



מכון ירושלים לאסטרטגיה ולביטחון

The Jerusalem Institute
for Strategy and Security

Violent Intervention in Democratic Regimes

Gabi Siboni
Simon Tsipsis





מכון ירושלים לאסטרטגיה ולביטחון

The Jerusalem Institute
for Strategy and Security

Violent Intervention in Democratic Regimes

Gabi Siboni
Simon Tsipsis

April 2026

Violent Intervention in Democratic Regimes

1. Introduction

This article defines violent intervention in democratic regimes with the aim of destabilization. Incidents of violent destabilization aimed at overthrowing democratic governments occurred in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. These events can be differentiated according to their character, underlying context, methods employed, the actors behind them, and their sources of financing. In many cases, local destabilization efforts were backed by external actors. Intervention typically operated through organizations established for subversive purposes. Frequently, these organizations functioned under the cover of human rights groups, organizations assisting disadvantaged populations, humanitarian bodies, or entities ostensibly created to promote democratic processes.

These organizations generally relied on local protest movements designed to reinforce and support opposition forces. Some were founded with declared objectives spanning a wide range of issues, from opposition to controversial legislation to resistance to policies concerning human rights, taxation, women's rights, accession to the European Union (where relevant), police violence, and other matters. In many cases, the specific issue was secondary; the primary objective was to undermine the governing authority.

For the purposes of this analysis, violent destabilization in democratic and non-democratic regimes can be divided into two categories: activity led by semi-state actors and activity led by non-state actors. In both categories, a distinction can be drawn between unarmed and armed action. In each case, the central objective is to overthrow the government, challenge the political order, generate destruction and chaos, weaken the standing of the government or its leadership, replace the ruling authority, or alter the policies of the existing regime.

2. Violent Destabilization with Foreign Support

Although not central to this article's core analysis, it is important to consider cases in which foreign powers intervened in other states. The twentieth century saw numerous instances of violent destabilization — including military coups, uprisings, and civil wars — that undermined or overthrew democratic governments, often resulting in the establishment of authoritarian regimes. The following are prominent examples.

2.1 Europe

Italy: In 1922, Benito Mussolini and his militia, the “Blackshirts,” carried out the March on Rome, widely regarded as the first significant post–World War I demonstration of fascist power in Europe. The display of organized coercive pressure led King Victor Emmanuel III to appoint Mussolini as Prime Minister. This decision undermined the liberal parliamentary system of the Kingdom of Italy and paved the way for the consolidation of a fascist dictatorship, which took its definitive form by 1925.¹

Spain: In 1936, a military uprising led by General Francisco Franco targeted the Spanish Republic, triggering the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). The conflict, marked by extensive atrocities, ended with Franco’s victory and the establishment of a dictatorship that dismantled Spain’s democratic institutions and remained in power until his death in 1975.²

Greece: In 1936, General Ioannis Metaxas, backed by the military, seized power in the August 4 coup. He suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament, ending the fragile republican democracy that had governed since 1924 and establishing the authoritarian “4th of August” regime, which lasted until 1941.³

Turkey: In 1980, the Turkish military, under the command of General Kenan Evren, carried out a coup amid escalating political violence. The armed forces dissolved parliament, banned political parties, and imposed military rule. The intervention removed a democratically elected government and led to three years of military governance before a controlled transition back to civilian rule.⁴

2.2 Latin America

Guatemala: In 1954, a CIA-backed military invasion led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas overthrew the democratically elected president, Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán, amid disputes over land reform. The violent operation resulted in the establishment of a military dictatorship, the suppression of democratic reforms, and decades of authoritarian rule and civil conflict.⁵

Brazil: In 1964, the Brazilian military, with U.S. support, orchestrated a coup against President João Goulart, citing concerns over a drift toward communism. The coup ended

1 Bosworth, R.J.B. 2005. *Mussolini's Italy: Life Under the Fascist Dictatorship, 1915–1945*. Penguin Books. <https://archive.org/details/mussolinisitaly0000bosw>

2 Beevor, Antony. 2006. *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939*. Penguin Books. <https://archive.org/details/battleforspainsp00anto>

3 Clogg, Richard. 1987. *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy*. Duke University Press. <https://archive.org/details/partieselections0000clog>

4 Michael M. Gunter. 1989. “Political Instability in Turkey During the 1970s.” *Journal of Conflict Studies* 1 (9). <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/14835>

5 John Coatsworth. 2005. “United States Interventions What For?” *Revista. Harvard Review of Latin America* 4 (Spring/Summer 2005). <https://revista.drclas.harvard.edu/united-states-interventions>

Brazil's Fourth Republic and imposed a military dictatorship that lasted twenty-one years, marked by repression and the suspension of civil rights.⁶

Chile: In 1973, General Augusto Pinochet, with U.S. backing, led a military assault on the presidential palace and removed the democratically elected socialist president, Salvador Allende, who was killed during the attack. The intervention ended Chile's long-standing democracy and ushered in a dictatorship that remained in power for seventeen years and was marked by widespread human rights violations.⁷

Argentina: In 1976, the Argentine military junta seized power in a coup against President Isabel Perón amid economic turmoil and guerrilla violence. The coup dismantled the democratic government, imposed a dictatorship, and initiated the "Dirty War" (1976–1983), characterized by state terror, systematic human rights violations, and thousands of enforced disappearances and cases of torture.⁸

2.3 Asia and Africa

Pakistan: In 1977, a military coup led by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq overthrew the elected government of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto following disputed elections and widespread protests. The coup resulted in eleven years of military rule, with widespread executions — including that of Bhutto — and a policy of enforced Islamization that eroded democratic norms.⁹

Nigeria: In 1983, Major General Muhammadu Buhari and the military removed the civilian government of President Shehu Shagari following elections marred by allegations of fraud. The intervention ended the Second Republic's democratic governance and ushered in a succession of military regimes that lasted until 1999.¹⁰

2.4 Interim Analysis

These examples illustrate recurring patterns of military intervention in contexts of political instability, often accompanied by foreign involvement (for example, U.S. support for regime change in parts of Latin America). Latin America was particularly prone to such interventions, with each country experiencing at least one coup during the twentieth century.

6 Spektor, Matias. 2018. "The United States and the 1964 Brazilian Military Coup." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*. April 26. <https://oxfordre.com/latinamericanhistory/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.001.0001/acrefore-9780199366439-e-551>. Also, in Latinometrics. 2024. "Every Latin American Country Has Gone through at Least One Coup." Latinometrics, May 9. <https://latinometrics.substack.com/p/a-history-of-coups>

7 Latinometrics. 2024. "Every Latin American Country Has Gone through at Least One Coup." Latinometrics, May 9. <https://latinometrics.substack.com/p/a-history-of-coups>. Also, in John R. Bawden. 2016. *The Pinochet Generation: The Chilean Military in the Twentieth Century*. University of Alabama Press. https://books.google.bg/books?id=ELScDAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

8 Latinometrics. 2024. "Every Latin American Country Has Gone through at Least One Coup." Latinometrics, May 9. <https://latinometrics.substack.com/p/a-history-of-coups>. Also, in Duncan Campbell. 2003. "Kissinger Approved Argentinian 'Dirty War.'" *The Guardian*, December 6. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/dec/06/argentina.usa>

9 Story Of Pakistan. 2003. "Ouster of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto." Story Of Pakistan, June 1. <https://storyofpakistan.com/ouster-of-zulfikar-ali-bhutto/>

10 Nowa Omoigui. n.d. "History of Civil-Military Relations in Nigeria: The Second Transition (1979-83)."

Not all instances of violent destabilization took the form of conventional coups; some escalated into civil wars or involved the use of paramilitary forces. A deeper understanding of why democratic governments were so frequently overthrown requires attention to the specific historical context of each case and to the fact that, in some instances, limited democratic commitment predated the events themselves.¹¹

Moreover, in most of the cases outlined above, the destabilization was military in character rather than rooted in civilian protest. The underlying drivers were typically ideological — conflicts among political ideologies such as socialism, communism, fascism, republicanism, and liberal democracy — and in most instances the means employed were military, supported by foreign financing and political backing.

3. Destabilization by Non-State Actors

Non-state actors within democratic societies — including street gangs, criminal organizations, protest mobs, ideological movements, and anarchist groups — have at times resorted to violence. Such events have often been driven by racial, ethnic, political, or socioeconomic tensions. Not all of the cases discussed below involved attempts to replace a regime; rather, many consisted of large-scale politically motivated violence, frequently rooted in racism. These incidents typically reflected failures of law enforcement, social inequality, or broader public frustration. For comparative purposes, several illustrative examples follow.

3.1 United States

The United States, a veteran democracy, has experienced recurrent episodes of mob violence and gang activity. A prominent example of racially motivated mass violence occurred in 1921 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A white mob, driven by racial hostility, attacked the prosperous Black neighborhood of Greenwood, killing approximately 300 people, destroying homes and businesses, and displacing thousands of families. The episode constitutes a clear case of racially motivated mob violence triggered by rumors of an assault on a white citizen.¹²

During the 1949 Peekskill riots in New York, an anti-communist and racially hostile mob attacked attendees at a concert by the Black singer Paul Robeson. The assault included stone-throwing and the violent enforcement of racial segregation. More than 140 individuals were injured in the unrest.¹³

11 Latinometrics. 2024. "Every Latin American Country Has Gone through at Least One Coup." Latinometrics, May 9. <https://latinometrics.substack.com/p/a-history-of-coups>

12 Barbara Kay Bosserman. 2025. *Tulsa Race Massacre*. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1383756/dl>

13 Joshua Dellacruz. 2025. "The Monsters Are Due on Hillside Avenue: Paul Robeson and the Racialization of the Peekskill Riots of 1949" https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1041&context=history_honors

Racially motivated lynchings in the southern United States from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century involved white mobs executing Black individuals accused of crimes, often on the basis of false allegations. More than 4,000 such cases have been documented. These were extrajudicial killings carried out by non-state actors, bypassing formal legal procedures and instilling fear in colored communities.¹⁴

Between 1974 and 1976, Boston experienced riots opposing school desegregation through mandatory busing. Mobs resisting integration attacked buses transporting Black students, throwing stones and leading to widespread violence that resulted in injuries and property damage.¹⁵ The 1992 Los Angeles riots in California erupted following the acquittal of police officers in the beating of Rodney King. Mobs and street gangs, including the Crips and the Bloods, engaged in looting, arson, and gunfire. The violence resulted in 63 deaths and more than 2,000 injuries. The participation of organized street gangs intensified the scale of the unrest and contributed to the number of casualties.¹⁶

3.2 United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, a long-standing liberal democracy, has also experienced episodes of violent unrest. In 1958, racially motivated riots broke out in the Notting area of London. Over several days, white mobs attacked immigrants from the West Indies, using iron bars and bottles and injuring dozens. The violence was rooted in racial hostility toward Indian subjects following the Second World War and the broader conflict between Britain and India.

In 2011, riots erupted in United Kingdom after police shot dead an armed criminal. Mobs and gangs looted shops, set fires, clashed with police, and spread unrest to cities including Manchester. More than 3,000 arrests were made, and five deaths were attributed to these riots.¹⁷ The riots erupted in following the police shooting of Mark Duggan, who was suspected of weapons and drug offenses. What began as an organized protest against police violence in London spread nationwide, escalating into widespread rioting, looting, and arson.¹⁸

14 Maya Angelou. 2017. *Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror*. <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>

15 Jack Tager. 2001. *Boston Riots: Three Centuries of Social Violence*. Northeastern University Press. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d235/9b3c69f09b3313fc74cc8e892ed7b098eb93.pdf>

16 Mydans, Seth. 1992. "Riot in Los Angles: Pocket of Tension; A Target of Rioters, Koreatown Is Bitter, Armed and Determined." *The New York Times*, May 3. <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/05/03/us/riot-los-angles-pocket-tension-target-rioters-koreatown-bitter-armed-determined.html>

17 Web.archive.org. n.d. "Notting Hill Riots 1958." Exploring 20-Th Century London. Accessed January 17, 2026. <http://www.20thcenturylondon.org.uk/server.php?show=conInformationRecord.161>

18 BBC News. 2011. "London Riots: Dozens Injured after Tottenham Violence." *BBC News* (London), August 7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-14435251> Also in Sky News. 2011. "London Burns As Rioters And Looters Run Amok." *Sky News* (London), October 26. <https://news.sky.com/home/uk-news/article/16045926> Also in Pickard, Jim. 2011. "Focus of Rioting Moves beyond UK Capital." *Financial Times* (London), August 10. <https://www.ft.com/content/5d2fbaa2-c262-11e0-9ede-00144feabdc0> Also in BBC News. 2011. "UK Riots: Trouble Erupts in English Cities." *BBC News* (London), August 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-14460554>

3.3 India

India, the world's largest democracy, has experienced recurrent episodes of communal and mob violence. In 2020, sectarian riots broke out in Delhi between Hindus and Muslims. Such eruptions have been a recurring phenomenon. The unrest, sparked by protests against citizenship legislation, involved arson, stabbings, and live gunfire. More than fifty people were killed and hundreds injured.¹⁹

Ethnic violence also erupted in the Indian state of Manipur in 2023 and has continued at varying levels of intensity since then. Street mobs and rival ethnic communities — Meitei and Kuki — attacked villages, burned homes, and killed more than 200 people in clashes linked to disputes over land, property, and resources.²⁰

Additional incidents have occurred in connection with protests by cow-protection activists that began in 2010 and have continued across various regions. Mobs associated with these movements — often linked to Hindu nationalist groups — have carried out lynchings of Muslims and Dalits suspected of cattle smuggling or beef consumption, with dozens of deaths reported annually.²¹ The issue of cattle slaughter, prohibited in many Indian states, has become a catalyst for broader mobilization against migrants and non-Hindu religious communities, frequently triggering ethnic and religious unrest.²²

3.4 France

France, a republican democracy, has frequently experienced socio-economic protests and unrest in suburban areas arising from a range of grievances, including anti-immigration protests, agricultural taxation, and ethnic tensions. A prominent example occurred in 2005, when riots broke out in the suburbs of Paris and other cities. Youth gangs and street mobs in heavily immigrant neighborhoods engaged in weeks of unrest following deaths linked to police violence. The disturbances involved the burning of vehicles and buildings, resulting in more than 2,800 arrests and extensive property damage.²³

19 Hannon, Elliot. 2020. "Hindu Nationalist Gangs Roam New Delhi Streets as Religious Riots in India Kill Dozens." *Slate Magazine* (New Delhi), February 26. <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/02/hindu-nationalist-gangs-new-delhi-modi-religious-riots-muslims-india-kill-dozens.html> Also in *The Guardian*. 2020. "Death Toll from Delhi's Worst Riots in Decades Rises to 38." *The Guardian* (New Delhi), February 27. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/27/death-toll-from-delhis-worst-riots-in-decades-rises-to-38> Also in *Tribune News*. 2020. "Delhi Riots: Ensure Safety of Minorities, Says SGPC." *Tribuneindia News Service* (New Delhi), February 28. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/delhi/delhi-riots-ensure-safety-of-minorities-says-sgpc-48220>

20 Sukrita Baruah, and Jimmy Leivon. 2023. "Manipur Govt Puts Toll at 60, Supreme Court Says Concerned over Lives Lost." *The Indian Express* (New Delhi), May 9. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/manipur-violence-death-toll-supreme-court-says-concerned-over-lives-lost-8598842/> Also in ANI. 2023. "Army Foils Sinister Plot In Manipur, Recovers Explosives, Detonators." *ZeeNews* (Manipur), May 19. <https://zeenews.india.com/india/army-foils-sinister-plot-in-manipur-recovers-explosives-detonators-2610144.html>

21 Mareš, M., and T. Bjørgo. 2019. "Vigilantism against Migrants and Minorities: Concepts and Goals of Current Research." *Routledge* 1: 1–30. <https://www.routledge.com/Vigilantism-against-Migrants-and-Minorities/Bjorgo-Mares/p/book/9781138493926>

22 Kumar, Nikhil. 2017. "India's Modi Speaks Out Against Cow Vigilantes After 'Beef Lynchings' Spark Nationwide Protests." *Time* (New Delhi), June 29. <https://time.com/4838566/india-beef-lynching-attacks-muslims/>

23 Associated Press. 2005. "Riots Plague Paris Suburbs for Sixth Night." *Fox News*, November 2. <https://web.archive.org/web/20130327075831/http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,174227,00.html> Also in *BBC News*. 2005. "Europe | French Riots Spread beyond Paris." *BBC News*, November 4. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4405620.stm>

The “Yellow Vest” (*gilets jaunes*) protests of 2018–2019 unfolded nationwide. Initially sparked by opposition to fuel taxes, the demonstrations escalated into violence as crowds clashed with police, vandalized landmarks such as the Arc de Triomphe, and caused injuries and arrests in major urban centers, including Paris.²⁴ More than 11,000 arrests were recorded, and multiple fatalities were reported in connection with the unrest.²⁵

3.5 Brazil

Brazil, as a relatively young democracy, has faced recurrent violence involving street gangs and politically incited mobs. Prolonged gang conflicts over territorial control have persisted for years in Rio de Janeiro and surrounding areas. Rival groups such as Comando Vermelho and Amigos dos Amigos have periodically engaged in armed street clashes, employing heavy weaponry and causing significant casualties in densely populated neighborhoods. In some instances, these gangs have overwhelmed local police forces.²⁶

Another example is the 2023 storming of government buildings in Brasília by supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro. Supporters of Bolsonaro invaded Congress, the Supreme Federal Court, and the presidential palace, vandalizing property and clashing with security personnel in an effort to contest election results.²⁷

3.6 Interim Conclusions

These examples demonstrate how violence in democratic systems may emerge from public crises and deep social divisions. Such events often prompt strong responses from law enforcement institutions and occur alongside efforts to advance socio-political reform. While democratic systems provide mechanisms for freedom of expression and electoral competition, they are not immune to episodes of violent unrest, particularly when state institutions fail to address underlying societal grievances.²⁸

It can be concluded that most instances of violence carried out by non-state actors in twentieth-century democratic regimes have been rooted in social drivers, including unemployment, racism, social protest, and, in some cases, overt political conflict.

24 Adam Nossiter. 2019. “Violence Surges as Yellow Vests Attack French Government Ministry.” *The New York Times* (Paris), January 5. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/05/world/europe/yellow-vests-protests-france-paris.html>

25 The Local France. 2018. “Furious French Drivers to Block Roads in Fuel Price Protest, but Are They Right To?” *The Local France*, October 30. <https://www.thelocal.fr/20181030/french-drivers-plan-road-blocks-to-protest-fuel-prices-but-are-they-right-to> Also in Kabir Chibber. 2022. “Versailles, Which Survived the French Revolution, Is Closing for the Latest Protests.” *Quartz*, July 21. <https://qz.com/1504949/versailles-is-closed-for-the-latest-yellow-vest-protests>

26 International Crisis Group. 2017. *Mafia of the Poor: Gang Violence and Extortion in Central America*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/central-america-guatemala-honduras-el-salvador/062-mafia-poor-gang-violence-and-extortion-central-america>

27 International Crisis Group. 2023. *Brazil: The Mob Leaves Its Mark*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/brazil/brazil-mob-leaves-its-mark> Also in Agence France-Presse. 2023. “World Leaders Condemn Anti-Government Mob Attacks in Brasilia.” *VOA* (Rio de Janeiro), January 8. <https://www.voanews.com/a/world-leaders-condemn-anti-government-mob-attacks-in-brasil/6910036.html>

28 ACLED. 2023. *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project CodeBook*. https://acleddata.com/sites/default/files/wp-content-archive/uploads/dlm_uploads/2023/06/ACLED_Codebook_2023.pdf

4. Organized Protest

This section examines organized protests and opposition movements in democratic societies that escalated into violence. Such cases often involved confrontations between demonstrators and counter-demonstrators, or clashes with law enforcement authorities, resulting in riots, injuries, and fatalities. The boundary between peaceful protest and violent unrest is frequently blurred, whether due to police response or the actions of external agitators.

In 1970, protests against the Vietnam War erupted at Kent State University in the United States. Student-led demonstrations escalated when members of the Ohio National Guard opened fire on protesters, killing four and wounding nine after confrontations that included stone-throwing.²⁹

In 2020, nationwide protests against police violence in the U.S. erupted following the killing of George Floyd. While many of the demonstrations, associated with the Black Lives Matter movement, remained peaceful, violence occurred in several cities, including looting, arson, and clashes with police. Law enforcement employed tear gas and rubber bullets. More than twenty people died in connection with the unrest, and extensive property damage was recorded.³⁰

On January 6, 2021, an organized effort to challenge the presidential election results culminated in an assault on the U.S. Capitol by supporters of Donald Trump. The crowd breached the building and clashed with police. The violence, which included physical assaults, vandalism, and gunfire, resulted in five deaths and injuries to more than 140 officers and civilians.³¹

There are also cases of separatism within a democratic state that threaten to break a democratic country apart. One example is the 2011 Northern Ireland riots, which took place from June 20 to July 16, 2011. The riots originally began in Belfast, before spreading to other parts of Northern Ireland. They were initiated by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The group undertook an armed campaign of almost thirty years and declared its goals to combat Irish republican paramilitaries, particularly the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) and to maintain Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom.³²

29 Human Rights Careers. n.d. "11 Student Protests That Changed the World." Human Rights Careers. Accessed January 17, 2026. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/student-protests-that-changed-the-world/>

30 Roudabeh Kishi, and Sam Jones. 2020. *Demonstrations and Political Violence in America: New Data for Summer 2020*. <https://acleddata.com/report/demonstrations-and-political-violence-america-new-data-summer-2020>

31 Barry, Dan; McIntire, Mike; Rosenberg, Matthew. 2021. "Our President Wants Us Here: The Mob That Stormed the Capitol." *The New York Times*, January 9. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html>

32 Henry McDonald. 2011. "The Truth about Belfast's Riots." *The Guardian* (Belfast), June 27. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/jun/27/the-truth-about-belfasts-riots>

In 2013, protests erupted in Turkey's Gezi Park. Opposition to an urban development project in Istanbul evolved into mass demonstrations against the government. Police used tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets, leading to violent clashes that resulted in eleven deaths and thousands of injuries.³³

Between 2016 and 2017, South Korea witnessed large-scale protests against President Park Geun-hye, with millions participating in demonstrations over corruption allegations against her. While most gatherings were peaceful, some incidents involved clashes with police, who deployed tear gas and water cannons. The large numbers of wounded ultimately led to the president's impeachment and removal from office.³⁴

Between 2019 and 2021, protests erupted in Chile in response to rising metro fares and broader grievances over social inequality. The demonstrations escalated into violent confrontations, including looting and arson attacks on metro stations. Police responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. More than thirty deaths and thousands of injuries were reported.³⁵

Between 2020 and 2022, youth and student-led pro-democracy protests in Thailand called for reform of the monarchy and changes to the government. As demonstrations intensified, police used tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets against protesters, resulting in injuries and multiple arrests.³⁶

In 2023, nationwide strikes and protests in France opposed pension reform raising the retirement age. Labor unions and opposition groups organized demonstrations that, in some instances, escalated into violence, including arson, vandalism, and clashes with police. Law enforcement responded with tear gas, and hundreds of injuries and arrests were reported.³⁷

4.1 Interim Conclusions

These examples illustrate how democratic system can descend into violence in response to political reforms, police actions, separatism, labor protests, migration-related tensions, or other social pressures. Numerous sources note that while most protests remain

33 Amnesty International. 2013. *Gezi Park Protests: Brutal Denial of the Right To Peaceful Assembly in Turkey*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR44/022/2013/en/>

34 Paula Hancocks, and Jeanne Bonner. 2016. "South Korean Protesters March against President Again." *CNN*, November 12. <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/11/12/asia/south-korean-protest-president-park/>

35 Claudia Dominguez, and Daniel Silva Fernandez. 2019. "Chile's President Declares State of Emergency after Riots over Metro Fare Hike." *CNN*, October 19. <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/19/americas/chile-protests-intl/index.html>

36 Human Rights Careers. n.d. "11 Student Protests That Changed the World." Human Rights Careers. Accessed January 17, 2026. <https://www.humanrightscarers.com/issues/student-protests-that-changed-the-world/>

37 Vidalon, Dominique, Manuel Ausloos, David Holmes, Peter Graff, and Daniel Wallis. 2023. "Paris Police, Protesters Clash for Third Night over Macron's Pension Reform." *Reuters*, March 16. <https://web.archive.org/web/20230319002935/https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/protests-resume-france-amid-anger-macrons-pension-age-reform-2023-03-18/>

relatively peaceful, a small proportion escalate into violent unrest. In the twenty-first century, documented cases of destabilization have generally been civilian rather than military in character, in contrast to the predominance of military-driven interventions in the twentieth century. The most significant shift concerns the means employed: less reliance on conventional military force and greater use of hybrid civilian methods, including cyberattacks, mass street protests, and organized mob violence.

The twentieth century was marked by successive violent struggles among diverse regime types — dictatorship, fascism, democracy, monarchy, and communism — over political dominance. The instruments of these struggles included both state-based military force, such as coups, and non-state opposition activity, including armed groups and organized gangs.

Paramilitary methods were often employed by underground movements and political or ideological opposition organizations, frequently with external support. Examples include Soviet assistance to communist forces in Spain and Nazi Germany's support for Mussolini's movement in Italy. The review suggests that in the previous century, destabilizing events in democratic states were largely driven by political, ideological, racial, or social factors. In some cases, classification is less clear-cut; for example, the 1968 student protests in France, led by an anarchist, do not fit neatly into a single category.

The late 21st century saw a decline in Cold War type conflicts; however, recent years have seen a marked increase in military coup attempts in Africa, with a total of 68 recorded attempts.³⁸ Military juntas frequently justify such actions as efforts to combat corruption, address security failures, or safeguard democracy. Many of these interventions have resulted in temporary or prolonged military rule.

5. Organized Protest with Foreign Support and Funding

Foreign involvement in protests and opposition movements is a contested issue. Governments and observers frequently allege that external actors provide financial, logistical, or ideological support in order to destabilize elected or established authority. Such claims may themselves be politically motivated and are often disputed by the parties involved, who may frame their activities as advancing democracy, human rights, social justice, or freedom of expression.

This section presents examples reflecting a range of perspectives, including accusations by authoritarian governments against Western funders, and vice versa. The focus is on

³⁸ Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. n.d. "List of Coups and Coup Attempts since 2010." Wikipedia. Accessed January 20, 2026. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_coups_and_coup_attempts_since_2010#References

cases in which violence occurred during protests and allegations were made that foreign actors contributed to efforts perceived as destabilizing democratic processes. It should be noted that the concept of “undermining democratic governance” is inherently subjective: some interpret such events as legitimate resistance to state authority, while others view them as orchestrated interventions by external elements.

5.1 Cases of External Funding and Support in the 20th Century

In 1948, the United States provided millions of dollars to Italy’s Christian Democracy party and other anti-communist groups in an effort to prevent victory by the Italian Communist Party, which was reportedly supported by the Soviet Union at a rate of approximately \$10 million per month. Both Cold War rivals engaged in financing efforts to bolster allied forces or undermine existing governments.³⁹

In Japan’s 1952 general elections, following the end of the Allied occupation, the United States covertly funded the Liberal Party in exchange for alignment with U.S. strategic interests. This alignment included suppressing protests against U.S. military bases in Japan and supporting Western security alliances. The assistance contributed to the party’s continued hold on power.⁴⁰

In Iran’s 1953 parliamentary elections, the United States, through the CIA, reportedly financed efforts to secure the election of eighteen pro-American candidates as part of broader efforts to weaken Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh. These actions formed part of the context preceding the 1953 coup and Mossadegh’s removal from office.⁴¹

In Chile’s 1964 presidential election, the United States spent approximately \$2.6 million supporting Eduardo Frei Montalva while conducting propaganda aimed at discrediting Salvador Allende. The Soviet Union, in turn, financed the Chilean Communist Party. Frei won the election with 56 percent of the vote.⁴²

5.2 Cases of External Funding and Support in the 21st Century

Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Antifa are generally described as distinct entities. BLM is a social justice movement with a central nonprofit arm, the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, whereas Antifa refers to a loosely organized anti-fascist ideological

39 Dieter Nohlen, and Philip Stöver. 2010. *Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook*. Nomos. https://books.google.co.il/books?id=zUbQRQAACAAJ&redir_esc=y.

40 Office of the Historian No. 573. 1952. “Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Young) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Allison).” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, China and Japan*, June 16, 1952. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v14p2/d573>.

41 Ervand Abrahamian. 2017. “Newly Declassified Documents Confirm U.S. Backed 1953 Coup in Iran Over Oil Contracts.” *Democracy Now!* Independent Global News. July 24, 2017. https://www.democracynow.org/2017/7/24/newly_declassified_documents_confirm_us_backed.

42 Loch K. Johnson. 2006. “Strategic Intelligence: [5 Volumes].” *Strategic Intelligence*, no. Bloomsbury Publishing (December). https://books.google.co.il/books?id=cg39hcj6AxQC&redir_esc=y.

movement without formal structure or centralized leadership. Neither has been credibly demonstrated to receive significant funding from foreign governments, despite recurring allegations and conspiracy narratives.

BLM's funding has primarily come from domestic U.S. sources, including corporations, public figures, and grassroots donations. Financial support increased sharply following the death of George Floyd in 2020. The Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation reported more than \$90 million in donations that year, including major contributions from U.S. companies such as Amazon (which pledged \$10 million to various racial justice groups, including BLM), Microsoft (\$250,000), Airbnb (\$500,000), and Google (as part of a \$2.35 million allocation).

Other contributors included foreign-based individuals or cultural figures, such as the South Korean band BTS, whose \$1 million donation was matched by U.S.-based fans, and the artist The Weeknd, who contributed approximately \$450,000 in total over several years. These donations were made by private individuals or fan communities and were not linked to foreign governments. The global BLM foundation concluded the year 2020 with approximately \$60 million in net assets after grants and expenses and has since distributed more than \$35 million to various U.S.-based organizations.

Allegations of foreign funding frequently center on billionaire philanthropist George Soros, a Hungarian-born Jew who became a U.S. citizen in 1961, whose Open Society Foundation have supported racial and social justice initiatives in the United States since the 1990s. Claims portraying BLM as a "Soros-funded corporation" or as part of a foreign conspiracy — including narratives circulated by Russian state media — have been widely characterized as disinformation. Soros's foundations are U.S.-registered nonprofit entities, and their grants related to BLM are transparent, publicly reported and domestically focused.

Other substantial commitments, such as \$100 million from the Ford Foundation, a U.S.-based philanthropic organization, have been directed toward American social justice groups and initiatives. There is no verified evidence indicating direct funding by foreign governments or entities seeking to influence U.S. domestic affairs.⁴³

Antifa is not a single organization but a decentralized network of autonomous groups and individuals opposed to fascism, operating through protests, counter-demonstrations, and online activism. It does not maintain documented or traceable centralized bank accounts,

43 DISINFO. 2020. "DISINFO: Black Lives Matter Is a Corporation Financed by George Soros." September 20. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/black-lives-matter-is-a-corporation-financed-by-george-soros/> Also in Cheryl Corley. 21 AD. "Black Lives Matter Fights Disinformation to Keep the Movement Strong." NPR, May 25.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/05/25/999841030/black-lives-matter-fights-disinformation-to-keep-the-movement-strong> Also in Gabriel Black. 2016. "Billionaires Back Black Lives Matter." World Socialist Web Site, October 11. <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2016/10/11/pers-o11.html>

revenue streams, or funding structures. Activities associated with the movement are generally self-financed by participants or supported through informal contributions from followers and sympathizers, with no verified evidence of structured foreign backing.⁴⁴

Allegations of foreign funding — often linked to George Soros or to vague “international” sources — originate largely in conspiracy narratives. For example, President Donald Trump and political allies asserted links between Antifa and foreign entities in order to justify designating it as a terrorist organization in 2025, including references to specific European groups such as East German Antifa. However, U.S. intelligence agencies, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security, have not identified foreign funding networks or centralized leadership structures connected to Antifa; it is generally characterized as an ideological tendency rather than a formal organization. Investigations into the 2020 protests did not identify foreign sponsorship and claims of covert foreign financing or infiltration remain unsubstantiated.⁴⁵

Although both movements have faced allegations amplified by political rhetoric and disinformation — at times including messaging attributed to foreign actors such as Russia seeking to exacerbate domestic tensions — available reporting indicates that their activities are either domestically financed or not externally financed in any structured manner. Should new evidence emerge, assessments could change, but current findings do not substantiate foreign involvement.⁴⁶

Comparable claims have arisen in other contexts. One prominent example is the Euromaidan protests in Ukraine (2013–2014), which began as a domestic political crisis and evolved into an event with significant international repercussions. Large-scale demonstrations against the government in Kyiv escalated into violent clashes between protesters and security forces, resulting in more than 100 deaths. The protests culminated in the removal of President Viktor Yanukovich, who subsequently fled to Russia.

Critics, including the governments of Russia and China, accused the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED) of funding sixty-five nongovernmental organizations and allocating approximately \$14 million to projects that they alleged contributed to the unrest.

44 CBS News. n.d. *What Is Antifa? Is It a Group or an Idea, and What Do Supporters Want?* Accessed January 20, 2026. <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/GO/GO00/20210512/112524/HHRG-117-GO00-20210512-SD006.pdf>

45 Gary Collins. 2025. “Feds Warn of Antifa Infiltration, Hidden Funding Ahead of ‘No Kings’ Protests.” *Fox News*, October 17. <https://foxbaltime.com/spotlight-on-maryland/feds-warn-of-antifa-infiltration-hidden-funding-ahead-of-no-kings-protests> Also in CBS News. n.d. *What Is Antifa? Is It a Group or an Idea, and What Do Supporters Want?* Accessed January 20, 2026. <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/GO/GO00/20210512/112524/HHRG-117-GO00-20210512-SD006.pdf> Also in Donald Trump. 2025. *Designating Antifa as a Domestic Terrorist Organization*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/09/designating-antifa-as-a-domestic-terrorist-organization/> Also in Terrorist Designations of Antifa Ost and Three Other Violent Antifa Groups, US Department of State (2025). <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/11/terrorist-designations-of-antifa-ost-and-three-other-violent-antifa-groups> Also in Ryan Lucas. 2025. “As Trump Talks of Designating Antifa a Foreign Terrorist Group, Experts See Danger.” *NPR*, October 28. <https://www.npr.org/2025/10/28/nx-s1-5587726/trump-antifa-terrorist-group>

46 Cheryl Corley. 21 AD. “Black Lives Matter Fights Disinformation To Keep the Movement Strong.” *NPR*, May 25. <https://www.npr.org/2021/05/25/999841030/black-lives-matter-fights-disinformation-to-keep-the-movement-strong>

They characterized the events as a Western-backed “color revolution” aimed at undermining Ukraine’s elected leadership. Supporters of the movement, by contrast, described it as a genuine public response to corruption and to policies perceived as pro-Russian.⁴⁷

Protests in Venezuela against President Nicolás Maduro (2014–2019) evolved into sustained opposition demonstrations that included violent clashes, the erection of barricades, street fighting, and attacks on security forces, resulting in hundreds of deaths and mutual allegations of human rights violations. The United States provided millions of dollars in funding to opposition groups through organizations such as the NED and USAID, including approximately \$5 million annually for pro-democracy initiatives and support for figures such as Juan Guaidó, who declared himself interim president in 2019. Maduro’s government and allies such as China characterized this support as U.S.-orchestrated subversion aimed at securing influence over Venezuela’s oil resources and undermining an elected government. The United States denied pursuing direct regime change and emphasized support for democratic transition processes.⁴⁸ This position has been questioned in light of the recent U.S. operation to arrest Maduro and efforts to establish a government aligned with U.S. interests.

Georgia’s “Rose Revolution” in 2003 began as largely peaceful protests and escalated into regime change when demonstrators entered parliament and compelled President Eduard Shevardnadze to resign amid allegations of electoral fraud. The U.S.-based NED and other Western organizations provided funding and training to opposition groups such as Kmara. Critics, including the Russian government, described this assistance as foreign interference intended to install a pro-Western government and weaken regional stability. Supporters characterized the movement as a popular reform effort directed against corruption.⁴⁹

In 2024, Iran funded pro-Hamas protests on U.S. campuses and was also behind street protests opposing U.S. support for Israel. In several instances, demonstrations escalated

47 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People's Republic of China. 2022. *Fact Sheet on the National Endowment for Democracy*. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjzb/zjzg_663340/xws_665282/xgxw_665284/202205/t20220507_10683090.html Also in Suparna Chaudhry. 2022. *The Assault on Civil Society: Explaining State Crackdown on NGOs*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/assault-on-civil-society-explaining-state-crackdown-on-ngos/71993D2DC576D810ADEC7675C229853B>

48 Hannah Dreier. 2014. “US Funds Political Groups in Venezuela despite Ban.” AP, July 18. <https://apnews.com/international-news-general-news-dca0ce53bd5940d0aa483e769f66975f> Also in Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People's Republic of China. 2022. *Fact Sheet on the National Endowment for Democracy*. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjzb/zjzg_663340/xws_665282/xgxw_665284/202205/t20220507_10683090.html Also in Mark Weisbrot. 2014. “US Support for Regime Change in Venezuela Is a Mistake.” *The Guardian*, February 18. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/18/venezuela-protests-us-support-regime-change-mistake>

49 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People's Republic of China. 2022. *Fact Sheet on the National Endowment for Democracy*. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjzb/zjzg_663340/xws_665282/xgxw_665284/202205/t20220507_10683090.html Also in Suparna Chaudhry. 2022. *The Assault on Civil Society: Explaining State Crackdown on NGOs*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/assault-on-civil-society-explaining-state-crackdown-on-ngos/71993D2DC576D810ADEC7675C229853B>

into confrontations between protesters and police. U.S. intelligence officials accused Iran of providing financial support and posing as online activists to encourage the protests, with the stated objective of incitement, undermining confidence in democratic institutions, and influencing electoral processes. These actions were perceived as part of Tehran's broader efforts to exploit domestic polarization in the United States. Iranian officials denied direct involvement and portrayed the protests as organic responses to U.S. foreign policy in the context of Israel's operations in Gaza.⁵⁰

In Nicaragua, protests in 2018 expanded into broader demonstrations against President Daniel Ortega and escalated into violence involving barricades, street battles, arson, and clashes that resulted in more than 300 deaths. The NED allegedly provided at least \$4.4 million between 2016 and 2019 to opposition groups and media outlets. Ortega's government alleged that this funding fueled a "violent coup attempt" aimed at removing a democratically elected administration and claimed that NED-supported actors played roles in attacks on government institutions. The United States described the funding as support for human rights and independent media.⁵¹

Protests in Belarus in 2020 followed disputed elections and developed into mass demonstrations, some of which turned violent as police used force against protesters demanding the resignation of President Alexander Lukashenko. The NED allocated approximately \$2.35 million to projects promoting "free and fair elections" and expressed support for opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya. Lukashenko and allies such as Russia accused her of participating in U.S.-backed subversion intended to destabilize the regime. The European Union and the United States condemned the election as fraudulent.⁵²

During the 2011 Arab Spring protests in Egypt, violent confrontations with security forces took place during demonstrations in Tahrir Square and ultimately led to the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. NED-funded youth initiatives supported nongovernmental organizations such as the National Association for Change and the "April 6" Youth Movement, providing training and assistance that critics — including Mubarak's government and other observers — described as American interference aimed at engineering regime change under the banner of promoting democracy. Many Egyptians, however, viewed the events as a legitimate uprising against an authoritarian regime.⁵³

50 FDD. 2024. *Iran Supporting and Funding Pro-Hamas Protests in the U.S.* <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2024/07/10/iran-supporting-and-funding-pro-amas-protests-in-the-u-s/>

51 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People's Republic of China. 2022. *Fact Sheet on the National Endowment for Democracy.* https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjlb/zjzg_663340/xws_665282/xgxw_665284/202205/t20220507_10683090.html

52 Suparna Chaudhry. 2022. *The Assault on Civil Society: Explaining State Crackdown on NGOs.* <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/assault-on-civil-society-explaining-state-crackdown-on-ngos/71993D2DC576D810ADEC7675C229853B>

53 Muriel Asseburg. 2012. *Protest, Revolt and Regime Change in the Arab World.* Berlin. https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research_papers/2012_RP06_ass.pdf

Protests in Georgia in 2024 against the proposed “foreign agents” law — legislation intended to restrict foreign influence in domestic policymaking and to require nongovernmental organizations receiving foreign funding to register as foreign agents — escalated into violence, including attacks on police officers and damage to property.⁵⁴ The ruling Georgian Dream party accused EU-backed nongovernmental organizations of financing and inciting unrest in an effort to topple the government following electoral setbacks, describing the events as foreign interference in democratic processes. Protesters and Western observers, by contrast, characterized the legislation as authoritarian.⁵⁵

Serbia’s “Velvet Revolution” in 2000 began as protests against President Slobodan Milošević and culminated in riots and the storming of parliament, leading to his removal from office. The NED allocated approximately \$10 million in 1999 and \$31 million in 2000 to opposition groups such as Otpor, which trained activists in organizing protests and demonstrations. Milošević’s allies accused these groups of engaging in U.S.-funded subversion aimed at undermining Yugoslavia’s sovereignty.⁵⁶

Protests in the United States between 2018 and 2024 targeting ICE, the Democratic National Convention (DNC), and U.S. immigration policy intensified around 2024 and, in some instances, involved violence, property destruction, and radical demonstrations. Certain groups — including the Party for Socialism and Liberation (connected to China) and more than 150 organizations alleged to be connected to hostile states such as Iran and China — were accused of exerting foreign influence to disrupt democratic institutions and public events in the United States. Participants frequently denied foreign ties, asserting that their actions reflected authentic domestic political and social grievances.⁵⁷

5.3 Interim Conclusions

One important distinction is that, unlike many cases of external support in the 20th century, 21st-century foreign assistance has been directed primarily toward supporting political opposition rather than toward violent street mobilization. In the current era, methods of financing and external intervention have evolved and grown more sophisticated, with support increasingly funneled to non-state, non-military organizations — especially social and community-based movements. The arena of contestation has shifted from institutional and military channels to the street, expressed through protests and

54 Similar laws exist in the United States and Israel, requiring nonprofit organizations to disclose foreign government funding.

55 Shereena Qazi. 2024. “Are EU-Backed NGOs Fanning Violent Georgia Protests?” TRT World, December 10. <https://www.trtworld.com/article/18241888>

56 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. People’s Republic of China. 2022. *Fact Sheet on the National Endowment for Democracy*. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjlb/zjzg_663340/xws_665282/xgxw_665284/202205/t20220507_10683090.html Also in Suparna Chaudhry. 2022. *The Assault on Civil Society: Explaining State Crackdown on NGOs*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/assault-on-civil-society-explaining-state-crackdown-on-ngos/71993D2DC576D810ADEC7675C229853B>

57 Geoff Harris. 2025. “FBI to Investigate Funding of the Los Angeles Anti-ICE Protests; Organizations Involved.” ABCNews; *The National News Desk*, June 10. <https://abc3340.com/news/nation-world/fbi-to-investigate-funding-anti-ice-protests-organizations-involved-president-donald-trump-california-governor-gavin-newsom-los-angeles>

demonstrations marked by more active mass participation, the involvement of street gangs and movements mobilized around a broad spectrum of issues, from race, religion, and minority rights to environmental protection and climate change.

These cases illustrate how foreign funding, whether provided directly by foreign governments, by non-governmental organizations, or indirectly through intelligence agencies, can be used, or perceived, as a political instrument in domestic struggles. Allegations frequently originate from target regimes (for example, Russia, Iran, or China, which characterize Western assistance as interference in internal affairs), whereas funders such as the United States frame such support as promoting democracy and assistance in transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy. Outcomes vary, ranging from regime change to intensified polarization, with violence typically emerging from escalation between protesters and state security forces. A central limitation in any comprehensive analysis of foreign funding is that many claims rely on open-source analysis, while much of the alleged support is, by nature, covert.

6. Key Findings

Quiet intervention and violent destabilization of democratic processes are phenomena nearly as old as democracy itself. What varies over time is their character, underlying drivers, instruments, and modes of financing and assistance. Broadly speaking, destabilization may take the form of military or quasi-military force —in the shape of invasion or a coup d'état — or of civilian force, including mass mobilization, organized movements, associations, and street gangs, which can in some cases produce a similar outcome to a coup in the form of a civilian overthrow of government. It may also be argued that contemporary cases increasingly reflect hybrid combinations of these two models, as movements such as Antifa and BLM frequently operate in ways that resemble urban guerrilla organizations — in 2020, President Donald Trump announced his intention to designate Antifa as a terrorist organization, however, no formal legal designation was implemented.

The underlying context has also shifted. Whereas the 20th century was largely shaped by ideological struggles among competing systems of governance and universalist doctrines, often intertwined with racial conflict, current contemporary destabilization efforts are more frequently framed in explicitly socio-political terms, centered on gender, social, racial, and ethnic justice. A parallel shift is evident in the instruments employed to challenge democratic governments. While the 20th century was marked predominantly by overt military mechanisms, the 21st century has seen comparatively fewer instances of foreign or domestic armed forces being used to undermine elected governments, with the exception of parts of the developing world and Africa.

Although military instruments for regime change remain in use (for example, the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine aimed at toppling the government in Kyiv, and more recent U.S. actions directed at the Maduro regime in Venezuela), foreign financing of efforts to weaken or destabilize democratic governments and provoke violence has assumed a far broader scope in the twenty-first century than in the previous era. A discernible trend favors the use of funding and the activation of local influence networks — often through intermediary movements and organizations — over direct military invasion or reliance on domestic armed forces to effect political change.

Moreover, foreign intervention in democratic processes and the leveraging of such involvement to catalyze violent unrest in order to challenge the legitimacy of elected authorities has become a significant operational tool and a core component of 21st-century hybrid warfare. In contrast to the 20th century, when financial support aimed at destabilizing or removing governments generally had more limited systemic impact, contemporary foreign funding — even absent overt military force or large-scale armed confrontation — can produce outcomes functionally similar to those once achieved through traditional military means: namely, the weakening or removal of democratically elected governments.

The rise of funding via foundations and nonprofit organizations has enabled states with limited conventional military capacity but substantial financial resources — such as Qatar — to exert influence over cross-border political processes, giving them the ability to shape internal dynamics within target states.

His areas of expertise include terrorism, cybersecurity, and post-Soviet politics in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

© All rights reserved
April 2026



The Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security
16 Abba Eban St, Jerusalem
www.jiss.org.il
info@jiss.org.il

Conlonel (Res.), Prof. Gabi Siboni is the CEO of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security. He is an expert on cybersecurity, military strategy and technology. He was the director of the Military and Strategic Affairs program and the Cyber Research program of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) from 2006–2020. He serves as a senior consultant to the IDF and other Israeli security organizations and the security industry. He holds a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in Engineering from Tel Aviv University and a Ph.D. in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from Ben-Gurion University

Dr. Simon Tsipis holds a PhD in Political Science and International Relations from Bonn University and an MA in Political Science and National Security from Tel Aviv University. His areas of expertise include terrorism, cybersecurity, and post-Soviet politics in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

www.jiss.org.il

