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Separation and immersion: the changing role of the armed forces in Northwestern liberal democracies

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**THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE:
LIBERAL DEMOCRACY,
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS,
AND THE HYBRIDIZATION OF THE
ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE**

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates on the main theoretical concepts used in this dissertation: liberal democracy, civil-military relations, and the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and discuss the theoretical concepts relevant to this dissertation and to identify the gaps in the existing literature. This chapter also includes the conceptual model for this dissertation.

Section 2.2 will cover the concept of liberal democracy and elaborate on the ‘undermining’ of liberal democracy. This section is followed by section 2.3 on civil-military relations. Section 2.4 and 2.5 will focus on two major developments relevant to military and society and civil-military relations since the end of the Cold War, namely the creation of all-volunteer forces in most western liberal democracies in section 2.4 and the concept of hybridization of the armed forces and the police in section 2.5.

2.2 LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

As explained in chapter 1, the definition for liberal democracy used in this dissertation comes from Mounk, who has defined it as ‘simply a political system that is both liberal and democratic – one that both protects individual rights and translates popular views into public policy’ (Mounk, 2018).

A related concept is that of the *democratic legal order*. In the Dutch context, this concept is used to describe the combination of a political system (namely, a liberal democracy) and a way of living together (namely, an open society). In this definition, liberal democracy describes the vertical relations between the government and its citizens, while open society describes the horizontal relations between citizens.

As mentioned in chapter 1, after the Cold War most western states expected liberal democracies to become the dominant regime form around the world. Democratic consolidation was thought to be a one-way street, and once liberal democracy would be achieved, the political system would be forever stable (Fukuyama, 2012, 2018; Mounk, 2018). Foa has pointed at both the ‘intrinsic’ (human desire for dignity and recognition) and ‘instrumental’ (economic development and high standards of living) appeal of a liberal democracy (Foa, 2018).

But as other authors - including Mounk and Fukuyama - have shown, ‘democracy’ and ‘liberal’ are not inseparable concepts and democratic consolidation appears not to be a

one-way street after all. It is possible to have regimes that are liberal but not democratic, for example Singapore and Hong Kong in the late 20th century. At the same time, some democratic regimes are not liberal. Some Eastern European states, particularly Hungary, are rapidly moving in that direction (Fukuyama, 2020b; Mounk, 2018).

Foa has shown that proving the instrumental advantages of liberal democracy has become more difficult with the faltering economic performance of liberal democracies and the rapidly rising living standards in various authoritarian regimes (Foa, 2018). Authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China have adopted the Western economic model (capitalism), while rejecting its system of political and social freedoms, and have become increasingly successful.

Foa and Mounk have found that support for the democratic form of government and for liberal institutions is declining in western liberal democracies. Their research shows that millennials are a lot less convinced that it is essential to live in a democracy and a growing number of people would support 'a strong leader' or 'an authoritarian government' running their country (Foa & Mounk, 2017).⁴ Foa and Mounk conclude that the long-time assumption of political scientists that 'democratic consolidation' is a one-way street may not be correct and that deconsolidation and democratic backsliding may take place when a sizable minority of citizens lose their belief in democracy. Mounk's research shows that three big developments have influenced this trend: the decades long rise in living standards has come to a standstill, mass migration has changed societies and has led to a part of society feeling threatened and resentful, and finally, means of mass communication have become available to everyone, making it easier to communicate extreme views (Mounk, 2018).

Before delving into the possible ways liberal democracy is undermined, it should be noted that instability and liberal democracy belong together to a certain extent. In the words of the French philosopher Claude Lefort, democracy is 'institutionalized uncertainty (or: indeterminacy)' (Ellian & Rijpkema, 2017). The dynamics of liberal democracy constitute a constant movement between finding consensus and organizing dissensus.

The next section will elaborate on democratic backsliding mentioned above. Based on the work of Boutellier (Boutellier et al., 2020), I will introduce three categories for the possible ways that liberal democracy is undermined. Chapter 4 will further delve into these three categories, based on both a literature review and secondary analysis of relevant databases. It is important to note at this stage this dissertation does not cover

4 In chapter 4 I will provide the corresponding data for Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden.

the whole scientific debate on the topic of liberal democracy. It focuses specifically on democratic backsliding in western liberal democracies and relates this process to the role of the armed forces. This research thereby aims to fill a gap in the existing literature studying the role of the armed forces in liberal democracies that mainly focuses on new, consolidating democracies instead of the opposite process.

Undermining of liberal democracy

The term 'undermining' has in recent years been extensively used by policymakers and researchers alike to describe various problems and perceived risks for liberal democracy as well as threats to the system. For example, the undermining of local government by criminal organizations, ideological undermining by extremist groups aiming for parallel authorities, and 'long-arm-tactics' by foreign state actors aiming to undermine western societies by influencing their diaspora.

In the Dutch context, some authors have pointed out that 'undermining' seems to have become the new buzzword in Dutch politics and security policy (Boutellier et al., 2020). According to Boutellier, undermining is a recent example of securitization⁵ with a strong mobilizing effect, and in this sense, he speaks about 'ondermijnering', which could be translated as 'underminization' (Boutellier et al., 2020). This confusion makes it even more necessary to look at the term more closely and try to define it. The aim of this section is to do so and specify how undermining is defined in this dissertation.

Boutellier speaks about two discourses in undermining, a vertical discourse focusing on organized crime and a horizontal discourse focusing on problematic behavior damaging the social quality of society, such as religious extremism. While the first form of undermining is usually aimed at economic gains (and undermining is in that sense a consequence, but not necessarily an intended effect), the second form is characterized by ideological motives or political and societal discontent with the government and / or the ruling elite (Boutellier et al., 2020).

Boutellier states that in the fight against organized crime, there is a risk of the state itself undermining liberal democracy. As will be further explored in chapter 4, the same can be said about counter-terrorism measures. In addition to the two discourses used by Boutellier in his analysis (vertical and horizontal undermining), this dissertation includes an extra category that is not in the original framework of Boutellier: undermining **by** the state. The three categories are depicted in a below.

5 Securitization theory will be explained extensively in chapter 4. In short, the theory states security threats are socially constructed and emerge through a discursive process that dramatizes and prioritizes them

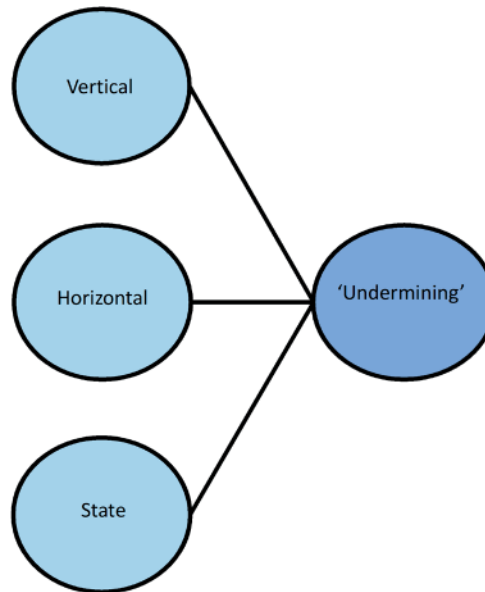


Figure 2.1: Three forms of undermining

Relations between categories of undermining and the role of external actors

These forms of undermining (vertical, horizontal and state) are presumably related. Strong counter-terrorism measures that stigmatize certain population groups may lead to radicalization in those groups. More generally, when the government is curtailing civil liberties, this may lead to people losing trust in the government. People who do not trust the government may be more inclined to fend for themselves and start organizing themselves within their own neighborhood or community (horizontal undermining). As will be explained in chapter 4 based on the work of Risse, this form of undermining may eventually create a form of limited statehood, creating opportunities for other organizations, including criminal organizations, to fill this vacuum (Börzel & Risse, 2016; Krasner & Risse, 2014; Noordanus, 2020; Risse & Stollenwerk, 2018; Steen et al., 2016).

External actors may play a role in undermining as well. There are indications that polarization can be exacerbated by foreign interference, often attempted at influencing members of a country's diaspora, so-called 'long arm' tactics (Nationaal Coördinator voor Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2019). Disinformation campaigns try to exploit the distrust of certain population groups and thereby have the potential to undermine social cohesion and ultimately the functioning of the democratic legal order (Bennett & Livingston, 2018). A recent report by the Dutch general and military intelligence service and the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism shows that while no external actors are ex-

pected to have the combination of capabilities and intention to disrupt national security in the short term (2 years), the developments for the medium and long term are worrying (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2021). Along with the link between external actors and horizontal forms of undermining, there may also be a link between external actors and vertical forms of undermining. However, at least in the Dutch context, this connection has thus far not been found. The expected role of external actors has been added to the model in figure 2.2. As the focus for this dissertation lies with the domestic role of the armed forces, external actors will only play a minor role in this dissertation.

After this short introduction on the concepts of liberal democracy and democratic backsliding, the next section will focus on the main theoretical basis for this dissertation, namely the concept of civil-military relations.

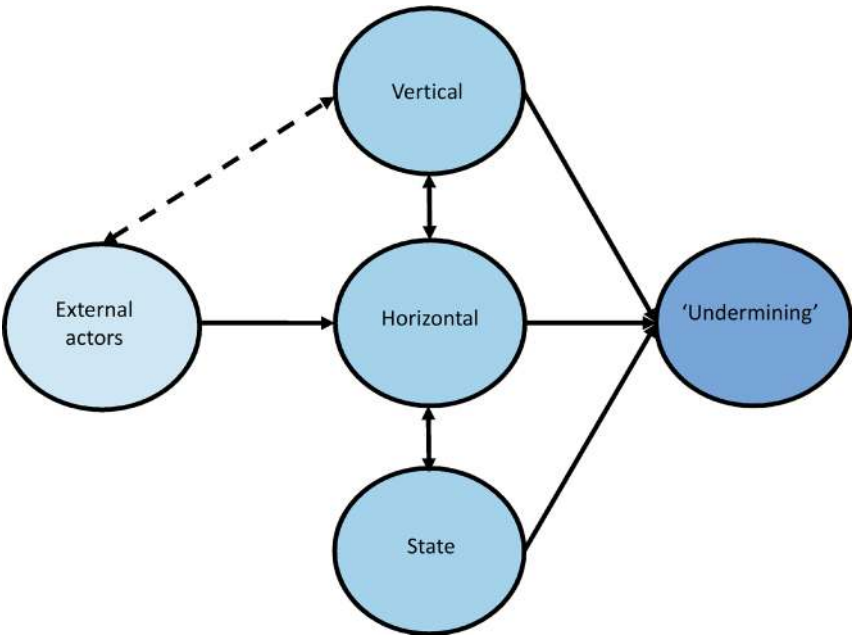


Figure 2.2: Undermining explained

2.3 CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

This section explains the concept of civil-military relations, which is one of the key subfields of study within the field of 'military and society'. It provides an overview of the most important concepts used in this field and explains why these concepts are important to the topic of this dissertation. It also aims to identify the gaps in the existing literature.

The military and society interact and shape each other and the field of 'military and society' seeks to understand and explain that interaction (Shields, 2020). It studies both the role of the military in society and the responsibility of the society to the military. The role of the armed forces is to protect the society it serves and both the military and society have developed norms, rules and theories concerning this relationship (Shields, 2020). A well-known example is Thomas Hobbes' notion of the social contract between the population and its rulers, in which the population obtains security from the rulers in exchange for obeying the rulers laws (Burk, 2002).

This perspective would assume that what it means to be 'civil' or 'military' is in the end a political choice. Without these categories, the state would not be able to differentiate between war and peace, as the state must be able to allow some deadly violence (by the military, in war times) and ban other deadly violence like crime. The distinction between civil and military in that sense upholds a particular form of domestic order, namely the state. Without this distinction, a Hobbesian state of nature would be the result (Angstrom, 2013).

Two disciplines - political science and sociology - have mainly influenced the field of 'military and society', with the two classical authors being Samuel Huntington (political scientist) and Morris Janowitz (sociologist). Their work from the 1950s and 1960s is still influential in the field today and will be discussed in the next section. Stemming from political science, civil-military relations basically concern the relationship between military and civil domains and authorities. Other subfields of 'military and society', mainly based on military sociology, concern topics such as veterans, military families, recruitment, and minority representation in the military.

Civil-military relations can be defined as the relationship between civil and military authorities (Shields, 2020). Many scholars assume that militaries are special actors because of the complex role they play in both regime and state security: on the one hand, the military is a regime and state's main protector and, in that sense, provides stability; on the other hand, it is the regime and state's main threat and source of insecurity (Blake McMahon & Slantchev, 2015; Brooks, 2019). How can a society assure itself that the armed forces of that society will do what society wants them to do? In other words who guards the guardians? Feaver calls this the civil-military 'problematic' (Feaver, 1999, 2005); McMahon and Slantchev talk about the 'Guardianship Dilemma' (Blake McMahon & Slantchev, 2015).

This section will start with a description of the two classical works in civil-military relations, written by Huntington and Janowitz. Subsequently, several ideal types for civil-

military relations will be described, followed by a discussion of some central themes in civil-military relations literature, namely civilian control, military defection, and coups. The final part of this section will focus on limitations to civil-military relations research and will introduce some alternative perspectives.

Classical works: Huntington and Janowitz

In his classical work in civil-military relations, *The Soldier and the State* (1957), Huntington focuses on the paradox that a military strong enough to protect the state and the people could also use that power against them. Huntington propagates objective control, by which he means a separation of authority and domains of responsibility into a military and a political sphere. In this division of labour politicians, in other words, civilians, are responsible for policy and goal setting, while the military is responsible for implementation. In matters of implementation, the military has autonomy to manage its own affairs. This requires a strong professional ethos in the officer corps (Shields, 2020).

Huntington distinguishes objective control from subjective control. The aim of subjective control is to limit military power and the capacity of the officer corps to influence politics. Huntington is of the opinion that this type of control makes the military more civilian by turning them into a mirror of the state, which leads to a decline in military professionalism (Bruneau, 2018).

Bruneau identifies three main flaws in Huntington's proposition. The first flaw is that Huntington's argument for professionalism in the officer corps can be considered a tautology. Citing Feaver, Bruneau explains that in Huntington's theory, military autonomy leads to professionalization, which leads to political neutrality and voluntary subordination of the military to civil authorities, which leads to secure civil authority. For Huntington, the link between professionalism and voluntary subordination is not a relationship of cause and effect, but a definition: a professional military obeys civil authority, and a military that does not obey is not professional (Bruneau, 2018; Feaver, 2005).

A second flaw identified by Bruneau concerns the nature of professionalism. For Huntington, this is a static variable, while for Bruneau, it is a dynamic variable that can change through programs of education. A third flaw identified by Bruneau is the exclusive focus on control. As Peter Feaver also states in a much-cited 1999 review article,

Although civil-military relations is a very broad subject, encompassing the entire range of relationships between the military and civilian society at every level, the field largely focuses on the control or direction of the military by the highest civilian authorities in the nation state (Feaver, 1999, p. 211).

The topic of civilian control will be further discussed in this section.

The second classical work is by sociologist Morris Janowitz (Janowitz, 1960). Janowitz describes changes in the use of force in international relations in the nuclear era. He considers these changes to make it appropriate to speak of constabulary forces rather than of military forces. He bases his ideas on the British model of 'imperial policing' which the British used after the Second World War to deal with insurgency in its colonies (P. Neuteboom, 2010). Janowitz states that Western armed forces are undergoing a process of constabularization by using limited force in small conflicts to quickly re-establish stability, resulting in armed forces resembling police forces (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). In Janowitz' words,

The military establishment becomes a constabulary force when it is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of forces, and seeks viable international relations, rather than victory, because it has incorporated a protective military posture (Janowitz, 1960, p. 418).

Janowitz' constabulary force includes all forms of military forces, from weapons of mass destruction at the highest spectrum of conflict to paramilitary operations at the lower spectrum. His concept eliminates the distinction between peacetime and wartime military establishment and draws on the police concept.

Neuteboom clarifies that Janowitz's approach is not about establishing a new military structure but rather about the necessity for new military missions in the nuclear era. During the Second World War, the main role model was that of the 'heroic leader'. In the nuclear age, this model could be replaced by that of the 'military technologist', which would transform the function of military professionals into 'controllers of a machine'. Janowitz proposes a new role of military manager with traits common to civilian managers to create a balance between the heroic leader (who will always aim for victory) and the military technologist (who is preoccupied with the highest level of force) (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

The key elements of Janowitz' constabulary force are its operational and organizational readiness and the minimum use of force. These elements are commonly associated to the police. However, it is important to note that Janowitz did not intend for the military to be involved in domestic police tasks, except as a reserve instrument, because it would hinder the development of the constabulary force in international relations (Janowitz, 1960). As noted by Neuteboom, he only based the constabulary force on the police concept to emphasize the need for a responsive, standing organization without the tra-

ditional distinction between a peacetime and a wartime establishment, thus integrating preparation and operational activities (P. Neuteboom, 2010). Another point of difference between Janowitz and Huntington is that while Huntington propagates objective control, Janowitz supports subjective control. In his words:

The constabulary force is designed to be compatible with the traditional goals of democratic political control. The constabulary officer performs his duties, which include fighting, because he is a professional with a sense of self-esteem and moral worth. Civilian society permits him to maintain his professional skills. He is amenable to civilian political control because he recognizes that civilians appreciate and understand the tasks and responsibilities of the constabulary force. He is integrated into the civilian society because he shares its common values (Janowitz, 1960, p. 440).

Neuteboom doubts the feasibility of this model, as policing requires decentralization and empowerment of lower levels, while the military traditionally is a hierarchical top-down organization (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

According to Haltiner, for the military to be able to accomplish this, it should evolve to a network organization with less hierarchy and a flexible, modular structure, without losing its combat power on a macro level (Haltiner, 2001). At the same time, from a functional perspective, the question can be asked whether the military is best suited to fulfil police tasks in an expeditionary context (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Feaver describes Janowitz' theory from the perspective of civilian control, focusing on his concern that the politicization of the military may challenge civilian supremacy. According to Feaver, such a military may try to influence civilians and resist unwelcome policy directives (Feaver, 1999). For Janowitz the answer to this potential problem is greater civilian oversight at many more levels of military affairs. As has been shown, Huntington is of the opinion that this may harm military professionalism. Muller highlights the risk that using the military in civilian affairs may result in it becoming subject to the whims of politics (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017). The distinction between the civil and the military domains becomes less clear, and the loyalty of the military is put to a test if missions are based on small majority decisions in parliament, and even more so if these decisions do not include the necessary preconditions for a successful mission (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017).

Ideal-types for civil-military relations

Apart from the Hobbesian state of nature described before, where there is no distinction between civil and military at all, Angstrom defines four ideal-types for civil-military relations, namely civilian supremacy over the military, military supremacy over the civil-

ians, civil and military parity and intertwining of civil and military (Angstrom, 2013). In the first type, civil and military are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. This ideal-type represents the inherent norm in civil-military relations literature for a democratic regime, in which the military should be accountable and subordinate to democratic civilian leadership. Proponents of this separation standpoint come from Huntington's tradition (Huntington, 1957).

Proponents of separation state that civil and military domains should remain strictly separated. This has consequences for the domestic role of the armed forces as well. In a democratic regime, there usually is a clear distinction between the organizations responsible for internal security (the police) and external security (the armed forces) (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017; Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Only in very specific circumstances the armed forces assist the civil authorities (for example, disasters or crises). The risk, however, of the separation standpoint is that military and civil actors grow apart, and that military expertise and threat analyses are ignored. Research has shown there is a significant civil-military gap (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012; Wallenius et al., 2019a).

An alternative to Huntington's model is Janowitz' model of subjective civilian control, as described above (Janowitz, 1960). This model matches the fourth ideal type identified by Angstrom, namely what he calls the intertwining of civil and military and what others would call 'immersion'. There is a distinction of civil and military in this model, but the expectation would exist for civilian positions within the armed forces and vice versa. The model relies on exclusive expertise but is structured such that the respective competence of civil and military authorities can be applied in the strategic decision-making process to yield the best results (Angstrom, 2013). Proponents of immersion propose an active military citizenship, whereby the armed forces are immersed in society to such an extent that they want to do what society demands.

A related concept relevant to this dissertation is militarization, which could be the consequence of a blurring of military and civilian domains, and is usually considered as something negative in liberal democracies (Schulzke, 2018). A recent paper written by Schulzke, however, distinguishes between necessary and surplus militarization. Schulzke describes militarization as a process 'characterized by the spread of military influence or values into domains that are thought to constitute a separate civil sphere.' (Schulzke, 2018) He distinguishes militarization from militarism, which he defines as '*uncritical enthusiasm for the military, which is linked to nationalism and a desire to use military force to secure foreign policy objectives*' and is not fitting in a liberal democracy (Schulzke, 2018). Within the concept of militarization, two separate processes can be

distinguished, namely material processes (such as the use of military vehicles in policing) and ideational processes (such as using the language of war in ordinary life).

Schulzke bases his theory on necessary and surplus militarization on Herbert Marcuse's theory on necessary and surplus repression. Schulzke argues that both repression and militarization are coercive practices involving the use of force. These concepts overlap to some degree (militarization may include or excuse repression and repression is often enacted with help of the military) and surplus militarization and repression are alike in their pervasiveness (Schulzke, 2018).

Schulzke argues that some militarization (and therefore, some form of immersion) may be useful for two reasons. Firstly, contact between civil and military spheres can prevent the military from becoming detached from society and guarantees that civilian values have a place in military life, which is basically Janowitz's argument as well. Militarization can foster legitimacy and popular support, which ensures mutual trust between civilians and soldiers, a requirement for civilian control (Schulzke, 2018). Contact between civil and military spheres can help the citizenry to evaluate policy decisions concerning the military and by consequence be useful in civilian oversight.

Secondly, according to Schulzke, some militarization may be unavoidable for national security reasons, depending on the threats a particular country faces at a certain point in time. He points to recruitment issues (promoting the military in society may be necessary to get enough recruits), militarization of the police that may be necessary to a certain extent (see also section 2.5), and military service as a unifying experience (see also section 2.4). As for police militarization, Schulzke considers the use of military protective equipment as reasonable (necessary militarization) when operating in dangerous circumstances, while the use of offensive weapons and tactics would be excessive (surplus militarization) (Schulzke, 2018). Schulzke's ideas are relevant for this dissertation, as they both explain the need for immersion and a certain amount of militarization and the limits that are appropriate in a liberal democracy.

As will be discussed in section 2.5, a process of hybridization of military and civilian forces is taking place in several Western European countries. This process may impact civil-military relations and more specifically the balance between separation and immersion as well (Bollen, 2019).

Coming back to Angstrom's typology, in addition to these two ideal types (civilian supremacy over the military and the intertwining of civil and military), he defines two additional ideal types. The first one is military supremacy over civilians, which means a

traditional military dictatorship. The military-led juntas in Latin-America in the second half of the 20th century stand as a prime example. The second additional ideal type is civil and military parity, where neither military nor civilians have exclusive spheres of knowledge and neither can set their own standards (Angstrom, 2013).

As often is the case with ideal types, none of them exactly match the situation of the three cases in this dissertation, nor should the term 'ideal' be read in a normative way. As will be shown in later chapters, each case is in fact a mix of Angstrom's ideal types, particularly civilian supremacy over the military and intertwining of civil and military. In chapter 1, the assumption was made that the balance between separation and immersion, that tilts towards separation now, may change in the direction of immersion to better be able to deal with the challenges to liberal democracy. Considering the models and critiques to these models presented in this section, it is important to keep the basic premises of a liberal democracy into account in this balancing act. Too much separation may lead to a growing civil-military gap and make it more difficult for the state to deal with the challenges identified, with a negative impact on the stability of liberal democracy. Too much immersion may help in dealing with the challenges but may also have a negative impact on the stability of liberal democracy.

A different perspective on the balance between separation and immersion is offered by Rebecca Schiff. In her concordance theory, she focuses on the relationship between three elements, namely the military, the political elite and the population, and states that these three should aim for a cooperative relationship. This relationship may involve separation, but it does not require it (Schiff, 1995). Schiff is of the opinion that separation theory is too focused on institutional aspects of the relation between the military and civil domain and fails to consider cultural and historical conditions that may be present in a state. She argues that *"the entire concept of 'civil' is a Western European experience later adopted by American culture"*, which cannot be directly applied to countries in other parts of the world (Schiff, 1996, p. 282). According to Schiff, cultural factors *"have tremendous influence on the absence or prevalence of domestic military intervention."* (Schiff, 1995, p. 11)

She describes four indicators, namely the social composition of the officer corps (representative of the nation or not), the political decision-making process (how decisions on budget, size, etc. of the armed forces are made), the recruitment method (coercive or persuasive), and military style (*"what it looks like, what ethos drives it, and what people think about it"*) (Schiff, 1995, p. 15). According to Schiff, if the military, political elite, and population agree on these four indicators, this makes domestic intervention by the military less likely, which is the main reason for the focus on civilian control of the military. Schiff illustrates her theory with case studies of Israel and India, two democratic

countries that do not resemble the traditional separation model between the military and civil domain, but still have never seen a military coup. Schiff, in short, considers the dichotomy between separation and immersion too limiting, and argues for more diversity, taking cultural aspects into account. Schiff uses her theory to explain the likelihood of domestic intervention by the military. Her concordance theory will be applied to the case studies in this dissertation as well, but with a different purpose, namely to determine whether it can explain the differences in the separation-immersion balance between the three case studies based on cultural aspects. Secondly, her theory will be applied within each case study, to determine whether it can explain the assumed development from separation to immersion in these countries.

In a later article, Schiff introduces the concept of 'targeted partnership', which focuses on agreement between the military, politicians, and society for a limited purpose and amount of time and on a specific indicator, namely the political decision-making process. During such a period, normal boundaries between the domains may blur, even when separation is the norm. She illustrates this with counterinsurgency strategy in the United States, stating that this topic required military experts to take a larger role than would usually be acceptable in US civil-military relations, in order to explore potential strategies together with policy makers and political elites. The most pressing need for targeted partnerships according to Schiff occurs in wartime scenarios. According to Schiff, *"targeted partnership does not undermine civilian control; rather, it enables the military to collaborate, share expertise, and participate in formulating effective strategy alternatives."* (Schiff, 2012, p. 335)

This section has provided insights in the ideal-types for civil-military relations and the inherent limitations of using such ideal-types, as illustrated by the work of Schiff. The ideal-types and the alternative concordance theory of Schiff will be used in chapters 5 to 7 to analyse the three case studies.

Civilian control, military defection, and coups

The concept of civilian control has already been referred to in the above analysis. Considering its importance in civil-military relations and the relevance for this dissertation (namely: that a growing domestic role of the armed forces may impact civilian control and thereby the stability of liberal democracy) it will be further explained and analyzed in the following section.

As shown, in Western thinking 'civilian control' is an essential aspect of civil-military relations in a democratic regime (Kohn, 1997). While a military coup signifies the ultimate loss of civilian control, divergence in point of view between civil authorities and the

military can undermine civil-military relations in the long run as well. Authors like Feaver and Kohn also point out that this means top military officers cannot resign from office, as it would be “a public political act of defiance” (Kohn, 2017, p. 44).

Bland identifies four problems in civil-military relations related to control issues, namely 1) the need to control the military establishment, 2) how to make sure the military does not harm the government or citizens, for example through indiscipline, 3) how to make sure the government does not abuse the military for their own partisan interests and 4) how the government can control the military experts while lacking that expertise themselves (Bland, 1999).

Croissant et al. have developed a five-dimensional concept of civilian control. They define civilian control as

That distribution of decision-making power in which civilians alone have the authority to decide on national politics and their implementation. Under civilian control civilians can freely choose to delegate decision-making power and the implementation of certain policies to the military while the military has no autonomous decision-making power outside those areas specifically defined by civilians. Furthermore, it is civilians alone who determine which particular policies, or policy aspects, the military implements, and civilians also define the boundaries between policymaking and policy-implementation. Moreover, civilian authorities must possess sanctioning power vis-à-vis the military; and they can – in principle – revise their decisions at any time (Croissant et al., 2010, p. 955).

They subsequently distinguish five decision-making areas for which the distribution of decision-making power can be assessed: elite recruitment, public policy, internal security, national defense, and military organization. Based on an assessment of all five areas, the degree of civilian control in any given country can be assessed.

Five relatively recent (compared with the classical works of Huntington and Janowitz) influential writers on civilian control are Feaver, Desch, Levy, Bland and Travis. The work of Desch, Levy, and Travis is of particular relevance for this dissertation, as it links civilian control to the threat context, with these authors expecting a declining external threat having a negative impact on civilian control of the military. If this is the case, it could be part of the explanation for a changing (and growing) role of the armed forces after the end of the Cold War.

Feaver developed a theory of civil-military relations based on principal-agent theory (Feaver, 2005). In this theory, the principals (civil authorities) develop policies, which then must be implemented by the agents (the military). When preferences of the civil authorities and the military align, the military usually does as it is asked. However, if preferences do not align, the military has an incentive to 'shirk' from the instructions.

Desch, a firm advocate of Huntington's ideas, has studied civilian control in the period after the Cold War and presents a model relating it to internal and external threats. For Desch, the main indicator for civilian control is which preferences (civil or military) prevail in case of disagreement. When military preferences often prevail, civilian control is weak. In his model, a state with a high external threat and a low internal threat should have the strongest civilian control of the military, as the military is focused on the external threat and has no time to mingle in domestic politics (Desch, 1998). According to Desch, civilian control in Europe and North America has been strong because these countries have mainly faced external threats. In contrast, Desch argues that civilian control is most likely weak in a regime facing high internal and low external threats, as civilian institutions are most likely weak and divided. He illustrates this by pointing at 'Third World' countries where civilian control of the military has been relatively weak.

For the other two possibilities (high internal and external threats, or low internal and external threats) the outcome for civil-military relations is less certain. With the high external threat disappearing for western countries after the end of the Cold War, Desch expected civilian control to weaken in these countries (Desch, 1998), an interesting aspect to consider in the three case studies presented in this dissertation.

Another theory on civilian control was created by Yagil Levy. He argues that the extent to which civilian control is effective depends on two relations of exchange:

"(1) the republican exchange, wherein the state provides its citizens with rights in exchange for their military sacrifice; and (2) the control exchange, in which the military subordinates itself to civilian rulers in exchange for resources (material and symbolic) the state possesses and provides to the military."(Levy, 2012, p. 530)

According to Levy's theory, civilian control requires these two exchanges to be in balance and perceptions play an important role; in a balanced relationship, both sides feel similarly committed to it and therefore, civilian control is firmly in place (Levy, 2012). Levy states that a diminishing external threat may lead to an imbalance in the republican exchange, as citizens may feel their sacrifice to be too high. The state may then employ four different strategies to achieve a balance again: militarization (which

aims to justify the level of sacrifice), rights allocation (for example better payment to the military), cost reduction (shrinking the military, which also means providing less security for citizens), or burden redistribution (for example abolishing conscription, or relying more on private contractors). The extent to which these strategies have been employed by governments in Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands will be discussed in chapters 5 to 7. In a more recent publication, Kuehn and Levy emphasize the importance of militarization as a mediating factor in the interplay of threats and control, adding to Desch's theory (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a). These authors argue that a high external threat, when combined with militarization, will increase military autonomy, unless war preparations require the mobilization of large groups in society. In that case, civilian control is enhanced "as it encourages monitoring of the military by the sacrificing groups." (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a)

Levy considers the interplay between the exchanges as a better predictor for the conditions under which politicians, the military and society can agree than the concordance indicators that Schiff proposes, as Schiff's theory, in his opinion, does not cover how changes in concordance affect civil-military relations or how the two sides bargain to achieve balance again (Levy, 2012). This theory will be tested in chapters 5 to 7 for the three case studies of this research. Regarding Feaver's principle-agent theory, Levy provides the conditions under which the principle-agent interactions take place.

Control of the military according to Levy must be distinguished from control over militarization, which *"deals with controlling the mechanisms that legitimize the use of force, first and foremost military force."* (Levy, 2016, p. 76) Scholars disagree on the question whether strong civilian control leads to military restraint or not, with some claiming it does and others claiming it does not. For example, Huntington claims that the military is more conservative than civilians concerning the use of force. In the words of Levy, *"the legitimacy to use force relates to the extent to which the state's legal mode of using armed force against an external adversary is socially accepted as a normal, pervasive, and enduring strategic preference."* (Levy, 2016, p. 79) This legitimacy can be evaluated on a spectrum ranging from pacifism on one side to militarism at the other side. Instrumental use of force would lie in the middle of the spectrum. According to Levy, it is difficult to operationalize control of militarization. Public debates on manpower, the essence of the use of force, the nature of the threat, domestic interests, and costs influence the political culture and thereby the legitimacy of the use of force.

Control of the military and control of militarization can be plotted against each other. Levy claims that the combination of high control of the military and low control of militarization is typical for democracies. Militarization then becomes a tool for legiti-

mizing sacrifice, which is another relevant hypothesis to investigate when studying the hybridization of the armed forces and the police, as will be done in this research.

Bland proposes a theory of shared responsibility in which "*civil control of the military is managed and maintained through the sharing of responsibility for control between civilian leaders and military officers.*" (Bland, 1999, p. 9) His theory assumes that although civil control must be at the basis of civil-military relations, it is a dynamic process which can take different shapes following from cultural developments and the threat environment. He recognizes that the participation of the military in political decision-making regarding national defense is inevitable and that theory should reflect this practice. This concerns all levels of political decision-making, which he categorizes in strategic (ends and means of defense), organizational (arrangement of resources), social (armed forces and society), and operational (employment of the armed forces) (Bland, 1999). Accordingly, Bland suggests dropping the term of civilian control and replacing it with 'civilian direction' of the military. He considers an effective accountability mechanism to be an essential element of such a model. According to Bland, effective direction of the armed forces will also reinforce the connection with the population because it will strengthen the population's conviction that the armed forces are acting in the interest of the country and according to its rules, which will in turn according to Bland contribute to military strength and a strong national defense (Bland, 2001). His argument is in line with that of Bruneau described in the next section, who suggests focussing less on control and more on the requirements needed for the military to be effective.

Travis has in a way translated Janowitz' thoughts to modern times, as he considers the rise of grey zone threats to be comparable with the trends leading to constabularization in Janowitz' time. He proposes what he calls 'pragmatic civilian control' as the preferred model for these times (Travis, 2017, 2019). The pragmatism he proposes is based on four principles, namely practical, pluralistic, participatory, and provisional. In his opinion, relationships between civil and military actors should be adaptive and practice inclusion (provisional and participatory) to stay effective and they should be determined by the kind of conflict and the context (practical) (Travis, 2017). He bases his model on three assumptions, namely 1) separating the soldier from society will have a negative impact on the soldier's will to fight, 2) the military operates as a pluralistic system in pluralistic political environment, and 3) if the military wants to stay effective, it needs its own sphere of competency (Travis, 2017).

Travis emphasizes three ways in which pragmatic control differs from the objective control propagated by Huntington. In his model, the military interacts with politicians in policymaking (in line with Schiff's targeted partnership). Secondly, the military does not

abstain from politics, but “*embraces the political arena as an inescapable challenge.*” (Travis, 2017, p. 403) Lastly, while Huntington spoke about a single legitimate authority governing the military, Travis is of the opinion that the military must deal with a variety of civilian leaders at different levels of authority.

Travis subsequently relates civilian control to the intensity of conflict. He argues that the more intense the conflict becomes, the more need there is for objective control.

The insights of these authors will be used in chapters 5 to 7 to analyze the three cases studied in this dissertation. The case studies in that sense serve as test cases for these theories on civilian control.

When civilian control weakens, as has been stated by Brooks, the military may decide to defect, for example in deciding to abstain from using force to disperse mass unarmed protests that threaten a regime (Brooks, 2019). Recent literature has focused on the Arab uprisings in 2011. However, a recent case as well is the storming of the US Capitol in January 2021 by supporters of former president Donald Trump. A week after the riots, the US military’s Joint Chiefs of Staff put out a rare message to their personnel stating that the riots were ‘a direct assault on the US Congress, the Capitol building, and our Constitutional process’, adding that the military remained committed to protecting and defending the Constitution: *‘As service members, we must embody the values and ideals of the nation. We support and defend the Constitution. Any act to disrupt the Constitutional process is not only against our traditions, values and oath; it is against the law.’* (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2021) Even more recently, a similar process took place in Brazil where, after losing the presidential elections, former president Bolsonaro claimed the elections had been fraudulent and apparently aimed (in vain) for military support so that he could stay in power (Downie, 2022; Villegas et al., 2022).

The ultimate form of defection is a military coup. Research on the likeliness of military coups in democracies is not consistent. Some state that coups are extremely rare in mature democracies, and that autocracies and other types of unstable states run a greater risk (Shields, 2020). Others show that democracies are just as vulnerable to coups as autocratic regimes and even that in democracies, they are more likely to succeed (Bell, 2016). In a related matter, Brooks has stated that as normative pressures against coups could abate with democratic backsliding, coups might increase in incidence (Brooks, 2019). This correlates with research by Mounk and Foa, who show that support for military rule is growing in western liberal democracies, especially among younger generations (Foa & Mounk, 2016). However, research also shows that most coups after the end of the Cold War, as opposed to the period before, have been followed by competitive elections. In

that sense, the new generation of coups has been far less harmful for democracy than their historical predecessors (Marinov & Goemans, 2013). Feaver argues that coups are a problematic focus for civil-military relations because it can underestimate military influence. A coup may indicate military strength but military weakness as well, as apparently the military failed in achieving its goals through the normal political process (Feaver, 1999). Military influence, however, is much harder to measure.

This section has elaborated on the topic of civilian control and the ultimate consequences if civilian control fails (military defection and coups). It has presented the work of several authors that have studied these issues and have theorized about the impact of a changing threat environment on civilian control. Their insights will be applied to the case studies in chapter 5 to 7. Finishing the discussion in this chapter on civil-military relations, the following section will focus on limitations to civil-military relations.

Limitations to civil-military relations research

The study of civil-military relations in the west has been dominated by research in the US and the UK (Angstrom, 2013). The question of control over the military is at the heart of many of these studies, even though some authors have proposed different forms of civilian control, speaking about 'civilian direction' or 'pragmatic civilian control'; as explained in the previous section. Some authors consider this heavy focus on control as misplaced, certainly in established liberal democracies, and suggest studying other dimensions as well, such as military roles and missions (what are the armed forces for?) and military effectiveness and efficiency (Bruneau, 2018; Bruneau & Matei, 2008; Edmunds, 2006). Bruneau and Matei in this respect argue that *"...control, in and of itself, is not much use if the instruments of security – military, police, and intelligence – are not effective in achieving the roles and missions assigned them by the civilian leadership."* (Bruneau & Matei, 2008, p. 924) According to Bruneau, Matei and Sakoda, a National Security Council can be a crucial component in democratic civil-military relations as it can both improve civilian control and the effective implementation of roles and missions (Bruneau et al., 2009).

Brooks suggests normalizing the military's role in politics. According to her, the military has long been treated as an exceptional actor, because it controls the most lethal forms of armed force in a state. However, there are other ways in which the military can influence politics and exercise power. Focusing on the exceptional may lead to overlooking other means of influence. Large militaries often have bureaucratic power within state institutions and senior military leaders can exercise influence by shirking from their duties. Military leaders and organizations can also work with organized interest groups in society to advance their interests, etc. (Brooks, 2019).

Both Bruneau's and Brooks' ideas will be used in this dissertation as well. The dissertation's focus on how the armed forces can strengthen liberal democracy matches Bruneau's suggestion to focus on the necessary requirements for the military to be effective while remaining under civilian control. Normalizing the military's role in politics as Brooks suggests may be helpful in that respect.

A further limitation concerns the fact that a large part of the civil-military relations literature focuses on countries moving from a non-democratic to a democratic model (Bruneau & Matei, 2008). Recent analyses focus on countries in South America and Eastern Europe (Burk, 2002; Cottey et al., 2002; Pion-Berlin et al., 2017a, 2017b) and not on established liberal democracies that are less stable now than in the past. This dissertation will specifically focus on established liberal democracies that are becoming less stable because of new challenges (organized crime, pandemics, etc.) and study the civil-military relations dilemma of separation versus immersion from that perspective. In line with Bruneau, the question can be asked whether the strong focus on civilian control of the military in established liberal democracies may have a negative impact on its effectiveness in dealing with new challenges and thereby on the stability of liberal democracy.

The focus of this dissertation is the period after the end of the Cold War, and more in particular developments in the 21st century. Two major developments have impacted the armed forces in western liberal democracies in this period. The first one is the move from conscription (a model in which – usually – the male population serves a certain period in the armed forces) to an all-volunteer force, making western militaries considerably smaller. The second development found in the literature, and relevant to this dissertation, is the growing hybridization of the armed forces and the police, both in the international context and the national context, that is having an impact on the tasks of militaries. These major developments will be described in the next two sections. Although treated separately, they are not unrelated. In short, as after the end of the Cold War interstate war was considered less likely, western militaries have increasingly been deployed in out-of-area crisis response operations. It was not deemed appropriate to send relatively little trained conscripts to these missions. At the same time, it did not seem necessary to most western countries to keep a large army (partly filled with conscripts and reservists) to defend the own territory.

2.4 CONSCRIPTION AND THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

An important development which has impacted the armed forces of western liberal democracies since the end of the Cold War is the transformation of many of those armed forces from a conscription system to an all-volunteer force. In this section this development will be described, as well as its impact on civil-military relations and the relations between military and society in general. The topic of conscription is not only important for this dissertation because of the impact of its abolishment (or suspension) on the armed forces, but also because of the possible link between conscription and social cohesion and civic responsibility. Social cohesion, as will be discussed in chapter 4, is an important factor in the stability of liberal democracy. Whether there is indeed such a link (with conscription having a positive effect on social cohesion and civic responsibility) will be discussed further on in this section. As will be explained in chapter 3, the three different models in the case studies of this dissertation (general conscription for men in Finland, limited conscription for men and women in Sweden, and an all-voluntary force in the Netherlands) make it possible to make a qualitative comparison between, on the one hand, these three models and their impact on the balance between separation and immersion and the stability of liberal democracy on the other.

From conscription to an all-volunteer force

The recruitment method of a country, volunteer, or draft is usually related to the level of threat it perceives (Shields, 2020). Almost all western liberal democracies have abolished or suspended conscription after the end of the Cold War, one of the notable exceptions being Finland. The main reason for abolishing conscription was the perceived lower level of threat of large-scale interstate war. However, looking at Levy's argument on the balance between the republican exchange and the control exchange presented in the previous section, another factor may have been the imbalance in the republican exchange caused by the lower threat level. There are certainly indications in the Netherlands that support for conscription was dwindling towards the end of the Cold War (Hoffenaar, 2017). The suspension of conscription could then be a form of burden redistribution and cost reduction aimed at again achieving balance in the republican exchange again.

This was the era when Fukuyama wrote his famous book 'The end of history' and optimism reigned that the world was moving to a model of liberal democracy. As liberal democracies tend not to fight each other it was assumed that there was no need for large armies. Conscription programmes were expensive and an all-volunteer force was expected to increase the qualitative output of the armed forces. In this era, peace and stability operations were on the rise and it was generally accepted that conscripts could not be sent to participate in stability operations. The justification for this is that

conscripts are normally utilized for territorial defense, complex international operations require professional skills and the risk of casualties among conscripts, which could spark domestic political unrest, was deemed too high. This was another argument for a professional army (Bieri, 2015; Boëne, 2011). As for the case studies in this dissertation, Finland, being until recently a non-aligned country with a very long border with Russia and a history of war with its big neighbor, has never abolished general conscription for men. Women can serve on a voluntary basis. The Finns also claim that conscription may lead to improved resilience in society because during the conscription period citizens train to survive in exceptional circumstances (Kaikkosen, 2020).

Since the rise of geopolitical tensions, starting with the Russian taking of Crimea and culminating in 2022 with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, several western countries have taken measures to reinstate at least some form of conscription. Sweden, for instance, calls up the eligible group available for military service for an online assessment. Around 20% of the generation is subsequently invited for medical testing and around 6.000 yearly serve as conscripts (out of a total of around 106.000 young men and women). Norway has a similar model. It is not only the threat of war that could necessitate a form of conscription. Some authors point at other threats, such as terrorism, climate change, environmental degradation, and mass migration, that could require a larger military than could be provided in an all-volunteer system (Hauser, 2018). In 2022, the Dutch Ministry of Defence has released a new White Paper, introducing a 'right to serve' in the armed forces for young people wishing to do so (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022c).

In addition to the perceived level of threat, the reinstatement of conscription is debated in some countries for another reason, namely its perceived contribution to social cohesion and civic responsibility (Bieri, 2015). The Dutch Christian-democrats have proposed re-introducing (social) conscription for the whole age group for this reason (Sanders, 2023; Winterman, 2023).

Impact on civil-military relations and the relations between military and society

Does conscription indeed contribute to more social cohesion and civic responsibility? Authors disagree on this impact of conscription, both on the individual conscript and on society. Some scholars claim that conscription has a positive effect on social cohesion because young people from all layers of society serve together, the so-called contact hypothesis (Galston et al., 2005; Hauser, 2018; Irondelle, 2003). This is an intended effect of the military, that wants its personnel to perform well as a group and if necessary even die for each other (Rosman, 2020). If this mechanism works, conscription in the long term could have the effect of a 'school for the nation'. In a study of undergraduates in

Israel that have completed conscription, Rosman found that service with people from different backgrounds influenced the social perception of conscripts in both positive and negative ways. The majority of her respondents stated that their military duty helped them develop their social skills and that they now felt “more open” to Israeli society, other people’s experiences, and part of a collective than they did before serving. (Rosman, 2020). Rosman’s research also shows that the beliefs of the conscripts play an important role in this respect: social change only takes place if they ‘want to believe their service changed their social identity and are willing to act accordingly in the civilian sphere.’ (Rosman, 2020)

In a recent paper on this topic, Weiss studied data from fifteen European countries after the transformation from conscription to an all-volunteer force. Comparing men in Europe that have performed conscription duties with men that were exempt from mandatory service he concluded that the abolishment or suspension of conscription has led to higher levels of affective polarization (the gap between positive feelings of citizens towards their own party and negative feelings towards other parties) (C. M. Weiss, 2022). Ronconi and Ramos-Toro have studied 29 cohorts of conscripts in Argentina, comparing them with citizens that have not performed conscription duties (which is based on a lottery system in Argentina) and come to comparable conclusions. They find that conscription leads to both a stronger national identity and more positive feelings towards other citizens (Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022). Finseraas and Kotsadam have performed a field experiment among conscripts in Norway, not with the specific purpose of researching the effects of conscription, but how close personal contact, in general, affects views on immigration. Specifically, they have explored whether majority members serving, working, and living together with minority members affects their views on immigration, immigrants’ work ethics and welfare dualism (lower social assistance benefits for immigrants than for natives). They find a substantive effect on views on immigrants’ work ethics, but not on support for welfare dualism or views on immigration in general (Finseraas & Kotsadam, 2017).

Other scholars have shown that conscription has a positive effect on citizenship and civic responsibility, showing that former conscripts for example have a higher turn-out in elections (Fize & Louis-Sidois, 2017; Hauser, 2018). Other research however denies this correlation (R. Garcia, 2010; R. J. B. Garcia, 2014; Krebs, 2004). Ronconi and Ramos-Toro, mentioned above, find that conscription does not influence civic values and conclude that allegiance to the nation (for example a strong national identity) is not necessarily connected with allegiance to the state (Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022). Bove, Di Leo and Giani, who have studied conscription reforms in 15 European countries, find that men drafted just before the abolishment or suspension of conscription show lower levels of

institutional trust than men that were just exempted from conscription, suggesting that a reintroduction of conscription to foster civic virtues could in fact have the opposite effect (Bove et al., 2024). They conclude that while not fostering civic virtues, conscription does foster military virtues and exposes conscripts to military interests, shaping the identity of conscripts according to military norms. According to the authors, this strong identification with the armed forces could clash with loyalty towards democratic institutions (Bove et al., 2024). It must be noted that these researchers studied very specific generations, just before and just after conscription was abolished or suspended. It is conceivable that the last generation serving during a time that people believed in the end of history and large militaries were considered unnecessary developed a certain resentment towards the government for forcing them to serve.

Other authors use more fundamental arguments about conscription. Some claim that conscription is an anomaly in liberal democracies, where nobody should be forced to serve in the armed forces, or state that conscription should only be used for national defense purposes, not for hoped-for civic by-products (Galston et al., 2005; Liebert & Golby, 2018; Pfaffenzeller, 2010). Others consider conscription, if only obligatory for male citizens, as incompatible with the principle of equality before the law (Pfaffenzeller, 2010).

A different set of arguments concerns the impact of a volunteer system on the relation between the armed forces and society. A volunteer system may lead to a disconnect between the military and society, which could lead to an isolated military which is unrepresentative of the population it serves (Boëne, 2011; Hauser, 2018; Shields, 2020). A declining proportion of civilian elites in countries that have abolished conscription has first-hand experience of military life, which is a potential source for misunderstanding and may hamper civil-military cooperation (Boëne, 2011). For example, some argue that civilian elites would make better foreign policy decisions when their own children would have to suffer in wars (Hauser, 2018). However, other research concerning the US shows that members of Congress with close family and friends serving in the military do not vote differently than those without (Liebert & Golby, 2018).

According to Wallenius et al., a representative democracy faces the challenge of balancing defense spending against other societal demands and institutions as well as ensuring that the public's values are reflected in the government's decisions. This requires that the public is familiar with the armed forces and its mission, that it has confidence that the armed forces act in accordance with the politically defined mission and that it has confidence that the armed forces reflect the values of civil society. They define this as societal anchoring of the armed forces and show that this societal anchoring for the

Swedish military was indeed hampered post-conscription, which could lead to recruitment problems and have a negative effect on the public understanding of the armed forces (Wallenius et al., 2019a).

However, there are other ways to foster societal anchoring, without resorting to a reinstatement of the draft. One could think of more outgoing communication by the armed forces about the purposes and benefits of military defense, increased visibility in the community, support to the civil authorities in case of crises, etc. (Wallenius et al., 2019a).

A different option considered in the literature would be some form of non-compulsory national service or social conscription, where serving in the military could be one of the options (Liebert & Golby, 2018).

Concluding, this section has shown that conscription may have a positive impact on social cohesion. In addition, it facilitates social anchoring of the military in society. The impact on civic responsibility is not so clear, with some authors showing a positive impact while others show it does not. This is relevant information for this dissertation, as the existence of a conscription system may, on the one hand, impact the immersion of the armed forces in society and on the other hand, through its impact on social cohesion, may have an impact on the stability of liberal democracy as well (see chapter 4).

The next section will discuss the second important development impacting the role of the armed forces in western liberal democracies after the Cold War, namely the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. It describes the changing role of the armed forces in liberal democracies. This is important information for this dissertation, as this hybridization may impact the balance between separation and immersion as well as the stability of liberal democracy.

2.5 CURRENT STATE OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: HYBRIDIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE

In recent years, scholars have noted that the clear separation between the armed forces and the police in a domestic context in liberal democracies seems to have disappeared (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Esterhuyse, 2019). In this section this so-called hybridization of the armed forces and the police will be explored further. The first part of this section will describe the specific developments - the constabularization of the armed forces, the militarization of the police and the growth of intermediary forces (such as gendarmeries) – which have led to a hybridization of the armed forces and the

police. This section will focus on developments in Europe but will pay some attention to other parts of the world as well, especially Latin America, where these developments have gone further than in Europe. In the second part of this section, this process of hybridization and its drivers, opportunities, and risks, will be further analyzed.

Constabularization of the armed forces

In the international context, after the end of the Cold War, western armed forces have been increasingly deployed in crisis response operations. In the security gap right after fighting has stopped but before civilian authorities are capable to provide security, this has often led to the armed forces (mainly Army personnel, but also Marines) performing police tasks such as restoring public order, crowd and riot control and stability policing (Stingo et al., 2017). This phenomenon has been defined as a constabularization of the armed forces (Hovens, 2017; P. Neuteboom, 2014). As has been noted by several authors, the performance of these tasks and the cooperation with civilian organizations requires the armed forces to develop a different mindset (Kasselman, 2012). Thus far, this process of constabularization has been recognized by researchers, but has hardly impacted military doctrine or training (P. Neuteboom, 2014). The performance of police tasks in crisis response operations might make the armed forces better equipped to perform in a domestic context, which makes it a relevant topic for this dissertation. Even though the context is completely different, the methods used may be comparable. Also, the comprehensive approach that has been developed with stability operations in mind, could be applicable in a domestic context (Jermalavičius et al., 2014).

In the domestic context, recent years have seen a rise in the use of the armed forces, especially in case of transborder security threats, when the police were overburdened or a more robust performance by the authorities was deemed necessary (Edmunds, 2006). Recent examples in the Netherlands include the use of Army search teams in counter-drug operations and the use of armed forces materiel to block the parliament area for farmers protesters. In France, Opération Sentinelle, launched in 2015, deployed up to 10.000 French soldiers on the streets as part of a military operation to protect the population from terrorism. The UK has on several occasions deployed troops to support police officers after terrorist attacks in Operation Temperer (Murray & Taylor, 2019). Other European countries, such as Belgium and Italy have also deployed the armed forces for this reason. In the Belgian operation Vigilant Guardian soldiers were deployed to patrol airports, train stations and metro stations. After the initial deployment in 2015, it took until 2021 to scale down and eventually completely stop this operation. At its height, 1,828 troops were deployed right after the Brussels attacks of 22 March 2016 (Claerman, 2018). Even more recently, the Dutch armed forces and the police teamed up to guard an Amsterdam court building in a high-profile crime trial (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022a).

In the early 2020s, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the use of the armed forces in a domestic context as well, in support of police and civilian authorities. This support varied from logistical support to hospitals, testing, the vaccination campaign in the Netherlands and the use of armed forces personnel to restore public order and enforce lockdown measures on the Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao to the building of field hospitals in Sweden, to border control and enforcement of lockdown measures in Southern Europe but also in Finland and Norway, for example.

After studying internal military functions and responsibilities in fifteen western liberal democracies, Schnabel and Krupanski produced five distinct task groups: law-enforcement related tasks (public order, counterterrorism, border control, crime investigation, building and personnel security, intelligence gathering, etc.), disaster-assistance related tasks, environmental-assistance related tasks, cross-over tasks (search and rescue, training, equipment and facility provision, etc.) and miscellaneous community assistance (such as providing a guard for parades) (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

Schnabel and Krupanski have also studied what factors determine the variation in the domestic role of the armed forces between different countries and have identified ten significant factors: type of political system (monarchy vs. republic), presence or absence of a constitution, extent of constitutional restrictions, historical context, military history, presence of gendarmeries or home guards, presence of services within the armed forces with explicit internal roles, external determinants (e.g. geographical conditions), recent or ongoing internal conflicts and membership in military alliances or regional bodies (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). In addition to variation, they have identified three common traits across their case studies as well: in none of the countries are the armed forces the primary internal security provider, in every country a role for the armed forces in case of natural or humanitarian disasters is undisputed and lastly, the threat of terrorism is an important factor that has reshaped the role of the armed forces in recent years (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). The case studies in this dissertation will try to explain developments in Finland, Sweden, and The Netherlands as well.

Militarization of the police

On the police side, a certain militarization seems to be taking place. This militarization is particularly visible in the United States but can be found in Europe as well (Campbell & Campbell, 2010; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997; Lutterbeck, 2005; Murray & Taylor, 2019). Hovens and Neuteboom point at centralizing tendencies in the police, the use of more robust gear and means and the development of a more military mindset, which is stimulated using war metaphors for police work (war on drugs, war on terror) by the authorities (P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018). Policing is also increasingly intelligence-led

and aimed at preventing and predicting crime, which makes it resemble military work to a larger extent (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). In the international context, civilian police are increasingly participating in crisis response operations, though usually on a voluntary basis.

Gendarmerie-type forces

Some western countries have an intermediary or hybrid force between the armed forces and the police. The most common kind is a so-called 'gendarmerie-type' force although some countries have different kinds of hybrid forces, such as the Finnish Border Guard in Finland (see chapter 7). Gendarmeries combine police and military characteristics and have historically only formed in continental Europe, not in Scandinavia or Anglo-Saxon countries. The gendarmerie model originates from the French police tradition and spread over parts of Europe in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The absence of gendarmeries in Scandinavia and Anglo-Saxon countries is usually explained by the fact that the government's authority in the emerging nation-state met with less resistance, and that national identity was not forged by the conquest of one region by another (Lutterbeck, 2004). Historically, gendarmeries were tasked with keeping law and order in rural areas. Some of them have demilitarized, for example the gendarmeries of Austria and Belgium (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Gendarmeries usually perform police tasks related to the security of the state, which require a higher level of robustness than regular (community-related) police tasks. They may be part of the ministry of Defense or of the ministry of the Interior (or Security), but in either case usually have military training, organization, and competencies (Lutterbeck, 2004). It is important to emphasize that there is no one-size-fits-all model for a gendarmerie. The Royal Netherlands Marechaussee is certainly not the same organization as the Italian Carabinieri, the French Gendarmerie Nationale, or the Spanish Guardia Civil. The gendarmeries differ in tasks, focus, competencies, etc. However, they do all combine military and police characteristics and, in that sense, can be seen as a form of hybridization.

Gendarmeries must be distinguished from Military Police forces. Their character and mission differ. As Neuteboom explains, a gendarmerie is a police organization with a military background, while the Military Police is a military organization with police tasks. Second, gendarmeries have national police tasks, are used to working with civilian communities and serving under civilian control. The policing role of the Military Police, on the other hand, is specifically limited to military personnel and military property.

Besides these differences, gendarmeries and Military Police have traits in common as well. Both gendarmeries and Military Police get military training and can perform public

order and law enforcement tasks in peace support operations (for example, crowd and riot control, detainment of criminals) (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Recent years have seen a fast growth in gendarmerie-type forces, even in times when the armed forces in general were shrinking (Bigo, 2006; Lutterbeck, 2004). They operate at the intersection of internal and external security and because of that have been able to ‘profit’ from the rise of new security threats caused by the blurring of internal and external security (Lutterbeck, 2004).

I assume that the three forms of hybridization described above can be related to the three forms of undermining of liberal democracy, with the armed forces increasingly being used for example in the fight against organized crime (vertical undermining), to deal with social unrest (horizontal undermining) and in the fight against terrorism (vertical undermining and/or state undermining). The expected links between categories of undermining and hybridization of the armed forces and the police are shown in figure 2.3.

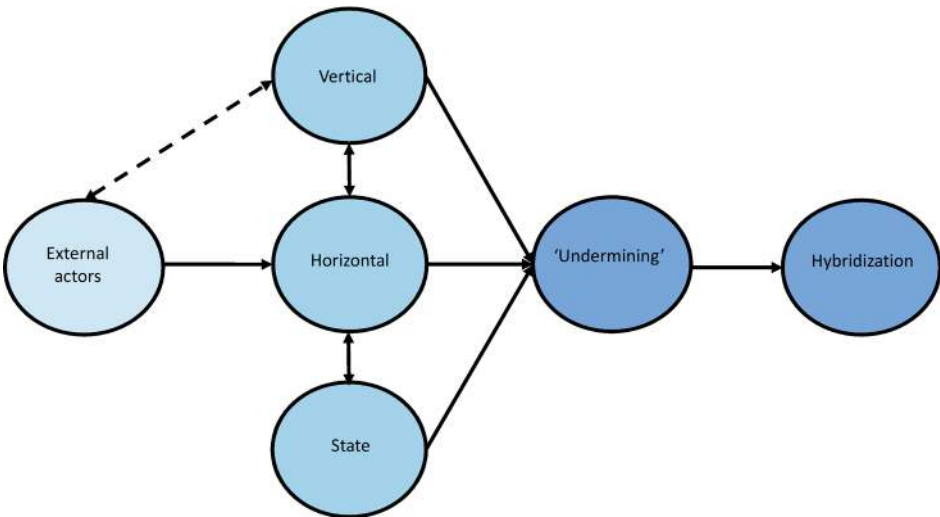


Figure 2.3: Undermining leading to hybridization

Developments outside of Europe

Some non-European democratic countries have already moved in the direction of a larger role for the armed forces in a domestic context, for example South Africa (Jensen, 2010) or South American countries such as Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico (Passos, 2018; Passos & Acácio, 2021; Rodríguez Sánchez Lara & Aguilar Romero, 2020; Voeten, 2018). In

a case study of Brazil and Mexico, Passos shows how the narrative of growing insecurity has led to the domestic use of the armed forces against organized crime and drug trafficking. This has resulted in reduced crime rates during the operations but failed to have a long-term effect. After the military operations were ended, levels of violent crime went up again (Passos, 2018). Rodriguez shows how the Colombian police, over the years, has been completely militarized and its roles and missions have become intertwined with those of the military, up to the point where for the average citizen it has become very difficult to differentiate between the police and the military (Rodriguez, 2018). Rodríguez Sánchez Lara and Aguilar Romero show how path dependence leads to a growing involvement of the Mexican armed forces in public security (Rodríguez Sánchez Lara & Aguilar Romero, 2020).

Drivers for hybridization

Different explanations and drivers for hybridization can be found in the literature. Kalkman distinguishes between functional and political reasons for this process (Kalkman, 2019).

As for functional reasons, authors point at 'new' security challenges caused by the blurring of internal and external security, such as terrorism and the threat of cross-border organized crime. This blurring of internal and external security has led to a fast growth in gendarmerie-type forces as well, even in times when the armed forces in general were shrinking (Bigo, 2006; Esterhuyse, 2019; Lutterbeck, 2004). This growth has been attributed to the fact that gendarmeries operate at the intersection of internal and external security.

Schnabel and Krupanski point at the demand to assist civilian authorities that are temporarily unable to fulfil their tasks effectively or adequately, usually as a last resort. Secondly, they point at the comparative advantage of the armed forces in terms of possession of proper equipment, skills, manpower and unhindered access to all parts of the country. Lastly, they name the ability of the armed forces to serve as a national unifying mechanism that reaches across all communities and classes of society, especially in countries with general conscription (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

As for political reasons, authors point at institutional interests (leading to a certain framing of new security challenges in such a way that it supports a larger role for themselves), mainly caused by the fact that after the Cold War the armed forces needed a new cause to justify their existence and rebuild societal support (Bigo, 2001, 2006; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008; Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Edmunds, 2006; Erickson et al., 2023; Kalkman & de Waard, 2017; Lutterbeck, 2005). Kuehn and Levy argue that militarization of the security discourse can be an important element in the legitimization of military involvement in domestic tasks (Kuehn & Levy, 2021b). Other authors emphasize a process of

‘institutional mimicry’, whereby armed forces and police forces increasingly look and behave alike (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020).

Opportunities and risks

How should the hybridization of the armed forces and the police be assessed? Neuteboom and Hovens conclude that at least in the Dutch context, this hybridization has thus far been quite limited. At the same time, they conclude that a further hybridization would not be problematic, as also within a liberal democracy governments should look for an optimal mix of capabilities and competencies (P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018). Proponents of a larger role of the armed forces in a domestic context emphasize the contribution this could make to security while at the same time preventing the militarization of regular domestic security forces, such as the police (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Some state the armed forces should be used only as a resource of last resort, when efforts are required to respond to exceptional circumstances (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

Others state that a more intensive role for the armed forces in a domestic context, for example in the fight against organized crime or in the reintegration of criminal youngsters, can contribute to the legitimacy of the armed forces (Muller, 2006). Yet others state that the armed forces could contribute in public order management, which is like crowd control in peace operations, or the protection of vital infrastructure (Welten, 2006).

Gendarmeries constitute a specific case. Because of their military education and training and their robust gear, they can perform at the higher end of the spectrum of force. At the same time, gendarmeries, because of their police education, training, and tasks, have more experience in dealing with civilians than other parts of the armed forces.

Some point at their ability to deal with large or complex crises in a domestic context, as well as with the security gap in post-conflict situations (Braw, 2020; Gobinet, 2008). Because of their military status, they can be quickly deployed by the government and are trained to act in groups, unlike the police that usually acts on an individual level. In addition, gendarmeries form an extra step in the escalation ladder from the police to the armed forces (Gobinet, 2008) and are well adapted to bridging the gap between military and law enforcement approaches to using force (Clarke, 2005). In deploying a gendarmerie, the militarization of the police may be prevented because there is an alternative in case a robust performance is asked for. That alternative works at the upper side of the spectrum of force as well, as the Belgian situation illustrates. The Belgian *Rijkswacht*, a gendarmerie, was demilitarized in 1992 and abolished in 2001. As described above, after the terrorist attacks in 2015, the Belgian government saw no other alternative than to deploy the armed forces to the streets to provide security to the population. It turned

out to be quite difficult to scale down and eventually abolish the use of the military for these purposes; it took until 2021 to do so (Defensie, 2022).

Where the proponents of the gendarmerie model emphasize the advantages of using a gendarmerie instead of using other parts of the armed forces, others see the existence of this model as a form of immersion that should be avoided in a liberal democracy. Some scholars state that these organizations, motivated by institutional interests, frame security threats in such a way that it implies a larger role for themselves (Bigo, 2001, 2006; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008).

The proponents of a larger domestic role of the armed forces do emphasize that this role cannot be boundless. Safeguards must be built in so that civilian control remains intact (Croissant & Kuehn, 2011; Muller, 2006). Croissant for example states that military activities in a domestic context always must be under civilian command (Croissant et al., 2010).

However, not everyone is positive about the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. Some authors fear a politicization of the officer corps and are of the opinion that armed forces should never be used against their own population (Brooks, 2002; Kohn, 2003). Steinert contrasts principles of peacekeeping (that characterize the police) with principles of warfare (that characterize the armed forces). He states that in many encounters between police and protest movements the principles of peacekeeping are superseded and he fears 'pre-emptive strikes' against crime and justification of 'collateral damage' inflicted as a result (Steinert, 2003). Arguments like this one can be related to the undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

Using the military in a domestic context may undermine the long-term goals of stability and strengthening of state institutions because it implies a loss of civilian control and compromises civilian authorities (Banks, 2007; Stevenson, 2006; T. Weiss, 2011). As some authors argue, liberal democracies need to maintain both order and legitimacy, which is why domestic police forces always aim to de-escalate and use minimum force, and which is also why police work is very closely regulated. The armed forces, on the other hand, need to possess what is called 'escalation dominance' to be able to win a war, and that may include the use of maximum force. Because of this, they cannot be expected to have the same sensitivity to civil liberties as police forces (Esterhuysen, 2019; T. Weiss, 2011, 2013). Kalkman is of the opinion that an increased dependence of civil authorities on the armed forces when it comes to domestic security could gradually upset the balance of power between civil and military authorities (Kalkman, 2019).

Some fear misconduct by the armed forces because they are not accustomed to dealing with the civilian population or the erosion of preparedness for core functions of national defense (Passos & Acácio, 2021; Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Others point at the differences in culture, norms and worldview of police forces and armed forces. While police forces “serve, protect, gather evidence and arrest suspects”, the armed forces “overwhelm, kill and destroy” (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). Armed forces are trained for a role that does not in general require the ability to deal with the complexities of conflict resolution on an individual level, and questions of reasonable use of force and proportionality are not core considerations in the military context (Murray & Taylor, 2019).

Other factors to be considered are risk (putting soldiers on the street might make them vulnerable), readiness (the primary mission of the armed forces is national defense), cost and appropriateness (is it right to use the armed forces or seen by the public as being right) (Clarke, 2005; Kohn, 2003). With respect to this last point, a larger role for the armed forces in a domestic context would be less controversial for tasks in crimefighting or logistical support than for public order tasks, as has been suggested by Bollen (Bollen, 2019), although other research shows that 70% of democracies used the military for coercive tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic (Erickson et al., 2023). Military interventions in large crises or disasters are usually considered acceptable, while intervention in smaller crises this would be less accepted (Bollen & Kalkman, 2022).

Morale of the armed forces could also be affected, as most of individuals who enlisted did so to be in military and international operations, not for domestic tasks such as security and surveillance, crowd and riot control or patrolling the streets (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). On the other hand, contributing to domestic security may also be seen as highly meaningful work, for example in the period after a terrorist attack or during a pandemic, and armed forces personnel may prefer this as a form of ‘real-life training’ instead of practicing somewhere out in the field. As Kalkman has shown, there is a lack of systematic research into how the members of the armed forces perceive domestic tasks in terms of their meaningfulness, so the exact effect on morale cannot be determined (Kalkman, 2019).

Lastly, some authors have questioned the utility of using the armed forces in a domestic context, especially for counter-terrorism purposes. They state that militarizing the handling of terrorism would play into the terrorists’ war rhetoric, making it easier for them to recruit new terrorists. They also indicate it may be difficult to scale down the visible use of the armed forces in counterterrorism as was evident in Belgium with Operation

Vigilant Guardian (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Edmunds, 2006; Erickson et al., 2023; Esterhuyse, 2019; Kohn, 2003).

It should be noted that many of the arguments mentioned above are theoretical arguments, and that empirical evidence is limited (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). This dissertation provides three in-depth case studies to explore the practice of hybridization, its benefits, and risks in the context of different countries and thus fill this research gap. Chapters 5 to 7 will analyze the amount of hybridization in the three countries researched and its impact on civil-military relations.

2.6 HYBRIDIZATION AND THE STABILITY OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

In the previous part of this chapter, I have defined three categories of undermining which can be linked to the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. As discussed in section 2.5, this hybridization of the armed forces and the police may both strengthen or weaken the stability of liberal democracy.

This dissertation will explore specific policy options for further hybridization, such as:

- The pooling of cyber capabilities of the police and the armed forces.
- The use of the armed forces for security and surveillance operations in a higher level of force, in support of the police.
- The introduction of (social or regular) conscription to strengthen social cohesion.

Hybridization of the armed forces and the police constitutes a form of immersion of the military and civil domain, and thus a move away from the separation paradigm associated with liberal democracies, as has been discussed in section 2.3 (see figure 2.4 below). However, this dissertation will not only look at hybridization of tasks. It will study other

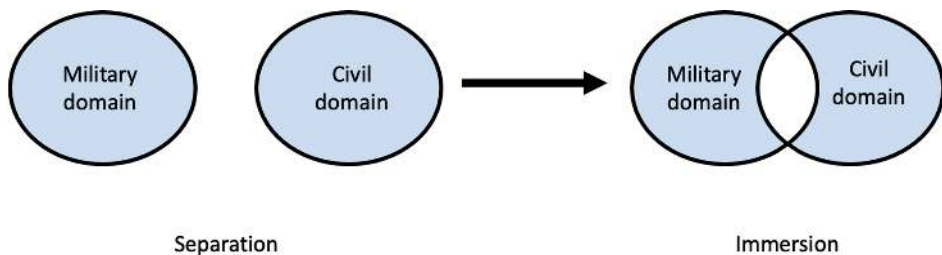


Figure 2.4: From separation to immersion

dimensions to determine the amount of immersion as well, namely 1) society, 2) public administration and government strategy, and 3) law.

Further hybridization, implementing certain policy options and leading to more immersion, may counter forms of vertical and horizontal undermining and consequently could strengthen the stability of liberal democracy. However, the hybridization of the armed forces and the police in a liberal democracy, and consequently the amount of immersion, cannot be unlimited. If the domestic role of the armed forces becomes too strong (either in tasks, position in society, public administration and government strategy, and/or the law), this may lead to an erosion of civilian control of the armed forces and – worst case – to an undermining of civil rights and to the civilian authorities being compromised. That would lead to a delegitimization of the state and weaken the stability of liberal democracy.

The various theories and concepts of civil-military relations, as explained in this chapter, will be used to explore a new balance in the separation versus immersion dichotomy that is fitting in a liberal democracy in general, but also in the specific situation of liberal democracies that are undermined by security and stability related challenges.

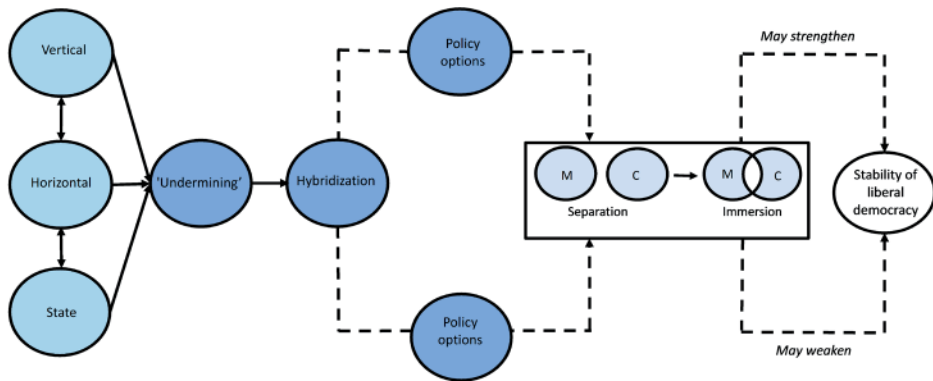


Figure 2.5: Hybridization and the stability of liberal democracy

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has started with defining liberal democracy and recent developments in the stability of liberal democracy in western countries followed by a discussion of three categories of the ‘undermining’ of liberal democracy, namely vertical undermining, horizontal undermining, and undermining by the state. This section has identified a

gap in the literature on the role of the armed forces in liberal democracies, namely the fact that this literature focuses on new democracies, rather than on established liberal democracies faced with democratic backsliding, which is the focus of this dissertation. This gap will be further explored in chapter 4, based on both an extensive document analysis and a quantitative analysis.

Subsequently, the broad field of military and society and the subfield of civil-military relations were discussed. Based on a discussion of two classical works, Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* and Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier*, followed by a review of the work of more recent authors in the field of civil-military relations, the dilemma between separation and immersion of civil and military spheres was defined. For a long time, in western liberal democracies this was a theoretical dilemma, as in practice the police were responsible for domestic security, while international security was the domain of the armed forces.

However, this distinction has become less clear after the Cold War. A process of hybridization of the armed forces and the police is currently taking place. Three relevant developments are taking place, namely a constabularization of the armed forces, a militarization of the police and the growth of gendarmerie-type forces, which share both military and police characteristics and therefore can be seen as a form of hybridization themselves. Some scholars attribute these developments to changes in the threat environment related to the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new threats such as terrorism. Others emphasize the institutional interests of the armed forces and gendarmeries in expanding their responsibilities and, consequently, their budgets.

The hybridization of the armed forces and the police has both proponents and opponents. As this is a recent development, empirical evidence is limited, both concerning the actual developments and its effects. This leads to various questions, that will be explored in the chapters to come. Is liberal democracy in the west indeed under pressure? What are the main security and stability related challenges for liberal democracy in the west? Is the domestic role of the armed forces indeed growing in western liberal democracies? Is hybridization of the armed forces and the police taking place in these countries? To what extent can these developments be seen as a move from separation to immersion and to what extent is or would such a change be problematic from a perspective of civil-military relations in a liberal democracy? To what extent can democratic civilian control over the military and military effectiveness in new roles and missions go together? To what extent would this lead to a changing balance between civil and military authorities? If this would lead to unwanted side-effects, how can these effects

be mitigated or prevented? Or should the aim be to keep civil and military spheres as separated as possible?

Chapter 4 to 7 will delve into these questions, describing the results of a secondary database analysis and literature review on liberal democracy (chapter 4), and three in-depth case studies of the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden (chapters 5-7). These individual chapters will focus on the developments in these countries concerning the domestic role of the armed forces and the hybridization of the armed forces and the police and the explanations for these developments. Each of these chapters will describe how the process of hybridization in these specific countries may continue and what would be the impact on civil-military relations in these countries. Each chapter contains a short paragraph in which developments are analyzed based on the theoretical concepts elaborated on in this chapter. In that sense, the case studies will be used as test cases for the theoretical concepts presented in this chapter. Is there evidence for Schiff's concordance theory? Or can Levy's theory of the interplay between the republican exchange and the control exchange be used to explain developments in the three countries concerning the role of the armed forces? A comparison between the three countries will be made in chapter 8, leading to an overall assessment of the impact of a changing role of the armed forces on civil-military relations and on the stability of liberal democracy and an answer to the research question.

To summarize, this research will address three gaps in the literature that follow from the analysis presented in this chapter. Firstly, it will address the link between the stability of liberal democracy and the role of the armed forces in cases of democratic backsliding. Earlier research addressing the connection between liberal democracy and the armed forces has focused on the role of armed forces in new democracies. Secondly, this research will try to explain the development from separation to immersion in liberal democracies. Thirdly, this research will explore how separation and immersion may exist at the same time in a liberal democracy and what that means for civil-military relations, including the workings of civilian control of the military.