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## **Towards a theory of militant constitutionalism**

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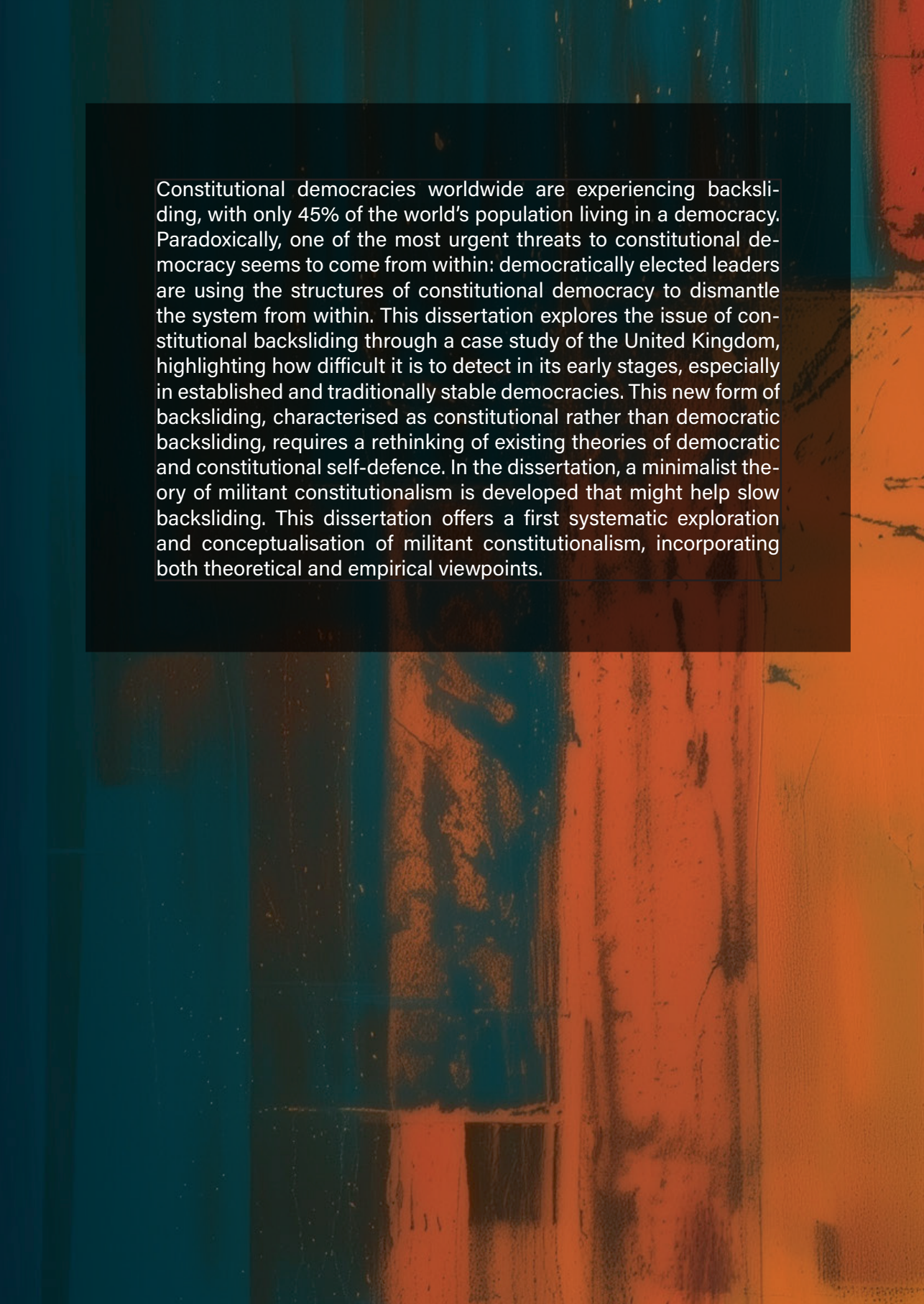
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An abstract painting featuring a profile of a face on the right side, rendered in dark purple and blue tones. The background is a vibrant orange-red with visible brushstrokes and textures. The title is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center.

# TOWARDS A THEORY OF MILITANT CONSTITUTIONALISM

JORIEKE MANENSCHIJN





Constitutional democracies worldwide are experiencing backsliding, with only 45% of the world's population living in a democracy. Paradoxically, one of the most urgent threats to constitutional democracy seems to come from within: democratically elected leaders are using the structures of constitutional democracy to dismantle the system from within. This dissertation explores the issue of constitutional backsliding through a case study of the United Kingdom, highlighting how difficult it is to detect in its early stages, especially in established and traditionally stable democracies. This new form of backsliding, characterised as constitutional rather than democratic backsliding, requires a rethinking of existing theories of democratic and constitutional self-defence. In the dissertation, a minimalist theory of militant constitutionalism is developed that might help slow backsliding. This dissertation offers a first systematic exploration and conceptualisation of militant constitutionalism, incorporating both theoretical and empirical viewpoints.