

Looking at the “Bigger Picture”

2.1 POLITICO-PHILOSOPHICAL DELIBERATION

The “civil–military problematique” has traditionally been viewed as a paradox: “because we fear others we create an institution of violence to protect us, but then we fear the very institution we created for protection” (Feaver 1996, 150). This is by no means a new dilemma, but has been reflected upon since ancient times.¹

Plato coined the notion of the “guard” to protect the fictitious state *Politeia* (Republic), which he delineated as the right order of society. Although Plato judged it “ridiculous” that “a guard would require a guard” (Platon 2003, 186, 403e),² he nevertheless dedicated much attention to the appropriate education of the guards so that they would be hostile towards foreigners while servile towards their rulers (Platon 2003, 149–150, 376b–c).

The traditional civil–military problematique, which concerns the control of the armed forces from the viewpoint of a possible intrusion into politics, at least in modern industrialised societies, is no longer a major theme. The accountability of policy-makers regarding security and defence politics and the use of force is a more pressing issue for citizens and societies at large today. The thinking about how to constitute an internally peacefully oriented social order by ostracising “military force” to external more distant tasks has a long tradition. In his work “Politics”, Aristotle considered the question of how to root military violence within the “political” by excluding it from the *polis* and linking it to the external

task of war. Indeed, the specific “political” of the ancient Greeks developed only through an emancipation of the communal-based (and not war-based) action of the *polis* from military violence. It represents one of the first endeavours to separate the “political” from the “military” (Kernic 1997, 26–27).

Peace as the ultimate objective of the history of ideas emerged in the course of the French Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment. “Peace” demanded by reason was linked to the idea of the “republican state” as the only inherently peaceful societal constitution (Ibid, 53). In the republican state, citizens are supposed to be concerned with matters relating to war and peace. As Kant explained in his work “Eternal Peace”:

If, as is inevitably the case under this [republican] constitution, the consent of the citizens is required to decide whether or not war is to be declared, it is very natural that they will have great hesitation in embarking on so dangerous an enterprise (Kant 1991 [1795], 100).

Kant’s theorem regarding the correlation between the form of governance and the peaceful orientation of a state is considered the philosophical basis for the “democratic peace theory”. With the increasing influence of liberal political thinking in theories of international relations opposing the (neo-) realist paradigm of the primacy of national security and integrity, the idea of the participation of the political sovereign in the military-political realm gained importance. Since the early 1980s, in the field of peace and conflict research, theorists of “democratic peace” have underlined the significance of the democratic control of states’ war powers; notably they have started questioning the executive prerogative empirically, analytically and normatively (Dieterich et al. 2007, 4). The “democratic peace theory” analyses the connection between the (democratic) domestic constitution of a state and its (peaceful) foreign policy behaviour. As is widely known, it postulates that democracies do not go to war with each other (however, they certainly go to war with non-democracies) or even that democracies are generally more war-averse than non-democracies.³

However, there are authors (see notably Czempiel 1996; Müller 2002) who see the relationship between democracy and peaceful conduct as less compelling than is suggested by the theory. Czempiel states:

The question is no longer, whether democracies are more peaceful; instead, we should ask: Are there in a given state during a given time

period, societal demands concerning a foreign policy that renounces military might? Are these demands formulated and transmitted for further progression to the political system? Are these demands modified, such as by means of informal interest groups, or shielded from the public? Do societies have possibilities to control and monitor the implementation, and sanction violations, of their demands? (Czempel 1996, 89)

In fact, “democratic peace” enjoys no *a priori* validity as long as the conditions in democratic states for the handling of foreign and security policy continue to be very heterogeneous. Nevertheless, the literature provides ample evidence to support the assumption of a link between historically grown domestic institutional structures and the choice of control mechanisms (see, for instance, Werkner 2006; Avant 2007). According to Avant, institutional and moreover constitutional arrangements (e.g. parliamentary or presidential systems⁴) have consequences for the way in which civilians are likely to control the military (2007, 82). It is indisputable that there are historical legacies and path dependencies with regard to the character of domestic institutions (capability, legitimacy, degree of authority) and their role in holding armed forces to account.

These legacies and historical paths are relevant, especially when it comes to the participation of the parliament in the exercise of civilian control. In countries where the range of tasks of the armed forces is regulated on the highest constitutional level, the justification for the use and deployment of armed forces is more pronounced. Often these are post-authoritarian states (such as Germany⁵ or Spain) which, due to historical experiences, tend to be very attentive when it comes to the question of the use of force (Werkner 2006, 255). It must be noted, however, that in practice the form of democratic control, i.e. how much governments rely on parliamentary oversight and regulated legal processes to ensure the control of armed forces, varies considerably, even among consolidated democracies. Studies show that in a majority of states worldwide, parliaments have difficulties to hold governments with regard to military- or security-related questions to account (see Wagner et al. 2010). Comparative research has further shown that not all parliamentary democracies automatically have comprehensive rights to veto the use of force (Wagner 2006). Westminster-type parliamentary systems, for example, have only a weakly developed form of parliamentary control over decisions on the military and defence. In addition, it must be noted that, traditionally, in parliamentary systems, such as the German, the government

and the governing majority in the parliament often are tightly connected. Thus, it is not the parliament per se, but in fact the opposition that figures as the control body.

Kant's theorem might lose pertinence for yet another reason. Against the backdrop of the changing character of war and conflict⁶ and a situation in which soldiers are no longer "sent to war" but deployed in "humanitarian interventions"⁷ or as result of an act of "self-defence" (against terrorism, organised crime, migration, etc.), the rational-institutionalist explanation, notably the cost-benefit analysis done by citizens, as explained by Kant, is undermined. This occurs particularly when the number of victims is kept low (at least when this is promised), the costs of a military operation decrease (effect of constantly improved military efficiency) and thus any opposition to war and armament is deprived of arguments (Müller 2002, 57). On the contrary, the motivation to keep casualties among servicepeople low can lead to even higher investment in armament (Ibid, 57). In other words, democratic governments today tend to bypass their war-averse populations rather than being halted by them.

When looking at the civil-military problematique in terms of the social contract between state and society regarding compulsory military service, it is persistent as long as the institution of conscription continues to exist in the majority of states worldwide. The idea of the social contract as formulated by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and also Jean-Jacques Rousseau is recalled by the distinction in CMR theory between the "liberal" and the "republican approach" (Burk 2002).⁸ The liberal approach considers the protection of the rights and liberties (and security) of its citizens as the first priority of the state. The republican approach, on the contrary, maintains that priority should be given to an engagement of citizens in the activity of public life.⁹

There are several authors who draw on the republican approach. Mjøset and van Holde (2002b, 88), for example, speak of a "conditional bargain" between citizens and state. Yagil Levy (2012, 530–538), for example, describes the exchange as a trade-off between state, citizen and military, in which the state provides citizens with rights in exchange for their military sacrifice, which is transformed into resources that civilians can trade for the military's subordination. Levy further argues that military service enhances participatory citizenship. Therefore, public scrutiny of political leaders over war policy would be a necessary element of civilian control (Ibid, 536). If the relations of

exchange are in a state of equilibrium, civilian institutions can establish supremacy over the military. If this relationship is distorted, however, the state seeks to rebalance the relations by resorting to alternative strategies, such as “militarisation” (artificially increasing the demand for security and thus demanding sacrifices from the citizenry), “rights allocation” (increasing compensation for military sacrifice), and “cost reduction” (reducing the costs of the military through strategic modifications) (Ibid, 541–542).

This “trade-off” in the contemporary world has proven to be increasingly difficult to sustain. The reason is that citizens are becoming politically more sophisticated and powerful. The state, on the other hand, is gradually losing leverage on them, by becoming increasingly burdened by obligations at home and abroad. Besides, there are increasingly complex and controversial relations between citizenship, military service and gender (Mjøset and van Holde 2002a, xv–xvi). The “change of value systems” (Inglehart and Welzel 2005), not only in Western societies, has, moreover, led to a cultivation of individualist values as well as to resistance to authority, which are hard to reconcile with the spirit of devotion and sacrifice for the nation associated with compulsory military service.

The debate on the “exchange relationship” has been extended by another debate labelled “second social contract” (Müller et al. 2010). It seeks to describe the contemporary informal relations between society, government and armed forces and the resulting mutual obligations. Soldiers are required to make sacrifices for the nation and in return are entitled to enjoy the care and support of the government and society. They can expect to be deployed in military operations only after the most careful consideration of all risks involved and expected gains (Ibid. 2010, 4–5). However, Müller et al. warn about an increasing practice of taking deployment decisions that are not thoroughly and carefully justified. This practice could risk causing alienation between society, politics and the armed forces. According to the authors, the bond between the military and society cannot be sustained by institutional mechanisms of democratic control only, but should extend to national confidence-building. This would imply a society interested in the destiny of their soldiers, which in a context of alienation between militaries and societies, as a result of a changing international security environment and changing military mandates, cannot be taken for granted.

2.2 CHANGING SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Civilian control and military accountability as a necessary condition for democracy are not only discussed by social scientists but have also emerged as an international norm.¹⁰ This came about not least of all as a result of changes in the international security environment.

After the peace dividend of the early 1990s had been exhausted and the idea of a “post-military society”¹¹ (Shaw 1991) had been laid aside, new security threats emerged or were evoked and resulted in a rapidly changing security environment during the post-Cold War era. In order to respond to these real and perceived threats, the role, mission and tasks of armed forces transformed gradually. A tendency could be observed, at least in Western countries, towards a reduction in manpower and transformation into professional all-volunteer forces with the aim of better responding to contemporary strategic requirements and geopolitical challenges. Whereas the former primary task of armed forces in terms of territorial defence had been relegated to a secondary position, former secondary functions (subsidiary police tasks, rescue services, humanitarian aid) were promoted to the rank of primary tasks (Haltiner and Klein 2005, 16). A shift of thinking went along with these developments—away from the conventional notion of “armed forces” towards the concept of “security sector” and in a similar vein from conventional conceptions of CMR towards security sector governance (Lambert 2009, 189–194). The characteristics of contemporary armed forces resonated with what Moskos et al. describe as “post-modern military”. It implies, among other things, a shift towards greater internationality, multipurpose volunteer forces, increasingly androgynous make-up and ethos and finally greater permeability with civilian society (Moskos et al. 2000, 1, and more recently with regard to a revised “hybrid model” Williams 2008).

These developments were accompanied by an altering perception of security. As a result, the meaning of the terms “security” and “military”¹² gradually changed. During the time of the bipolar world order, “security” was understood in the context of military and “defence” in national territorial terms, but security and defence concerns today are of a more non-traditional form (keywords are “war on terror”, transnational crime, weapons proliferation, etc.). One of the consequences is a more comprehensive and inclusive notion of security, which took hold in the 1990s, including other risk scenarios than military threats, but also

Table 2.1 Transforming concept of security (Adopted from Hänggi 2003, 5)

<i>Level (“deepening”)</i>	<i>Scope (“widening”)</i>			
	<i>Military security issues</i>	<i>Non-military or new security issues</i>		
		<i>Political</i>	<i>Economic</i>	<i>Societal Environmental</i>
System	International security			
State	National (external and internal) security			
Sub-state	Societal security			
Individual	Human security			

other dimensions, such as “societal security” and “human security”¹³ (an example is the OSCE’s comprehensive notion of security, which covers three dimensions: the politico–military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimension). The following table illustrates the widening and deepening dimensions of the transforming concept of security (Table 2.1).

In consequence, constructivists illustrated that national and international security are not “simply extensions to a concern with the fate of individual human beings” (Buzan 1991, 35), but, on the contrary, that human and national security could severely contradict each other. Thus people would fear not only their armed forces, but also their states, which, according to the postulate of primordial anarchy formulated by the social contract theory, had been founded to defend their rights, liberties and security. According to Buzan, individual citizens continue to face many threats which emanate either directly or indirectly from the state,¹⁴ arising from domestic law-making and enforcement, from direct administrative or political action by the state against individuals or groups, from struggles over control of the state machinery and from the state’s external policies (1991, 44). Due to the continuing primacy and totality of national and international security, individual security is still a long way from being established as a distinct category and level of analysis.

What are the implications for the concept of civilian control? While traditional research on CMR and civilian control seeks to shed light on the effects on national security by concentrating on structures and institutions as explaining variables, an expanded concept of civilian control, that allows actors on the micro-level to play a significant role in oversight processes, by contrast, will need to take different levels of security beyond national and international security¹⁵ into consideration as well.

2.3 EMANCIPATION OF SOCIETAL FORCES

This book aims to shift the focus towards the needs, interests and claims of societal actors (individuals, groups and society at large) affected by military-related factors. In other words, it questions the traditional referent object of security and lays emphasis on the emancipation of societal forces from the domination, influence and subjugation by state power structures (of whom the military is one). It seeks to shed light on the quest by societal actors for sovereign oversight over the armed forces, taking into account the structure (recruitment), use (deployment) and purpose (legitimation) of the military and armed forces. Thus, what is of interest is the world as it is perceived not by those who possess influence and power of interpretation, but by actors involved in social processes at the grassroots level, who construct their identities in the process of interaction with state power structures and with one another. This is in line with Giddens' perception of a critical social theory that seeks to conceptualise the participation of citizens in the construction of society "from the bottom up" (Kreckel 1989, 343). Societal structures are therefore not pre-defined variables that have to be accepted in a fatalistic manner. For Giddens, these structures represent a battle field, (re-)produced and maintained by powerful actors, equipped, however, with unequal resources (Ibid, 344).

From a critical social theory perspective, this book therefore questions existing institutions and power relations as given. It aims to examine the prevailing order (while abstracting from the nature of the political system) but also its origins. Furthermore, it rejects a realist vision of CMR with the executive as the main reference and ontological focus.¹⁶ For Levy, the traditional civilian control approach "takes this order for granted and [...] focuses on how to improve the politically controlled performance of the armed forces within the existing order" (Levy 2016, 85). This book, by contrast, attempts a critical reflection on whose interests are served by the use of particular constructs, concepts and "conventional wisdom" (Forster 2006, 14). Questioning these entrenched structures means remaining sceptical about the unquestioned application of certain approved (Western) models of "democratic civilian control"¹⁷ to different regional contexts.

One obstacle to societal emancipation from the established order of CMR is society's "benign indifference" towards military matters. One possible explanation is that the military as a "permanent social event"

(Frevert 1997, 10) has escaped the general consciousness. While society is kept fit for war, it is not aware of war. How fast public attitudes can change towards military activities and how societies can be manifestly peaceful and belligerent at the same time has been abundantly discussed in the literature (see Vagts 1967 [1937]; Andreski 1968; Heins and Warburg 2004).

However, changing attitudes can be observed as well: on the one hand, surveys conducted in different countries reveal almost everywhere the same clear rejection of the use of force as a means of problem—and conflict-solving (see, e.g. a German opinion poll on foreign military deployment, Schmidt 2 March 2015). On the other hand, it has become more difficult for governments to ignore public opinion polls and nevertheless revert to the use of force for conflict management and assertion of interests. An illustrative example is the reaction of the Spanish Zapatero government to the 2004 Madrid terrorist attack. The Socialist government, which had just taken over from the conservative Partido Popular, drew conclusions from the mistakes made in the involvement in the Iraq operation (which the Aznar government pushed through against the will of the majority of the population) and in 2005 passed a new deployment law requiring parliamentary approval for the use of military force on foreign territory.

Another instance of societal emancipation in the politico–military sphere is the issue of women’s participation—not in the military organisation (as discussed by certain feminists)—but in the resistance to the military and militarisation (Enloe 2000). In other words, there is no need to revert from one extreme claim for integration of women into the military to the other extreme idea of a maternal-pacifist role for women (see Shaw 1991, 177). Nonetheless, it would be conducive to address more thoroughly the question and role of women in the (still) male-dominated realm of research, expertise, consultancy and decision-making in and on politico–military matters.

2.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Despite the risk of being accused of theoretical eclecticism, I deliberately apply several theoretical perspectives to explain social phenomena encountered in the empirical world. The “real-world” is too complex and multilayered to be dealt with through one single theoretical lens. This book aims to combine theoretical perspectives that have been

derived from an intense dialogue between the empirical data and corresponding theories in the literature.

2.4.1 *Neo-Institutionalist Framework*

For the analysis of a changing institutional setting with regard to civilian and public control in post-Soviet Russia, a theoretical approach was needed that could explain both institutional genesis and institutional change over time without ignoring the impact on and perception by actors. Thus, it seemed logical to revert to a neo-institutionalist approach.

As Cottey et al. note, “much of the existing debate [in CMR] uses a narrowly defined [conventional] institutionalist approach, in the sense that it focuses on the formal political and legal mechanisms through which the civilian sector controls the military—such as constitutional arrangements, chains of command, and laws governing the armed forces” (Cottey et al. 2002, 40). The objective here is not to abandon common institutionalist approaches, but to supplement them with an understanding of institutions as perpetuated social practices that arise from social interaction.¹⁸ Actors (such as organisations) relate to institutions in terms of compliance or opposition.¹⁹

What is innovative about the application of neo-institutionalism to civil- and society-military relations and the phenomenon of civilian and public control? First, the systematic application of an integrative approach complementing structure—with agency-based aspects is not new but underdeveloped in the existing literature.²⁰ Second, I will revert to a broadened concept of “institution”²¹ that differentiates between three types: (1) set political institutions (as anchored in the constitution, for example), (2) state-sanctioned institutions (as influenced by political culture, historical legacies, ideas about the aim of the political system and the role of citizens), and (3) institutions as regularised practices exercised “from below”.

Neo-institutionalist theories were conceived as a response to the behavioural revolution and the weaknesses of actor-centred approaches in sociology and of state-centred approaches in the political sciences. Therefore, they are compatible with normative and cognitive environments, characterised by non-positivist modes of analysis, meant to decode social meaning. The institutional framework in this book is hence characterised by a combination of formal rules and cultural beliefs,

norms derived from historical legacies and regularised social practices. In fact, institutions are elusive, because they seem to integrate elements of agency and structure simultaneously.

The reason for drawing on a historical institutionalist approach, as proposed by Mahoney and Thelen (2010a), is that it offers a suitable framework for the theoretical analysis of gradual institutional change. This theoretical strand holds that outcomes are contextual, that culture and cognition are relevant to understand the nature and change of institutions, and that path dependencies, which stress the weight of factors lying in the past, may play a decisive role. The effects that institutions produce themselves result in increasing returns, which can also be described as self-reinforcing or positive feedback processes (Pierson 2000, 252). Institutions, however, may outlive the forces that brought them into being. Incidentally, unintended consequences may occur (not foreseen by the initiators), which particularly happens with new institutions. Historical institutionalism emphasises the asymmetries of power associated with the institutional distribution of resources and the resulting development trajectory of institutions. It is a suitable device for analysing gradual incremental changes in institutional frameworks by delineating the different options for institutional genesis and institutional reproduction.

It is true that new coalitions may design new institutional arrangements, but often lack the support, or perhaps the inclination, to replace pre-existing institutions established to pursue other ends. The solution to that is to add new institutions rather than dismantle old ones and to work around those elements that are not easy to change (Thelen 2003, 226). As for the emergence of new institutions in the context of political contestation, change can be brought forth by mechanisms such as “layering” (new arrangements on top of pre-existing structures) and “conversion” (existing institutions are redirected to new purposes, roles and/or functions) (Ibid, 226–230). The mechanisms responsible for the genesis of institutions are quite different from those that sustain institutions over time. Therefore, Thelen explains that institutional arrangements over time may come to serve functions that are quite remote from those originally intended by their designers (2003, 213–214).

There are certain events (e.g. the introduction of new laws or decrees) that constrain or enhance the activities of societal actors (either they have been involved in formulating the new law or have been excluded) and this makes them react towards the institutional development by resorting to formal as well as informal practices.²²

The moments of contestation over the form and functions of institutions (Thelen 2003, 231) can be delineated, for example, by means of an analysis of both successful and (due to the obstruction of political and military elites) unsuccessful draft laws in the context of the general military reform²³ process of the Russian armed forces. Serious impediments to institutional change, especially in CMR, “derive from *agency*, that is, from the actual resistance of those who benefit from the existing institutional order” (Croissant et al. 2011, 81, emphasis in the original).

Power distribution with regard to institutional resources and interests of actor groups is significant. Where we expect incremental change to emerge, according to Mahoney and Thelen, is precisely in the “gaps” or “soft spots” between the rule and its interpretation or the rule and its enforcement (Mahoney and Thelen 2010b, 14).

In sum, the historical institutionalist approach enables us to examine and to formulate the relationship between institutionalised and non-institutionalised politics as well as formal and informal practices. Historical institutionalist approaches also explain the coming into being of institutions as a result of processes of contestation and that established institutions can only be maintained if they are able to claim legitimation. Thus, informal arrangements, conventions or practices can also be converted into “legitimised social institutions”, as long as there is a cognitive convention or legitimising authority.

2.4.2 *The Philosophy of Social Practices*

When societal actors decide or feel the necessity to control and monitor state power structures and decision-making processes, it is a wilful but not necessarily deliberate act. They may phrase or conceive of their actions differently, although their objective and means are similar. For reasons of greater effectiveness, individuals may join or support existing networks, and instead of agitating by themselves, thus acting collectively on the basis of a common interest and social trust. Both interests and trust develop through regular social interaction and lay the foundation for social organisations as autonomous entities in the non-institutional sphere (see Putnam 1993, 169–176). Individuals engage in “collective action”,²⁴ because they believe that by concerting their action and coordinating their strategies with like-minded activists they can achieve their goals in a more efficient way. Once “collective action” follows certain mechanisms and principles it becomes a practice.

Social practice theory is a suitable conceptual lens for the analysis of activities of grassroots organisations, because it represents an umbrella approach that creates a context of intersubjectivity, helps understand social phenomena on the micro-level and considers them in relation to power asymmetries (ideas about practices in relation to power institutions can be found, for example, in Bourdieu 2006; notably Giddens 2007 [1984]).

Parallel to neo-institutionalist approaches, social practice theory emerged as an alternative to behavioural thinking in the 1970s, in the aftermath of the “constructivist” or “interpretative turn” (when key terms like identities, norms and culture found entry into social theory). Approaches that lay emphasis on hermeneutics, the role of language and cognitive capacities came to the fore and presented a third way between rational choice theory and completely norm-oriented theory of action, thus transferring a conceptuality of behaviour to one of action. Action was no longer viewed as static and dominated by purely structuralist conceptualisations (dealing with the macro-conditions of conflict and contestation in societies), but rather as embedded in mechanisms and processes²⁵ that connect the elements of structure to each other.

In the most common understanding, a practice is a routinised form of behaviour. The idea of routine implies a concept of the temporality of structure (Schatzki 1996, 89). Routinised social practices hence occur in a sequence of time, in repetition. Giddens accords to them also a moment of reflexivity (Giddens 2007 [1984], 3). At some point, they can become so automatic that they are taken for granted and have a law-like status or resemble an institution. Civic activism in the form of social movements²⁶ is a particular mechanism for articulating and asserting certain collective or common interests in the form of routinised social practices with a public impact.

2.4.3 *Contentious Politics and Advocacy*

Public disputes, such as those that arose during the deliberations on Russia’s proposed AGS law, can be analysed using the concept of “contentious politics” (Giugni et al. 1998; McAdam et al. 2001, Tilly and Tarrow 2007). Referring to the established definition by McAdam et al., “contentious politics” is characterised by “episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the

claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants” (McAdam et al. 2001, 5). I would argue that not necessarily governments need to be the object of claims. Proxy institutions, such as the military, representing the state, could also be the target of claims.

Contentious politics is often viewed as “tactics” applied by social movement organisations in an effort to obtain political change by deliberately presenting demands and values that are in conflict with the political status quo. According to Rucht and Neidhardt, the emergence of extra-institutional mobilisation can be closely related to existing deficits in the system of political interest-mediation, such as low responsiveness and flexibility (Rucht and Neidhardt 2002, 20). Activists do not choose goals, strategies and tactics in a vacuum, however. The organisation of the polity and the attitude of various actors towards it make some strategies of influence more attractive and efficacious than others (Meyer 2004, 127–128). A system that allows for dialogue and confrontation facilitates activities by the claimants. Tarrow aptly describes what is needed to bring about episodes of contentious politics: “When institutional access opens, rifts appear within elites, allies become available, and state capacity for repression declines, challengers find opportunities to advance their claims” (Tarrow 1998, 71). Exogenous factors, namely political opportunities, either stimulate or impede the activities of societal activists. They can thus help assess the continuously shifting relationship between the state and civil society. Sometimes political opportunities are perceived as static structures and sometimes as changing political environments. Much depends on the policy field (the military is by definition a closed and structured field).

Hence, “the wisdom, creativity, and outcomes of activists’ choices – their *agency* – can only be understood and evaluated by looking at the political context and the rules of the games in which those choices are made – that is *structure*” (Meyer 2004, 128, emphasis in original). Some mechanisms of contention, such as opportunities (structures), can be derived from the classical social movement paradigm, whereas others, like identity shifts and actor constitution, draw on culturalist approaches. In other words, the systematic study of mechanisms of contention contributes to breaking the traditional cleavage between structure and action (Tarrow 2012, 23).

There are many examples in the literature of how tactics of contentious politics have transformed into more institutional forms of political

action such as lobbying and advocacy²⁷ (see notably Kriesi et al. 1995). Advocacy groups are experts in making use of political opportunities. They contribute to public debates by providing channels (which may differ in form and size, however, depending on the political system) through which activists can connect with authorities. What impact or outcome can social and advocacy movements actually achieve? Tilly and Tarrow (2007, 128), for example, distinguish between three kinds of potential effects (their point of reference is the American women’s movements, but the effects are generalisable and hold true for democratic as well as authoritarian contexts: (1) direct impact of movement campaigns on public policies; (2) effects of the participation in claim-making campaigns on the lives of activists; (3) effects outside the campaigns; contribution to general political contention.

The first effect is the most obvious and most frequently studied, but it is also the least likely. In fact, collective action by social or advocacy organisations is found to be most often ineffective in influencing public policy. This finding is confirmed by several authors (see, e.g. Burstein and Sausner 2005). However, many authors agree on the fact that the potential power of movements to transform policy agendas is high (see Giugni et al. 1999; Baumgartner et al. 2005; Amenta et al. 2010).

Advocacy movements and the phenomenon of interest group representation are usually associated with democracy and are even labelled as an inherently democratic feature. Therefore, the bulk of the existing literature is dedicated to perspectives on advocacy groups in democracies (which hold that competing advocacy coalitions generate policy change, assuming that in a liberal context there is enough room for free and fair competition). However, there is a steadily growing strand that focuses on how these mechanisms function in authoritarian contexts (see Prakash and Gugerty 2010; Henderson 2010 on Russia; Ortmann 2012 on Singapore; Pils 2015 on China). The main problem with which social movements and advocacy groups struggle in authoritarian and neo-patrimonial (see Mommsen 2010) contexts is the fairly closed political culture and the unresponsiveness of state institutions. The dilemma is that state officials and authorities are not generally accustomed to advocacy groups or grassroots initiatives bringing forward demands for transparency and accountability, and thus react by means of obstructive policies. Thus, advocacy groups have a hard time promoting their interests, even when contention is wide spread. Human rights advocacy in repressive systems is often on the brink of political resistance, “since the political morality

that supports the idea of human rights holds political obligation [...] to depend on respect of such rights, which the repressive system denies” (Pils 2015, 2).

As Ortmann notes, in increasingly competitive authoritarian states, policy-making and influence by advocacy groups can best be explained by an agenda-setting approach. A notable role is played by the Internet today, which has dramatically enhanced the ability of civic activists to advocate policy changes by influencing the official national (and increasingly international) agenda (Ortmann 2012, 14–20). Despite the agenda-setting process being still largely under the control of the authoritarian regime, civic actors increasingly challenge and bring to the fore issues that were previously largely ignored.

Advocacy groups also have the potential to compensate for representational failures, providing a voice to minorities, particularly with regard to groups that are vulnerable, or have been, subject to discrimination and marginalisation (Young and Everitt 2004, 18). Conscientious objectors are certainly not a typical minority group that seeks representation in state bodies, but nevertheless at all times and in most places there has been a clear deficit in the representation of their interests. In Russia, civic activists, at the forefront the “Coalition for a Democratic AGS”, sought to counteract this discrimination and eventually resolve it. The coalition attempted to do this mainly through information and educational campaigns which aimed to change the preferences of the general public and influence the deliberative process within the State Duma, which are core methods employed by advocacy groups (Ibid, 20).

Soldier rights organisations are some of the strongest advocacy groups in today’s Russia. Evidently, some of them also became the natural advocates of conscientious objectors. By the time of the Second Chechen War the recruitment crisis in Russia had worsened. In addition, more and more violations of civic and human rights in the Russian armed forces became public. The time seemed right to raise again the pending question regarding the implementation of the right to conscientious objection and legal opt-out from compulsory military service as provided for in Article 59, 3 of the Russian Constitution. Another impetus was provided by the Civic Forum, organised in November 2001 (see Sect. 5.4), where prominent civic NGOs and representatives of the MoD met in a face-to-face discussion, for the first time reaching compromises on AGS as well.

Recalling the definition of "contentious politics" (see above), it can be stated that the activities relating to the Russian AGS legislative process were indeed episodic, since advocacy work was built up gradually, reached a climax and then receded (this has happened repeatedly since the 1990s); it occurred in public, especially since the media took an active part in it; it involved interaction between makers of claims (civic activists + liberal deputies) and others (namely centrist parliamentary groups backed by the military establishment); it was recognised by all groups as having a bearing on their interests; and finally, it brought in the government as a form of mediator, target and claimant itself. In addition, there were challengers from the outside, namely external political actors, such as the Council of Europe, which exerted additional pressure. Political opportunities grew out of the contentious interaction between institutional and non-institutional political actors.

To assess the influence of the AGS coalition, which is categorised as a classical social advocacy movement, this book will not look at direct impact, in the form of a linear causality from movement activities to policy- and law-making (as suggested by Tilly and Tarrow above); instead, it will examine their influence at several different levels. Based on the literature, the following effects are identified that are brought to bear at different stages: (1) agenda-setting (putting forward a certain issue); (2) reaching out to media and opinion-makers; (3) participation in institutional processes by influencing decision-makers' discursive positions; (4) exerting indirect pressure by mobilising challengers and external sources; (5) following up on the implementation stage and monitoring the behavioural level of the state (for a similar approach see Keck and Sikkink 1998, 25). The other two effects mentioned by Tilly and Tarrow above with regard to the consequences for the personal lives of activists and contributions to general political contention in society will not be disregarded but are not the primary focus.

Another consequence of movements that will be examined is the capacity or potential of civic activism in the politico-military sphere to institutionalise. Among other things, cooperation²⁸ processes between societal actors and state authorities are regarded as a form of institutionalisation. When social movements cooperate with political power structures they do so by various means, notably: (1) through consultation with the state or parties, which allows societal actors to disseminate information and opinions as well as policy advice; (2) through integration, which

gives societal movements some responsibility for policy implementation; (3) through delegation, which implies a transfer of responsibility from the state to the societal actors on the operational level (Giugni and Passy 1998, 86). Giugni and Passy further specify that these types of cooperation occur above all in the phase of policy implementation (see stage 5 above). However, based on the empirical evidence from Chaps. 7 to 8, I argue that cooperation can occur at any stage. Integration, as opposed to consultation and delegation, is the most delicate form of cooperation, since it can result both from the bottom-up and from the top down. In the former case, movements themselves try to expand the channels of access to the state in order to increase the chances of reaching their political aims (Ibid, 82). In the latter case, there are several ways in which a state seeks collaboration with the societal sphere. In a positive sense, state authorities lack expertise and revert to organisations to assist them in order to solve problems. In a negative sense, the state seeks to infiltrate movements or individual organisations by means of co-optation²⁹ with the aim of increasing control of and insight into their activities. In between these extremes, there is a third variant, which Giugni and Passy call “conflictual cooperation”. It mostly takes place in the legislative or general decision-making process. Societal actors become integrated in the legislative process, by challenging existing or proposed policies or by outlining, elaborating and enforcing new government policies (Ibid, 85–86).

NOTES

1. This brief overview sets the stage for a philosophical-historical reflection on the topic, but does not intend to provide an exhaustive review of historical approaches to civilian control and CMR, which is provided elsewhere (see, e.g. Croissant and Kühn 2011).
2. The notion of “guarding the guards” is often falsely attributed to Plato (it is said to originate from Juvenal, *Omnia romae*, VI, 347); however, it is widely used to characterise the “civil–military problematic”. This notion has been developed further into concepts such as “controlling of the controllers” (see, e.g. Lambert 2009, 25).
3. These two variants that can be found in the literature on “democratic peace” both propose that rational-institutional factors (accountability of policy-makers to the popular will and ponderous institutional barriers) and normative cultural factors (political socialisation as well as reservations against the use of force and general war-aversion in society) lead to more responsible foreign, security and defence policies.

4. A distinction is made between parliamentary and government armies. In the former case, the parliament is the central institution or authority to be included in decision-making on security and defence issues; in the latter, the use of force and deployment of the military are regulated primarily by governmental acts (decisions by the executive). This is especially the case in semi-presidential systems like France or strong presidential systems like Russia (cf. Werkner 2012, 179–180).
5. Germany has a relatively strong system of civilian and parliamentary control instruments (the accountability of the defence minister to the parliament, the budget and information right of the relevant parliamentary committees and the control function of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces are enshrined in the German constitution, the Basic Law). Moreover, the Parliamentary Participation Act of 2005 (based on a Constitutional Court decision of 1994 on the compatibility of “out-of-area missions” with the German Constitution) requires the prior approval of the German Bundestag for the deployment of German armed forces abroad. There are ongoing debates about the option of modifying this act (see Douglas 2014).
6. Despite the decreasing number of inter-state wars, the numbers of intra-state and transnational armed conflicts below the threshold of war are rising dramatically.
7. Noam Chomsky labels military interventions undertaken for humanitarian reasons as “new military humanism” (Chomsky 2000).
8. Please note: some of the following passages draw on an article, previously published by the author: “Civil–Military Relations in Russia: Conscript vs. Contract Army, or How Ideas Prevail Against Functional Demands”, *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (2014): pp. 511–532.
9. Participation in political life is traditionally connected to the military duty of citizens. Compulsory military service emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in most industrialised countries and was an important factor in the introduction of universal voting rights. Dolman aptly formulates the nexus of state, military and citizen in the context of recruitment: “It is this basic observation, that organisational differences within military forces substantially determine the strength and direction of the military’s political influence on state development toward, or away from, political inclusion with citizen-based rights” (Dolman 2004, 3).
10. See UN General Assembly Resolution 55/96 (2000) regarding military accountability to the democratically elected civilian government (http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/55/96&Lang=E); Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly recommendation 1713 (2005) on “Democratic oversight of the security sector in member states” (<http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/>

<Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17360&lang=en>); OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico–Military Aspects of Security (Section VII, paragraph 20, <https://www.osce.org/fsc/41355?download=true>). For an overview of norms and standards of democratic governance of the security sector, see also Hänggi (2003, 3–22).

11. The idea of a “post-military society” was meant to characterise the decreasing role of armed forces for Western societies in the political, economic and social sense by the end of the Cold War.
12. “Military” and “armed forces” will be used interchangeably here and are considered to be a “social system” or “social organisation” (Janowitz and Little 1965, 26) of the state that is constituted of armed units authorised by the constitution and society to defend a country and its citizens from actual or perceived threats.
13. “Human security” is defined as an emerging paradigm whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of international and national security by arguing that the referent for security should be the individual rather than the state. It holds that a human-centred, multidisciplinary understanding of security is needed (see Wikipedia article “Human security”, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_security). Key notions are the “freedom from want” and the “freedom from need” (UN Human Development Report, Chap. 2, 1994, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf).
14. States began to increasingly identify threats, as part of what became labelled “securitised” policies, provoking more frequently the use of urgent, extraordinary measures. The “securitisation theory” (see Buzan et al. 1998), a theory that discusses the shifting of certain public policies into the security realm, developed a tendency to judge the morality of state policies against values derived from the interests of citizens (Buzan 1991, 48).
15. Examples of individual security are the observance of soldiers’ rights, safety guarantees and well-being during peacetime. On the societal level, the freedom from a collective fear of possible repercussions (such as terror attacks) as a result of unpopular external state policies (“war on terror”) is another example.
16. The state and its institutions have no monopoly, neither on the public sphere (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 32) nor on the means of coercion (Hänggi 2003, 3). Societal actors are therefore increasingly regarded as component parts of the security sector.
17. The endorsement of “democratic civilian control” as a desirable norm and global standard in this study should not be (mis-) understood as a general and uncritical promotion of liberal democracy in terms of a fully accomplished political system that is without alternatives (as opposed to

systems that are less dependent on certain economic and social orders). Nevertheless, it is viewed as a norm that contributes to safeguarding transparency, accountability, and participation, which are principles that are brought forward by citizens, irrespective of their origin and the type of political regime they are dealing with.

18. In viewing institutions more widely as social constructs, institutionalist approaches have developed further—away from their formal legalistic approach to both explanatory but also more interpretative and cognitive approaches (see Hinings and Tolbert 2008, 484–485).
19. The difference between “institution” and “organisation” is explained pertinently by Knight (1992): “Whereas institutions are a set of rules that structure interactions among actors, organisations are collective actors who might be subject to institutional constraint” (1992, 3). While “civilian control” can be regarded an “institution” in the sense of a regime or set of rules, “public control” can constitute either an activity or a social process executed by “organisations” as physical entities with personnel, volunteers, resources and offices.
20. Of course, integrative approaches exist in the literature; however, most remain on a theory-based level (for a good overview see Croissant et al. 2011, who combine insights from historical institutionalism and strategic action to explain changes in the civil–military relationship; for empirical evidence of an integrative approach on government–military relations in emerging Asian democracies, see Kuehn and Lorenz 2011; Croissant 2014).
21. In accordance with the literature, “institution” can be understood as a formal or informal mechanism or “rule of the game of a society” (North 1992, 3) and in that sense as the product of conscious design and redesign, while the knowledge of rules must be known to and accepted by actors or wider society (compilation of definitions by Scott 1995, Thelen 2003; Pierson 2004).
22. Contrary to formal institutions, informal practices or institutions are not the result of a conscious process of “institutional design”, but rather of self-perpetuating collective expectations (Liebert and Lauth 1999, 24).
23. The notions of “reform” and “change” will be used interchangeably in this context. Institutional reconfigurations and changes are sometimes said to be triggered “by exogenous shocks”. In agreement with Mahoney and Thelen, it will be argued here that “incremental shifts often add up to fundamental transformations” and that a general model of change can comprehend both exogenous and endogenous sources of change (2010a, 2–7).
24. Tilly defines “collective action” as: “people acting together in pursuit of common interests” (Tilly 1978, 7).

25. Mechanisms, according to Mayntz, represent the middle ground between a description and a social law (2004, 239). More precisely, she defines them as “sequences of causally linked events that occur repeatedly in reality if certain conditions are given” (Ibid, 241). They are theoretical building blocks. Temporality is a decisive element here, since social mechanisms are recurrent processes taking place in time (Ibid, 242). Processes in turn are defined as “regular sequences of such mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformations of those elements” (McAdam et al. 2001, 24).
26. A useful definition of “social movement” is provided by Rucht and Neidhardt (2002, 9), who view them as “mobilized networks of groups, which, based on a collective identity, participate in collective action to bring about social change mainly by means of protest”.
27. Under “lobbying”, I understand the representation of interest of a specific group or entity in order to influence legislators to support or oppose a particular legislative project or policy; under “advocacy”, I understand the pleading of a cause or defending of a cause, proposition or right of others, for example a (vulnerable) group, in order to raise awareness and set it on the political agenda. However, the term “lobbying” should be used with caution. This form of participation should not be equated to “special interest”, “commercial lobbying” or other informal practices, since these terms have assumed a rather pejorative meaning. They stand in contrast to open and public engagement, which is the essence of contentious politics.
28. Cooperation is described as “a relationship between two parties based on an agreement over the ends of a given action and involving an active collaboration aimed at reaching such ends” (Giugni and Passy 1998, 84).
29. Under “co-optation”, I understand the incorporation of previously excluded societal or political actors into state power institutions.

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Public Control of Armed Forces in the Russian Federation

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2017, XXI, 361 p. 9 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-56383-1