

# An analysis of the sources of resilience of Panamanian military rule (1968-1989) ̈

Jia Shihui

**Abstract:** Military interference in politics was a common political phenomenon in developing countries during the Cold War. Among the military regimes established in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, the case of Panama has certain particularities. The country's military rule lasted for a long time, and it is unable to independently realize democratic transformation driven by domestic forces, showing strong regime resilience. As for the reason for the resilience of Panamanian military rule, existing research mostly explains it from the perspective of authoritarian resilience and the governing ability, that is, emphasizing the authoritarian rulers. The ability to integrate society. However, most of these studies have ignored the essential characteristics of Panamanian military rule's lack of integration ability and its inability to establish a strong social foundation for its own regime. For this reason, this article re-examines the strategies and means of Panamanian military leaders to maintain power. ̈ It is believed that the lack of integration capabilities prompted military leaders to continue to use differentiation strategies instead of integration strategies in different periods of political intervention. This article believes that the resilience of Panamanian military rule largely stems from the ability of military leaders to continuously divide society, resulting in long-term instability of domestic social forces. It is difficult to form a joint force to overthrow the existing regime. During the period when the military directly intervened in politics, the military leaders' strategy of dividing society was mainly to establish patronage relationships with some people in multiple social groups, so that the patronized people would not resent the military being in power, and would even be willing to come forward. Maintaining military rule. During the period when soldiers indirectly intervened in politics, military leaders used three different methods: system design, transfer of patronage functions, and public opinion propaganda to further hinder the gathering of forces opposing military rule and create conditions for the continuation of the regime.

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In Western political system theory, authoritarian regimes represented by one-party systems, military regimes and personal dictatorships. Usually due to its weak legitimacy, over-reliance on coercion, over-concentration of decision-making power, and low level of institutionalization, it is considered to be inherently fragile and difficult to maintain for a long time, and its final result will be the development of a more superior liberal democracy. This democratization assumption has led to a long-term lack of attention in the academic community to the issue of how authoritarian regimes are maintained. However, after the so-called "end of history", many scholars discovered that some authoritarian regimes still have tenacious vitality, thus proposing the "The concept of "resilient authoritarianism"

In fact, before the "third wave" of democratization occurred, some authoritarian countries that established military rule had already shown strong resilience. For example, in Latin America, a wave of military rule emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Among the military rule established in Latin America during the same period, Panama's military rule was one of the longest lasting. From 1968 Colonel Boris Martínez, the general of the Panamanian National Guard, launched a coup and established military rule until 1989.

It lasted for 21 years, and only Brazil reached this record during the same period.

In addition, compared with other Latin American countries, Panama's military rule has a stronger ability to deal with various threats. Under normal circumstances, economic crises and legitimacy crises are the main reason that led to the transformation of military rule. However, during the period when Panamanian military took power, although it faced the pressure of domestic popular protests and the threat of coup within the military, the military regime did not return power to the people until the United States launched an armed invasion to overthrow the military rule. This was the only case among military rule established in a Latin American country during the same period that relied on external intervention rather than its own domestic strength to achieve democratic transition.

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[US] Written by Francis Fukuyama, originally translated by Huang Shengqiang and Xu Ming: "The End of History and the Last Man", Beijing: Chinese Society Science Press, 2003

Andrew J Nathan's "China's Changing of the Guard: Authoritarian Resiliency" in *Journal of Democracy* Vol 14 No 1 2003 pp 6 - 17 The so-called "military rule" is a regime in which the military replaces

civilians in ruling and managing the country and society. form. It "can either be led by a military strongman who is not constrained by other officers, or it can be ruled by a group of senior officers who have the ability to limit the dictator's discretion." In other words, military rule includes military regime (military regime) and individuals. Dictatorship (personal dictatorship) are two common authoritarian regimes. Because the regimes established by some military leaders in Latin America after coups are sometimes difficult to define as a single military regime or personal dictatorship, for example, Panama in 1968, Chile's military establishment in 1973 At first, military rule was jointly governed by multiple military officers, and then gradually evolved into a personal dictatorship. Therefore, this article uses "military rule" to generally refer to different types of military governance forms in Latin America. See Barbara Geddes' "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?" in *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol 2 1999 pp 123-125 Samuel E Finer's "The Man on Horseback: The Role of the "Military Rule" in *Annual Review of Political Science* 2002 p 4 Barbara Geddes et al *Political Science* Vol 17 No 1 2014 pp 147 - 162 Chen Mingming: "All Bullets Have a Destination: Research on Military Politics in Developing Countries" Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing House, 2003, Page 3

Why is Panamanian military rule so resilient? Combining existing research results, this article attempts to explore the reasons for the long-term continuation of Panamanian military rule based on the differentiation strategies and means used by military leaders to maintain power.

### A literature review and analysis framework

The so-called "resilience" of a regime usually refers to the comprehensive performance of the regime in the two dimensions of duration and stability. It is a reflection of the vitality of the regime. An authoritarian regime that can overcome numerous crises and survive for a long time has regime resilience. Often stronger. Based on the above understanding, this article defines the resilience of military rule as "the ability of military rule to respond to and overcome various crises, thereby enabling the continuation of the regime." This is also an important cornerstone for understanding the resilience of Panama's military rule.

#### (1) Existing explanations of the resilience of Panamanian military rule. Military

rule is one of the types of authoritarian regimes. The exploration of its resilience is rooted in the theory of authoritarian resilience.

#### Two analytical perspectives

First, the perspective of governing ability. It mainly examines the relationship between the ability of authoritarian rulers to expand their regime base and limit opposition forces and regime resilience. Generally speaking, the two major challenges facing authoritarian regimes are the internal contradictions of the ruling elite and the External pressure from society. The reason why an authoritarian regime can be maintained is because "the government is politically stronger than the opposition." For this reason, common means for authoritarian rulers to maintain their power include: gaining legitimacy through economic performance and elections. Use coercive force to suppress opposition, and use institutional tools such as political parties, parliaments, and bureaucratic groups to absorb elites in key areas of society. Strong legitimacy, effective suppression, and strong absorptive capabilities constitute the triangular stable structure of authoritarian regimes.

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[US] Written by Samuel Huntington, translated by Liu Junning: «The Third Wave: The Wave of Democracy in the Late 20th Century», Shanghai: Shanghai Third Lian Bookstore, 1998, page 172.

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(2) The analytical framework of this

article starts from the time when the military came to power in 1968 to the end of military rule in 1989. The development process of Panamanian military rule can be roughly divided into two stages. (1) The period of direct military intervention in government (1968-1978), specific performance For the military to directly replace civilians in governing the country, or for the military to arrange for civilians to serve as the head of state symbolically, but the actual power is still in the hands of the head of the government, that is, the military leader. (2) The period of indirect military intervention in politics (1978-1989), specific performance The country was governed by civilians in name only, with a civilian president serving as the head of government. However, the military during this period still had the ability to pressure civilians through threats, forcing them to accept their own views, or directly replace them with more compliant civilians when necessary.

In fact, at different stages of military rule, there have been some attempts to force the military to step down in Panama. These include challenges from elites within the ruling group (such as military coups and the dismissal of military leaders by civilian presidents), as well as from outside. There are social threats (such as large-scale social protests and the victory of the opposition alliance in the election), but they have failed to change the nature of military rule. The fundamental reason is that it is difficult for Panamanian domestic society to form a joint force on the issue of overthrowing military rule, thus creating a foundation for the military regime. The conditions have been created for the continuation of this attitude. As for why this difference in attitudes arises, the interest differences mentioned in the existing literature are certainly an important factor. However, compared with the objectively existing interest differences, the social differentiation caused by the artificial intervention of military leaders It deserves more attention. At the beginning of the establishment of military rule, except for some political elites and military members, most of the forces in Panamanian society had a negative attitude towards military rule. Protests demanding that the military return power to the people occurred frequently. Until Tori After Hoss came to power, he formed a community of interests with some social forces. This led to obvious differences in the attitude of Panamanian society towards military rule. During the period when the military indirectly intervened in politics, in addition to the patronage relationship, the reasons for the differentiation of Panamanian social forces also included the political system and Public opinion propaganda, and these factors also have traces of human intervention by military leaders. Therefore, this article believes that the reason why Panamanian military rule has strong resilience is largely due to the fact that military leaders continue to divide society through various channels, resulting in long-term domestic disintegration in Panama. It is difficult to form a joint force to overthrow m

2. The differentiation strategy during the period when Panamanian soldiers directly intervened in politics

After the 1968 coup, there were different opinions among the top brass of the Panamanian National Guard as to what type of regime should be established. Since Martinez had the highest prestige in the military at that time, the rest of the Guard generals

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The leader temporarily followed his advice and agreed to establish a provisional military government and let the military directly govern. However, Martinez was not good at maintaining military rule. His tough attitude towards the oligarchic elite soon led to the collective resignation of the civilian cabinet. Some students and workers demanded The military returned power to the people and held protests. 1 Against the background of growing opposition to military rule, in February 1969, Torrijos established his leadership of the military and government through a small coup. When Hoss came to power, he realized that the continuation of military rule must rely on the support of social forces. To this end, he used a series of asylum methods to convert some oligarchic elites, middle- and lower-class forces in society, and members of the National Guard into supporters of military rule. ŷ Realized the differentiation of social forces.

(1) Patronage relationship with some oligarchic elites

During the period of military direct intervention, the elite group willing to cooperate with the Torrijos regime mainly consisted of two parts. One part was the political elite who did not want Arias to be in power in the 1968 election. They supported the military coup. 2 After the small coup in 1969, this part of the oligarchic elite came together with Torrijos. In addition, some elites from the domestic construction and transportation industries in Panama also publicly expressed their need for social order and stability. Express support for military rule and oppose students, workers and other social groups holding general strikes demanding the resignation of military personnel. ŷ

There are two main operating models of the patronage relationship between the military and elites. One model is that military leaders open up an expression of interests for the oligarchic elites in the government. channels, and exchanged specific policies for the support of this group. For example, Torrijos enabled a group of oligarchic elites in the business field to serve as ministers of planning, finance, commerce and industry in the cabinet, and then introduced policies that were beneficial to this group. Group development policies. ŷ Another model is to establish personal connections between some oligarchic elites and military leaders to directly exchange benefits. For example, during the period when Martinez was in power, the Duque family expressed its hope to obtain the printing of the national lot

ŷ 这篇文章主要探讨了托里霍斯政权与寡头精英之间的庇护关系。文章指出，托里霍斯在1969年通过政变上台后，为了维持军事统治，采取了一系列手段将寡头精英、中下层社会力量以及国民警卫队成员转变为军事统治的支持者。这反映了社会力量的分化。

ŷ 在军事直接干预期间，愿意与托里霍斯政权合作的精英群体主要由两部分组成。一部分是政治精英，他们不希望阿里亚斯在1968年大选中获胜，因此支持了军事政变。另一部分是在1969年小政变后与托里霍斯走在一起的寡头精英。此外，巴拿马国内建筑和运输业的一些精英也公开表达了他们对社会秩序和稳定的需求，并公开支持军事统治，同时反对学生、工人和其他社会力量举行总罢工要求军事人员辞职。

ŷ 存在两种主要的庇护关系运作模式。一种是军事领导人向寡头精英提供在政府中表达利益的机会，并交换具体的政策以换取该群体的支持。例如，托里霍斯任命商业界的一些寡头精英担任内阁中的计划、财政、商业和工业部长，随后引入了对该群体有利的政策。另一种模式是建立一些寡头精英与军事领导人之间的个人联系，以便直接交换利益。

ŷ 例如，在马丁内斯掌权期间，杜克家族表达了其希望获得国家彩票印刷权的愿望。托里霍斯政权通过建立个人联系，使寡头精英能够在政府中获得利益，并借此换取他们的支持。托里霍斯政权通过任命寡头精英担任内阁部长，并引入有利于他们的政策，来换取他们的支持。托里霍斯政权还通过建立个人联系，使寡头精英能够在政府中获得利益，并借此换取他们的支持。

However, the proposal was rejected by Martínez. After Torrijos came to power, not only did the lottery printing rights fall into the hands of the Duke family, but the military leaders also agreed to release members of the Duke family who had been

imprisoned by the National Guard. Torrijos's asylum to some elites also gained their political support. In December 1969, a group of oligarchic elites opposed to Torrijos's rule instigated senior generals in the National Guard to stage a coup in an attempt to force Torrijos into exile. Fernando Eleta, a business elite who supported Torrijos, connected the military leader to the plane to return home through personal relationships, which provided conditions for Torrijos's final counter-coup to be successful. It can be seen that the role of patronage relationships Next, the attitude towards military rule within the Panamanian elite group further became divided, which resulted in the elite group being unable to form a joint force to demand that the military return power to the people.

(2) The patronage relationship with the middle- and lower-class forces in society. When the Panamanian military established the regime in 1968, the international community was in the context of the Cold War. Ideological opposition led to differences in the attitudes of various social groups in Panama towards military rule. Among them The Panamanian People's Party, which has a communist ideology, took the initiative to express its willingness to support the interim military government, but also proposed a series of cooperation conditions. After Torrijos came to power, he cooperated with the People's Party. The fundamental reason was that the People's Party was among the workers and students at that time. The three major groups of farmers and farmers all have their own social base. Military leaders hope to use the help of the People's Party to transform some of the middle and lower-class forces in society into supporters of military rule.

First of all, in order to win the favor of the workers, Torrijos appointed Popular Party leader Rómulo Escobar Bethancourt as Minister of Labor and Welfare, and on 2 Labor welfare mandated in the early 1970s The Ministry of Labor revised Panama's labor law, which to a certain extent improved the long-term disadvantaged position of the workers. At the same time, Torrijos supported the upgrade of the "Federation of Workers' Unions of Panama" (FSTP) led by the People's Party to the "National Workers' Union of Panama" Central Trade Unions (CNTP). By the 1980s, the trade union alliance had grown to include 7 federations, 36 unions,

It is clear that the military government's policy of patronage towards the middle and lower classes was a key factor in its resilience. The military leaders sought to build a broad base of support by co-opting various social groups, including the People's Party and labor unions. This strategy allowed them to maintain power despite opposition from the elite and the international community.

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(Florencio Flores) and others refused to accept the results of the coup. In addition, Torrijos trained a group of officers when he was the commander of the Chiriqui Military District. With the help of these people, Torrijos was able to return to the country and finally succeeded in realizing the counterattack. coup ỹ

After the 1969 coup, in addition to imprisoning and exiled the military generals who participated in the coup, Torrijos strengthened the protection of his cronies in the military, allowing the factions that supported him to gain a dominant position in the guard. This protection It mainly includes three aspects. (1) Career promotion. After the success of the counter-coup, the heads of the five core departments of the National Guard were all served by close associates of the military leaders. Career promotion brings two kinds of power to the military: one is political power. In the military, During the reign of the Panamanian National Guard, the generals of the Panama National Guard had greater powers than local chiefs. The second was economic power, that is, they were given the power to govern the financial institutions of the National Guard and extract more dividends from them. (2) Increase income. After the military leaders took power, ỹ The National Guard has profited heavily from the smuggling trade and visa business by controlling the Colon Free Trade Zone and the Panama Immigration Administration. (3) Family benefits. Military leaders provide various preferential treatment to relatives and friends of Guard members, including issuing license plates. , provide scholarships, and allow access to clubs opened by the government. More importantly, the government can provide them with jobs. Between 1965 and 1975, the number of people in the Panamanian bureaucracy increased from 360,000 to 870,000, with most of them Most of them were "recommended" by Torrijos'

cronies in the National Guard. ỹ Since only about 1/4 of the Panamanian National Guard's truly well-trained soldiers are, and most of them are placed under the jurisdiction of Torrijos' cronies, they are subject to The patronage of military leaders. When oligarchic elites who oppose military rule hope to join forces with members of the Guard to launch a coup again, it is often difficult to find strong allies. At most, they can obtain the support of

some middle- and lower-class soldiers. (4)

Direct effects of patronage networks on military personnel During the period of direct intervention, leaders provided material benefits, preferential policies, social welfare, status and other favors, which enabled some of Panama's domestic elites, middle and lower social forces, and members of the National Guard to obtain equal or more benefits than during the period of civilian rule. benefits and form a community of interests with military leaders. Therefore, the protected groups do not resent the military taking power, which creates favorable conditions for the continuation of military rule.

In fact, the establishment of asylum channels has largely reduced the voices in society calling for the overthrow of military rule. During the period before the political liberalization reforms from 1971 to 1978, the Panamanian Communist Party

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Dissidents and opponents of the regime have a potential incentive to cooperate to overthrow military leaders.

After the political reform in 1978, military leaders expressed their willingness to return to the military camp and return administrative power to the civilian president. This made the civilian government a buffer barrier between military rule and society. On the one hand, the military no longer had to worry about political performance; The reason is to blame all economic and social problems on the civilian government. Even if public opinion demands that the president step down, the military has the ability to force the new government to obey its wishes through the legislative bodies it controls or through direct pressure, thereby maintaining the stability of the regime. On the other hand, the government After being separated from the political system, dissatisfaction with the government's ability to govern and dissatisfaction with military rule in society can no longer be transformed through concerted actions. At this time, the diversity of interests and voices of social members objectively reduces the possibility of overthrowing military

rule. (2) Transferring part of the patronage function to elite groups and establishing patronage relationships with different groups in society has always been one of the core elements of the differentiation strategy of Panamanian military leaders. However, unlike the patronage model dominated by military leaders during the period of direct intervention in politics, the 1978 political After the reform, military leaders intentionally transferred part of their patronage functions to elite groups supported by military personnel. While reducing their own patronage burdens, they also directed some of the social dissatisfaction to elite groups to avoid the accumulation of negative emotions at the national level. The specifics of the transfer of patronage functions It manifests itself in two aspects.

First, the civilian president assumes the role of protecting some elites. From 1978 to 1989, most of the presidential candidates recommended by Panamanian military personnel were business elites or people friendly to elite groups. In this way, the president can appoint cabinet members, Forming advisory groups and promulgating relevant policies can provide shelter for some elite supporters and prevent them from joining protests organized by opposition forces. For example, after Royo became president, he immediately established a group of elites from the banking, insurance and business industries. The National Economic Advisory Council was formed and given the agency the ability to influence the government's economic policies. Arditio Barletta, the presidential candidate supported by the military in 1984, was influenced by domestic industry, banking and export trade during his campaign. With the support of industry elites, after he was elected president, he ordered the implementation of a series of economic austerity policies, which caused dissatisfaction in the domestic society. However, most of the groups participating in the strike protests were the urban middle class, and the business elite did not provide support. y

Second, members of the Legislative Assembly should assume the role of protecting some local voters. After Noriega became the commander of the National Guard in 1983, he agreed to restore and increase the "constituency allowance" for members of the Legislative Assembly, and then allocate part of the role of shielding to elected members. Members. The so-called "constituency allowance" refers to funds allocated by the legislative body to members for local project construction. However, most of this money is converted into members giving back to their supporters.

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and tools to expand the asylum network. Between 1985 and 1987, the total amount of subsidies received by members of the Panama Legislative Assembly reached 17.4 billion U.S. dollars. Among them, the subsidies received by members of the ruling party coalition were usually twice or more than those of members of the opposition party. When members replaced the government After becoming the direct patron of some local voters, many people's livelihood issues were transformed into local issues instead of evolving into a national social movement. Therefore, compared with the previous period when the military directly intervened in politics, from 1984 to 1989, Panama had fewer A nationwide strike by industrial workers occurred over wages and benefits.

When part of the patronage function was transferred to elite groups, military leaders were able to spend more energy on strengthening the patronage network in the military. During the Noriega administration, the economic and political power of military members was once again enhanced. On the one hand, the profit of the military The channels are more diversified. On the other hand, more confidants of military leaders are reused. However, superiority in status and material interests alone is not enough to guarantee the absolute loyalty of military members to military leaders. For this reason, Noley In addition, he followed the example of Alfredo Stroessner, the dictator of Paraguay, and deliberately involved his cronies in illegal activities, cultivating their loyalty to military leaders through criminal behavior. At the end of the indirect intervention, military leaders strengthened their ties with part of the army . The bond of interests between members has even reached the point of mutual prosperity and common loss: only if military leaders continue to be in power can military members be protected from criminal liability. Therefore, many military generals are unwilling to cooperate with opposition forces to overthrow military rule.

(3) During the period of indirectly intervening in politics by shaping hostile relations through public opinion propaganda, another major challenge faced by Panamanian military leaders was the possibility of the opposition winning power through universal suffrage. After the party ban was lifted in 1978, former President Arias returned to the country and founded the "real The Panamanist Party" (PPA), and announced that he will participate in the presidential election again. In the campaign platform, he promised to limit the power of the Panamanian military and make it completely subordinate to the civilian government. Arias' rich political experience made him an instant leader in Panama. The best hope for democratic transition. In this regard, military leaders used intensified public opinion propaganda to create hostility in Panamanian society, thereby weakening the political force opposed to military rule. On the eve of the 1984 elections, military-controlled print media published an article condemning Arias as a "Nazi" A TV station controlled by an elite pro-military family broadcast witnesses' accusations against Arias, saying that he had committed a crime in 1941

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A large number of Jews in Panama were massacred in 2001. This move by the military leaders was intended to prevent the Jewish elite families and the Panamanian Republican Party (PR) led by them from joining the Arias camp. In the end, the Republican Party chose to join the ruling party supported by the military leaders in the 1984 election. Alliance

Before the 1989 elections, in addition to domestic opposition forces, Panamanian military leaders also faced pressure from the United States. In February 1988, a grand jury in the Miami Federal Court indicted Noriega, commander of the Panamanian Defense Forces, for participating in international smuggling and drug trafficking activities. As a result, a large amount of drugs entered the United States. Since then, the U.S. government's attitude towards Noriega has changed from its original acquiescence and connivance to open opposition, and it hopes that the domestic opposition forces in Panama will oust Noriega. Noriega approved the establishment of The militia force "Batallones de la Dignidad" (Batallones de la Dignidad) was used to deter the United States and pro-American forces in Panama. In the election on May 7, even though the opposition alliance was far ahead in actual votes. However, Duque, the presidential candidate of the ruling party alliance, announced He won the election. In the following days, the opposition alliance organized a large-scale demonstration, which was violently attacked by the Dignity Camp, including the opposition alliance presidential candidate Guillermo Endara and the first vice president. Many demonstration leaders, including candidate Guillermo Ford, were injured and hospitalized. The absence of core elites greatly weakened the mobilization ability of the opposition alliance. As a result, the opposition began to seek help from international forces and to its competitors and Military leaders sent a signal for peace negotiations, but the attack on military rule ultimately ended in failure.

#### Four reasons why Panamanian military rule adopted a strategy of differentiation

By sorting out the relationship between military leaders and different social groups during the military rule of Panama, as well as the various threats faced by the regime and their consequences, it can be found that military leaders can continue to divide social forces, resulting in the inability to generate synergy in Panama to overthrow the existing regime. This enhances the resilience of military rule. The fundamental reason why military leaders adopt differentiation strategies as the main way to improve the resilience of the regime lies in the internal divisions of social groups, the limitations of the patronage network between the military and society, and the dominance of the ruling Democratic Revolutionary Party. The influence of the Panamanian military has weakened. These three factors have led to the lack of integration ability of Panamanian military rule.

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It is not enough to allow the forces supporting the regime to take a dominant position in society.

(1) Internal divisions within social groups prevented military rule from gaining widespread support. When military rule was established in 1968, Panamanian military leaders faced domestic social divisions. This division mainly stemmed from ideological differences in the context of the Cold War, and led to It is often difficult to cooperate within the same group. For example, among workers, the Panamanian Workers' Union Federation is controlled and led by the communist party People's Party. Its competitors are the Workers' Federation of the Republic of Panama and the "Isthmian Workers' Central" supported by the United States and the International Labor Organization. (CIT) is affiliated to the Latin American Workers Center of the World Federation of Labor and has a Catholic flavor. In addition, banana plantation workers formed the Chiriqui Land Company Workers Union (SITRACHILCO), but it is internally divided into the Port of Amueyes ( There are two different union organizations: Puerto Armuelles) and Bocas del Toro (Bocas del Toro). After coming to power, Torrijos planned to follow the example of Chile and establish a union that would The "Confederation of Workers" (CUT), which unites most workers in the country However, the proposal was strongly opposed by the Federation of Workers of the Republic of Panama and the Central Isthmian Workers. Among the banana plantation workers, only the Puerto Amuayes Workers Union supported Torrijos. In view of the inability of the union forces to integrate, Torrijos Hoss then gave up the plan of a workers' federation and instead made the Panamanian Workers' Union, led by the Popular Party, a key target of protection among workers. In 1973, the Puerto Amuayes Workers' Union became an affiliate of the Panamanian Workers' Union. Trade Union

At the same time, it was difficult to form a united front within student groups, elite groups, and the National Guard due to ideological differences. It can be seen that in the early days of Panamanian military rule, although military leaders intentionally resorted to patronage relationships to integrate social forces, internal social groups Differences have affected their attitudes towards military rule. Therefore, military rule can only be recognized by some social groups, and cannot make the forces that support them overwhelming the opposition forces.

(2) The patronage network between military leaders and social groups has limitations. During the period when soldiers directly intervened in politics, Torrijos weakened the opposition through a series of patronage mechanisms. The threat of power to the regime, but the shielding ability of military leaders also shows certain limitations.

First of all, it is difficult for military leaders to properly handle the structural contradictions between the protected groups. Torrijos's patrons include business owners represented by oligarchic elites in the business field, as well as workers who are employed by these business owners. On labor issues, military leaders' policies favoring either party may trigger protests and marches by the other party. Frequent frictions between soldiers and protected groups are more likely to consume the trust of the protected groups in the military, thereby weakening military rule. Legality

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Secondly, the cost of direct asylum is high, and the sustainability of the patronage relationship is worrying. During the period when the military directly intervened in politics, in order to avoid the emergence of social movements that subvert military rule in the country, Torrijos usually adopted the method of strengthening patronage to deal with dissatisfaction in society. Over time, the sheltered groups gradually learned to use protests as a means of pressure, and then demanded more benefits from military leaders. For example, the Torrijos government initially hoped to solve the problem by establishing rural cooperatives, opening state-owned enterprises, and expanding the public sector. However, after providing jobs, they had to face strikes and demonstrations held by government employees demanding higher wages and labor benefits. At the same time, the heavy foreign debt burden limited the ability of military personnel to further expand their asylum network. In addition, in 1977 After the signing of the new Panama Canal Treaty in 2016, Panamanian military leaders faced pressure from the United States for political liberalization, which restricted the asylum system under military rule. However, the lifting of the party ban and allowing exiles to return to the country have also increased Panamanian domestic security. As the forces opposing military rule grow, the existing patronage capabilities of military leaders are obviously not enough to turn most of them into supporters of the regime. It is undoubtedly difficult to maintain the stability of military rule simply by establishing a patronage network.

To sum up, by the late 1970s, affected by factors such as changes in the domestic political landscape, economic development, and conflicts between different social groups, the limitations of military leaders simply relying on establishing patronage relationships to divide society became increasingly prominent, and the means of differentiation were maintained. The effectiveness of regime resilience is weakened. Military leaders have to seek other means of differentiation to reduce the burden of patronage while avoiding the concentration of opposition forces at the national level.

(3) The influence of the Democratic Revolutionary Party controlled by the military regime is challenged. Before the military coup in 1968, Panamanian politics was controlled by elite families for most of the time. Party politics was mainly manifested in the competition for interests between different elite families, but the social foundation of the political party After the 1968 coup, the military banned all political parties, further weakening the role of political parties in society. Although military leaders created some intermediary organizations that could connect the government and society during their direct intervention in politics, such as the National Workers' Council (Consejo), National Federation of Rural Cooperatives (CONAC), Directorate General of Community Development (DIGEDEC OM), etc., but these organizations generally have more symbolic significance than substantive significance.

For the worker group, the original intention of establishing the National Workers' Committee is to bring representatives of various trade union federations together to negotiate labor and management issues. However, due to ideological differences within the worker group, it is difficult to cooperate within the National Workers' Committee. Therefore, in most cases, labor and management The way the problem was dealt with was that the leaders of the various unions communicated directly with the military leaders, rather than the leadership of the National Workers Council negotiating with the government. In terms of protecting farmers, Torrijos often used weekends to visit rural areas and negotiate with farmers.



Talk or even directly pay cash to build a trusting relationship. Farmers will also bypass the National Federation of Rural Cooperatives and tell Torrijos their demands directly. In this way, the ability of the National Federation of Rural Cooperatives to bargain with the government as a farmer organization will be affected. Weakened. In addition, the main function of the General Administration of Community Development established in 1969 is to supervise and guide national development projects and strengthen communication between the government and local governments. However, since the agency is divided into five levels, the local appeals at all levels Reporting not only takes a long time, but also may not be resolved at the highest-level national district congress. In contrast, it is more convenient to convey it to military leaders through the heads of local military regions. Therefore, during the period when military personnel are directly involved in politics, The direct contact between military leaders and the people has hindered the development of Panamanian intermediary organizations themselves to a certain extent.

After the party ban was lifted in 1978, a large number of political parties suddenly emerged in Panama because the number of members required to register a political party was not high. However, the large number of political parties also means that there are many differences of interest between them. In addition, the development of intermediary organizations has long been subject to restrictions. Inhibition, most of the newly established political parties lack social foundation. In contrast, the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) promoted by military leaders and the True Panamanist Party founded by opposition leader Arias have more advantages. Most of the supporters of the former are They had directly or indirectly benefited from Torrijos, so they had a certain sense of gratitude to the military leader. The latter's supporters placed their hopes on Arias's ability to bring about political changes in Panama. In other words, whether it was a democratic revolution Whether the party is a true Panamanist party, its social foundation mainly comes from the people's personal identification with the party leaders, rather than the identification with the ideology of the party itself.

Torrijos hoped to use this cult of personality to help him gain political legitimacy in the 1984 presidential election. However, he died in a plane crash before the election. As a result, the key identity that united the supporters of the Democratic Revolutionary Party no longer existed. The cohesion of the party declined as a result. The Popular Party, which had long cooperated with Torrijos, also refused to unite with the ruling party before the 1984 elections due to ideological differences, and nominated its own presidential candidate to compete for power. The society ruled by the military The foundation was further weakened. In view of the large number of political parties that challenged military rule at that time, and the limited influence of the political parties that maintained military rule, the use of public opinion propaganda to create hostility in society was conducive to dividing the electorate and reducing competition.

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Potential supporters of his opponents, this has also become one of the main reasons why Noriega strengthened his differentiation strategy.

### Five conclusions

Regarding the question of why Panama's military rule lasted for such a long time from 1968 to 1989, the existing literature mostly starts from the perspective of analyzing the governing ability of regime resilience and concludes that the regime's support base is broad, the military continues to play a key role, and the opposition is weak. There are different explanations. However, through historical review, it can be found that Panamanian military leaders have actually been unable to establish a strong social foundation for military rule and enable the forces that support them to occupy a dominant position in society. This article believes that due to the integration of Panamanian military rule Due to lack of ability, military leaders adopted a differentiation strategy, forcing domestic society to find it difficult to form a joint force to overthrow the existing regime for a long time, thereby enhancing the resilience of military rule.

During the period when military personnel directly intervened in politics, military leaders' strategies to divide society were mainly manifested in establishing patronage relationships with some people in multiple social groups by providing material benefits, preferential policies, social welfare, status and other favors, thereby making the patronized Those who do not resent the military being in power are even willing to defend military rule when opposition forces threaten the regime. During the period of indirect military intervention in politics, the differentiation strategy of military leaders expanded from establishing patronage relationships to three different dimensions. First, military leaders used institutional design to enable military leaders to The government is separated from the political system, and the diversity of interests and voices of social members is used to reduce the possibility of overthrowing military rule. Secondly, military leaders intentionally transfer part of their patronage functions to elite groups supported by military personnel, thereby reducing their own patronage burdens. ̄ Avoid social dissatisfaction from gathering at the national level. Finally, during elections, military leaders often use public opinion propaganda to create hostility between social groups to reduce potential supporters of competitors.

The reason why Panamanian military leaders continue to use differentiation strategies to enhance the resilience of the regime is ultimately due to the lack of integration capabilities of military rule and its inability to unite all forces in society to form a broad coalition that supports the regime. At the beginning of the establishment of military rule, Panamanian domestic social groups There are obvious internal ideological differences and it is difficult to cooperate with each other. Even if the military leaders try to attract as many supporters as possible through patronage, they can only gain the recognition of some people. After the political liberalization reform in 1978, the strength of the opposition increased significantly. The military leaders have limited patronage capabilities and cannot attract them as supporters. In addition, the ruling Democratic Revolutionary Party is a political party that maintains military rule. In the early days of its establishment, its supporters identified more with the military leaders personally than with the political party. In 1981, the Democratic Revolutionary Party After the death of Rijos, the influence of the Democratic Revolutionary Party has weakened, and the number of political parties challenging the existing regime has increased. These factors have posed a threat to the continuation of military rule.

In summary, it can be seen that in different periods of Panamanian military rule, military leaders faced difficulties in integrating the political power.

The objective fact is that the government has insufficient power, so it chooses to use differentiation strategies instead of integration strategies to improve regime resilience. At the same time, due to the influence of factors such as changes in the domestic political landscape, economic development, and conflicts between different groups in society, specific differentiation methods maintain regime resilience. The effectiveness of differentiation will inevitably be weakened, and military leaders have to find new ways to re-strengthen the differentiation of society in order to continue to maintain the resilience of the regime. The adjustment and evolution of differentiation methods reflect the strong ability of military leaders in responding to various crises and challenges. This provided a guarantee

for the resilience of military rule. On December 20, 1989, the United States launched an armed invasion of Panama code-named "Just Cause" on the grounds of protecting American interests in the Canal Zone. The country's 21-year-long military rule came to an end. The political transformation promoted by external forces has not fundamentally changed the widespread interest differences in Panamanian society. These differences are precisely the soil where the differentiation strategy during the military rule took root, and they are also the basis for military rule. The internal reasons for the continued differentiation and opposition of domestic political forces after the end of the war. Looking at the regional level, the Panama case provides a relatively unique analytical perspective for understanding the issues of democratic consolidation and democratic quality after the democratization transition in Latin America.

(Editor-in-charge Wang Shuai)