skills. Third, many of the countries that currently import expertise are English-speaking states and have long been close allies. This should not be surprising as the shared language, frequent coalition exercises and deployments, common operating procedures, and similar military cultures help streamline the integration of foreign personnel. Integrating foreigners who do not speak the local language, particularly into positions where clear communication is necessary – like flight operations – may create more chaos than progress.

⁵⁹ John Clementson, "Eagles of Oman," *UK Mobile Air Movements Squadron Old Bods Association*, n.d., http://ukmamsoba.org/eagles_of_oman.htm.

⁶⁰ Curtis Brown, Ryan Browne, and Zachary Cohen, "Here's Who Buys the Most Weapons from the U.S." *CNN*, 24 May 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/politics/us-arms-sales-worldwide/>.

By contrast, most of the other states with strong economies and technologically advanced militaries – such as Japan, South Korea, and Germany – have unique national languages and have been less involved in overseas counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations over the past two decades. Further, some of these states appear to rely on security guarantees from allies rather than importing foreign expertise. Japan and South Korea, for instance, face significant regional security threats, but the large presence of U.S. military forces bolsters many of the technologically advanced capabilities that states often develop by recruiting foreign experts. The U.S. bases several squadrons of fighter jets in Korea and stations an aircraft carrier, along with several other advanced weapon systems, in Japan. These assets would likely play a critical role in any regional conflict, reducing the requirement for additional Japanese or Korean assets and the skilled manpower to operate them.⁶¹

Despite the benefits, importing experts raises several practical and normative concerns. Although these states recruit only a small numbers of foreign experts, they often position them in highly important roles, responsible for critical technology, intelligence, or high-level military strategy. From a practical standpoint, this heightens concerns about loyalty, external manipulation, and dangerous miscommunication due to differences in military procedures between states. Even programs that recruit only foreign-born permanent residents have concerns about troop loyalty, suggesting matters are even worse when recruits lack any connection with the state they serve. For instance, the U.S.'s MAVNI program recruits permanent residents for expert roles in the military, yet the Department of Defense recently added increasingly rigorous

⁶¹ The presence of U.S. assets in these cases not only adds to combat capability that would otherwise need to be developed by the host nation, but also serves to deter foreign aggression.

screening procedures and considered shutting down the program altogether.⁶² The more time and energy that states dedicate to screening, retraining, and integrating foreign experts, the less the military is able to benefit from the benefits these experts provide. These practical and normative concerns are less salient when states have a long tradition of military cooperation and share values and foreign policy goals. Indeed, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand recruit nearly exclusively from the American and British militaries, and all previously used British military advisors.

The recruitment of foreign experts can shape a state's ability to conduct military operations and to rapidly respond to changing threat environments. By importing foreigners to develop specialized capabilities, a state can shift the regional military balance of power and conduct operations that might have been impossible without foreign expertise. In the late 1940s, for example, Israel transformed the regional balance of power by importing World War II veterans to build the *Haganah* paramilitary organization into a conventional military force. The IDF recruited foreign pilots and technicians – who comprised 70-percent of the nascent Israeli Air Force – to fly combat missions; hired U.S. Naval Academy graduates to command ships in the new Israeli Navy; recruited military physicians from overseas; and relied on armor troops from Europe, Africa, and the Americas to build expertise in the ground forces. In total, the fledgling Israeli Defense Force recruited some 3,500 overseas volunteers in 1948 to respond to the existential threat posed by Israel's neighboring states.⁶³ During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War,

⁶² Richard Gonzales and Tom Bowman, "Pentagon Considers Canceling Program That Recruits Immigrant Soldiers," *National Public Radio*, 3 July 2017, <http://www.npr.org/2017/07/03/535342867/pentagon-considers-canceling-program-that-recruits-immigrant-soldiers>.

⁶³ Markovitzky, *Machal*.

foreign-recruited Israeli Air Force personnel maintained an air bridge that smuggled arms and materiel from Europe to equip the new military, operated reconnaissance missions that pinpointed the location of Arab troops, conducted attack operations against Arab targets, and guaranteed air supremacy in the skies over Israel.⁶⁴ Foreign experts in Israel's navy protected the new country's coastline, transported supplies and new IDF recruits, and sank adversary warships.⁶⁵ Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion even recruited retired U.S. Army Colonel David Marcus to serve as IDF's first general, where he developed strategy for battling Arab armies and opened the supply route that broke the siege of Jerusalem.⁶⁶ The IDF's stunning victory in the Arab-Israeli War was in large part due to the technical skills of these foreign recruits.

All of these issues – the strategic logic of importing foreign experts, the normative and practical challenges of integrating them into another state's military, and the operational effects of foreign recruitment – are evident in the recent history of the Australian Defence Forces' (ADF) Lateral Recruitment program. The program is small and recruitment of foreign military veterans with specific expertise is based on manpower modeling that identifies specific ADF shortcomings.⁶⁷ As a result, the ADF recruits only about 30 commissioned and 30 non-commissioned officers a year in jobs like “avionics technician,” “offensive support officer with amphibious or mechanised experience,” and “unmanned aerial system artillery gunner and

⁶⁴ Shlomo Aloni, *Arab-Israeli Air Wars 1947-1982* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2001); Donald J. McCarthy, *The Sword of David: The Israeli Air Force at War* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2014), 6–22.

⁶⁵ Markovitzky, *Machal*, 28–29.

⁶⁶ Ted Berkman, *Cast a Giant Shadow: The Story of Mickey Marcus Who Died to Save Jerusalem* (New York: Pocket Books, 1966); Markovitzky, *Machal*, 17.

⁶⁷ Email exchange with Australian Defence Force staff officer, 9 August 2017

bombardier” (i.e. drone operator).⁶⁸ To recruit these experts, the ADF pays large signing and relocation bonuses (in some cases up to AUD 200,000, or USD 150,000).⁶⁹ However, as one Australian defense expert explained, “It actually saves money because we don’t have to train people up, but most of all, it saves time. ... Snipers are as rare as hen’s teeth and it takes 15 years to train a major. The idea that we can walk out and grab one off the street is a bit naive. We don’t have the expertise, so we import it.”⁷⁰

While Australia’s recruitment of foreigners appears to date back to at least the 1950s, the ADF has stepped up the program substantially in the past two decades, during the time that Australia’s military has been working closely with British and American forces in counterterrorism operations.⁷¹ Indeed, many current ADF lateral transfers previously served as British and American exchange officers with Australian forces.⁷² This foreign recruitment has also coincided with a major military modernization in Australia. As concerns about China’s military growth proliferate in the Asia-Pacific region, Australian defense spending is set to

⁶⁸ Seth Robson, “Job Pool Expanding for US Troops Interested in Heading down Under,” *Stars and Stripes*, April 2014, <https://www.stripes.com/job-pool-expanding-for-us-troops-interested-in-heading-down-under-1.275395#.WV7X-byysk>.

⁶⁹ Alex White, “Military Recruits Lured from Overseas,” *Herald Sun*, December 2014, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/military-recruits-lured-from-overseas/news-story/7a7e838c31672f57becb2616023218c7>.

⁷⁰ White, “Military Recruits Lured from Overseas.”

⁷¹ Email exchange with Australian Army Headquarters Staff Officer, 8 August 2017

⁷² Interview with US military officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 26 June 2017.

double between 2014 and 2023.⁷³ Buying American military equipment and hiring American and coalition experts to use it is an efficient way to refine tactics and enhance military capabilities.

Yet despite Australia's close ties with their home countries, lateral recruits often hold complex, divided loyalties. Lateral recruits often retain home country citizenship while serving in the ADF, and Britain and the U.S. occasionally attempt to rehire officers who have transferred abroad.⁷⁴ Moreover, many lateral recruits feel like permanent outsiders in the ADF. Many feel that they are not "talent managed" and find themselves in assignments where they do not leverage the skills for which they recruited.⁷⁵ These foreigners also often have limited opportunities for promotion because they lack the social ties with senior officers that Australian officers typically develop during early assignments.⁷⁶ At the most basic level, one former U.S. military officer said his American accent automatically set him apart from his Australian peers, making it difficult to fully fit in with his colleagues.⁷⁷ The result is that many officers are caught between national loyalties. One former U.S. military officer serving in the ADF said he would never provide the Australians with information that jeopardized U.S. national security, but neither would he do something for the United States that would go against his Australian commission.⁷⁸ In some cases, foreign recruited officers simply resign their Australian

⁷³ Robson, "Job Pool Expanding for US Troops Interested in Heading Down Under."

⁷⁴ Email exchange with Royal Air Force officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 9 July 2017.

⁷⁵ Email exchange with Royal Air Force officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 9 July 2017.

⁷⁶ Interview with US military officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 26 June 2017.

⁷⁷ Interview with US military officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 26 June 2017.

⁷⁸ Interview with US military officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 26 June 2017.

commissions, exacerbating ADF manpower shortcomings when they leave "in disgust because they were recruited but not valued."⁷⁹

Imported Labor

In an international system where the principle of self-help rules supreme, states must provide for their own security.⁸⁰ Some governments, however, are unable to meet their military manpower requirements using domestic labor and instead *import labor* from abroad to fill the ranks. Since states in this category (shown in Table 2) are often trying to staff sizable segments of their militaries using foreign recruits, they focus on importing large amounts of labor rather than small numbers of individuals with specialized expertise. Accordingly, states in this category generally have few conditions for recruitment. States may attempt to hire personnel from certain regions or with specific language competencies to ease integration but typically do not require recruits for these "foot soldier"-type positions to possess specialized military skills or represent specific diaspora or colonial interests.

Table 2: States Recruiting with Broad Requirements

Belgium	any EU citizen
Cyprus	Greek citizens
France	no restrictions (Foreign Legion)
Ireland	any EU citizen (besides UK)
Monaco	French citizens
Serbia	no restrictions (mostly EU and former Soviet states)
Ukraine	no restrictions (mostly EU and Belarus)
Vatican City	Swiss Catholics
Brunei	Nepalese citizens (Gurkha Reserve Unit)
Bahrain	no restrictions (mostly Sunnis)
Oman	no restrictions

⁷⁹ Interview with US military officer who transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force, 26 June 2017.

⁸⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston, MA: McGraw Hill, 1979).

Qatar	no restrictions (mostly Sunnis)
Saudi Arabia	no restrictions (mostly Sunnis)
U.A.E.	no restrictions

Organized by region.

(Sources: Belgium⁸¹, Cyprus⁸², France⁸³, Ireland⁸⁴, Monaco,⁸⁵ Serbia,⁸⁶ Ukraine⁸⁷, Vatican City⁸⁸, Brunei⁸⁹, Bahrain,⁹⁰ Oman⁹¹, Qatar and Saudi Arabia⁹² U.A.E,⁹³ Bangladesh⁹⁴)

⁸¹ Belgium Defense Ministry, <http://www.mil.be/fr/page/si-vous-navez-pas-la-nationalite-belge> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017).

⁸² Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://mfa.gov.ct.tr/regarding-recruitment-new-professional-soldiers-greek-cypriot-administration-south-cyprus-greek-cypriot-national-guard/> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017). Cyprus’s recruitment of Greeks may also be intended to enhance ties with the Greek government and population.

⁸³ French Foreign Legion Recruitment, <http://en.legion-recrute.com/> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017).

⁸⁴ Defense Forces Ireland Careers, “Frequently Asked Questions,” <http://www.military.ie/careers/faq/> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017).

⁸⁵ Monaco Department of Interior, “Compagnie des Carabiniers du Prince,” <http://www.gouv.mc/Gouvernement-et-Institutions/Le-Gouvernement/Departement-de-l-Interieur/Compagnie-des-Carabiniers-du-Prince> (Accessed 3 Aug 2017).

⁸⁶ Serbian Army, <http://www.vs.rs/> (Accessed 3 Aug 2017).

⁸⁷ Butkevych, Bohdan and Stanislav Fedorchuk, “A Ukrainian Foreign Legion: Does Ukraine need mercenaries in its army,” *The Ukrainian Week*, 1 Apr 2014, <http://ukrainianweek.com/Politics/106697> (Accessed 13 Jun 2018).

⁸⁸ *The Telegraph*, “10 things you didn’t know about the Vatican City,” 7 Jun 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/lists/surprising-facts-about-the-vatican-city/swiss-guard/> (Accessed 5 Jul 2017).

⁸⁹ McClatchey Caroline, “How Gurkhas came to be Britain’s new security army,” *BBC News Magazine*, 14 Nov 2011, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-15634938>. Brunei hosts both a British Gurkha force and the Sultanate’s own Gurkha Reserve Unit. Members of the Gurkha Reserve Unit are typically veterans of the British Army and are

States that import labor in this way may have a number of reasons for doing so. First, many states have simply too small a domestic population to fill security force ranks and are wealthy enough to hire foreigners for the job. This explains the most obvious pattern of states in Table 2, which features a huge number of extremely small and wealthy states. For instance, of the sixteen states with standing armies that have a population smaller than 6 million and a per capita GDP of at least 20,000 USD, nine allow foreigners to serve.⁹⁵ In some cases, like the

supplied at behest of British government – in recent years India has offered to replace Britain’s supply. However, the soldiers are uniformed members of their host state’s military.

⁹⁰ See subsequent case study.

⁹¹ Author interview with American officer formerly stationed in Oman, Oct 2017

⁹² No official acknowledgement, but numerous reports of extensive recruitment, including: Middle East Media Research Institute, “Saudi Arabia and Qatar Begin Recruitment of Soldiers from Pakistani Jihadi Belt of FATA,” Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor Reports, 15 Apr 2014.

⁹³ See above sources regarding Jordanians, Sudanese, and Colombians.

⁹⁴ We did not include Bangladesh on this list, despite a recent scandal involving advertisements for Bangladeshi Army service posted in India purporting to come from the Bangladeshi government. The Army’s public relations wing (ISPR) claims it was deliberately planted to defame Bangladesh, and the Bangladeshi Army’s website maintains that service is limited to natural-born Bangladeshi citizens. *Daily Star*, “ISPR protests soldier recruitment advert on foreign website,” 21 Jun 2016, <http://www.thedailystar.net/online/ispr-protests-soldier-recruitment-advert-foreign-website-1243255>.

⁹⁵ Bahrain, Brunei, Cyprus, Ireland, Monaco, Qatar, and Vatican City fit into this “importing labor” category. Norway allows Icelandic officers to serve and New Zealand recruits foreign technical experts. The Bahamas, Denmark, Kuwait, Luxembourg, San Marino, Singapore, and Switzerland do not recruit foreigners by our definition. However, Denmark does allow permanent residents to serve, and Singapore uses a sizable Nepalese Gurkha force in domestic policing. Andorra, Iceland, and Liechtenstein meet our population and GDP thresholds, but do not have standing militaries.

Vatican City and Monaco, the state faces relatively limited security threats and employs non-citizen soldiers largely for ceremonial duties and to protect dignitaries, relying on neighboring states for defense from external threats.⁹⁶ In other cases, states like Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates face regional security threats and integrate foreigners into traditional military units. Some states face such extreme security threats that they permit foreigners to serve despite very large populations. Ukraine, for instance, has imported foreign labor to conduct operations against Russian-backed forces in Eastern Ukraine. In the month's following Russia's invasion of Crimea, the Ukrainian president signed a law allowing "foreigners and stateless persons" to join Ukraine's military in an effort to increase the strength of army battalions and boost the state's combat capability.⁹⁷

Second, even if a state's domestic population is large enough to serve as a recruiting pool, domestic recruits may be unwilling to serve due to danger and discomfort. In some states military service may be considered low-status and therefore few locals are interested. As a result, states often import foreigners to fill these military roles along with other civilian sector jobs that

⁹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Monaco," *The World Factbook*, February 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mn.html> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017); "The Palace Guards," *Ministry of Interior, Principality of Monaco*, n.d., <http://en.gouv.mc/Government-Institutions/The-Government/Ministry-of-Interior/The-Palace-Guards> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017). The Papal State's Swiss Guards and Monaco's Palace Guards exemplify these ceremonial and VIP protection forces. Monaco and the Vatican City rely on France and Italy, respectively, for defense from external threats.

⁹⁷ "Poroshenko Legalizes Foreigners in Ukrainian Army," *UNIAN Information Agency*, November 2015, <https://www.unian.info/politics/1173085-poroshenko-legalizes-foreigners-in-ukrainian-army.html>.

are perceived as undesirable.⁹⁸ This might be particularly true when states wish to deploy soldiers in dangerous or politically unpopular ways. Since state leaders face domestic political pushback when casualties mount during military operations,⁹⁹ they often seek ways to minimize battlefield losses. Foreign troops, therefore, play a role similar to capital-intensive military technologies like airpower and drones,¹⁰⁰ reducing the political risk associated with casualties during interstate conflicts. By deploying personnel recruited abroad, casualties may receive less coverage in local media and be less likely to trigger adverse domestic effects. Indeed, the British and French both relied heavily on their foreign-recruited troops to wage counterinsurgency campaigns and colonial wars throughout much of the nineteenth and twentieth century.¹⁰¹ One French general even reportedly told a group of foreign-recruited legionnaires heading to Indochina in the 1880s that, "You! Legionnaires! You are soldiers meant to die, and I am sending you to the place where you can do it!"¹⁰² This practice continues today. One U.S. Army veteran who worked in the UAE described Colombian-recruited troops serving in Yemen as "cannon fodder" for the Emirati military.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ See Mehran Kamrava and Zahra Babar, eds., *Migrant Labor in the Persian Gulf* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012) for more on migrant labor in the Gulf States.

⁹⁹ John E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973); Dan Reiter and Allan C Stam, *Democracies at War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002).

¹⁰⁰ Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Jonathan D. Caverley, *Democratic Militarism: Voting, Wealth, and War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

¹⁰¹ Porch, *The French Foreign Legion*.

¹⁰² Hugh McLeave, *The Damned Die Hard* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1973), 86.

¹⁰³ AFP, "UAE Sending Colombian Mercenaries to Yemen."

Third,¹⁰⁴ some states have an insufficient domestic labor pool because they face significant risks of coup or revolution. For states riven by ethnic or sectarian conflicts, large portions of the population are potentially disloyal. Rather than arm, train, and organize potential adversaries, the ruling elite in these states may hire foreigners to man their conventional forces in lieu of local nationals. This motivation is particularly clear in the case of Bahrain, as we describe below.

States with insufficiently large or loyal populations have relatively few attractive alternatives. In some cases, small states, particularly those without significant internal and external security threats, choose not to have a standing army and either follow strict policies of neutrality or rely on outside protection – as do Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Iceland.¹⁰⁵ States with greater external threats and fewer reliable allies often do not have this option and instead rely on domestic conscription to fill ranks – such as Israel, Qatar, Singapore, Switzerland, and the UAE.¹⁰⁶ These conscription programs may help to build national identity in some cases but can be politically costly and pose operational challenges for a military. Conscripts are typically less motivated and effective than volunteers, and their short terms of service lead to high

¹⁰⁴ These factors need not be mutually exclusive. For instance, a state may be small and wealthy and also have a potentially disloyal domestic population.

¹⁰⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, “Andorra,” *The World Factbook*, February 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/an.html> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017).

¹⁰⁶ Zoltan Barany, “Why Have Three Gulf States Introduced the Draft?” *The RUSI Journal* 162, no. 6 (November 2017): 16–26; Ho Shu Huang and Samuel Chan, *Singapore Chronicles: Defence* (Singapore: Straits Times Press, 2015); Tim Huxley, *Defending the Lion City: The Armed Forces of Singapore* (St Leonards, New South Wales: Allen & Unwin, 2000); Simon Jack, “Swiss Vote to Keep Army Conscription,” *BBC News*, September 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24195870>.

institutional turnover. States that have disloyal domestic populations, meanwhile, may recruit domestically but design institutions to prevent coups. Saddam Hussein, for instance, insulated his government behind an extremely loyal Special Republican Guard.¹⁰⁷ This is a high-risk strategy that may not sufficiently protect the ruling class, and many states lack even sufficient numbers of loyal troops to staff these Praetorian guards. It should be unsurprising, then, that so many small and wealthy states opt instead for foreign troops, despite or because of concerns over loyalty.

Importing and arming large numbers of foreigners with little connection to their new countries exaggerates several of the operational and normative issues of foreign recruitment, particularly when states face substantial domestic or international threats. When a state faces significant internal threats, foreign troops may be more willing to use force against the population than are citizen soldiers. During the Arab Spring, Bahrain's defense and security forces, comprised mostly of Sunnis recruited from Pakistan and elsewhere, cleared the streets and rounded up large numbers of Bahraini Shi'a protesters, stopping the protests in their tracks.¹⁰⁸ By contrast, domestically-recruited militaries in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria fractured or defied orders when commanded to use force against civilians, enabling civilians to overthrow or seriously threaten the regimes.¹⁰⁹ When Egyptian president Mubarak commanded

¹⁰⁷ James T. Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security* 24, no. 2 (1999): 131–65.

¹⁰⁸ Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry"; Laurence Louër, "Sectarianism and Coup-Proofing Strategies in Bahrain," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (April 2013): 245–60.

¹⁰⁹ Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 2012): 127–49; David D. Kirkpatrick, "Power in Tunisia Changes Hands 2 Times in 24 Hours," *The New York Times*, January 2011; Chris McGreal, "Libyan Rebel Efforts Frustrated by Internal Disputes over Leadership," *The Guardian*, April 2011; "Two Libyan Fighter Pilots Defect, Fly to

his military to crack down on protesters, an official army statement responded, “Your armed forces, who are aware of the legitimacy of your demands and are keen to assume their responsibility in protecting the nation and the citizens, affirm that freedom of expression through peaceful means is guaranteed to everyone.”¹¹⁰ In Tunisia, the military’s refusal to fire on civilians is credited with causing President Ben Ali to step down and flee the country.¹¹¹ In Libya, defections of generals and troops led Muammar Gaddafi to turn to foreign mercenaries in an attempt to maintain control of the country, but these forces came too late and were no match for NATO airpower.¹¹² Assad seems to have learned his lesson – the Syrian government has

Malta,” *Reuters*, February 2011, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-protests-malta/two-libyan-fighter-pilots-defect-fly-to-malta-idUSTRE71K52R20110221>; Kareem Fahim and Rick Gladstone, “Syrian General in Charge of Stopping Defections Becomes a Defector,” *The New York Times*, December 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/27/world/middleeast/syrian-general-defects-in-a-public-broadcast.html>; Kheder Khaddour, “Assad’s Officer Ghetto: Why the Syrian Army Remains Loyal,” *Carnegie Middle East Center*, November 2015, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/11/04/assad-s-officer-ghetto-why-syrian-army-remains-loyal-pub-61449>; Peter Gwin, “Former Qaddafi Mercenaries Describe Fighting in Libyan War,” *The Atlantic*, August 2011, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/08/former-qaddafi-mercenaries-describe-fighting-in-libyan-war/244356/>.

¹¹⁰ Tony Karon, “Egyptian Military Proving to Be Rival Power Center to Mubarak,” *Time*, February 2011, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2045455,00.html>.

¹¹¹ Kirkpatrick, “Power in Tunisia Changes Hands 2 Times in 24 Hours” To be sure, the role of the military during Arab Spring protests was but one factor that affected regime survival, however, there is broad consensus among scholars and policymakers that the decisions of militaries to side with protesters played a critical role in shaping outcomes in Tunisia and Egypt.

¹¹² Gwin, “Former Qaddafi Mercenaries Describe Fighting in Libyan War” These Tuareg mercenaries were never fully integrated into the Libyan military command structure so are not non-citizen soldiers by our definition. Still, their use highlights how leaders often turn to foreigners for use against internal threats.

increasingly used Iranian and Hezbollah fighters to augment its own forces during the civil war, but has used them to augment its forces rather than formally integrating them into the Syrian military.¹¹³

When facing international threats, meanwhile, states relying on foreigners instead of domestic troops may be able to deploy forces with less political risk, potentially lowering the threshold for the use of force. This is particularly true in cases like the French Foreign Legion where non-citizen soldiers are organized into separate units that can be deployed in lieu of those comprised of citizen soldiers.¹¹⁴ French leaders frequently dispatched the Foreign Legion rather than French troops to quell dangerous colonial uprisings in places like Algeria, Vietnam, Madagascar, and Mexico.¹¹⁵ Even after the decline of the French empire, Legionnaires were routinely deployed on high risk contingency operations in remote locations like Lebanon, Rwanda, Congo, and Kosovo.¹¹⁶ Today, the Foreign Legion increasingly deploys alongside regular French units but continues to fill less desirable roles, like helping to secure borders and

¹¹³ Sam Dagher, “What Iran Is Really up to in Syria,” *The Atlantic*, February 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/02/iran-hezbollah-united-front-syria/553274/>.

¹¹⁴ These units often have citizens serving as officers, but the numbers of citizens is small relative to non-citizen members.

¹¹⁵ Porch, *The French Foreign Legion*; Slobodan Lekic, “Fabled Foreign Legion Fading with Time,” October 2006, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/31/AR2006103100724_pf.html.

¹¹⁶ Adrian D. Gilbert, *Voices of the Foreign Legion: The History of the World's Most Famous Fighting Corps* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2014), 237–54.

sensitive infrastructure in remote French Guiana.¹¹⁷ As a French Foreign Legion spokesman commented, "It will politically always be easier to dispatch foreigners rather than French soldiers to such places."¹¹⁸

Bahrain's recruitment of foreign troops provides a clear illustration of the strategic motivations and normative issues associated with importing labor. While the exact number of non-citizen personnel in Bahrain's forces is a state secret, human rights organizations suggest that more than half of the kingdom's 19,400 military and paramilitary forces are non-Bahrainis.¹¹⁹ Over the last few decades, Bahrain's security forces have reportedly recruited soldiers from Pakistan, Yemen, Jordan, Syria, and, in the early 2000s, the then recently-disbanded Iraqi Army.¹²⁰ Bahrain has a number of features which motivate states to import large amounts of military manpower. Its population is small (1.4 million) and wealthy (nearly 40,000 USD per-capita GNI, PPP), making it difficult to recruit a large pool of soldiers domestically. More pressingly, the tiny Gulf State has a fraught history of sectarian conflict between its majority-Shia population and its Sunni ruling elite.¹²¹ Given the history of sectarian protests, riots, and reported coup attempts, a majority-Shia military would jeopardize regime survival,

¹¹⁷ William Langewiesche, "The Expendables: The Dark Romance and Grim Reality of Life in the French Foreign Legion," *Vanity Fair*, December 2012, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2012/12/french-foreign-legion-expendables>.

¹¹⁸ Lekic, "Fabled Foreign Legion Fading with Time."

¹¹⁹ Ian Black, "Bahrain Security Forces Accused of Deliberately Recruiting Foreign Nationals," *The Guardian*, February 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/17/bahrain-security-forces-sunni-foreign>.

¹²⁰ Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," 15–16.

¹²¹ Nelida Fuccaro, *Histories of City and State in the Persian Gulf: Manama Since 1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9.

which further limits domestic recruitment.¹²² As a result, while Bahrain's military has always recruited foreign soldiers, it has done so particularly in times of regime threat.

As Arab Spring protests mounted against the Bahraini government in 2011, advertisements appeared in Pakistani newspapers offering generous salaries for service in Bahrain's defense forces. The advertisements were placed by Pakistani veteran's organizations on behalf of the Bahraini government, and read: "For service in Bahrain National Guard, the following categories of people with previous army and police experience are urgently needed: former army drill instructors, anti-riot instructors, [and] military police."¹²³ Within weeks, nearly 2,500 Pakistanis had enlisted in Bahrain's military and security services, joining thousands of other foreigners already serving in the kingdom's armed forces. By filling its ranks with foreigners, Bahrain's ruling Al Khalifa family sought to ensure that its military would act against domestic threats to regime security. Unlike many other states throughout the region where citizen soldiers resisted taking action against their fellow citizens, Bahrain's foreign-recruited forces cleared away protesters, enforced curfews, manned checkpoints, protected sensitive government locations, and carried out hundreds of arrests.¹²⁴ While Arab Spring protests forced other leaders out of office, the Al Khalifas survived in large part due to the willingness of their foreign recruited security forces to crack down on the domestic population.

But how do Bahrain's elites justify such a normatively troubling practice? The desire for regime survival likely played the primary role, but part of the answer may lie in the state's long

¹²² Hasan Tariq Alhasan, "The Role of Iran in the Failed Coup of 1981: The IFLB in Bahrain," *The Middle East Journal* 65, no. 4 (2011): 603–17.

¹²³ Mashal, "Pakistani Troops Aid Bahrain's Crackdown."

¹²⁴ Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry."

history of recruiting foreigners for both military and non-military purposes. Throughout the 19th century, Bahrain's ruling Al Khalifa family recruited ethnic Balochs from outside their kingdom's borders to serve as armed guards. After the 1861 Perpetual Truce of Peace and Friendship, the British began to provide external protection for Bahrain, first importing Balochs and Punjabis from British India and the Middle East. The British faced numerous issues with Baloch and Punjabi soldiers over this period – including several incidents in which soldiers mutinied and killed non-commissioned officers. But by this point, the pattern of foreign recruitment was well-established. Even when Britain attempted to recruit from the local population, many Bahrainis were reluctant to join the security forces because of the association of paramilitary forces with socially inferior groups.¹²⁵ As a result, Britain continued to rely on imported labor and also maintained permanent bases manned by British troops until the withdrawal of British forces from the region in 1971.

After gaining independence in 1971, Bahrain began developing its own military and security forces, but remained largely under the the security umbrella of the United States, which had filled the void left by departing British forces.¹²⁶ The perceived threat to regime security posed by the predominantly Shia population coupled with the historical legacy of foreign recruitment led the government to continue importing Balochs, Yemenis, Omanis, Africans, Pakistanis, and Iraqis for national defense.¹²⁷ The military culture that accepted the use of

¹²⁵ J.E. Peterson, "The Baluch Presence in the Persian Gulf," in *Sectarian Politics in the Persian Gulf*, ed. Lawrence G. Potter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 239–41.

¹²⁶ David F. Winkler, *Amirs, Admirals, and Desert Sailors: Bahrain, the U.S. Navy, and the Arabian Gulf* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2007), 45–62.

¹²⁷ Peterson, "The Baluch Presence in the Persian Gulf," 239–41.

foreigners was perhaps strengthened by Bahrain's acceptance of foreign labor outside the security sector – today more than 80 percent of the total civilian workforce is comprised of non-nationals.¹²⁸ The long legacy of relying on foreigners to man Bahrain's defenses has, for centuries, helped ensure regime survival of the ruling Al Khalifa family.

Bolstering International Bonds

A third group of foreign military recruitment programs, however, appears to have no material military purpose at all. Instead, these programs recruit members of ethnic diasporas or citizens of former territories in order to *bolster international bonds* with these populations and states. These programs are fairly easy to identify – they require no special skills but explicitly screen based on these ethnic or national characteristics. According to our count, at least seven states have foreign recruitment programs that restrict membership to small and historically-specific ethnic or national groups, listed in Table 3. Two states, India and Israel, permit foreigners to serve only if they are members of the states' ethnic diaspora populations. Meanwhile, India, Norway, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States all open their military to citizens of former colonies, possessions, or Trust Territories. These programs are almost always negotiated in bilateral treaties or as a benefit of membership in commonwealth organizations. All of these programs are fairly small in comparison to the state's armed forces, the largest recruiting a few thousand soldiers. Yet some of these programs are widely publicized and discussed, like the Gurkha Brigades and the IDF's Lone Soldiers program.

¹²⁸ Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," 19.

Table 3: States Recruiting Explicitly Based on Ethnicity or in Former Territories

India	Indian descent
Israel	Jewish descent
India	Nepal, Bhutan
Norway	Iceland
Russia	Former Soviet republics
Spain	Former Spanish Colonies
United Kingdom	Commonwealth & Nepal
United States	Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau

(Sources: Israel¹²⁹, USA¹³⁰, UK¹³¹ UK and India,¹³² Norway¹³³, Spain¹³⁴)

Why do some ethnic homeland states or former colonial powers recruit foreigners in this way while others do not? Some of these states clearly recruit foreigners purely as a symbolic gesture signifying the importance of its continuing relationship with a state or population. By opening up the military to foreign recruits, states communicate ongoing trust and commitment. This explains why Israel and India permit military service for their ethnic diaspora populations

¹²⁹ Alona Ferber, "Israeli Army Cites Rise in Number of Overseas Volunteers Joining Its Ranks," *Haaretz*, 22 Apr 2015, <http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.652927>.

¹³⁰ Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau, 30 Apr 2003, US State Department, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/173999.pdf>.

¹³¹ British Army Recruitment, <http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23209.aspx> (Accessed 4 Jul 2017).

¹³² Rob Blackhurst, "The Race to be a Gurkha," *The Telegraph*, 8 Mar 2014, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/10677559/The-race-to-be-a-Gurkha.html>; Army Education Corps, "Indian Army Recruitment Materials," January 2016.

¹³³ Grete Faremo, "Questions from Dagfinn Hoybraten to the Minister of Defense," Norway Parliament Written Questions and Answers, 17 Jun 2011, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Skriftlige-sporsmal-og-svar/Skriftlig-sporsmal/?qid=50854>.

¹³⁴ BBC News, "Spain's army fills gaps from abroad," 19 June 2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1397221.stm>.

while states which are less interested in diaspora affairs, like Germany and Sri Lanka, do not. Foreign recruitment falls into a broader campaign to promote a wide-reaching national identity, protect diaspora populations, and keep them engaged in state politics. Israel's foreign policy advocacy in the West is well known and the Indian government has publicly lobbied foreign governments for labor rights of Indian workers and evacuated Indian diaspora communities from natural and political disasters in more than two dozen countries around the world.¹³⁵ In both cases, a sense of national pride in the diaspora is important symbolically for domestic politics and rallies support among diaspora populations living in allied states. These campaigns often respond to a perceived sense of threat against this identity: Indian leaders worry about the increasing drain of talent from India and the security of labor migrants in the Middle East, while Israeli leaders worry about the state's long-term security in a hostile region.

Some states, however, put these symbolic ties to practical purposes in state-to-state relations. The United Kingdom, Spain, and Norway all recruit foreigners as part of a larger campaign to promote historical ties to their former territories. These ties are important for symbolic reasons, promoting the state's identity as a protector of former colonies, but also for practical reasons, promoting international cooperation and trade. Nepal, for instance, views Gurkha Forces as "the most visible bridge between Nepal and the United Kingdom."¹³⁶ Nepal's government considers the wartime sacrifices of Gurkhas serving in British forces as "leaving a

¹³⁵ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus; Giroux, 2007); Constantino Xavier, *Indias Expatriate Evacuation Operations: Bringing the Diaspora Home* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2016), <http://carnegieindia.org/2017/01/04/india-s-expatriate-evacuation-operations-bringing-diaspora-home-pub-66573>.

¹³⁶ Embassy of Nepal – United Kingdom, "Nepal-UK Relations," <http://uk.nepalembassy.gov.np/nepal-uk-relations/> (Accessed 21 March 2018).

heritage of deep and sincere friendship" between the two countries that serves as a foundation for broader relationships in education, trade, and foreign affairs.¹³⁷ This explains why the other major 19th and 20th century colonial powers (Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium) do not recruit in their former colonies – each is far more invested in European cooperation than in ties to their former empires.

On the most instrumentalist end of this group, the U.S. and Russia recruit citizens from areas they previously controlled as a symbol of ongoing military cooperation which exchanges superpower protection for client loyalty. Despite pulling out of several of its Pacific possessions, the United States retains an active naval presence in the region and currently leases a base in the Marshall Islands. These Pacific island states explicitly requested the right for their citizens to enlist in the U.S. military as part of the Compact of Free Association, the agreement which continued ties with Washington after independence. The Russian military, meanwhile, recruits Russian speakers almost exclusively near overseas bases in Central Asia and Belarus and in ethnic-Russian breakaway regions of former Soviet States: Donbass in Ukraine, Transnistria in Moldova, and Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. According to a variety of security experts, the Kremlin's aim with these programs is to legitimize its security relationships with Russian-leaning states and regions.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Embassy of Nepal – United Kingdom, "Nepal-UK Relations."

¹³⁸ Laurence Peter, "Russia to Hire More Foreign Troops," *BBC News*, January 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30682465>; Farangis Najibullah, "Russia's Foreign Legion of Doubt," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, January 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-foreigners-military-recruiting/26800177.html>; Peter, "Russia to Hire More Foreign Troops"; Nicholas Lazaredes, "Hundreds of Foreign Fighters Join Pro-Russian Rebels in Eastern Ukraine," *ABC News*, September 2015, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-09-22/foreign-fighters-join-pro-russian-rebels-in-eastern-ukraine/6792696>.

The Russian case represents a harder-edged version of this instrumentalist logic: by recruiting ethnic Russians and citizens of former Soviet states, the Russian military makes a symbolic gesture of its interest in the wider region. It helps explain the timing of these Russian foreign recruitment programs. The 2003-2004 origins of the program correspond with a growth in Russia's international ambitions and a reemerging sense of threat from the West posed by NATO and European Union expansion into Russia's backyard. Russia's foreign recruitment program was publicly passed into law – with significant fanfare from the Russian press – early in Russia's involvement in Eastern Ukraine in 2015, reinforcing the program's ability to solidify influence among ethnic Russians.¹³⁹ It also explains why Moldova and other governments have complained so loudly about “illegal” Russian recruitment in their territory.¹⁴⁰ A few dozen Moldovans are insignificant in military terms, but they are a valuable symbol of Moscow's influence and appeal among those living in Russia's near-abroad. Russian recruitment is part of a broader effort to signal Moscow's commitment to defend ethnic Russian populations to potential regional rivals. For both Russia and the United States, maintaining regional relationships is critical to maintain power projection as a tool for statecraft.

This group of programs is the least challenging practically for the states involved but the most interesting normatively. From a practical perspective, these programs neither add significant military strength nor introduce significant risk. They involve small numbers of foreigners, who are not typically recruited to fill strategic or undermanned positions; therefore, neither loyalty nor self-sufficiency is a substantial issue. However, rather than skirting norms

¹³⁹ Peter, “Russia to Hire More Foreign Troops.”

¹⁴⁰ Damien Sharkov, “Moldova Asks Russia's Army to Stop Recruiting Its Citizens,” *Newsweek*, June 2016, <http://www.newsweek.com/moldova-asks-russia-separatist-army-stop-recruiting-citizens-473155>.

around citizen soldiers, these programs specifically challenge and make use of those norms. In one sense, these states reject citizen soldier norms by explicitly and publicly recruiting non-citizens, suggesting that national ties are not the sole basis for military relationships. In another sense, however, they lean on the power of the citizen soldier norm by recruiting only within a narrowly-defined, presumably loyal and unified community. If Britain's military allowed any and all foreigners to join, as does France's Foreign Legion, the recruitment would say little about their trust and commitment to the Commonwealth. By recruiting foreigners almost entirely from Commonwealth states, Britain identifies these former imperial bonds as an important element of their military and foreign policy priorities, leaning on the same normative assumptions about identity and military loyalty. As such, these programs often focus their training and efforts on political education, turning a "school of the nation" into a "school of the ethnicity" or "school of the commonwealth." This influence flows the other direction, too, empowering individuals often from much smaller and weaker states to have a voice in and express support for the militaries of powers like the U.S. and Russia.

The most prominent case in this set, Israel's recruitment in the Jewish diaspora, is emblematic of a number of commonalities in this category. The "lone soldier" programs are militarily insignificant in comparison with the conscripted majority of the IDF, yet the program takes pains to train and socialize foreign recruits for symbolic reasons.¹⁴¹ Jewish people are free to serve either as a prelude to citizenship (through the Garin Tzabar program) or as a short-term volunteer (the Mahal programs). Though careful not to actively advertise to foreigners, the IDF goes out of its way to support them. The IDF pays lone soldiers higher wages, employs

¹⁴¹ The lone soldier program reportedly also includes some Israeli-born soldiers, such as former orphans, who lack familial support when conscripted.

numerous specialists to assist non-Hebrew-speakers, and partners with non-governmental organizations that help foreigners navigate the IDF recruitment bureaucracy.¹⁴² The IDF once recruited members of the diaspora as a matter of immediate survival during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, but today it recruits only small numbers of non-expert foreigners – only about 5,000 of the nearly 200,000 soldiers in the IDF are non-Israelis.¹⁴³

Instead, foreign recruitment appears to be intended primarily as a way of kindling Jewish identity and building awareness of Israeli affairs, both among the Jewish diaspora and among Israelis. One NGO collaborating with the IDF, Garin Mahal, lists its twin missions as “to educate and support lone soldiers,” and “to promote Israel education and advocacy.”¹⁴⁴ In this sense, the program fits into a much larger relationship between Israel and the Jewish diaspora: Israel allows citizenship for any Jewish person who desires it, encourages all Jewish people to visit the Holy Land, and lobbies the diaspora heavily to support Israel’s political causes. Another recruitment website (Mahal Volunteers) even explicitly links non-Jewish “friends of Israel,” ineligible to join the IDF, to pro-Israel public relations campaigns in their home countries. In other words, the programs exist both as kindling symbolic identity and in promoting Israeli soft power, particularly in states with large Jewish populations.

In addition, the service of foreign recruits may have positive effects on the commitment and performance of domestically-recruited soldiers. Many argue that lone soldiers are in fact more driven and loyal to the IDF than domestic soldiers, improving the *esprit de corps* of the

¹⁴² Alona Ferber, “Israeli Army Cites Rise in Number of Overseas Volunteers Joining Its Ranks,” *Haaretz*, April 2015, <http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.652927>.

¹⁴³ The Lone Soldier Center, “*Combat Units*”, n.d., <https://lonesoldiercenter.com/idf-units-2/>.

¹⁴⁴ “Mahal-IDF-Volunteers,” n.d., <http://www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org/about/non-Jewish-volunteer.htm>.

army.¹⁴⁵ As a result, so long as foreign-born soldiers are willing to become Israeli (dual) citizens, the IDF treats them the same as Israeli-born soldiers. Lone soldiers can serve in any unit and have no restrictions on rank.¹⁴⁶ More than that, these soldiers represent to many a symbol of the bond between Israel and the Jewish people. In recent years, the IDF has prominently honored Michael Levin, an American-born IDF soldier killed in action in the Second Lebanon War, as a symbol of military service and the IDF. A documentary about his life plays every Memorial Day on Israeli television and his grave has become a popular site for diaspora and domestic soldiers alike.¹⁴⁷ These stories suggest that this type of highly selective identity-based recruitment may not pose many of the loyalty risks that foreign recruitment often does and intentionally leverages citizen-soldier norms to deepen Israel's bonds with the global Jewish population.

Conclusion

Despite the existence of a strong international norm that states build militaries comprised of nationals rather than foreigners, dozens of states continue to bolster their military ranks with foreign personnel. Although this practice is not proscribed by international law, it falls into a normative gray zone. The recruitment of non-citizens runs counter to the spirit and intent of anti-mercenary agreements, which seek to prevent individuals with no genuine connection to a state from serving in that state's armed forces purely for financial gain. States persist in this practice

¹⁴⁵ Ed Wittenberg, "IDF Officer: IDF Is the Most Loyal Army in the World," *Cleveland Jewish News*, October 2014, https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/news/local/idf-officer-idf-is-the-most-loyal-army-in-the/article_f23b239c-5ec3-11e4-8c2d-772c9b349c8b.html.

¹⁴⁶ The Lone Soldier Center, "Combat Units."

¹⁴⁷ Judah Ari Gross, "Why the Life and Death of Lone Soldier Michael Levin Still Resonates, a Decade After the War," *Times of Israel*, August 2016, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/why-the-life-and-death-of-lone-soldier-michael-levin-still-resonates-a-decade-after-the-war/>.

because they face no sanctions for doing so and because foreign recruitment allow them to meet a variety of security and diplomatic challenges. Specifically, we suggest that states turn to foreign recruitment to import expertise that allows the military to rapidly acquire specialized capabilities; import labor to fill military ranks when the domestic population is insufficiently large, willing, or loyal to meet military requirements; and bolster bonds with diaspora and colonial networks in an effort to increase state influence.

The ability to recruit foreigners can have significant implications for a state's security and military operations. First, foreign recruitment can sometimes play a critical role in regime survival. Foreign-recruited personnel – like those in Bahrain – can be deployed to crack down on restive populations or to serve in a coup proofing role. Second, foreigners can represent a capital-intensive means of reducing the political risks associated with modern conflict. A politically expendable force made up primarily of foreigners rather than citizen soldiers – like the French Foreign Legion or Colombian special operators in the UAE military – allows states to deploy forces on dangerous or politically unpopular missions without worrying about the political constraints that would otherwise be imposed by casualty-averse populations. In effect, foreign recruitment lowers the domestic political barrier to deploying forces. Third, recruiting foreign troops allows a state to quickly build up specialized military capabilities. By importing personnel already trained in highly technical fields, states like Australia and the United Arab Emirates, can develop specialized capabilities far faster than training forces indigenously. These capabilities potentially boost a state's military power by enabling it to rapidly generate the types of forces needed to carry out modern military operations. As states increasingly acquire high-tech systems like remotely piloted aircraft and submarines, dependence on foreign expertise may grow. Fourth, foreign recruitment allows a state to maintain or increase its influence in regions of

historical or cultural importance. By recruiting members of diaspora populations or in former colonies, states may demonstrate their commitment to those groups. This commitment can signal a state's willingness to defend co-ethnics or strengthen cultural ties between the state and an overseas diaspora, influencing the politics of other states.

In all these cases, states navigate through a normative gray space to ensure their survival, security, and global influence. In some cases these states do their best to ignore and limit the normative implications. They lean on a tradition of using foreign soldiers or seconding foreign military advisors and put in place training and screening programs to inculcate loyalty and limit cross-border issues. In other cases states more directly confront and leverage the normative weight that military recruitment conveys to send a message about their foreign policy commitments and transnational identities. More broadly, our findings demonstrate that states deviate from strong norms both for material and ideational reasons. Because of the lack of a strict legal prohibition on a normatively gray practice, states either skirt or reinterpret these norms to serve their military and foreign policy goals, generally without any significant risks.

This paper represents a first step in understanding both the drivers and effects of foreign recruitment by state militaries and sheds light on the conditions under which states deviate from widely held international norms. Future work might consider how states navigate through other normative gray spaces, where behavior is not legally proscribed but runs against dominant international norms. Are states willing to flout norms in other security-related areas so long as their actions do not violate international law? How do these states justify their deviations from strong norms? Other work might also further explore the practice of foreign recruitment. The typology we introduce is a helpful tool for classifying recruitment programs that sets the stage for empirical testing of the effects of foreign recruitment. Future research might further examine

personnel loyalty among foreign recruits, study how service in a foreign military affects an individual's ethnic or cultural identity, or further investigate how the integration of foreign recruits affects military decision-making and effectiveness.

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