Military role in democratic transition and succession: Lessons from the Kingdom of Lesotho

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Abstract: This study examines military institution and prevailing roles in the Lesotho government to determine transition and succession formations, this is accomplished by articulating how Lesotho’s democracy failed by understanding the existing military roles. From a qualitative standpoint, this study relied mainly on non-empirical research design: Systematic review, data restricted to 1965–2017 (52 years’ projection), which included periodicals and other archival documents that provided required information for this discourse. Critical and logical analysis of data attested that the military play a role of distractive force in Lesotho’s democratisation process. This military institution presented acted as a false custodian of democratic principles by initiating the “Coups.” Other emerging findings further suggest that the military democratic principles and arrangements are faulty and inadequate for sustainable democratic governance to succeed. This military institution function as a partisan organisation where various acts performed were unlawful. This study concludes that military has been more of a distractive than consolidation force of democratic transitions. This study further concludes that in the period 1970 to 1986 the military acted as guarantors of civilian election power under conditions of civilian dictatorship and politicians used to ensure their survival (politicisation of the military). From the independence of Lesotho in 1965 to 2016 by

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT
Despite the international and regional best practices on defence and security, the political and security problems remain peculiar to Kingdom of Lesotho as emanate from the primary Constitution of the Lesotho, as adopted in 1993, amended in 1996, 1997, 1998, 2001 respectively in comparance to other notable selected countries who undergone political transitions. The deficiencies and overlaps in this Constitution regarding mandates of security institutions need to be academically looked into urgently with a comprehensive strategy for effective reform. It is hoped that Lesotho native residents and visitors will benefit from this study as they will be better skilled and competent in understanding the military roles in democratic transitions and related successions. They should be also empowered with adequate knowledge and stimulate their ways of reasoning and thinking about this subject.
as adopted by politicians to fight their political battles, and withal to overthrow the regime.

**Subjects:** Politics; Social Sciences

**Keywords:** democracy; lesotho; military; politics; political transition

1. **Introduction**

Von Soest and Grauvogel (2017) stresses that constructing convincing legitimacy claims is important for securing the stability of authoritarian regimes. However, extant research has struggled to systematically analyse how authoritarians substantiate their right to rule. Available analysed data on authoritarian regimes’ claims to legitimacy that is based on leading country experts’ assessments of 98 States for the period 1991–2010. This analysis provides key new insights into the inner workings and legitimation strategies of current non-democratic regimes. Closed authoritarian regimes predominately rely on identity-based legitimacy claims (Foundational myth, ideology and personalism). In contrast, elections fundamentally change how authoritarian rulers relate to society. In their legitimacy claims, electoral authoritarian regimes focus on their “adequate” procedures, thereby mimicking democracies.

All the cited regimes also stress their purported success in proving material welfare and security to their citizens. To be sure, claims to legitimacy related to identity, procedures and performance are clearly not the only means to safeguard authoritarian rule. In addition to making use of legitimation strategies, autocracies also rely on repression and co-optation to increase their chances of staying in power (Gerschewski, 2013; and Wintrobe, 1998) (in Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). While repression is costly, it has the potential to successfully contain regime-threatening protest (DeNardo, 1985; Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). Moreover, many regimes seek to “buy” support, either from key constituencies or from broader segments of society (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003; and Von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). How authoritarian regimes calibrate this mix of survival strategies could be assessed by systematic research in the future.

In the 1980s, an extensive literature has emerged on transitions to democracy and democratic processes in Latin America. Latin Americans and Latin Americans have produced ground-breaking works that have enhanced understanding of these subjects. A number of differences of opinion, usually implicit and not articulated, have arisen. Considering the abundance and quality of the literature, a review of some major themes, debates, and disagreements is overdue, Mainwaring (1992). Furthermore, during the last decade, most countries in Latin America, Southern Europe and Africa have made a transition from authoritarian to democratic forms of rule, opening the way for the growth of a peaceful civil society and effective liberal institutions. Power and Power (1998) highlights that scholars and democratic politicians share an interest in identifying the strategies, institutions, and actors that will strengthen democracy and prevent a relapse to authoritarianism. In Africa, the dawn of political independence, which many countries experienced in the late 1950s and the early 1960s, ushered in political freedom but not economic prosperity. Some three decades ago, the military in Lesotho was considered one of the major internal factors for political instability, which was the hallmark of the conventional authoritarianisms (Matlosa, 2011).

The history of military involvement in Lesotho politics dates back to 1970 when Chief Jonathan, then Prime Minister of Lesotho and leader of the Basotho National Party (BNP), lost the general elections to the opposition Basutoland Congress Party (BCP). Instead of handing over power, Jonathan declared a state of emergency, arrested and detained leaders of the opposition and established a mono-party state (Mothibe, 1998, p. 2). In April 1991, Lekhanya was removed from power in a military Coup led by Colonel Elias Tutsoane Ramoema. Ramoema announced a schedule for Lesotho’s return to democracy. Lesotho’s history is littered with military Coups (Benyera, 2017, p. 1).
All political parties were soon allowed to operate in the country and Mosheshoe returned from exile in July 1992, though not as monarch, but as a tribal chief. Democracy was restored in 1993. Lesotho, a mountainous state of two million people, has suffered a several Coups since independence from Britain in 1966. At least 58 locals and 8 South African soldiers died during a political stand-off and subsequently fighting in 1998. In 2014, Lesotho Prime Minister Thomas Thabane fled to South Africa hours before the military surrounded his residence and overran police stations in the capital, Maseru, in what the Prime minister called a Coup (Reuters, 2014a, p. 1). The military seized control of the tiny police headquarters and jammed radio stations and phones. The military said it had not tried to oust Prime Minister but had moved against police suspected of planning to arm a political faction. The unrest stems from a power struggle between Prime Minister, who was supported by the police and deputy Prime Minister, who had the loyalty of the military.

The problem under research suggests that the Lesotho Barrier Compel, Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) is politically impacted, it serves and ensure the legislators and their interests. Since 2014, The kingdom of Lesotho has been under alliance government, the central point in the falls of the previous alliance governments in the Kingdom of Lesotho is the LDF. The administrators of LDF served certain ideological groups and got the command from such ideological groups in return for high positions, forces and cash. The LDF is utilised to kill different individuals from the ideological groups, for instance, the ongoing occurrence was in 2014 when the military endeavour to upset, and in that procedure, they endeavoured to kill the Prime clergymen. The executive and the pioneers of other ideological groups escape to South Africa.

Another issue by the LDF is that it is utilised to battle, explore and capture lawbreakers which is the elements of the police as per the global measures. The ‘Phumaphi (2015) reports featured the bodies of evidence against the LDF individuals where individuals from the open were seriously beaten and slaughtered in the hands of the LDF individuals. There are parcels of cases which incorporates the money related cases brought about by the LDF individuals while doing their elements of fighting, examining and capturing lawbreakers. There is likewise a need to create security changes in the Kingdom of Lesotho, the obligations of the LDF and police covers and that brought about by the holes in the enactments and the nonattendance of the security changes.

Furthermore, predicated on the pertinent questions set to be addressed in this study, the main objectives were to analyse the involution of military institution in political transition and succession in Lesotho. The objectives of this study were demarcated to the following:

- Analysing the extent of military involvement in actualising or destabilising democratic transitions in the country.
- Analyse from a retrospective, the military involution and collapse of Lesotho’s regimes.
- Determining the challenges involved in endeavouring to bring the military under Constitutional rule.

2. Methodology
The methodology utilised in this study was qualitative in nature. The collected data was sourced from relevant sources and also analysed contextually without necessarily involving any quantitative techniques. The researcher read an overview of the literature on this subject from 1965–2017 (52 years’ projection), this was done to examine the following facets; the history of military, Lesotho and the anterior Prime ministers. Websites (i.e. Especially those cognate to military and democracy in Lesotho, for example, the LDF Act (No.74 of, 1996), Phumaphi [Commission of Inquiry] (2015), the Constitution of Lesotho, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), as well as reviewing the major newspapers on history of Lesotho, military and democracy.

Predicated on the nature of data required in this study; the presented discourse relied mainly on secondary data sources in the process of amassing germane information. In this process,
documented and archival data were extracted from regime gazettes, texts, periodicals and other pertinent sources. Data generated from these sources were condensed and critically analysed through content and context analysis where germane and concrete information were distilled from the collections. The deductive synthesis was consequently applied in this process. Synthesised outputs from the analysis are presented as different sections in this study in accordance with the set-out objectives of the discourse.

3. Preliminary literature review and discussions

3.1. Contextual framework for densifying Lesotho politics: an introductory comment

According to Matlosa and Pule (2003), Lesotho gained political independence from British colonial rule in 1966. As was the case in various other transitions from colonial rule to self-rule in Africa, the newly independent Lesotho state inherited the Westminster constitutional and institutional arrangements. Hence the modern Army in Lesotho was bequeathed by the British colonial power and was indeed built by the British personnel with considerable succor from neighbouring South Africa.

Philander (2000) explains that initially; the Army evolved as a paramilitary police, the Police Mobile Unit in the 1960s, transforming into a modern Army, the Lesotho Paramilitary Force in 1980 and subsequently elevated to a defense force proper in the 1980s when it assumed the status of the LDF. However, following the military Coup of 1986 which witnessed the demise of Basotho National Party (BNP) rule and its replacement by a military Junta initially led by Maj Gen Justin Metsing Lekhanya, the name of the Army was changed to the Royal LDF (Matlosa, 1998, 2011).

Cawthra and Luckham (2003) highlight that since the political transition of the early 1990s, whose apogee was marked by the holding of a democratic election in 1993, the military force comprises about 2,100 people (Including the Army and Air Wing) and is now known as the LDF. It is worth noting that the above changes or transformations of the military in Lesotho were not just changes in name, but rather a profound metamorphosis of the military from its infancy in the 1960s up to its present status. These transformations were also informed by interesting changes, too, in terms of the governance arrangements of the military in Lesotho. Whereas, there have been shifts and twists regarding institutional arrangements for the governance of the military over time since the 1960s, one common denominator throughout all the phases of military evolution in Lesotho is that the prime minister has remained commander-in-chief of the forces. However, it is worth noting that in the earlier periods, tensions have simmered between the prime minister as head of government and the king as head of state regarding the governance of the military (Hutchful & Bathily, 1998).

Moreover, the approaches to the study of democratic consolidations and related transitions rest on definition of consolidation, which fall into three categories, namely: “Actor-centered, Event-centered and Institutional (External or internal).” The actor-centered approach focuses on the willingness of significant actors to work within democratic rules. The event-centered approach looks at elections or constitutional ratification as markers. An internal institutional approach focuses on the degree of institutionalisation, while an external approach concentrates on the duration of new political institutions and the extent of meaningful changes therein, Philander (2000). Clearly, there is no single approach that is adequate in responding to political consolidations; while, it should be acknowledged that there are causal relationships among these approaches; actors, events and institutions, thus, various points of departure and emphasis should be employed in studying this subject holistically (Mothibe, 1998).

Instability is also witnessed, since new democracies provided threats of a Coups, thus, consolidation may be seen as the process of eliminating opposition to democracy on the part of powerful actors (Matlosa, 1998). In more stable cases; consolidation may be understood as establishing permanent institutions and arrangements for the functioning of democracy or, alternatively, as
eliminating undemocratic features of a post-authoritarian system. The establishment of democratic procedures and institutions does not, by itself, ensure the elimination of undemocratic features, such as privileged roles for the military (Cowthra & Luckham, 2003).

3.2. The role of the military in breakdown of democracies and transitions away from authoritarian regimes: a comparative analysis

With differed branding and limitations; the movement out from military dictatorship in several Latin American nations has been almost universally accommodated, highlighting the notion that “change is good.” Notably, the establishment of civilian regimes and formal democratic political procedures in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay relate to a positive development in itself and in that it creates a potential for more far-reaching social and economic progress. Chile under Pinochet indicates the accomplishment of the process of change. Thus, a regime that arise in the wake of dictatorship and repression, tends to be unstable, usually providing an initiation of a new round of [new] political conflicts to clearly interpret the process of how a new democratic regime came to inception (MacEwan, 1988a). In support to this statement; the difficulty in measuring quality of political leadership exists, although Juan Linz provides customary insight focusing on Spain with the expression that crisis could have been avoided only if the politicians had been more reasonable in their respective approaches, this is cited as one of the helpful attempts. Other notable examples on political crises are also shared by Linz citing Europe and Latin America and Chile Coup in 1973. The Peru breakdown by Julio Cotler is projected to socio-economic sphere. In contrary; crises were successfully avoided in Finland during the 1930s and Venezuela in the 1960s, this respectively contributed to quality of political leadership than the wealthy produced by oil operations. Furthermore, what brought the regime of breaking point in Brazil was the quality of political leadership of the then President Goulart, whose acts in the last months of the touted regime undermined existing support, Linz and Stepan (1980).

For more than Twenty years, the comparative politics literature on democritisation has widely generated shared assumptions, concepts and hypotheses adopted by seminal scholars to describe, analyse, explain and prescribe the dynamic sequences of regime changes. Starting with O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead’s “Transitions from the authoritarian rule, which focused on post—1974 cases in Southern Europe and Latin America, this literature subsequently stretched to cover countries and experiences quite different from its initial purviews. This research works constituted a distinctive sub-field of contemporary political science: Democratisation studies, cited Two (2) related but independent sub-fields each endowed with its own epistemological foundation and research orientation, namely: “Transitology and Consolidology” (Schmitter, 1994) (in Schmitter & Guilhot, 2000). Considerably; during the last decade, most countries in Latin America and Southern Europe have made a transition from authoritarian to democratic forms of rule, opening the way for the growth of a peaceful civil society and effective liberal institutions (Philander, 2003). To this end; prominent scholars have arranged international meetings to discuss the theoretical underpinnings for comparative work on consolidation. Building on their previous collaboration, which led to the publication of “Transitions from Authoritarian Rule,” of 1986 by Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead as editors, furthermore, O’Donnell and Schmitter coordinated working groups in Latin America and Southern Europe, respectively to research democratic consolidation and debate continues over which institutions and institutional arrangements are most important for democratic consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe. The relevance of particular institutions or structures of power varies between the two regions and among the various countries under study. Cross-national and cross-regional research will continue on such themes as parliament, the presidency, the military, parties, organised interests, and political and economic pacts (Power & Power, 1988).

3.3. South African Defense Force Act (No. 42 of 2002)

According to Section 200(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) must be structured and managed as a disciplined military force. Subsection (2) further states that the primary object of the SANDF is to defend and protect the
Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force. The SANDF established by Section 224(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act (No. 200 of 1993), continues to exist and consists of the regular force where members serve full-time, reserve force, the members of which serve on a part-time basis for such period as they have been contracted.

3.4. Lesotho Defence Force Act (No.74 of, 1996)
According to Section 146 (1) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Lesotho, there shall be a Defence Force for the maintenance of internal security and the defence of Lesotho. (2) The command of the Defence Force shall be vested in the Commander and, subject to any direction of the Defence Commission, the Commander shall be responsible for the administration and discipline of the Defence Force. (3) The power to appoint a person to hold or act in the office of Commander of the Defence Force and the power to remove him from that office shall vest in the Defence Commission.

According to Section 4 (1) of the LDF, there shall be in Lesotho a force, not exceeding such strength as may be determined from time to time, by the Minister, to be known as the LDF, which shall consist of the regular force, the reserve force and the volunteer element. According to Section 5 (1) of the LDF, this force shall be employed in the defence of Lesotho, in the prevention or suppression of terrorism, internal disorder, and the maintenance of essential services including maintenance of law and order and prevention of crime.

When one comparing the LDF Act (No.74 of, 1996) and SANDF Act (No. 42 of 2002) with other international legislative frameworks, it is indicated that the LDF force Act is inconsistent with the international standards. This Act state that the LDF should maintain law and order and prevent crime, all this according to international standards should be done by the police not the military. Crime prevention, law and order cannot be the functions of the military because they are trained to kill. The LDF Act, 1996 create a problem within the Kingdom and should be amended to meet the international requirements and standards, Phumaphi (2015).

3.5. The challenges and military role in democratic transition(s)
Valenzuela (1990) highlights that as the new democracies that substituted authoritarian rule in many countries worldwide during the seventies and eighties grow out of infancy, social science observers have shifted their focus from the analysis of transitions out of authoritarianism to problems of democratic consolidation. Much of the previous scholarly discussion was anchored on examinations of the political processes occurring in the closing phases of authoritarian rule and on the manner in which the change to the democratically elected governments occurs. Current queries center on how really democratic the post-transition political institutions are and on their long-term prospects, for example; whether they are prone to succumb to a new round of authoritarian rule or whether they will prove to be stable or consolidated. The modalities assumed by the transition, the way in which political actors are organised, and the various political institutions that emerge or reemerge during the course of the transition are understood to make a significant difference for the long-term viability of newly democratised regimes. The process of democratic consolidation unfolds through a series of political confrontations which either buttress or remove the perverse elements that detract from the minimal democratic process. These confrontations can be over reforms of the political institutions themselves or over substantive policies. While actors favoring democratic consolidation and those opposing it will generally act in ways that advance their preferences, both can actually contribute to the process or detract from it given short-run calculations of gain, miscalculations, or unanticipated consequences. Consolidation is reached as an ex post factum realisation; any deliberate plan to advance it will, by virtue of its stated goal, indicate to all those concerned its absence.

The relationships between two groups of authoritarian regimes exist; based in the vocabulary of O’Donnell’s original essay of “hard-liners” (duros) and “soft-liners” (blandos). The former refers to
the consensus of world history, it is believed that the perpetuation of authoritarian rule is possible and desirable. The latter may be indistinguishable from the hard-liners in the first “reactive” phase of the authoritarian regime. They may be equally disposed to use repression and to tolerate the arbitrary acts of the appropriate ministry or security agency. However, what turns them into soft-liners is their increasing awareness that the regime they helped to implant, and in which they usually occupy important positions, will have to make use, in the foreseeable future, of some form of electoral legitimation. To this end; the soft-liners add that, if its eventual legitimation is to be feasible, the regime cannot wait too long before introducing certain freedoms, at least to the extent acceptable to modern segments of the domestic opposition and of international public opinion, O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) (in Biekart, 2015).

Consequently, Gasiorowski and Power (1998) share that “democratic consolidation” is the process prompting newly established democratic regimes to become sufficiently durable to confirm that a return to non-democratic rule is unlikely. These authors examined a wide range of structural factors that may affect democratic consolidation in “Third World” countries, using three indicators of consolidation and multivariate statistical techniques. Their main findings were that the development-related socio-economic factors, contagion effect of democratic neighbours, and high inflations, each strongly affect the likelihood of consolidation, although the latter was significant only in the early part of the period studied. Several other factors were concluded not to have apparent effect on consolidation, including several measures dealing with political culture and the design of democratic institutions. These three identified factors strongly predict which “Third World” democracies achieve consolidation, suggesting that the process-centric literature on democratic consolidation has paid inadequate attention to the effects of structural factors.

Furthermore, Schlumberger (2017) presents that seminal studies on “authoritarian regimes” structures can be classified using Eight (08) thematic clusters: (1) Typological efforts and regime characteristics, namely: Coalition formation and origins, (2) institutionalist approaches, (3) State-society relations beyond formal institutions, (4) Repression, (5) Political economy approaches, (6) International dimensions, (7) Performance, and (8) Linking the concepts of regimes and States. However, research on this subject has been extremely prolific, with a dire needs of unsystematic and disparate measures. Thus, this research field should consolidate and contribute to genuine knowledge accumulations.

Whereas, Wheaton (2001) outlines the interrelationships between the eight phases, namely: Phase 1: Agenda formation and adjustment (Opposition to an authoritarian regime usually forms around one or more core issues. It is, in fact, these core issues which allow the organisation of dissent in the first place), Phase 2: Alliance formation (Alliances are formed between parties and interest groups. In some cases, the tie is so tight that the two are essentially inseparable. Solidarity in its early days might be an example of such a connection), Phase 3: Coalition (Parties now make their second pact. This pact is a coalition that forms a government. In States that are just beginning the transition from authoritarian rule, the party that represents the authoritarian interests is very likely to have sufficient political power to control the government for a considerable length of time), Phase 4: Policy selection (Governments use policies to fulfill their agendas and to raise the standard of living. The nature of the policies depends on the country. Land reform, privatisation and disarmament are all policies that have been pursued, to one degree or another during the transition from authoritarian rule in the Eastern European State), Phase 5: Policy support (Parties use political power to either support or oppose specific policies. This phase overlaps the previous phase to a considerable extent. A policy as a separate action from selection is supported), Phase 6: Policy implementation (Policies that were supported in the last phase are implemented. The success or failure of these policies depends on many things including, among others, the pre-authoritarian legacy with similar policies, the will of the people to execute the policies, the skill with which the policies are drafted), Phase 7: Coup/Military Action Phase (Coup or military action are means by which parties or individuals that currently do not have power or are in a risk of losing what they do have can seize power. Like elections, Coup can take place at any
time. Logically, they would take place because of some expectation or event, such as the expectation of defeat in elections or successful policy implementation by another party) and Phase 8: Elections (These are the peaceful way to redistribute political power within a regime, while the announcement of elections is an activity that comes sometime earlier, the election itself normally occurs sometime after its announcement).

Motsoa and Pule (2003) provide that parliamentary oversight needs to be strengthened through relevant standing and portfolio committees. There should be effective implementation of the defense policy and finalisation of the draft Strategic Plan for the LDF in order to add more value to the improved civil-military relations and security reforms. There is need to further decentralise governance of the LDF and avoid centralisation within the Prime Minister’s Office. Van Nieuwkerk (2004) concurs that the democratic governance of the LDF is also dependent upon the successful democratisation of Lesotho generally. The democratic culture and practice that is emerging in Lesotho ought to change in a positive manner the attitude of both the political elite and society at large towards the military. There should be recognition that the LDF ought to play increasingly developmental roles on its traditional security roles. An emerging culture of public trust and confidence around the role of the military since the mid-1990s needs to be solidified and consolidated through, among others, greater access to information on security sector reform to broader stakeholders, including civil society organisations. The LDF has begun to play a greater regional role in Southern Africa through Southern African Development Community (SADC), and in the African continent through the African Union (AU). This is bound to continue as the region and the continent strive for deeper integration; and this implies further and possibly more complex responsibilities (Motsoa & Pule, 2003).

3.6. Military coup of 1986
The reasons for the military coup in 1986 vary depending on the preferred vantage points of observers. For others power struggles between BNP factions, which included the military, were responsible, because they caused insecurity among some BNP members, opponents of the regime, and the nation in general. Still others pointed to worsening cognations between the King and the BNP regime over his constitutional status. Whatever the reason or reasons about the coup, the fact remained that the Lesotho military was rigorously compromised. Not only because of its sodality with the BNP regime, but withal because of its close sodality with the apartheid security establishment of sodality that perpetuated even as government’s anti-apartheid rhetoric perpetuated and even as the Army itself used sophisticated weaponry originating in the eastern bloc.

3.7. The 1994 palace coup
On the 17 August 1994, King Letsie III announced the dissolution of a democratically elected BCP government and parliament. The reasons for this coup have been critically analysed elsewhere and therefore need no repetition. (Mahao, 1997; Makoa, 1995; Mothibe, 1998; Thabane, 1998) This move which had the support of the BNP, royalist forces and the military, was vehemently opposed by internal democratic forces as well as the international community.

Various reasons have been advanced why the military supported the King’s coup. First, the dominant suspicion was that it was to be disbanded and replaced by Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) at worst or neutralised at best. Presidents Mugabe and Masire (1994, p. 4) attest to this when they say there was thus deep distrust of the Government [BCP] by the Army, especially in the presence of rumours that the government was seeking to replace it with forces deriving from the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA). This was fuelled by “Anti-army” statements made by senior BCP figures including Prime Minister Mokhehle who was reported to have said that, among the five enemies of democracy in Lesotho, was the Army. The opposition parties, especially the BNP leader, Honourable ER Sekhonyana, exploited government’s incompetence in addressing real and imaginary grievances of the Army by repeatedly alleging that the government wanted to replace it with LLA. Secondly, and most importantly, was Prime Minister Mokhehle’s decision to
set up a Commission of Inquiry into events relating to the LDF’s armed confrontation of January 1994.

The Commission’s terms of reference included, among others, “to identify the persons or groups whose activities caused or contributed to those events,” and recommend, “the incorporation of former members of the Lesotho Liberation Army into the LDF … ” The commission was further mandated to recommend the future role of the Army, redeployment of some of its members and possible legal proceedings against those involved in the January mayhem. This move fuelled the military’s suspicions that government had a secret agenda of bringing LLA through the backdoor. This was so because, although Prime Minister Mokhehle had claimed, on a number of occasions, that the LLA had been disbanded before his return from exile, some of the senior members of the BCP, including ministers, made persistent calls for its integration into the LDF. Following the reversal of the coup in the form of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between King Letsie III and Prime Minister Mokhehle and guaranteed by Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe (the troika) which provided, among other things, the reinstatement/restoration of the BCP government, the latter embarked on measures to promote civilian control of the military (Mothibe, 1998).

3.8. The second military administration

In February 1990, divisions within the regime culminated in the passage of the Lesotho (No. 2) Order of 1990. The King lost executive and legislative powers and the vast majority of the members of the Council of Ministers who were associated with the King had their services terminated. This time, however, changes in government did not result in the euphoria that had welcomed the military coup in 1986. For the new regime, two main issues had to be resolved, the country’s movement towards a constitutional order and the status of the King. In pursuit of the objective of a return to the barracks in June 1992, the military regime established a constituent assembly, whose brief was to produce a new constitution using the 1966 constitution as a working document, in terms of Order No. four of 1990 (Dixon, 1998, p. 98).

The constituent assembly was made up of 109 members. These would include 20 members from development councils, 22 Principal and Ward chiefs, ten members from civil society organisations, ten representatives from urban centres, eight members of the armed forces and 17 members of the council of ministers and assistant ministers. Party political activities, however, remained suspended. Leaders of the BNP, BCP, MFP, UDP, and the Communist Party of Lesotho (CPL) were initially reluctant to join the constituent assembly because they objected to a number of issues. First, that the assembly was merely advisory. Second, that they wanted the ban on political activities lifted. Third, that the presence of members of the Army and police in the assembly would deny them freedom of expression. Fourth, which they were uneasy serving as appointees and not as elected members of the assembly (Lesotho time, 13 June, 2014).

However, by the time the swearing-in ceremony was held in June, all but the interim leader of the BNP had joined the assembly. Southall advances a plausible explanation for the fact that political leaders joined the assembly without any of their demands being met; pointing to the central role played by the British High Commissioner in this regard. On 10 March 1990, the King was exiled in the United Kingdom in move spokespersons of the regime sarcastically termed a sabbatical. Talks between the King and the representatives of the regime collapsed when the King insisted that he would not return under the Office of the King Order of 1970. In a speech to the Constituent Assembly where the decision to dethrone the King was announced, the Chairman of the Military Council informed members of the assembly and the nation that the King had declined the offer to return by making impossible demands that the regime rejected. According to Lekhanya, the King demanded the dissolution of the military government and the format on of a government of national unity. He claimed the King also demanded the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the lifting of the suspension of the 1966 constitution, and the abrogation of the Lesotho Order of 1990, changes that the Military Council envisaged were embodied in the
Office of the King Order of 1990. After a brief hesitation, Prince Mohato Bereng Seeiso (Letsie III) succeeded the deposed King on 12 November 1990.

3.9. The fall of the second military administration
According to Chege (1995, p. 48), the regime's success in convening the constituent assembly and in dethroning the King camouflaged an impending crisis. There was general discontent among civil society groups largely brought on by the effects of structural adjustment and the perceived corruption of the regime that was exemplified by the decision to increase the salaries of military councillors, ministers and deputy ministers in March 1991. The regime responded to public discontent by employing heavy-handed methods against what it termed civil unrest and a general refusal to be governed. But the society had decidedly turned against military rule in favour of a return to constitutional rule. The Army, for its part, had become restless once more. Combined, these grievances posed a significant threat to the regime. On 30 April 1991; junior officers in the RLDF forced the chairman of the military council to resign. Three of the chairman's trusted allies in the military council (Colonel Tsotetsi) and the council of ministers (E.R. Sekhonyana and T. Thabane) were also dismissed.

3.10. The third military administration and the transition to democracy
Colonel P. Ramaema, who had served as military councillor since 1986, was named as the new leader of the military regime. Perhaps in recognition of the pressure the regime was under, its new leader was quick to reassure the population that the democratisation programme would continue. South Africa was assured that the new regime intended to honour the Highlands Water Ourselves to Know Treaty and to continue a friendly foreign policy (Lesotho Times, 2014).

In September 1991, the constituent assembly finished its work and proceeded to solicit people's views on the new constitution. Preparations for elections were almost entirely in the hands of international organisations, notably the Commonwealth which provided Noel Lee from Jamaica and Jocelyn Lucas from Trinidad and Tobago, who served as Chief Electoral Officers. As a result of delayed preparations in the areas of voter registration and delimitation of constituencies, the mid-1992 date that was set earlier was postponed to November 1992 and, later, to March 1993. Basotho went to the polls for the first time since 1970, on 27 March 1993. Local and international observer groups monitored the election closely. The elections were plagued by myriad administrative problems that included delays in opening polling stations because of a shortage of voting materials. Some of these problems caused the extension of voting to the next day so that people could get the chance to vote. These problems notwithstanding, observers unanimously declared the election to have been free and fair, and the BCP was declared victorious. The Army duly handed power to the new civilian administration on 2 April 1993.

3.11. The 1998 military intervention in Lesotho by South Africa and Botswana
In May 1998, parliamentary elections in Lesotho resulted in an overwhelming majority for the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) Party, which won 79 out of 80 seats. However, allegations of vote fraud soon surfaced, and after a failed lawsuit by the opposition parties, widespread rioting broke out. Under President Nelson Mandela the ANC-led government in South Africa announced it would hold a formal inquiry to determine the allegations of corruption. Controversially, the report only alleged minor irregularities. Furthermore, South Africa authorised the deployment of 700 South African troops to Lesotho on 22 September 1998 to quell the rioting and maintain order. Botswana Defence Force soldiers were also deployed. The operation was described as an “intervention to restore democracy and the rule of law.”

Widespread arson, violence, and looting occurred despite the presence of SANDF soldiers. Troops were pulled out in May 1999 after seven months of occupation. The capital city of Maseru was heavily damaged, requiring a period of several years for rebuilding (Dixon, 1998, p. 5).
3.12. Political crisis of 4 August to 22 September

All these successes have, however, been seriously reversed by the political crisis which arose following the general elections of the 23 May 1998 which were unexpectedly massively won by with 79 seats and 1 seat for BNP. The three opposition parties of BCP, BNP and MFP have refused to recognise the LCD government because they allege it won elections fraudulently. After their unsuccessful legal challenges at the High and Appeal Courts of Lesotho these opposition parties had, since the beginning of August, mobilised their supporters, occupied and kept vigil at the palace grounds requesting, among other things, that the king should dissolve the LCD government. The Military and Democracy What started as relatively peaceful protests turned violent when opposition supporters intensified their struggle on Monday 1 O’clock August, by imposing a stay-away that was characterised by violent blockades and commercial lock-out of Maseru, the result of which was that vehicles that ferry people to work as well as private vehicles were either turned away or damaged (Reuters, 2014b, p. 69).

Violent clashes ensued between opposition and government supporters and some people lost lives while others were injured and lost their properties either through arson or hijacking. Maseru remained largely inaccessible throughout the week of Friday/Monday, 11/17th August. Members of the Army who patrolled the city remained largely indifferent to these acts of violence and intimidation which were perpetrated in their presence. In the midst of the daily fast deteriorating situation, South African Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki accompanied by Foreign Minister, Alfred Nzo, and Defence Minister, Joe Modise on behalf of SADC chairperson, President Mandela, arrived in the country to mediate. Out of the mediation an agreement was brokered that a Community SADC team of experts from Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe be instituted to probe the opposition allegations of the rigging of May elections as well as “other matters relating to the electoral process,” and report its findings within fourteen days (Radio Lesotho broadcast 15 August 1998).

The SADC experts began probing alleged irregularities in the 23rd May general elections results on Saturday, 15th August. The team was chaired by Justice Pius Langa, deputy president of South Africa’s Constitutional Court and made up of Auditors, elections, legal and computer experts from the troika countries. Unfortunately, the Langa Report took until the 17th September before it was delivered to relevant authorities and its findings were far from satisfactory.

3.13. 2014 attempted coup

Lesotho’s Prime Minister, Thomas Thabane, on Saturday accused his country’s Army of staging a coup against him and fled to neighbouring South Africa, which condemned the military’s action and called for a peaceful settlement. Early morning gunfire was heard in Maseru, capital of the small southern African kingdom encircled by South Africa. Army units occupied police headquarters and surrounded the prime minister’s residence, residents and diplomats said the following in verbatim:

Thabane said he had fired the LDF Commander, Lieutenant-General Kennedy Tlali Kamoli, replacing him with Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao. But the Army spokesman told Reuters (2014b) Kamoli was still in charge of the military. Thabane said: “Commanders of armies are appointed by government; it is not up to them to say who is in control. (Reuters, 2014a, p. 1)

3.14. The collapse of a first coalition government 2014

A political pact of three political parties that gave birth to Lesotho’s first ever coalition government has effectively collapsed, plunging the Kingdom into a new era of political uncertainty. Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing, who was the leader of LCD by the time of drafting this study, blamed the failure of the political pact on Prime Minister Thomas Thabane, leader of the “All Basotho Convention”(ABC), whom he accused of ubiquitously making unilateral decisions to the exclusion of his coalition partners. They decided that they can no longer endure the humiliation that the Honourable Dr Thabane is inflicting upon the LCD by his unilateral and undemocratic conduct. As a result, the Deputy Prime Minister had decided to accept that the Prime Minister has cancelled and rendered nugatory the strength and existence of the coalition by refusing to observe
and adhere to the good faith and democratic principles. On the other hand, the LCD started talks with other political parties to try and constitute a majority to form a new government with a new Prime Minister (ISS Africa, 2014, p. 1).

But Dr Thabane were already launched a pre-emptive strike against any move to unseat him by issuing a prorogation (suspension) order against Parliament, which was duly signed by King Letsie III in line with the constitution. Prorogation means that all meetings of Parliament are discontinued without dissolving it. At the time, Dr Thabane’s reasoning is that by suspending Parliament, there would be no sitting to even consider any motion to unseat him. This will allow him to rule without Parliament until March next year after which he can reopen parliament or call fresh election (ISS Africa, 2014, p. 1).

3.15. The collapse of a second coalition government 2017

The dissolution of the ninth Parliament in Lesotho on 6 March 2017 as a result of a successful vote of no-confidence against Prime Minister (PM) Pakalitha Mosisili has put an untimely end to the seven party coalition governments. Moreover, Mosisili sacked four cabinet ministers accused of colluding with opposition parties to unseat the governing coalition on November 10. He also moved Deputy Prime Minister Monyane Moleleki from the police ministry. The move backfired and four other ministers resigned, including Moleleki, who claimed at least 21 Members of Parliament (MPs) in the ruling coalition were ready to quit. Then, on November 17, Mosisili was issued with a suspension letter by his own party’s National Executive Committee (NEC). Mosisili’s response has been to call for a special general conference from December 2–4, at which he hopes to re-establish control. He claims the NEC had no power to suspend him.

The feud between the party’s factions—the Lirurubele and Lithope—reached its peak on November 10 when the party executive, dominated by the former, decided to pull out of the seven-party coalition government. The withdrawal was followed by the resignation of five pro-Lirurubele ministers who also moved to cross the bench in parliament (ISS Africa, 2017, p. 1). This means they are likely to vote with the opposition. The Democratic Congress executive wants Mosisili to cross the bench and resign from the cabinet, or face dismissal from the party for not honouring its decisions. Reasons, according to Secretary-general Ralechate Lithope, include government-sponsored polarisation of the people, patronage, lack of direct policy on service delivery, violation of human rights and worsening relations between Lesotho and its development partners. With Mosisili now leading a minority government, his deputy, Monyane Moleleki, who leads the Lirurubele faction, has invited all 10 parties in parliament to form a government of national unity.

3.16. The 2015 Phumaphi report

3.16.1. Findings of this report

The fleeing of opposition party leaders after Lieutenant General Kamoli’s reappointment and parliamentary boycott by opposition amounts to political instability. That these political challenges if to arrested might spiral out of control with the consequences of failing the current government. The opposition parties in LCD and Democratic Congress (DC) utilised the commander of the military to gain power and make the bellwethers of coalition to flee the country to South Africa. The results of the report revealed that the military is utilized by some opposition parties to gain power and to threaten other bellwethers. There is deep rooted politicisation of the security sector especially the LDF and LMPS as it was witnessed that some members of the said institutions participated in politics.

The security sectors especially LDF and police members are not supposed to participate in the politics, and should not be influenced by the politicians or to fight the political battles. In Lesotho it has always been an authenticity from the country’s independence that the politicians will utilize the military to fight their battles, in 1970 when Chief Jonathan, then Prime Minister of Lesotho and bellwether of the Basotho National Party (BNP), lost the general elections to the opposition
Basutoland Congress Party (BCP). In lieu of handing over puissance, Jonathan declared a state of emergency, apprehended and detained bellwethers of the opposition and established a mono-party state.

The LDF Act Section 5 (b) (ii) and (c) mandate the LDF to issues of internal disorder and maintain of law and order as well as prevention of crime, which are commonly known to be police duties. It is clear that the military cannot be mandated to maintain law and as well as prevention of crime, because they are trained to kill and they cannot be expected to deal with members of the public on day to day substructure. This has led to military assaulting and killing members of the public, Phumaphi (2015) reveals that there are lot of cases in courts against the members of the military. Placidly, the cited sections of this Act needs to be amended and the Lesotho regime needs to align its military policies and Act with the international practices.

There were several investigations by police on LDF members which were hindered by the Lieutenant General Kamoli by refusing to hand over suspects to the police. This disregard for the rule of law by the LDF, is evidenced by existing warrants of arrests on some members of LDF including Lieutenant General Kamoli charged with high treason arising from the 30 August 2014 unrest.

The military as a component of the security sector has been acting against the law and the commander of the military have been forfending the members of the military who has transgressed the law. The commander of the military was charged with high treason by the police after endeavoring to abduct and endeavour to commit political assassination against the members of the coalition bellwethers including the Prime Minister.

Table 1 shows over a wide span of time Lesotho head of State and their term in office. The military in Lesotho had dependably been having affected by the legislators. Since the autonomy of Lesotho, the military was utilised to battle the inward skirmishes of the lawmakers to topple the setting government. Leabua Jonathan in 1986 when he should hand over power he at that point affected the military and never needed to surrender control, and notwithstanding that, Ramaema Phisoana in 1993 additionally took over government by power and notwithstanding Metsing Lekhanya in 1991 controlled by power.

4. Concluding remarks and recommendations
In conclusion, this study examined the military as an institution and its role in political succession in Lesotho. The analysis of the information gathered attests to the fact that the military had

**Table 1. Past and present Lesotho Head of State (1965 Republican Status to 2020)**

| Name Term/Reign Office                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sekhonyana Maseribana 6 May 1965–7 July 1965 Prime Minister                          |
| Leabua Jonathan 7 July 1965–20 January 1986 Prime Minister                         |
| Metsing Lekhanya 24 January 1986–2 May 1991 Military                               |
| Phisoana Ramaema 2 May 1991–2 April 1993 Military                                  |
| Ntsu Makhele 2 April 1993–17 August 1994 Prime Minister                            |
| Hae Phoofolo 17 August 1994–14 September 1994 Prime Minister                      |
| Ntsu Makhele 14 September 1994–29 May 1998 Prime Minister                         |
| Phakalitha Mosisili 29 May 1998–8 June 2012 Prime Minister                         |
| Thomas Thabane 8 June 2012–17 March 2015 Prime Minister                            |
| Phakalitha Mosisili 17 March 2015–16 June 2017 Prime Minister                      |
| Thomas Thabane 16 June 2017– Present Prime Minister                                |

Source: Researchers’ Illustrations.
played the role of both distractive and sustaining force in Lesotho's democratization project. This stems from the observation that on 15 January 1986, General Justin Lekhanya, the Head of the Lesotho Army, and ousted Lesotho Prime Minister Chief Leabua Jonathan in a military coup. In April 1991, Lekhanya was removed from power in a military coup led by Colonel Elias Tutsoane Ramaema. The incidences of 1986 and 1991 point to the above, where the military believed that they could sanitize the polity and restore democracy but later failed to deliver the goods. In 2004, the Army attempted to cause a coup but failed, that resulted to the opposition leaders to fly the kingdom to South Africa.

In 1986, of its own volition it staged a coup and took over political power. In April 1994, a group of soldiers took four government ministers hostage, and killed the deputy prime minister. In August 2014, the military attempted another coup, but failed. Contrarily, the military has presented itself and acted in some occasions as the custodian of democratic principles by initiating and implementing them. However, history proved that these democratic principles and arrangements put in place by the military are usually faulty and inadequate for a variable democratic governance to thrive on. The military has also contributed both as an institution and collective of individuals in sustaining democratic project of Lesotho since 1986 to the present. This claim has been substantiated by ample evidence of involvement and investments by retired Military Generals in democratic governance in Lesotho. Their commitment, inclusion and absorption into politics after their retirement from the armed forces and their desire to continue in the part of democratic career attest to this claim.

MacEwan (1988b) recommends that when a transition from authoritarian rule is in progress, every effort should be taken not to threaten the military, not to attack the military as an institution, and not to upset the structure of privilege and power that it defines as the linchpin of “National Security.” The problem is one of “coaxing the military out of power.” Other conclusions are possible. For example, in the emergence of workers’ organisations and of the liberation theology movement in Brazil, we can see both the pressures for liberalisation and the embryo of an alternative, popular movement. What these developments indicate is that there are ways, both old ways and new ways, that authoritarian rule can be challenged. There is no reason that these challenges need stop, when democratic procedures are won and it is not implausible that such popular movements can ultimately challenge both the stability of the military and the existing structures of social organisation. But such other conclusions must proceed from the same set of facts about the durability of military regimes and about the destruction that they have brought upon the left.

To recognise the weakness of the left in the wake of authoritarian regimes is not to despair of progress; it is to undertake the process of change toward meaningful democracy from a realistic basis. In any case, we cannot get very far toward a democracy if we misspecify what it is. Real democracy in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and elsewhere cannot exist while the military remains intact as an institution. Neither can real democracy be attained within the existing structure of power and privilege. The envisaged progress can be made and political life can be dramatically improved, however, that is not the same thing as creating a democratic society. If by democracy we mean a system of popular power, then it is impossible for democracy to coexist with the present military and socioeconomic structures. Building popular movements that are themselves democratic would seem to be the only way to get where we want to go, even if success seems improbable. While paraphrasing the research works of Sherlock Holmes, it is determined what is impossible is the task to proceed to the improbable, MacEwan (1988b).

The necessity of examining the issue of democratic uncertainty when constructing rational choice accounts of democratic breakdown. The idea of democratic uncertainty has recently been excessively debated, however, it is believed that this is mainly due to conceptual confusion. Such confusion can be overcome by limiting the application to the idea that democracy institutionalises the possibility for changing governments. Despite this controversy, there is widespread agreement in the democratisation literature that democratic uncertainty is theoretically important. However,
little effort is made to incorporate it into our research. Ultimately, this limits researchers in this field to examine set of goods actors, which are currently received when attempting to understand when and why they might support regime change. However, the theoretical arguments behind the idea of democratic uncertainty point to the shortcoming of such a position. Actors are influenced by their views of the potential democratic institutions hold over time to change governments and their respective powers (Ferguson, 2004).

Mainwaring and Perez-Linan (2013) went on to states that a rich body of qualitative studies of individual countries tells us that the survival or fall of democratic regimes depends on what political leaders, parties, militaries, social movements, and other key actors do. Their behaviour is shaped, however, it is not determined by structural forces and cultural patterns. The level of development neither raised nor lowered the likelihood of competitive regimes breaking down in Latin America between 1945 and 2005. This generally confirms O'Donnell’s analysis in “Modernisation and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism.” Policy radicalism makes it more difficult to sustain competitive political regimes. When strong radical forces compete for political power, the chance grows that some actors will find the cost of tolerating democratic politics too high. Radical threats encourage defection from competitive regimes.

Conversely, pervasive policy moderation is believed to lower the stakes of democratic politics. Normative attitudes of “actors” about the political regime have a significant impact on whether competitive regimes endure or break down. Some actors intrinsically value democracy far more than others. Democracy can withstand severe crises and protracted bad performance if most actors are normatively committed to democracy as a regime. Conversely, competitive regimes are highly vulnerable to breakdown if the most powerful actors are indifferent to liberal democracy’s intrinsic value. These normative preferences about the regime are not reducible to structural factors or to broad sociocultural patterns. Thus, measuring actors’ policy radicalism and normative preferences concerning the political regime is a huge challenge, and we do not claim to have solved all the difficulties. If policy radicalism and actors’ normative preferences are important variables that are not reducible to structural factors or to broad sociocultural patterns, however, social scientists should strive to incorporate them in their analyses. Earlier scholars did so in a qualitative way; we believe that it is now time to study these issues with quantitative tools as well, Mainwaring and Perez-Linan (2013).

With the notion that the transition phase is over and democratic governments are now in place, it is predictable that fewer people will write about democratic transitions as they turn their attention to the new democratic processes, it would be unfortunate to simply forget about the interesting issues in the transitions literature, especially because, strong implications for the analysis of democratic processes exists. Therefore, it is precisely at this point when a considerable amount has been written that an overview of the issues and debates can be most valuable. It is hoped that the efforts conceal several debates in the literature and to challenge influential writings on issues relating to this subject, Mainwaring (1992).

Against the background of persistent interference or dabbling in politics by the LDF inspite of attempts by post-military governments to keep it out of politics and the absolute need of a non-partisan military if democracy is to take root and prosper in Lesotho, it is imperative that professional and politically correct armies in the service of democratically-elected governments ought to be encouraged and supported.

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