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Author: Grandia, Mirjam

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Chapter 2 Theoretical Foundations

Interventions, Strategies and Decision-Makers

2.1 Introduction

The act of deciding if and how military force will be deployed lies at the heart of what is known as the strategic *civil military interface*. In this interface¹, military operations are designed and directed by a group of senior civil and military decision-makers. They and their actions are the focus of the theoretical and empirical puzzle of this study. Before outlining the theoretical prescriptions on the relations among senior civil and military decision-makers, this chapter first briefly sketches the international setting in which they operate. One cannot comprehend the 'how' of decision-making - responding to foreign policy problems and occasions for decision² - without an understanding of the context. This perspective is founded in the constructivist belief that the world should be seen and analysed as a (social) construction whilst being appreciative to differences across context.³

Therefore, first of all, the context of contemporary military interventions will be delineated, with a particular focus on the concept of stabilisation operations. This concept was, and arguably still is, the dominant concept wherein the decisions that are at the centre of attention for this study, were made. Subsequently, the senior civil and military decision-makers and the nature of their relations will be attended to. These actors are the main unit of analysis in this research project and need to be conceptualised. Successively, a theoretical description of their core process, the act of strategy making, will be presented. From then onwards, the analytical framework that provides the prism of the research project will be introduced. It commences with sketching the institutional context and its conditioning mechanisms, thereby providing the setting in which the senior civil and military decision-makers are to come to a decision. Successively, the analytical framework that sets out how to reconstruct the decision paths of the group of senior civil and military decision-makers

1 The term *civil military interface* is used to describe the strategic level. It not only includes a level in the chain of command, but it also provides the funds, as well as the physical and conceptual directions that are necessary to implement the decisions of the political leadership. In this arena, decisions are taken regarding the size, organisation, materiel and deployment of the military are made. It is at this level that the campaign plans are created and implemented. See: Egnell, 'Explaining US and British Performance in Complex Expeditionary Operations', 1042, 1045-1046.

2 Hermann, 'How Decision Units shape Foreign Policy', 51.

3 Karin M. Fierke, 'Constructivism', in: Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith (eds) *International Relations Theories. Discipline and Diversity* (second edition Oxford 2010) 187-204; Vendulka Kubáľková (ed.), *Foreign policy in a constructed world*. Vol. 4. ME Sharpe, (2001) 60-74.

is presented. The chapter is concluded with listing the propositions that will guide the data collection and analysis of this research project.

2.2 Contemporary Military Interventions

The history of military intervention by Western states has been variable and cyclical in nature, rather than progressing in a clearly defined direction. Military interventions have exhibited considerable variation in terms of the normative dimension.⁴ Hence, the pattern of military intervention throughout the last decades cannot be understood in isolation from the changing normative context in which it occurs; the context shapes the various conceptions of interest. Standard analytical [mostly realist] assumptions about states and other actors pursuing their interests tend to leave the sources and motivations of interests vaguely defined or unspecified.⁵

The end of the Cold War heralded a rapid and dramatic transformation in the practice of military interventions. Now, the majority of interventions came to be multinational peacekeeping operations instead of unilateral intervention by world powers. Ever since, the number of this type of mission increased greatly.⁶ Moreover, a qualitative shift in the nature of peacekeeping: 'second-generation' peacekeeping missions emerged. Since the early nineties of the last decade an increase of intrastate conflicts was seen to endanger international security. Consequently, peacekeepers were sent to intrastate conflicts, thus stretching the traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, neutrality, and limited use of force. Hence, in addition to the traditional truce observation role of peacekeepers⁷, this type

4 Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, 'Democratization and War', *Foreign Affairs* 74(3) (1995) 79-97; James Burk, 'What Justifies Peacekeeping?', *Peace Review* 12(3) (2000) 467-473; Alex J. Bellamy, 'The great beyond: Rethinking military Responses to new Wars and complex Emergencies', *Defence Studies* 2(1) (2002) 25-50; Roland Paris, *At War's End: building Peace after civil Conflict* (Cambridge 2004); Mary Kaldor, *New and old Wars: Organised Violence in a global Era* (Cambridge 2013); Helen Dexter, 'New War, Good War and the War on Terror: Explaining, Excusing and Creating Western Neo interventionism', *Development and Change* 38(6) (2007) 1055-1071; Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and unending War: governing the World of Peoples* (Cambridge 2007); David A. Lake, 'Building Legitimate States after Civil Wars' in: Matthew Hoddie and Caroline A. Hartzell (eds.), *Strengthening Peace in Post-civil War States: Transforming Spoilers into Stakeholders* (Chicago 2010) 29-51; Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, 'The History of Imposed Democracy and the Future of Iraq and Afghanistan', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 4(4) (2008) 321-347; Sonja Grimm and Wolfgang Merkel, 'War and Democratization: Legality, Legitimacy and Effectiveness', *Democratization* 15(3) (2008) 457-471.

5 Martha Finnemore, 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention' in: Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York 1996) 153.

6 United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations web site, www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home.shtml

7 This typology is taken from Michael Lipson, 'A "Garbage Can Model" of UN Peacekeeping', *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 13(1) (2007) 79-97, 79. He uses the term to describe post-Cold War missions that increasingly undertake peace enforcement or peace building activities in addition to traditional interposition and truce observation functions. Typologies of peacekeeping generations include Michael W. Doyle, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC's Civil Mandate* (Boulder 1995) 25-26; Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the Post-Cold War Era* (2nd ed. Boulder 2000) 78-108; Ramesh Thakur and Albrecht Schnabel, 'Cascading Generations of Peacekeeping: Across the Mogadishu Line to Kosovo and Timor' in: Ramesh Thakur and Albrecht Schnabel (eds.) *United*

of peacekeeping also entailed significant nation-building activities in various places like Cambodia, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Mozambique, Bosnia, Croatia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Liberia, Sierra Leone, East Timor and Kosovo.⁸

One of the striking features of these peacekeeping operations is that they all sought to remake (post-) conflict states into liberal democracies on the grounds that this is the 'appropriate' model of domestic political organisation for states to adopt.⁹ These set objectives however were not without their own difficulties. One of the most prominent peacekeeping operations, which revealed the growing difficulties of competing mandates and unclear political objectives, were the UN and NATO missions in the Balkans.

In addition to the transformation of types of interventions, Western powers demonstrated a growing reluctance to intervene without justification in terms of widely-shared normative principles. Although political interest continued to play a significant role in contemporary intervention by major powers, these powers were now required to justify their actions in terms of general normative principles. Consequently, they rarely intervened in the internal affairs of other states without authorisation based on these general principles from legitimate multilateral institutions¹⁰, in particular the United Nations.

In turn, the notion that sovereignty is conditional and contingent upon state performance in terms of protecting the rights of citizens, became increasingly influential. The legal prescription for intervention¹¹ became weaker as a consequence, as applicability of the principle of non-intervention started to depend on 'standards of civilisation'. More specifically, 'civilised' states engaged in the protection of norms whereas 'uncivilised' states or polities did not.¹² In fact, Russia, after the end of the Cold War more and more viewed

Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Ad Hoc Missions, Permanent Engagement (New York 2001) 3–25; John Mackinlay and Jarat Chopra, 'Second Generation Multinational Operations', *The Washington Quarterly* 15(3) (Summer 1992) 113–131; Marrack Goulding, 'The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping', *International Affairs* 69(3) (July 1993) 451–464 cited in: Lipson, 'A "Garbage Can Model" of UN Peacekeeping', 79.

8 Roland Paris, 'Peacekeeping and the Constraints of Global Culture', *European Journal of International Relations* 9(3) (2003) 441–473; Niels van Willigen, 'International administration and institutional autonomy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo', *East European Politics* 28.4 (2012): 429–451; Frans Osinga and James A. Russel, 'Conclusion: Military Adaptation and the War in Afghanistan', in Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga and James A. Russell, eds. *Military Adaptation in Afghanistan* (Stanford University Press, 2013) 288–236, 289.

9 Roland Paris, 'International Peacebuilding and the "Mission Civilisatrice"', *Review of International Studies* 28(4) (2002) 637–55; Roland Paris, 'Saving Liberal Peacebuilding', *Review of international studies* 36(2) (2010) 337–365.

10 Chiyuki Aoi. *Legitimacy and the Use of Armed Force: Stability Missions in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York 2010); James Dobbins et al., *The UN's role in nation-building: From the Congo to Iraq II* (Arlington, 2005); Simon Chesterman 'Legality Versus Legitimacy: Humanitarian Intervention, the Security Council, and the Rule of Law', *Security Dialogue* 33(3) (2002) 293–307; Neil S MacFarlane, Carolyn J. Thielking, and Thomas G. Weiss, 'The Responsibility to Protect: is Anyone Interested in Humanitarian Intervention?', *Third World Quarterly* 25(5) (2004) 977–992; Andreas Krieg, 'National Interests and Altruism in Humanitarian Intervention' in: Andreas Krieg, *Motivations for Humanitarian Intervention* (London 2013) 37–58.

11 See: Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton 1999); Stephen D. Krasner, 'Compromising Westphalia', *International Security* 20(3) (1995) 115–151; Stephen D. Krasner (ed.), *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities* (New York 2013); Janice E. Thomson, 'State Sovereignty in International Relations: Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Empirical Research', *International Studies Quarterly* 39 (1995) 213–233; Winston P Nagan and Craig Hammer, 'The Changing Character of Sovereignty in International Law and International Relations', *Colum. J. Transnat'l L.* 43(1) (2004) 141.

12 S. Neil MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, Adelphi Paper 350 (Londen 2002) 77–78.

as an ‘uncivilised state’¹³ and was mostly excluded from participating in multinational interventions.

Engaging the term ‘humanitarian’ in concordance with military intervention became rather prominent about a decade ago. One of the legacies of the NATO operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo¹⁴ was the emergence of a new predicament known as *humanitarian intervention*.¹⁵ Ever since, many prominent political leaders have become strong proponents of the use of force for humanitarian purposes and the principle of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P).¹⁶ Although the causal weight of these principles in determining state behaviour in the international arena is contestable, it on the one hand limited (Western) states’ flexibility in contemplating intervention on the pure grounds of self-interest.¹⁷ On the other hand, interventionist behaviour of states in internal affairs of other states, was in fact facilitated by employing a normative framework as a justification for the intervention.¹⁸

Consequently, interventions are increasingly often accompanied by normative justification and rhetoric.¹⁹ Collective values such as conflict resolution, the protection of human rights, and the promotion of democracy have gained influence at the expense of more clearly self-interested political objectives.²⁰ One of the critiques voiced against this type of contemporary mission is the discernible trend toward less clear political guidance and less profound or even absent objectives that are to guide them.²¹ Some describe the

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- 13 Daniel C. Thomas, ‘Human Rights Ideas, the Demise of Communism, and the End of the Cold War’, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7(3) (2005) 110–141, 129. Also, Russia viewed the international normative environment as a means for Western powers to secure their economic resources and/or as an alternative for possible cultural isolation of other states. *Ibid.*
- 14 NATO conducted a 78 day air campaign (From 24 March 1999 until 10 June 1999) in the Southern Yugoslav province of Kosovo. The campaign was directed against Serbia and Serbian forces who were supposedly committing genocide against ethnic Albanians. For more information about operation *Allied Force* see: Adam Roberts, ‘NATO’s ‘Humanitarian War’ over Kosovo’, *Survival* 41(3) (1999) 102–123; Alex J Bellamy, *Kosovo and international society* (New York 2002).
- 15 Humanitarian intervention as an act of foreign involvement in internal affairs of another state was no novelty at all. Throughout history one can witness various interventions by states under the banner of ‘relieving human suffering’. The use of the term however as a predicament became very prominent after the intervention in Kosovo.
- 16 There seems to be a common belief among governments (particularly members of the Non-Aligned Movement) that the principle simply encompasses a more sophisticated way of conceptualising and legitimising humanitarian intervention. In fact, since 2005, it has been widely suggested that R2P ‘legalises’ or ‘legitimises’ non-consensual intervention potentially without the sanction of the UN Security Council. Others claim that the principle is inadequate because it did not provide clear guidance about the circumstances in which coercive military intervention might be justified or about the appropriate decision-making process in situations where the Security Council is deadlocked. They argue that the set of criteria proposed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2001 to guide international decision-making in times of major humanitarian emergencies was an important casualty of pre-summit diplomacy in 2005 and should be put back on the international agenda. See Alex J. Bellamy, ‘The Responsibility to Protect and the problem of military intervention’, *International Affairs* 84(4) (2008) 616–617.
- 17 MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, 81.
- 18 See: Dexter, ‘New War, Good War and the War on Terror’, 1055–1071.
- 19 See: Daniel Charles Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton 2001).
- 20 Kaldor and Salmon, ‘Military Force and European Strategy’, 19–34; MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, 78.
- 21 Hew Strachan, ‘The lost meaning of strategy’, *Survival* 47(3) (2005) 33–54; David Betz and Anthony Cormack, ‘Iraq, Afghanistan and British Strategy’, *Orbis* 53(2) (2009) 319–336; David E. Johnson, ‘What are you prepared to do? NATO and

contemporary era of value-based foreign policy making, as it is short on instrumental policy making and marked by the inability to construct a clear political goal, coherent values, frameworks, and strategic interests.²²

However, the way interests are defined does depend on one's theoretical standpoint. Does one view interest as being material in its existence or as a 'social construction'? The realist interpretation of interest, the basis for state action in pursuit of power, is an often-heard axiom in the debate about the stabilisation of (post) conflict states. In essence, stabilisation of (post-) conflict states is argued to be about powerful Western states seeking to forge, secure, or support, a particular political order in line with their particular strategic objectives.²³

If interest, however, is viewed as a social construction, there is argued to be a process of interpretation that is required in order to understand both what situation the state faces and how they should respond to it. It presupposes a shared language by those who determine state action and for its public. In addition, rhetoric is produced by interests as well as used to justify the pursuit of those interests. This rhetoric mediates between clear state interests as dictated by the international system and state action.²⁴ In the case of contemporary operations, the construction of legitimacy seems to be an inextricable part of the process

the Strategic Mismatch between Ends, Ways, and Means in Afghanistan—and in the Future', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 34(5) (2011) 383-401; Chandler, 'War Without End (s)', 243-262.

22 David Chandler, 'Hollow Hegemony', 703-723. To him, the Cold War era represented a convergence of clear values and distinct interests, reflected in instrumental policy-making, and the post-Cold War period is seen as an epoch where the value/interest framework (based on consequentialist reasoning) has collapsed, resulting in ad hoc and non-instrumentalist policy-making (based on habitual responses and appropriateness reasoning). See: Chandler, 'Hollow Hegemony', 703-723; David Chandler, 'The Security-Development Nexus and the Rise of 'Anti-Foreign Policy'', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 10(4) (2007) 362-386; David Chandler, 'Rhetoric without Responsibility: the Attraction of 'Ethical' Foreign Policy', *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 5(3) (2003) 295-316. Chandler's views are influenced by the works of the French philosopher's Zaki Laïdi and Alain Badiou who denounce the key to understanding value-based projections of power by Western nations, as the incapacity of their ruling elites to formulate a collective project and the retreat from political responsibility for taking society forward. As such, the post-cold war era is viewed to portray a 'gap between power and meaning'. See: Laïdi, *A World without Meaning*, 11; Badiou, *Ethics*, 31. Put differently, linking the pursuit of national interest to the pursuit of perceived global values does nothing more than to remove politics from the 'earthly realm of a struggle over interests into an idealised realm of the struggle over 'values'. David Chandler, *Hollow Hegemony*, 19.

23 Sarah Collinson, Samir Elhawary and Robert Muggah, 'States of Fragility: Stabilisation and its Implications for Humanitarian Action', *Disasters* 34(3) (2010) 275-296; Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War*; Mark Duffield, 'Governing the Borderlands: Decoding the Power of Aid', *Disasters* 25(4) (2001) 308-320.

24 As outlined by Bill McSweeney, identity and interests are mutually constituted by knowledgeable agents, monitoring, managing, and manipulating the narrative of one in respect to another. To say that both are chosen by human individuals is to make a constructivist claim that the behavior of states is an effect of cognitive and material structures, of the distribution of power informed by ideas and the choice is made in the context of interaction with other states in the international arena and with sub-state groups within the domestic. In addition, and in fact in opposition to constructivist claims, is that state choices are not only constrained by structure; they effect the progressive transformation of structure within a reflexive structure-agent relationship which can never be dissolved in favor of the determinative role of the actor or of the structure and the conception of action. This implies, the concept of structure and the conception of causality in the social sciences to be radically distinct from the ideas applicable from our understanding of the natural order. To affirm to co-constitution of behavior by agent and structure is to affirm causality in the social order, but is not to affirm what we mean by cause in respect of the natural order. See: Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: a Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge 1999) 210.

of national interest construction.²⁵ In other words, this perspective acknowledges norms as instrumental to the structuring of state's interests. The contra position on the use of normative rhetoric is that norms are in fact employed as a vehicle to acquire justification for purely self-serving purposes of states.²⁶

As postulated earlier, the influence of norms²⁷ with regard to military intervention has been manifest over the last three decades. It has evolved into a requirement for states to combine their interests with prescriptive norms since these norms not only affect their interests, but also shape the instruments or means that states deem available and appropriate to use. Hence, even when actors are aware of a wide array of means to accomplish their policy objectives, they may nevertheless reject some means as inappropriate due to normative constraints'.²⁸

The most recent Western incarnation of value-laden intervention is known as *stabilisation operations*. Current writings on stabilisation of (post-) conflict states and stabilisation operations draw heavily on operations as conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, the stabilisation discourse emerged on the basis of the experiences of Western stabilisation efforts in these countries. The foundation and objectives of stabilising (post-) conflict states and the process of meeting these objectives remain deeply controversial, reflecting competing mandates, priorities, interests, and capacities of the many different actors involved. Approaches tend to be divided between prioritising security imperatives and taking direct and immediate action to counter perceived threats such as insurgents and pursuing wider peace-building, state-building and development goals.²⁹

The (post-) conflict states that are subject to the stabilisation efforts of Western states are often characterised by weak governments which, more often than not, lack a monopoly on violence and by the presence of various groups, mostly known and defined as insurgents. It is for this reason that the terms 'counterinsurgency' (COIN) and 'stabilisation operations' are intertwined and have been used interchangeably.³⁰ This highlights the lack of conceptual

25 Jutta Weldes, 'Constructing national interests', *European Journal of International Relations* 2(3) (1996) 276-277, 303.

26 Dexter, 'New War, Good War and the War on Terror', 1058

27 Norms, like for example laws and habits, prescribe social behaviour and aim to regulate human behaviour. They can take many forms but the kinds of norms that are of particular interest for this study are those norms that regulate the behaviour of actors in international politics. An authoritative norm when looking at foreign interventions is the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) prescribing rules for international conduct like the alleviation of human suffering. Paul Kowert and Jeffrey Legro, 'Norms, Identity, and their Limits: a Theoretical Reprise', *The Culture of national Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (1996) 451-97.

28 Kowert and Legro, 'Norms, Identity, and Their Limits', 463.

29 Collinson, Elhawary and Muggah, 'States of fragility', 280; Ann Fitz-Gerald and Stephanie Blair, 'Stabilisation and Stability Operations: a Literature Review', (2009) https://dspace.lib.cranfield.ac.uk/bitstream/1826/4247/1/Stabilisation%20article_statebuilding_intervention_FitzGerald.pdf 1-26, 24; Clare Lockhart and Ashraf Ghani, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (Oxford 2008); Wilson, *Thinking Beyond War*.

30 The concept of COIN is viewed by leading nations such as the United Kingdom as the 'the heart of stabilisation and an integral part of providing stability in fragile states' notwithstanding that 'stabilisation may be broader than counterinsurgency'.

clarity surrounding stabilisation and is indicative of the overwhelming influence of, and current focus on, the Afghanistan and Iraq experience.³¹

The intangibility of the two concepts seems to be founded in military operations conducted as a response to the events of 9/11. Ever since then, the relationship between peace operations and counterinsurgency has grown significantly: rapid offensive successes in Afghanistan and Iraq were followed by classical protracted ‘pacification campaigns’. These type of operations encompass a diverse range of activities falling somewhere between peace operations, state-building, counterinsurgency and counter-terrorism. Consequently, labels like ‘stabilisation’, or ‘reconstruction’ have been attached to these missions.³²

Hence, the term stabilisation operation is in fact a ‘catch all’ description. More often than not, such operations contain a substantive military component, although the potentially violent aspects of the stabilisation effort are habitually down played for various (domestic) political reasons.³³ The principle of military response in this complex politicized context concerns the use of force, but explicitly recognises the limitations of the use of force.³⁴ Hence, military successes alone are no longer sufficient in and of themselves, but must also facilitate and foster sustainable peace or stability.³⁵

Nevertheless, the contemporary role of the military in stabilisation operations is seen to be in creating conditions for the attainment of stability. In fact, many scholars³⁶ argue military operations with political aims of stability, democratisation, and economic development are the most prominent since the end of the Cold War. Studies have indicated a sharp increase in the number of responses and interventions seeking to stabilise (post-)

The major common denominator for both counterinsurgency and stabilisation operations is the understanding that local population is the centre of gravity. See: Fitz-Gerald and Blair, ‘Stabilisation and Stability Operations’, 8.

31 Fitz-Gerald and Blair, ‘Stabilisation and Stability Operations’, 8.

32 Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, ‘Counterinsurgency and peace operations’ in: Paul B. Rich and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency* (London and New York 2012) 80–98, 92.

33 Brocades Zaalberg, ‘Counterinsurgency and peace operations’, 82; Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (Ithaca and London 2004); Ian Manners, ‘Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40(2) (2002) 235–258; Hanns W Maull, ‘Germany and the Use of Force: Still a “Civilian Power?”’, *Survival* 42(2) (2000) 56–80.

34 Kaldor and Salmon, ‘Military Force and European Strategy’; MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, 26–27; Smith, *The Utility of Force*.

35 As a result, nowadays military operations are supposed to impact decisively on political outcomes. This idea is referred to as the ‘peace paradox’ The paradox explains the difficulty of achieving and maintaining peace on the long term. Lasting results and success of contemporary operations depend on the ability to preserve the peace or some form of stability. This is more closely related to restoring for example governance and civil society which means extending military tasks and functions. See: Wilson, *Thinking Beyond War*.

36 See: David Chandler, ‘Introduction: Peace without Politics?’, *International Peacekeeping* 12(3) (2005) 307–321; Steven L Burg, et al. *Military intervention: cases in context for the twenty-first century*. Eds. William J. Lahneman. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004); Robert Egnell, ‘Winning ‘Hearts andMminds’? A Critical Analysis of Counter Insurgency Operations in Afghanistan’, *Civil Wars* 12(3) (2010) 282–303; Strachan, ‘Strategy or Alibi?’; Colin S. Gray, ‘Strategic Thoughts for Defence Planners’, *Survival* 52(3) (2010) 159–178.

conflict states.³⁷ In fact, military means are increasingly applied as a viable instrument for transforming non-liberal countries or regions – like for example Iraq and Afghanistan – into liberal ones, thereby extending the ‘zone of peace’.³⁸

The normative dimension of these interventions is part of the broader conception of intervention as a political/military instrument that states use to pursue their perceived interests.³⁹ The concept of stability operations is new to both scholars and practitioners in the field. The term stabilisation and its derived ‘type of operation’ have been used primarily by Western governments and are shaped by their political and strategic interests and priorities. Hence, following the prominence of the terms peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, the current discourse of stabilisation is now on the agenda of the United Nations and a growing array of regional organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.⁴⁰

As a result, integrated responses most commonly known as ‘comprehensive approaches’ have been developed, taking in all three elements of power: military, economic, and political. The concept contains various elements of the best counterinsurgency practices; a mix of economic, political, and security components, civil-military hybrids (provincial reconstruction teams) as implementing tools, and a focus on strengthening local governance and security forces. The main aim is to foster development that will create a local host-nation administrative capacity, capable of providing security, meeting basic needs and providing services to citizens in a manner which is perceived as legitimate in the eyes of the local population.

The application of the term stabilisation operation also reveals changes in the language used to describe contemporary military undertakings by Western states. The application of the term war has proven to be problematic in a number of countries – depending on their background – for several reasons. First of all, there are different conceptions of what war is. Originally, war was understood as an instrument of policy, but it is equally an instrument in terms of the analytical framework it provides for the military: the ability to use force to

37 Collinson, Elhawary and Muggah, ‘States of Fragility’, 4.

38 Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, ‘The Imperial Peace: Democracy, Force and Globalization’, *European Journal of International Relations* 5(4) (1999) 403-434; Mark Laffey, ‘Discerning the Patterns of World Order Noam Chomsky and International Theory after the Cold War’, *Review of International Studies* 29(4) (2003): 587-604, 593. For more on the *liberal peace paradigm* also known as the *democratic peace* see: Michael W. Doyle, ‘Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs’, *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (1983) 205-235; Bruce Russett et al., ‘The Democratic Peace’, *International Security* 19(4) (1995) 164-184; David Chandler, ‘The Uncritical Critique of ‘Liberal Peace’’, *Review of International Studies* 36(1) (2010) 137-155; David E. Spiro, ‘The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace’, *International Security* 19(2) (1994) 50-86; Roland Paris, ‘Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?’, *International Security* 26(2) (2001) 87-102; Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver Richmond, ‘Myth or Reality: Opposing Views on the Liberal Peace and Post-War Reconstruction’, *Global Society* 21(4) (2007) 491-497.

39 Neil MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics*, Adelphi Paper 350 (London 2002).

40 Collinson, Elhawary and Muggah, ‘States of Fragility’, 277.

transmit a political intention.⁴¹ Secondly, force is often not a 'role' states like to employ, regardless of whether or not the ends they seek are ultimately the same as those countries who *do* employ this terminology. Here, a distinction can be made between smaller European military powers and great military powers such as the United States.⁴² As where in the United States the use of the word 'war' in foreign policy and foreign policy actions does not seem to disturb its citizens, the employment of the term does cause nuisance amongst constituents of smaller European nations.⁴³

Thirdly, war as an interpretive unit assumes a mutual understanding of the term,⁴⁴ but this is not always the case amongst those who wage it, let alone those who have it forced upon them, like the recent examples of Iraq and Afghanistan. In traditional interstate war, the use of force was intended to yield a military outcome, facilitating a political solution. Consequently, in order for force to be used in an effective manner, an enemy needs to be identified and subsequently the purpose of the war needs to be defined.⁴⁵ However, the identification of (and often agreement upon) 'the enemy' has proven to be a complex endeavour since it is often a diverse grouping of actors that constitutes a threat. Secondly, the purpose of the armed engagement often remains vague for primarily political (diplomatic) purposes.⁴⁶

In summary, the contemporary approaches of Western states with regard to intervention are entangled with normative prescriptions of how states should behave amongst each other at the international level. Moreover, these prescriptions, derived from neo-liberal models of governance, set out how states should be designed and ruled. The various debates about these Western military undertakings portray the beliefs and desires that have conditioned its use. This, however, does not diminish the importance of the ever-present dynamic of interests – however constructed – of states in their international relations. The most recent label attached to these interventions is stabilisation operations. The term carries with it a considerable degree of conceptual indistinctiveness about what it is and is not, but it nevertheless remains a powerful normative mobilising concept on the basis of which Western nations engage in the 'stabilisation' of (post) conflict states.

41 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*, 27.

42 Adrian Hyde-Price, 'European Security, Strategic Culture, and the Use of Force', *European Security* 13(4) (2004) 323-343; Pascal Vennesson et al., 'Is there a European Way of War? Role Conceptions, Organizational Frames, and the Utility of Force', *Armed Forces & Society* 35(4) (2009) 628-645.

43 See: David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis 1992); Ole Waever, 'European Security Identities', *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 34(1) (1996): 103-132.

44 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*, 64

45 Smith, *The Utility of Force*; Angstrom and Duyvesteyn (eds.), *Modern War and the Utility of Force*; Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'Exploring the Utility of Force: Some Conclusions', *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19(3) (2008) 423-443; Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*.

46 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*, 64; King, A., *The transformation of Europe's armed forces: from the Rhine to Afghanistan*. (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

2.3 Senior Civil and Military Decision-Makers and the Nature of Their Relations

The act of deciding if and how military forces will be deployed lies at the heart of what is known as the *civil military interface*. Within this interface, also known as the strategic level, funds, as well as the physical and conceptual directions that are necessary to implement the decisions of the political leadership, are provided. Hence, in this arena decisions regarding the size, organization, materiel and deployments of the military are made and where the campaign plans ought to be created and implemented⁴⁷ by the senior civil and military decision-makers.⁴⁸

Within International Relations (IR) and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) literature, these groups of actors are often referred to as civil-military elites, foreign policy elites or epistemic communities.⁴⁹ However, these concepts often take either a very broad view of what is meant by the civil military interface, or do not define it at all, allowing space for subjective interpretation of this grouping of actors.

The relationship between senior civil and military decision-makers is predominantly seen as an end in itself, not necessarily as a way of making the state more efficient in its use of military means.⁵⁰ This is a result of Western prescriptions for how civil and military decision-makers should engage with one another.⁵¹ The nature of civil-military relations, which has been studied extensively from a normative perspective, addressing the need for civilian control over the military, derives from the work of two key authors: Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. Both works put forward an American perspective on civil military relations founded in the realities of the Cold War, but nevertheless remain to be authoritative works primarily adhered to by Western states.

The Huntingtonian approach advocates a clear divide between civilian and military leadership and the Western liberal societal ideology that supports objective control of the military, allowing the military to develop its own skill set based on its own view of

47 Egnell, 'Explaining US and British Performance in Complex Expeditionary Operations', 1042, 1045, 1046.

48 In order to embark the group of senior civil and military decision-makers for this study, Margaret Hermann's definition of a decision unit as a group of actors that have the ability to commit government resources and the power or authority to make a decision that cannot be easily reversed is employed. The conceptualisation will be dealt with later on in the chapter. See: Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy', 48, 56. See also: Hermann, Hermann and Hagan, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy Behavior', 311; Beasley et al., 'People and Processes in Foreign Policymaking', 219.

49 Margriet Ellen Drent, *A Europeanisation of the Security Structure: The Security Identities of the United Kingdom and Germany* (PhD dissertation, Groningen 2010); Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Lonely Superpower', *Foreign Affairs* 78(2) (1999) 35-49; Thomas Risse Kappen, 'Exploring the Nature of the Beast: International Relations Theory and comparative Policy Analysis meet the European Union', *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 34(1) (1996) 53-80; Emanuel Adler and Peter M. Haas, 'Conclusion: Epistemic Communities, World Order, and the Creation of a Reflective Research Program', *International Organization* 46(1) (1992) 367-390; Eva Etzioni-Halevy, 'Civil-Military Relations and Democracy: The Case of the Military-Political Elites' Connection in Israel', *Armed Forces & Society* 22(3) (1996) 401-417.

50 Strachan, *Making Strategy*, 66.

51 Jan Angstrom, 'The Changing Norms of Civil and Military and Civil-Military Relations Theory', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 24(2) (2013) 224-236.

the *functional imperative*.⁵² It assumes that it is possible to segregate an autonomous area of military science from political purpose.⁵³

Military deference to civilian control, rooted in a conservative realist perspective, is one of the core premises of Huntington's work and has dominated thought on civil-military relations up to the present time. This perspective was challenged by Samuel Finer, over five decades ago, in his work on the role of military in politics, where he argued that it is exactly the 'professionalism' of the military that may lead them to see themselves as servants of the state rather than servants of those in power.⁵⁴ Also Sam Sarkesian expressed his doubts about the 'professionalism' of the military as described by Huntington when he stated 'the generally accepted idea of acceptance of the military in democratic societies as an apolitical organization, characterized by civilian control and supremacy is, in practice, mere ignorance of history and reality'.⁵⁵ Only recently, mainly due to experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, have the Huntingtonian prescriptions about civil-military relations been challenged again. Those who have operated at various levels while planning and executing present-day operations, especially, have experienced the untenability of categorising the military as politically inert operators only executing policy.⁵⁶

The contemporary context of civil-military relations, the belief in a concerted civilian-military effort to stabilise (post-) conflict states, adheres more to the framework of the work of yet another prominent theorist in the field of civil-military relations, Morris Janowitz. His framework prescribes a politically attuned military and therefore advocates civil-military integration in order to create coordinated advice and to develop increased mutual understanding and trust between the actors in the civil-military interface. The logic informing his argument is the belief he holds about the need for intertwined political and military policy and decision-making. Janowitz's notion of civil-military relations advocates that the officer corps be politically educated in order to be able to function well in the political domain. He refers to the military as a 'constabulary force' and denounces a clear separation of the civil-military domain, since to him civilian control cannot be achieved through a professional military tradition not to intervene in politics, but through 'self-imposed professional standards and meaningful integration with civilian values'.⁵⁷

52 Huntington distinguishes two imperatives: the functional and societal. The former aims to potential threats to a society's security, as where the later derives from ideologies, social forces and institutions that are dominant within the society. See: Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA 1957) 79.

53 Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*.

54 Samuel Edward Finer, *The man on horseback: The role of the military in politics* (London, 2002) 25.

55 Sam C. Sarkesian, 'Military Professionalism and Civil-Military Relations in the West', *International Political Science Review* 2(3) (1981) 283-297 quoted in: Rene Moelker, 'Culture's Backlash on Decision-making', *Nação e Defesa* 107(2) (2004) 11-35, Pgnummer citaat!

56 Simpson. *War from the Ground Up*, 113-116.

57 Morris Janowitz. *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York 1960) 41.

Even though the founding fathers of civil-military relations and their (Western) prescriptions still very much dominate the discourse, more novel insights have begun to materialise. For example, James Burk, when reviewing the theories on civil-military relations, points to the danger of total military obedience because the military could potentially be forced to follow the passions of the civilian majority in control of the democratic state. Blindly obeying public opinion could reduce military strength, distracting it from its purpose to provide (inter-) national security.⁵⁸

More recently, Peter Feaver has expanded the body of literature on civil-military relations by applying the principal-agent theory and exposing the ‘civil–military problematique’⁵⁹ as a strategic game. Civilians control the military through monitoring and punishment whereas the military either ‘work or shirk’. He suggests civilians might exercise oversight of the military by monitoring or non-monitoring whether the military has obeyed their orders. In the event that the military has not executed its orders, civilians can decide to either punish the military or not. In the whole process of managing the military, the civilians – according to Feaver – have the ‘right to be wrong’, i.e. to make mistakes in their strategic guidance directing key decisions, even when the military disagrees with that direction.⁶⁰

The case of Kosovo is used by Feaver to illustrate what refers to as a highly detailed and efficient monitoring of the American force commander and his operations by Washington. He argues that during this campaign, American civilians could sufficiently access information to exercise near-term tactical control over their military agents. The case demonstrates that cheap and effective (information) technology provides information to civilians to detect and punish commanders’ deviations from their guidance. The principal-agent model then puts forward the assumption that military agents would therefore adhere strictly to a suboptimal use of military resources because civilian principals stipulate and efficiently enforce political constraints.⁶¹

An interesting, but lesser known perspective on civil-military relations, has been developed by Rebecca Schiff. She sees the citizenry as a party, in addition to the civil and military actors and articulates that these parties should aim for a cooperative relationship, one that may or may not involve separation, but does not require it in and of itself. Her ‘concordance theory’ argues that the type of civil-military relationship adopted matters less than the ability of the three partners to agree on the social composition of the officer

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58 James Burk, ‘Theories of Democratic Civil-Military Relations’, *Armed Forces & Society* 29(1) (2002) 7–29.

59 He refers to this problematique as the tension between a strong military protecting society versus being a threat to the civil liberties of society themselves. See: Peter Feaver. *Armed servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA 2005).

60 Feaver, *Armed Servants*.

61 Damon Coletta and Peter D. Feaver, ‘Civilian monitoring of US military operations in the information age’, *Armed Forces & Society* 33(1) (2006) 106–126. 109,110,116,120.

corps, the political decision-making process, the recruitment method, and military style. In addition, she argues for the inclusion of elements of society, amongst which culture is central in both the prescriptions and descriptions related to civil-military relations.⁶²

As mentioned above, the dominant approaches within civil-military relations derive from American perspectives on this relationship and focus very much on institutional analysis. Despite the dominance of these American views, even in the majority of other Western nations, it is worthwhile to draw some distinctions. First of all, smaller nations with a lesser military capability have tended to view the potential ability of the military to seize control as a less likely option.⁶³ They might, therefore, provide the military with some more 'space to manoeuvre' in the sense that they are not overly worried about the military's potential influence on policy, for example. This is notwithstanding the fact that the civil-military structures embedded within their political system and the consequent rules and roles assigned to the civil and military actors originated from the American models and are no longer reflective of the way the civil military is believed to operate best.

However, the majority of European studies of civil-military relations focus on the cooperation and relations of these actors during operations.⁶⁴ A particular focus is directed toward trying to identify when and how civil and military organisations should work together in the field. As said, this includes another angle of civil-military relations that extends beyond the scope of this study, but is indicative of the European operational focus on the matter.

In conclusion, despite the shortcomings of the organisational and American-centric view on civil-military relations, Janowitz's and Huntington's models still very much underpin the thoughts of theorists and - arguably to a lesser extent - practitioners. Their prescriptions are embedded in the organisational setting, rules, and codes that exist between civil and military actors. However, as outlined above, these models have proven to be quite problematic when preparing and executing strategies for contemporary operations.

62 Rebecca L. Schiff, 'Civil-military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance', *Armed Forces & Society* 22(1) (1995) 7-24, 7.

63 See for example: Erik Hedlund, 'Civil-Military Control over the Swedish Military Profession An Analysis from the Perspective of Officer Rank and Officer Education', *Armed Forces & Society* 39.1 (2013): 135-157.

64 See for example: Sebastiaan Rietjens and Myriame Bollen (eds.), *Managing civil-military Cooperation: a 24/7 Joint Effort for Stability* (Aldershot and Burlington 2008); Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, *Soldiers and civil Power: Supporting or Substituting Civil Authorities in Modern Peace Operations* (Amsterdam 2006); Hugo Slim, 'The Stretcher and the Drum: Civil Military Relations in Peace Support Operations', *International Peacekeeping* 3(2) (1996) 123-140; Robert Egnell, 'The Missing Link: Civil-Military Aspects of Effectiveness in Complex Irregular Warfare' (PhD Dissertation, London 2007); Angstrom, 'The Changing Norms of Civil and Military and Civil-Military Relations Theory'; Chiara Ruffa, Christopher Dandeker, and Pascal Vennesson, 'Soldiers Drawn into Politics? The Influence of Tactics in Civil-Military Relations', *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 24(2) (2013) 322-334.

2.4 Strategy as The Product of a Dialogue Between Politicians and Soldiers

The current debate about strategy draws largely on recent experiences in the field. The cases of both Afghanistan and Iraq have illustrated a trend in which the military has been shaping and formulating strategy before and during the campaign. Put differently, the operational level of the military is seen as filling the gap created by an absent strategy.⁶⁵ Moreover, military courses of action of Western states are often based on a feeling that ‘something must be done’⁶⁶ and are not necessarily grounded in a realistic evaluation of possibilities and costs. As such, the constitutive act⁶⁷ of strategy-making seems to be complicated by the absence of ends-based meaning or purpose, i.e. political responsibility. Hence, subjective intentions of state-actors seem to be prioritised above broader strategic or long-term policy-making.⁶⁸ This by and large can be attributed to the fact that states are often limited by the complexities of the demands they face and by the institutionalised with pressure to act appropriately, resulting in the ad hoc and non-instrumentalist policy-making characteristic of modern-day interventions.⁶⁹

The tension between what is militarily possible and politically desirable and vice versa, lies at the heart of civil-military relations when it comes to the use of military means. In other words, the dialogue between the two is vital for the drafting of policy, the possibility of its implementation,⁷⁰ and, ultimately, the provision of (inter-) national security through the use of military means.⁷¹ In addition to linking political goals to the use of military means, strategy should also be seen as the link between official political ‘talk’, ‘decisions’, and ‘actions’. The stronger the linkages, the better the strategy will be. If contradictions between official talk and subsequent actions of a respective government arise, the question should be asked if this in fact serves a purpose. A state could e.g. very well engage in international talks about the stabilisation of a potential region without actually being able to really commit itself with relevant resources. Thus, disparity between talk, decisions, and ultimately the actions of states can arise from inconsistent material and normative-ideational⁷² like for

65 Strachan, ‘Making strategy’, 60–61.

66 Desmond Bowen, ‘Something Must be Done—Military Intervention’, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 23(1) (2000) 1–19.

67 David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (2nd ed. Minneapolis 1998); Thomas Diez, ‘Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering Normative Power Europe’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33(3) (2005) 613–36.

68 Laidi, *A World without Meaning*, 11–13.

69 March, J.G. and J.P. Olsen, ‘The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders’, *International Organization* 52(4) (1998) 943–69. Reprinted in: P.J. Katzenstein, R.O. Keohane and S.D. Krasner (eds.), *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics* (Cambridge, MA 1999) 303–329.

70 Simpson. *War from the Ground Up*, 111.

71 Strachan, ‘Making strategy’, 66.

72 Michael Lipson and Catherine Weaver, ‘Varieties of Organized Hypocrisy’, Paper delivered at the ISA 49th annual convention, San Francisco. See: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p252179_index.html. (2008) 4–6.

example the cases of Sudan and Liberia. Here, nations agreed that human suffering needed to be alleviated yet hardly anything was done.

The harmonisation of the civil-military interface would ultimately be a product of interaction between politicians and soldiers: a dialectical relationship between desire and possibility. The core problem, however, seems to be ‘what comes first’? Ideally, the articulation of desire should be grounded in possibility in terms of resources and political will. In turn, the assessment of possibility requires a clear idea informing any analysis.⁷³ In other words, a clear harmonisation of ways, ends, and means, i.e. strategy, is required in order to effectively employ military means.

Traditionally, both in the domains of scholars and practitioners, the existence of strategy is believed to be a crucial determinant of military efficacy since it entails linking political objectives to military means. Thus, the state ought to have an interest in directing and controlling the deployment of its troops. To effectively match means to ends therefore, a state preferably begins by identifying clear [underlying] interests. Subsequently, theory prescribes that foreign policy ends advancing these interests should be identified, allowing an evaluation of the best available resources for the attainment of the stated ends.⁷⁴

Strategy in this study will be defined as the harmonisation of political goals with military means facilitated by a dialogue between civil and military decision-makers. This definition heavily draws on the work of Hew Strachan on strategy.⁷⁵

Most, if not all, of the traditional theoretical prescriptions of Western military strategy are founded upon the writings of Carl von Clausewitz. His definition of strategy as ‘the use of the engagement for the purpose of the war’ is probably the most cited, but also often misunderstood since he made a distinction between the concept *Politik* and strategy. In doing so, he emphasised the two are in fact interwoven.⁷⁶ As delineated by military historians Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe, ‘On War is the ‘prism through which we have come to look at war (...) military commentators have used this text as a departing point at least for their questions, if not for their answers’.⁷⁷

The ideas following from classic writings present the making of strategy as a linear process. After the nature of the conflict has been properly analysed, theory prescribes strategy to manage and direct the conflict. However, it cannot do so if it starts from an incorrect premise. In practice, strategy is more often than not pragmatic since it habitually

73 Strachan, ‘Making Strategy’, 20, 60-61, 67; Simpson. *War from the Ground Up*, 116.

74 David Stevens and Matthew S. Winters, ‘When the Means Become the Ends: Two Novel Pathways to Foreign Policy Failure’, paper delivered at *International Studies Association Annual Conference*. 2006, 10.

75 See: Strachan, *Direction of War*.

76 Clausewitz cited in: Strachan, ‘The lost meaning of strategy’, 34.

77 Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe, ‘Introduction’, in Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe, eds. *Clausewitz in the Twenty-first Century* (Oxford New York, 2007) 1- 13, 1

derives from underlying assumptions and educated guesses about the situation at hand. For this very reason, most strategic theory was retrospective by design and was itself grounded in military history. By means of explaining events that had seemed unclear at the time, it provided interpretative and didactic tools for the future, as is the case with the writings of many strategists.⁷⁸

Does the insight of strategy and strategic studies⁷⁹ provide the roadmap for effectively employing military means? In theory it does. It prescribes a linear process, objectives driven and based on rationalist calculations made by the political elite. However, in practice the prescriptions for strategy have proven far more difficult to employ and to an extent are too unrealistic to be of use for present complex operations. Hence, the theory tends to downplay the dynamic interaction between the political and military levels, which cannot be described as a linear process based on rational calculation. In the current complex international order, threats, in particular, are no longer as static as during for example the Cold War and the attainment of political objectives no longer requires military victory in a traditional sense.

The narrow interpretation of the Clausewitzian dictum of war to be an extension of policy by other means only recognises the actual use of force as the instrument by which war affects policy.⁸⁰ As military writer Rupert Smith argues, military objectives must be chosen for their value in achieving the political objective, not merely because they are possible. As such, activity should not be confused with outcome. Furthermore, Smith stresses the need to understand the nature of the problem on its own terms, in order for force to have political utility. He points to the tendency in Western nations to analyse contemporary conflicts through dogmatically applied ideological or doctrinal⁸¹ lenses.⁸²

This touches upon a fundamental problem, namely that before one even considers the use of military means, the degree of intractability of the conflict should be understood. Before intervention can be considered, accurate assessments must be made and are crucial to understanding the development of the conflict at hand. Only by starting from the perspective of the conflict, its causes, and the factors affecting its continuation, can a proper

78 Strachan, 'Strategy and the Limitation of War', 38; Hew Strachan, 'Making Strategy', 67.

79 The discipline of strategic studies has mainly engaged itself with studying world powers and their use of the military instrument. As a result, their capability to solve security problems by armed force is an a priori for the entire conception of armed force in most studies of strategic issues. In focusing on the most military capable states, like the United States and China, one habitually focuses on the ability of military power to redress balances of power and world order. See: Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, 'What's the Use of It?': Danish Strategic Culture and the Utility of Armed Force', *Cooperation and Conflict* 40(1) (2005) 67-89, 68.

80 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*.

81 Western doctrinal guidance commands political primacy and civil-military cooperation but does not abundantly explain the central importance of the political process. It neither confines the potential peace building role of the military as explained by Ben Lovelock in his work about the military's role in political processes during interventions. Richard B. Lovelock, *The General as Statesman? Exploring the Professional Need for Commanders to Support viable Political Outcomes in Peace and Stability Operations as Typified by the UK military Approach* (PhD dissertation, Cranfield 2010).

82 Smith, *The Utility of Force*, 374.

set of instruments be developed to address it.⁸³ The political context of the conflict, and less so the identity of those who are parties to it, seem to be the key characteristics.⁸⁴ However, a thorough comprehension of the complexity of contemporary conflicts is quite demanding for the civil-military decision-makers who are required to draft the strategy.

The lack of information and understanding⁸⁵ of the political and social makeup of the societies that are to be stabilised and even more so, the persistent belief amongst Western nations in ‘their own ways of doing things’ complicates matters even more. This has also been alluded to by Matt Waldman, when reflecting on the underlying causes of deficiencies in American policy-making with regard to Afghanistan. The respondents in his study have identified organisational weaknesses in the acquisition, interpretation, processing of information and self-evaluation as main drivers for failing policy.⁸⁶

In addition, the difficulties of formulating coherent strategy seem to be rooted in the fact that the well-ordered, policy-operational distinction, firmly rooted in both strategic thought and in states’ very constitutions, has proved to be untenable in modern conflicts.⁸⁷ In current operations the operational level often fills the gap created by a lack of strategy. Difficulties with formulating how *democracy or rule of law* should be delivered in a (post-) conflict state regularly result in failing to define clear goals. Ideally, for military operations to be successful, the political objective should be defined in terms of a concrete, immediate-term outcome to be attained through the employment of military means. Subsequently, the political goals need to be operationalised by politicians in order to provide the military with a directive.⁸⁸ In return, the military needs to learn and understand where war policy derives its purpose and to understand the role the military serves in terms of achieving political objectives.⁸⁹

The actual articulation of the objective that needs to be attained through the deployment of military means⁹⁰ is, as mentioned earlier, often missing in contemporary missions. This

83 Colin McInnes, ‘A different kind of war; September 11 and the United States’ Afghan War’, 109–134 in Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom (eds.), *Rethinking the Nature of War* (Abingdon and New York 2005), 109–134, 124.

84 Thomas G. Mahnken, ‘Strategic Theory’, in: John Baylis, James J. Wirtz, and Colin S. Gray, eds. *Strategy in the contemporary world* (third edition, 2010) 67–83, 69; Nat J. Colletta and Robert Muggah, ‘Context Matters: Interim Stabilisation and Second Generation Approaches to Security Promotion’, *Conflict, Security & Development* 9(4) (2009) 425–453, 427.

85 The phenomenon of drafting strategy in complex environments with too much or a limited amount of information and the demands posed on those who are to develop strategy – in this case the senior civil and military decision-makers – served to cater the ‘*science of muddling through*’ introduced by Charles Lindblom to the field of organisational theory. See: Charles E. Lindblom, ‘The science of “muddling through”’ *Public administration review* (1959):79–88.

86 Matt Waldman, ‘System Failure: the Underlying Causes of US Policy-Making Errors in Afghanistan’, *International Affairs* 89(4) (2013) 825–843, 839.

87 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*, 111.

88 Hew Strachan, *The Direction of War. Contemporary Strategy in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge 2013); Smith, *The Utility of Force*; Kaldor and Salmon, ‘Military Force and European strategy’; Patricia L Sullivan and Michael T. Koch, ‘Military Intervention by Powerful States, 1945—2003’, *Journal of Peace Research* 46 (5) (2009) 707–718.

89 Wilson, *Thinking Beyond War*; Lovelock, *The General as Statesman?*

90 Simpson, *War from the Ground Up*.

could possibly be explained by the fact that Western nations have fallen out of the habit of strategy making and, arguably, may have never even been engaged in strategy-making as described in the textbooks. Whatever the reading of events may be, ever since the end of the Cold War, Western military powers have not engaged themselves much in the development of strategy, including the formulation of grand strategy and the drafting of strategic-level military appreciations. Classic strategy-making, dating back to the nuclear era, entailed threat-based planning whereas post-modern strategy-making entails capacity-based planning. Consequently, current strategy-making is much more about addressing issues of uncertainty, ambiguity, and unpredictability and often originates from the bottom up instead of the top down, which used to be the case during the Cold War.⁹¹

Nowadays, contingent strategic factors [political, geographical, economic, social, or military] are not adequately assessed before courses of action are designed and often, the defining of necessary strategy followed the decision to deploy military force rather than preceded it. In addition, Western foreign policy habitually views the use of force as an instrument to attain a political objective, but often seems – as addressed earlier – insufficiently understand the implications of its use.⁹²

However, the lack of understanding of the nature of the problem at hand cannot be solely explained by a shortage of experience in strategy-making and lack of sufficient information. Acknowledging the importance of experienced strategists and understanding the problem at hand, there seems to be a more structural cause at play, seriously complicating the drafting of strategy for the stabilisation of (post-) conflict states, namely the normative disposition of stabilisation operations: the Western belief in bringing about stability through democratisation of (post-) conflict states. In the process of managing inconsistent and irreconcilable operational aims of stabilisation operations, decoupling of rhetoric, decisions, and activities seems to be both a political and organisational response.⁹³ It allows states to maintain systemic stability and legitimacy by managing irreconcilable pressures that might otherwise force them to operate ineffectively.⁹⁴

Put differently, senior civil and military decision-makers are required to reconcile normative external demands with internal demands or restrictions such as the desire not to

91 Mungo Melvin, 'Learning the Strategic Lessons from Afghanistan', *The RUSI Journal* 157(2) (2012) 56-61, 58; Todor Tagarev and Petya Ivanova, 'Classic, Modern, and Post-Modern Approaches to Making Security Strategy' (2009) http://www.gcmarsshall.bg/KP/new/TT_PI_og.pdf, 7.

92 Melvin, 'Learning the strategic lessons from Afghanistan', 58; Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'Strategic Illiteracy. The Art of Strategic Thinking in Modern Military Operations', Inaugural lecture on the acceptance of her position of Special Chair in Strategic Studies at Leiden University (2013), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/20944/Oratie%20Duyvesteyn%20Eng.pdf>.

93 Nils Brunsson, *The Organization of Hypocrisy: Talk, Decisions and Action in Organizations* (New York 1989); Krasner, *Sovereignty*; Michael Lipson, 'Peacekeeping: Organized Hypocrisy?' *European Journal of International Relations* 13(1) (2007) 5-34.

94 Robert Egnell, 'The Organized Hypocrisy of International State-building', *Conflict, Security & Development* 10(4) (2010) 465-491, 467.

engage in combat operations. Hence, the international community often only articulates a set of idealised aspirations instead of interests. These aspirations, however, are difficult to gauge in a strategically coherent manner. Consequently, a contradictory process where political elites seem keen to express the rhetoric of high moral responsibility in the international sphere, but are in fact rather reluctant to take responsibility for either policy-making or policy outcomes, is witnessed.⁹⁵ Again, one only has to call to mind the various atrocities committed on the African continent in which Western nations decided not to intervene.

As a result, the moral responsibility referred to by senior civil and military decision-makers to justify the deployment of military troops is not necessarily founded in a political meaning or goal. However, policymaking entails taking responsibility for choices founded in the articulation of a political goal. The belief in political ends, stated in policy, enables governments to justify and legitimise the inevitable costs (money, soldiers/civilian lives, and other resources)⁹⁶ of achieving these policy-ends through the deployment of forces. Yet, in current stabilisation operations, ends and means are often separated,⁹⁷ thereby illustrating the aforementioned inconsistency between expressions of morality and the resulting actions.⁹⁸

However, the aforementioned lack of strategy did cause a rise in emergent strategies designed in the field instead of in capitals of the troop contributing nations. Even though this contradicts the traditional Clausewitzian logic, one could pose the question as to whether emergent strategies are as worrisome as expected. These bottom-up initiatives originating in the field did facilitate adaptive behaviour which is crucial in the complex environments of current operations. Instead of focusing on certain predefined desired effects, it allowed field operations to rely on the ability to respond to the unpredictable nature of the conflict.⁹⁹ It also allowed more room for a civil military dialogue on how best to use military means for contemporary operations.

95 David Chandler, 'Hollow Hegemony', 720.

96 Paul Williams, 'How Can We Improve the Formulation and Implementation of UK Foreign Policy?', paper for IPPR and LSE event on 'Progressive Foreign Policy for the UK', London School of Economics (2006).

97 Strachan, 'The Lost Meaning of Strategy'; Johnson, 'What are you prepared to do?'; Rudra Chaudhuri and Theo Farrell, 'Campaign Disconnect: Operational Progress and Strategic Obstacles in Afghanistan, 2009–2011', *International Affairs* 87(2) (2011) 271–296.

98 Chandler, 'Hollow Hegemony', 720–721.

99 Zoltán Jobbyagy, *From Effects-based Operations to Effects-based Force: on Causality, Complex Adaptive System and the Biology of War* (PhD dissertation, Leiden 2009).

2.5 The Analytical Framework

The implication of having selected senior civil and military decision-makers as the main unit of analysis for this research project is to induce analytical inferences from actor-oriented approaches within the field of international relations. As such, the construction of the analytical lens applied to this study draws, but not solely, on the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)¹⁰⁰ since this field of inquiry relies on an actor-specific focus. It focuses on ‘agents of the state’ based on the argument that all that occurs in the international order is ultimately grounded in human decision-makers, acting in groups or alone.

As pointed out by Joe Hagan, decision-making approaches are well suited to contribute to further advance international relations theory especially by enlightening inconsistencies in systemic explanations of state behaviour in conflict and war.¹⁰¹

The main strength of FPA is its acknowledgement of human agency. It moves beyond the ‘black boxing of states’ – approximating all decision-making units as rational, unitary actors or the equivalent of states – often done in the field of international relations. The difficulty of attempting to define a group derives from the fact that agency [agency concerns events of which the individual is the perpetrator]¹⁰² often evolves and cannot always be predefined. Hence, empirical data often illustrates how agency emerges and follows a certain path that becomes instrumental to the outcome.¹⁰³

As such, FPA develops an actor-specific theory that does not view decision-making units – individuals or groups – as rational, unitary actors equivalent to the state. It features six hallmarks, as identified by Valerie Hudson, namely multi-factorial, multilevel, interdisciplinary, integrative, agent-oriented, and actor-specific.¹⁰⁴ The actor-based approaches within the field of FPA draw heavily on cognitive and psychological approaches, bureaucratic politics, and the interpretative actor perspective.¹⁰⁵ The structural perspectives in the field – neo-realism, neo-liberalism/institutionalism and social constructivism¹⁰⁶ –

100 Foreign Policy Analysis derives from the field of international relations which is grounded in the same ground as all social sciences in the sense that it aims to understand ‘how humans perceive and react to the world around them, and how humans shape and are shaped by the world around them’. Valerie Hudson, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor- Specific theory and the Ground of International Relations’, *Foreign Policy Analysis* 1(1) (2005) 1-30.

101 Hagan, J. D., ‘Does Decision-making Matter?’, *International Studies Review* 3 (2) (2001) 5- 46:6.

102 Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society Outline of a Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1984) 4.

103 Markus Kornprobst, ‘The Agent’s Logics of Action: Defining and Mapping Political Judgement’, *International Theory* 3(1) (2011) 70-104.

104 Hudson, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis’, 1.

105 Walter Carlsnaes, ‘Actors, Structures, and Foreign Policy Analysis’, in *Foreign Policy*, edited by Smith, Hadfield and Dunne: 118-123; Brian Ripley, ‘Psychology, Foreign Policy and International Relations Theory’, *Political Psychology* 14(3) (1993) 403-416, 403.

106 Hudson, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis’.

predominantly focus on structural or systemic causes of agents' behaviour and, in doing so, often offer a deterministic approach that neglects the creativity of agents.¹⁰⁷

The major assumption of systemic explanations is that decision-makers straightforwardly respond to systemic international emergencies. Foreign policy problems are predominantly, but not solely, explained by the systemic logic of structural realism¹⁰⁸. Systemic explanations assume, and therefore only account for, decision-makers having information certainty, and a shared understanding of the goals and their possible maximisation, and are in essence unitary rational actors. The unitary rational actor model, however, does not hold up very well because it tends to downgrade the complexity and conditions in which decisions are taken. Historical analyses demonstrate that decision-makers are constantly confronted with trade-offs across competing goals and operated in decision structures in which political authority was fragmented and dispersed. It follows from this that advancing the understanding of decision-making as a way to respond to international issues, is fundamental to explaining, possibly even predicting how decision-makers will respond.¹⁰⁹

As the famous models of Irving Janis (*Victims of Groupthink*)¹¹⁰ and Graham Allison (*Essence of Decision*)¹¹¹, demonstrated how the dynamic character of the decision process can shape foreign policy behaviour.¹¹² They have identified that, in complex foreign policy cases concerned with the use or non-use of military means, members of decision groups are central to the decision-making process as they define the nature of the problem and present courses of action.¹¹³

107 See for example: Andrew Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics', *International Organization* 51(4) (1997) 513-553; David Patrick Houghton, 'Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision-making: Toward a Constructivist Approach', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3(1) (2007) 24-45; Joseph S. Nye, 'Neorealism and Neoliberalism', *World Politics* 40(2) (1988) 235-251.

108 See for example: Waltz, K. N., *Theory of international politics* (Waveland Press, 2010); Keohane, R. O., 'Theory of world politics: structural realism and beyond', *Neorealism and its Critics* 158 (1986) 190-97; Krasner, S. D., 'Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables', *International Organization* 36 (2) (1982) 185-205.

109 Hagan, J. D., 'Does Decision-making Matter?', *International Studies Review* 3 (2) (2001) 5- 46:6-11.

110 Janis' insights into the dynamics of foreign policy were novel in the sense that they could explain policy failures. The case he investigated was the decision made by John F. Kennedy about invading the Bays of Pigs in Cuba. His findings illustrate suboptimal policy choices, limiting choices of the actors involved as a consequence of what he coined to be 'groupthink'. This phenomenon is characterised by consensus seeking behaviour and intolerance of opposing viewpoints amongst members of a decision group. Janis Irving, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascos* (2nd edition, Boston 1982).

111 The work of Graham Allison about the workings of interaction within decision groups have become known as 'bureaucratic politics'. He argues individuals to bargain also known as 'pulling and hauling' about decisions that need to be taken. See: Graham T. Allison, *The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston 1971). He further developed this line of thought with Morton H. Halperin. See: Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, 'Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications', *World Politics* 24 (1972) 40-79. Morton Halperin himself advanced the work on bureaucratic politics in his work on the Johnson administration. See Morton H. Halperin, 'The Decision to Deploy the ABM: Bureaucratic and Domestic Politics in the Johnson Administration', *World Politics* 25(1) (1972) 62-95.

112 Jean A. Garrison, 'Foreign Policymaking and Group Dynamics: Where We've Been and Where We're Going' *International Studies Review* 5(2) (2003) 155-202, 155.

113 Garrison, 'Foreign Policymaking and Group Dynamics'.

One of the most damaging claims made by these models against the dominant rational actor model [which views (human) action as the product of a cost-benefit analysis] is that decisions and actions within government are political in nature. It follows from this disposition that political competition between the various actors in government results in compromises that emerged out of bargaining between the actors¹¹⁴ i.e. decisions are made on the basis of bargaining and in fact reflect no one's specific and/or pre-defined interests.

The actions of actors involved are constituted by their interests posited against anticipated consequences, and by the rules entrenched in their identities and political institutions. Consequently, they calculate consequences and follow rules often in a subtle tandem.¹¹⁵ Throughout the whole process, the act of communication is ever present. The authenticity of actors and their charisma greatly influences the way their arguments are perceived and accepted or rejected within decision-making processes. Those who are most able to forward convincing lines of argument, or whose authority is broadly accepted, are very likely to have it 'their way'.¹¹⁶

2.5.1 Institutional Setting and Roles of the Actors

The primary foundation for action in an organisational setting (the primary setting in which the actors under study operate) largely constitutes a cognitive concept [a process of interpretation] but it also contains a normative component.¹¹⁷ Hence, 'actors seek to fulfil the obligation encapsulated in a role, an identity, a membership in a political community or group, and the ethos, practices, and expectations of its institutions. Embedded in a social collectivity, they do what they see as appropriate for themselves in a specific type of situation'.¹¹⁸

Moreover, the actions of decision-makers occur in the context of shared meanings and practices.¹¹⁹ These can be best described as expressions of what is acceptable and exemplary behaviour according to the (internalised) purposes, codes, and methods and techniques of the principal group and the self. Accordingly, actions within organisational settings are believed to commence from these rules, identities, and roles and less so from consequences

114 Graham Allison, 'Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis', *The American Political Science Review* 63(3) (1969) 689-718, 708.

115 James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen. 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', *American Political Science Review* 78(3) (1983) 734-749.

116 See: Thomas Risse, "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics', *International Organization* 54(1) (2000) 1-39.

117 James G March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions* (New York 1989); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 'Institutional Perspectives on Governance' in: H.U. Derlien, U. Gerhardt and F.W. Scharpf (eds.), *Systemrationalität und Partialinteresse*. Festschrift für Renate Mayntz (Baden-Baden 1994) 249-270 cited in: James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 'Institutional Perspectives on Political Institutions', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 9(3) (1996) 247-64, 252.

118 March and Olsen, 'The Logic of Appropriateness', 689.

119 James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York 1989).

and preferences,¹²⁰ in contrast to of the rationalist approach to explaining human behaviour, which starts from the premise that collective or individual action is based on material gain only.¹²¹

Hence, the prescriptions of civil-military relations theory and strategic thought have developed into roles¹²² and identities, rules, and codes, acquired by senior civil and military decision-makers in Western democratic societies. This reflexive part of their reasoning often derives from habits [unintentional, unconscious, involuntary, and effortless, actions]¹²³ and allows for rapid, but not necessarily accurate, classification of people and events.¹²⁴

However, senior civil and military decision-makers are not simply confined to acting according to their roles¹²⁵ (rule-based behaviour), but may actively be involved in the reconstruction of their roles through their interaction with other (inter-) national actors (communicative action). In addition, they often have to mediate between various – often competing – demands that arise from different institutional contexts.¹²⁶ Hence, the ‘art

120 Carl J. Friedrich, *Constitutional Government and Democracy* (rev. ed. Boston, MA 1950) cited in: March and Oleson, ‘Institutional Perspectives on Political Institutions’, 251-252.

121 For a rational choice account on this matter see: Michael Hechter and Satoshi Kanazawa, ‘Sociological Rational Choice Theory’, *Annual Review of Sociology* 23 (1997) 191-214; Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, ‘Rational Choice and the Framing of Decisions’, *Journal of Business* 59(4.2) (1986) S251-S278; Jack L. Goldsmith and Eric A. Posner, ‘Moral and Legal Rhetoric in International Relations: A Rational Choice Perspective’, *The Journal of Legal Studies* 31(51) (2002) S115-S139; Jeffrey Friedman (ed.), *The Rational Choice Controversy: Economic Models of Politics Reconsidered* No. 1-2 (rev. ed., New Haven 1996). Or for discussions on its use: Donald P. Green et al. *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science* (New Haven 1994).

122 Decision-makers employ own definitions of general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules, and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems. See: Kalevi J. Holsti, ‘National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy’ *International Studies Quarterly* 14(3) (1970) 233-309.

123 That is, they do not consume limited cognitive processing capacity. See: Ted Hopf, ‘The Logic of Habit in International Relations’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 16(4) (2010) 539-561, 541. See also: Paul ‘t Hart and Anchrit Wille, ‘Ministers and Top Officials in the Dutch Core Executive: Living Together, Growing Apart?’, *Public Administration* 84(1) (2006) 121-146, 125.

124 Henk Aarts and Ap Dijksterhuis, ‘Habits as Knowledge Structures: Automaticity in Goal-directed Behavior’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 78(1) (2000) 53-63, 60; C.N. Macrae, A.B. Milne, and G.V. Bodenhausen ‘Stereotypes as Energy-Saving Devices’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 66(1) (1994) 37- 47; D.M. Wegner and J.A. Bargh, ‘Control and Automaticity in Social Life’, in: Gilbert D.L., Fiske S.T., and Lindzey G. (eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* I (Boston 1998) 446-497, 472-473 cited in: Hopf, ‘The Logic of Habit in International Relations’. 541

125 The concept of role was initially developed within the disciplines of sociology and social psychology to indicate agent’s characteristic patterns of behaviour provided by a certain position. The role performance of actors includes their behaviour in terms of decisions and actions undertaken. Within this behaviour they often act on the role they are expected to play, anticipating on roles of their counterparts are expected to portray. See Liesbeth Aggestam, ‘Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy’, ARENA Working Papers, WP 99/8, (1999) 12. See http://www.deutschaussenpolitik.de/resources/seminars/gb/approach/document/wp99_8.html

126 Aggestam, ‘Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy’, 10. This process constitutes the intersection of structure and agency and inclines or disposes actors to do certain things. Its premise being that a set of individual dispositions is in fact profoundly social. Pierre Bourdieu captured habit with the concept of doxa: an ‘automatic, unthinking, and unreflective responses of actors in their interpretation of the world’. See: Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge 1977) 164-170. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu claims that ‘habitus engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with [the particular conditions in which it was constituted] and no others’. The *habitus* itself ‘could be considered a system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group’. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 86- 95. His work is criticised by, amongst others, Anthony King who argues that Bourdieu mistakes the nature of human society. He postulates that instead of conceptualising society in terms of structure and agency, mediated by habitus, society should be understood

of inventing' that introduces contingency in social action: the same dispositions could potentially lead to different practices depending on the social context.¹²⁷

Furthermore, in their analysis, be it in terms of the goal or the use of applicable means, the beliefs of senior civil and military decision-makers on which basis they are prepared to act, are positioned in their minds¹²⁸ and constitute, as indicated in many studies, a great normative force.¹²⁹

Moreover, much of their behaviour is – as mentioned earlier – more often than not caught up in habitual behaviour rather than reflection.¹³⁰ This does not withstand the fact that actors are socialised into playing roles through interaction within domestic and international institutional contexts, yet their practices are also caught in so-called position roles allowing less scope for interpretation.¹³¹

The role (perception) of these actors constitutes a mixture of values and descriptions of a reality that may be partial or general and more or less manifest. It does not, however, imply that actors passively act in accordance with a script. Instead, they are actively involved in the categorisation of themselves.¹³² Indeed, the fulfilling of an identity or a role constitutes matching 'a changing (and often ambiguous) set of contingent rules to a changing (and often ambiguous) set of situations'.¹³³

in terms of social interaction. King defines this interaction as webs of social relations in which humans mutually develop shared understandings and co-operate in collective ventures. See: Anthony King, 'The Habitus Process: A Sociological Conception', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 35(4) (2005) 463-468, 467.

127 As postulated by Vincent Pouliot: 'While social scientists have all the time to rationalise action post hoc, agents are confronted with practical problems that they must urgently solve. Hence, one cannot reduce practice to the execution of a model. Social action is not necessarily preceded by a premeditated design. A practice can be oriented toward a goal without being consciously informed by it. In addition, in the heat of practice, hunches and habits often take precedence over rational calculations'. Vincent Pouliot, 'The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities', *International Organization* 62(2) (2008) 257-288, 262, 274.

128 It is the essence of constructivist research to study the acts of social agents. Ultimately, observation is interpretation: social reality constitutes meanings and cannot be studied in any 'objective' manner. However, the impossibility of objective observation should by no means justify not trying to pragmatically interpret social reality with as much detachment as possible. Finally, 'to know if social reality is really real makes no analytical difference: the whole point is to observe whether agents take it to be real, and to draw the social and political implications that result' See: Vincent Pouliot, 'The Essence of Constructivism', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 7(2) (2004) 319-336, 328-329; Nicolas Onuf, 'The Politics of Constructivism' in: Karen Fierke and Knud Eric Jorgensen (eds.), *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation*, (Armonk NY 2001) 236-254.

129 Marijke Breuning,, 'Words and Deeds: Foreign Assistance Rhetoric and Policy Behavior in the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United Kingdom', *International Studies Quarterly* 39(2) (1995) 235-254; Cameron G. Thies and Marijke Breuning, 'Integrating Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations through Role Theory', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8(1) (2012) 1-4; Cameron G Thies, 'Role Theory and Foreign Policy', *The International Studies Encyclopedia* 10 (2010): 6-335; Cristian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, 'Contested Roles and Domestic Politics: Reflections on Role Theory in Foreign Policy Analysis and IR Theory', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8(1) (2012) 5-24.

130 Hopf, 'The Logic of Habit in International Relations', 548.

131 Michael Barnett, 'Institutions, Roles, and Disorder: The Case of the Arab States System', *International Studies Quarterly* (1993) 271-296 cited in: Aggestam, 'Role conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy', 10.

132 Aggestam, 'Role conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy', 12. See: http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/seminars/gb/approach/document/wp99_8.htm

133 Bruce J. Biddle, 'Recent Development in Role Theory', *Annual Review of Sociology* 12 (1986) 67-92; Ellen Berscheid, 'Interpersonal relationships', *Annual Review of Psychology* 45(1) (1994) 79-129, cited in: March and Olsen, 'Institutional

Consequently, role conceptions¹³⁴ structure the behaviour of their agents, as is most apparent when employed in domestic discourse over contested roles.¹³⁵ In both the Danish and Dutch debates about Afghanistan, studied by Juliet Kaarbo and Christian Cantir, role conflicts were evident and influenced by domestic processes, involving particular political actors and their institutional contexts. In the Dutch case, domestically contested roles even became the centre of the international community's attention as world leaders sought to influence the internal debate,¹³⁶ hoping the Netherlands would conform to external expectations.¹³⁷

Throughout the process of making decisions, actors interpret and debate about the problem that requires a decision.¹³⁸ In doing so, they try to figure out in 'a collective communicative process whether their assumptions about the world and about cause-and-effect relationships in the world are correct (the realm of theoretical discourses); or whether norms of appropriate behaviour can be justified, and which norms apply under given circumstances (the realm of practical discourses)'.¹³⁹ Hence, they seek to reach communicative consensus about their understanding of a situation as well as justifications for the principles and norms guiding their action.

By itself, the actions in the decision-making are largely mediated by language: individuals figure out what to do by exchanging arguments with one another.¹⁴⁰ At first glance, this seems to be a habitual practice. However, the very act in itself requires actors to develop trust in the authenticity of each other's' speech acts. In this process, actors implicitly raise three types

perspectives on political institutions', 251-252.

134 Holsti, 'National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy'; Stephen G. Walker (ed.), *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis* (Durham NC 1987); Breuning, 'Words and Deeds'; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*; Cantir and Kaarbo, 'Contested Roles and Domestic Politics', 19; Stephen G Walker, Ed. *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*. (1987 Durham, NC: Duke University Press).

135 Cantir and Kaarbo, 'Contested Roles and Domestic Politics'. The concept of role was initially developed within the disciplines of sociology and social psychology to indicate agent's characteristic patterns of behaviour provided a certain position. The role performance of actors includes their behaviour in terms of decisions and actions undertaken. Within this behaviour they often act on the role they are expected to play, anticipating on roles of their counterparts are expected to portray. See Aggestam, 'Role conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy', 12.

136 This debate will be attended to in chapter 5: the Dutch case.

137 Juliet Kaarbo and Cristian Cantir, 'Role conflict in recent wars: Danish and Dutch debates over Iraq and Afghanistan', *Cooperation and Conflict*, published online 7 August 2013, 2 See also: March and Olsen, 'The institutional dynamics of international political orders'.

138 Risse, "'Let's Argue!'", 6.

139 Risse, "'Let's Argue!'", 7.

140 Most theorising about argumentation within the field of international relations, see: Harald Müller, 'Arguing, Bargaining and All That: Communicative Action, Rationalist Theory and the Logic of Appropriateness in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations* 10(3) (2004) 395-435; Risse, "'Let's Argue!'" is informed by the *Theory of Communicative Action* of Jürgen Habermas. See: Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action I* (Boston 1984); Habermas, Jürgen, *The Theory of Communicative Action II: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston 1985). The main line of thought of his work focuses on an 'ideal-speech situation', which supposedly constructs the social context of the argumentative encounter in such a way that it does not interfere with the 'force of the better argument'. Kornprobst, 'The Agent's Logics of Action', 74.

of validity claims¹⁴¹: the propositional truth of speech acts, the moral rightness, and the authenticity of the speakers. As long as these claims remain unchallenged, communicative action displays itself as a habitual practice. Once these claims are challenged, ‘normal’ communication becomes problematic and the outcome remains undecided. Consequently, a more reflective form of communication will occur since the problematic validity claim will be evaluated with reference to shared norms and principles.¹⁴²

The logic mediating communicative action is not to attain certain fixed preferences, but to seek a reasoned consensus. Hence, where argumentative rationality prevails, actors do not seek to maximise or satisfy their given interests and preferences, but instead challenge and justify the validity claims inherent in them. This in itself, reveals the willingness of actors to change their views of the world in light of the better argument, despite their respective interests.¹⁴³

It is within this collective, interactive decision process, in which all members that are required to make authoritative commitments participate. However, the ability to commit or withhold resources does not require group members themselves to actually implement the decision. This, in fact, creates the possibility of potential discrepancies between choice and action.¹⁴⁴

2.5.2 Decision Units and Decision Paths

The senior civil and military decision-makers are – as explained earlier on in chapter, conceptualised as a ‘decision unit’. The concept of a decision units allows a focus on how a group of actors acquires agency, its primary feature being the ability to commit government resources. The concept of a decision unit moves beyond the dominant understanding of unitary rational actors and allows for a more comprehensive and dynamic understanding of decision-making and decision-makers. The work of Margaret Hermann on decision units builds upon the afore mentioned extant body of research on foreign policy decision-making that has traditionally focussed on bureaucratic politics, group dynamics, and presidential advisory systems. The research on decision-making units aims to facilitate an understanding

141 These claims relate to the corresponding presuppositions of participants engaged in a communicative dialogue: that they share the same objective ‘world’ of facts, feel compelled by the same social context of norms, and – approximately – share similar subjective ‘worlds’ of feelings and emotions. See: Nicole Deitelhoff and Harald Müller, ‘Theoretical Paradise – Empirically Lost? Arguing with Habermas’, *Review of International Studies* 31(1) (2005) 167–179, 168.

142 Deitelhoff and Müller, ‘Theoretical Paradise – Empirically Lost?’, 168, 171.

143 Risse, “‘Let’s Argue!’”, 7, 34.

144 Margaret G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann, ‘Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry’, *International Studies Quarterly* 33(4) (1989) 361–387, 363.

of foreign policymaking by offering an explanation of the essence of decision incorporating existing insights in a complementary framework.¹⁴⁵

Furthermore, it takes into account the variety of ways in which those involved in policymaking can shape events instead of focusing on constraints that limit what decision units can do. Hence, decision units are often active participants in the making of foreign policy. Lastly, the model of a decision unit facilitates research on foreign policy decisions beyond the current models, focussed largely on the American political system, which allows for a more inclusive and comparative approach to studying how decisions are made in and between other political systems.¹⁴⁶

Most importantly, especially for this particular study, the model allows a systematic analysis of sequential decisions whereby the decision unit potentially changes and/or shifts back to the initial configuration, depending on the type of decision within space and time. The contingency-based logic of the model facilitates a dynamic analysis of the series of decisions that are made.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, this level of analysis bridges the individual and organisation level, facilitating switching between levels.¹⁴⁸

Within the specific institutional setting in which the actors operate, as described above, a collection of rules, roles, and practices are embedded in structures of resources that allow action.¹⁴⁹ These notions are taken into consideration whilst employing the framework [explicated below] as advanced by Hermann in order to reconstruct the actions and decisions of the group under study.¹⁵⁰

145 Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy', 48.

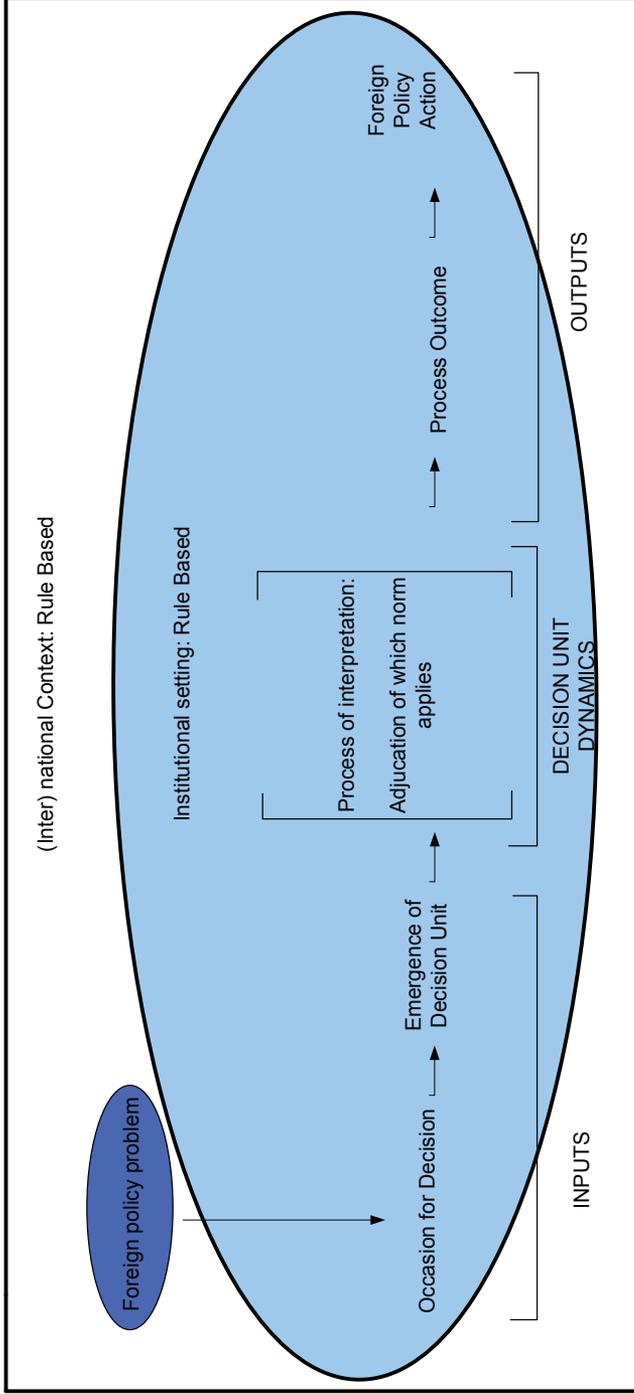
146 *Ibid.*, 48.

147 *Ibid.*, 76.

148 Garrison, 'Foreign Policymaking and Group Dynamics:', 155. See also: Paul 't Hart, Eric K. Stern and Bengt Sundelius (eds.), *Beyond Groupthink: Political Group Dynamics and Foreign Policy-making* (Ann Arbor 1997), 6.

149 James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Democratic Governance* (New 1995); March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*.

150 The following paragraphs are taken from the work of Margaret Hermann on decision units. See: Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy'.



I The Foreign Policy Problem

The foreign policy problem – a perceived discrepancy between present conditions and what is desired¹⁵¹ – is, by definition, subjective and dependent on the perception of the decision-makers involved. They can either pose opportunities or difficulties for the decision-makers and their respective governments. The ‘problem’ is a trigger or the reason for engaging the decision-making framework since it allows for the identification of who will be able to commit government resources and how that individual or set of individuals will, in fact, make that decision.¹⁵²

II The Occasion for Decision

A problem calling for foreign policy action generally tends to get structured into a series of decisions that involve different segments of government. Occasions for decisions are moments when those involved feel they need to act even if the action itself is inaction or to acquire more information. Consequently, there might be various occasions for the decision that may be addressed across time by the same decision unit or by different decision units. The specific occasions studied are strategic actions that lead to authoritative actions on the part of governments.¹⁵³

III Emergence of Decision Unit

Three types of decision units can be distinguished: the predominant leader, the single group, or the coalition. The presence of relevant actors outside government can potentially change the nature of the decision unit. At this point, the formal structures of the respective government, whether a predominant leader, or a single group, becomes less explanatory in terms of the nature of the decision unit.¹⁵⁴

IV Decision Unit Dynamics

The process of interpretation of what problem is actually at hand and how it should be dealt with very much depends on the nature of the decision unit. The unit will often proceed according to institutionalised practices of a collectivity, based on mutual, habitual tacit understanding of what is considered to be reasonable.¹⁵⁵ However, the actors within the unit are limited by the complexities of the demands imposed upon them, by the regulations and distribution of resources and their competencies and organising capacities.¹⁵⁶



151 Hermann, ‘How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy’, 53.

152 *Ibid.*, 53-54.

153 Hermann, ‘How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy’, 54.

154 For a more detailed outline on the different types of decision units, see: Hermann, ‘How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy’, 56-57; Hermann and Hermann, ‘Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How’.

155 March and Olsen, ‘The Logic of Appropriateness’, 690, 694.

156 *Ibid.*, 695.

Furthermore, information about the domestic and international environment shapes the definition of the problem at hand as well as the formulation of feasible alternatives. The decision unit is structured according to the way in which decision-makers seek information from outside the unit to understand where important constituencies stand. Consequently, they determine their options, deduce a certain responsibility to these external forces and bring them into the decision process.¹⁵⁷

In the interpretation and the framing of the problem, cultural and political norms come into play. They give rise not only to the roles of the actors involved, but also to the expectations of the decision unit about the role its nation is to play on the international stage in relation to the problem they are addressing. It may take time to re-frame the problem once policymakers lock onto an initial perception of what is occurring.¹⁵⁸

The matching of identities of those in the unit, with the situation and the aforementioned behavioural rules will very likely be based on experience, expert knowledge, or intuition. It entails the pairing of the problem at hand with a problem-solving action.¹⁵⁹ Hence, the process of interpretation requires assigning rules to situations and is mediated by language. The process upholds consistency of action predominantly through establishing typologies of similarity rather than through deriving action from stable interests or wants.¹⁶⁰

V Process Outcome

The decision-making process produces two outcomes: the outcome of the process itself, and the actual foreign policy action (which will be addressed below). The outcome of the process itself indicates what happened in the course of the decision unit's deliberations. Six possible outcomes are distinguished: concurrence, mutual compromise/consensus, lopsided compromise, deadlock, and fragmented symbolic action.¹⁶¹ The outcome of the process is indicative of the preferences of those involved. The process outcome can vary in terms of different degrees of ownership of the choice that is made and different ways of monitoring the consequences of the decision.¹⁶²

VI Foreign Policy Action

The foreign policy action is what the government ultimately decides to do as a response to the occasion that called for a decision. Put differently, the content of the decision that resulted from the choice process and engendered the response.¹⁶³

■
157 Beasley et al., 'People and Processes in Foreign Policymaking', 223.

158 Ibid., 232-234.

159 March and Olsen, 'The Logic of Appropriateness', 690.

160 March and Olsen, 'The Logic of Appropriateness', 690, 694; Risse, "'Let's Argue!'".

161 For a detailed description of the various outcomes of the process outcome see: Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy', 68.

162 Ibid., 68.

163 Ibid., 68.

The dynamic nature of decision-making and the dynamic and often changing nature of the decision group is very well encapsulated in Herman's model. Studying both the decision units engaged with the potential use of military means and their decision paths, is necessary and central to the field of international relations in order to be better able to understand, predict and maybe even control the use of military means as a response to instability within international relations.

2.5.3 The Propositions

The integration of the decision unit framework with the main concepts of civil-military relations and strategy results into the following propositions – based on the 'ideal type' as put forward in the theory discussed in this chapter:

- PI. The inputs into the DMP are instigated by political guidance on a foreign policy problem;
- PII. The decision-making dynamics reveal a process of interpretation in which the senior civil and military decision-makers perceive and deduce constraints and pressures imposed on them by the domestic and international environment;
- PIII. The output of the decision-making process is a strategy articulating the purpose of the use of the military means.

These propositions will guide the data gathering and analysis as will be described in the next chapter. The extent to which these propositions are, in fact, in line with the practices and decisions made by the group under study, will be dealt with in the concluding chapter.

To conclude, this chapter presented the major theoretical foundations of the three concepts foundational to this study: contemporary military interventions, civil- military relations and strategy. The unit of analysis, the civil and military decision-makers, were conceptualised as a decision unit. The analytical framework that will be applied in this study to reconstruct the activities and respective decisions of these decision-makers, largely builds on Margaret Hermann's work on decision units and foreign policy decision-making. It furthermore includes the conditioning mechanisms that derive from the institutional setting in which these actors are to come to a decision. The sequential phasing of the decision paths as outlined in the model is applied to structure the case studies. The theoretically informed propositions derived from the model and the concepts as discussed in this chapter, are put to the test when confronted with the data as put forward in the case studies.