The Second Generation Problematic: Rethinking Democracy and Civil-Military Relations

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Following the southern European and Latin American democratic transitions of the 1970s and 1980s, the postcommunist transitions of the countries of central and eastern Europe provide an important new case study of the relationship between civil-military relations and democratization. A decade after the fall of communism, this article reviews the transition in civil-military relations in postcommunist Europe, exploring what we have learned, first in terms of progress in the democratization of civil-military relations in central and eastern Europe, and, second, of the relationship between democracy and civil-military relations more generally. We argue that the debate on democracy and civil-military relations in central and eastern Europe—and more generally—has been distorted, narrowed, and sometimes confused by a conceptual focus on "democratic control" of armed forces, which assumes that the primary problems are the threat of praetorian military intervention in domestic politics and the resultant need to enforce civilian executive control of the military. We argue instead that the debate on the relationship between democracy and civil-military

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relations needs to be reconceptualized in terms of democratic governance of the defense and security sector. Such a reconceptualization shifts the focus away from control of the military in domestic politics and towards the wider problem of the democratic management and implementation of defense and security policy. We argue that this reconceptualization can be understood as a shift from the first generation problem of reforming core institutions for the political control of armed forces to a second generation problem of establishing effective structures for the democratic governance of the defense and security sectors.

In much of postcommunist central and eastern Europe, addressing the first generation problem (which much of the academic literature on civil-military relations implicitly focuses on) has proved relatively straightforward, and the primary challenge facing states is the second generation one. In particular, central and eastern European states face ongoing challenges in terms of building effective defense policymaking structures, establishing meaningful parliamentary oversight of the defense and security sectors and developing wider civil society input into defense and security debates. Meeting these challenges depends on general state and societal capacity—that is, the ability of state bureaucratic-administrative structures to provide for effective democratic policymaking and the ability of the wider society to contribute to public policy debates. The article begins by reviewing the literature on democracy and civil-military relations, follows by making the case for a reconceptualization in terms of democratic governance of the defense and security sectors, explores the problems the countries of postcommunist Europe face in this area, and finally draws conclusions regarding future research.

The Existing Debate on "Democratic Control of Armed Forces"

The existing debate on the relationship between democracy and the armed forces is dominated by the contributions of scholars whose primary analytical focus has concentrated on West European and North American traditions and experiences. Within this debate, two core issue areas emerge. The first of these concerns the degree of autonomy of the military from the civilian political power and its influence on democratic and civilian control of the military. Perhaps the most influential contribution in this area was made by Samuel P. Huntington in his book, *The Soldier and the State*. Huntington argued that civilian control of the armed forces occurred in two main ways, through either "subjective" or

"objective" control. Huntington suggested that subjective mechanisms of control occur in undemocratic circumstances, and maximize civilian power by politicizing the military and binding them and their interests to those of the civilian regime. In contrast, he observed that in democracies, civilian control of armed forces results from an objective approach. This entails a clear separation of responsibilities between civil and military sectors, with the military having a clearly defined, autonomous, and professionalized area of responsibility concerned with the application and management of force. Huntington hypothesized that this arrangement ensures that the civilian sector refrains from interfering in purely military matters and the military stays out of politics. The military's political neutrality was thus firmly institutionalized and internalized as part of its professional ethos.[1]

Morris Janowitz, in *The Professional Soldier*, observed that changes in technology, society, and missions had led to an inevitably more political role for the professional soldier than that suggested by Huntington. Despite this tendency, he noted that the military in the United States had retained enough of a professional ethic to ensure that they did not become involved in politics. Janowitz contended that it was the professional socialization of the military through its relationship with and sympathy for the values of the society it serves that ensures civilian control over the armed forces.[2] Bengt Abrahamsson, in *Military Professionalization and Political Power*, went further than Janowitz in his critique of Huntington, suggesting that to view the professional military as inherently apolitical was incorrect. He argued that in reality the professionalized military was a politicized and active interest group, often with inherently conservative tendencies. For Abrahamsson, the key to maintaining democratic control over the armed forces was to recognize the military's political nature, and to establish a system of institutional control mechanisms, which would allow civilian governments a fair choice in their defense and foreign policy options.[3] More recently, Douglas Bland has argued that the assumption of a confrontational or problematic relationship between the military and civilian political leaders is flawed. Instead, civilian control of the military is best understood and maintained through regimes of "shared responsibility" between civilian leaders and military officers. These regimes evolve according to particular national circumstances, and work according to "principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actor expectations converge."[4]

A second issue in the academic literature on civil military relations concerns the propensity of the military to intervene in politics, and in

particular to seize political power in the form of a coup. Samuel Finer, in *The Man on Horseback*, made one of the most useful contributions in this area. Finer addressed the question of why the military *does not* intervene in politics more often, given the potential political power their monopoly on the use of force seemed to provide. He concluded that civilian control of the military was strongest in "countries of developed political culture." Here the role, position, institutions, and legal processes relating to civil-military relations were clearly defined, valued, and institutionalized in both the military and society. In contrast, the most coup-prone countries were those of "low political culture," where society's respect for the governmental and legal institutions of the state was lower.[5] In *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Huntington took a similar approach, linking the likelihood of a military coup to levels of institutionalization and political participation. He suggested that in a "civic society," where there are high levels of institutionalization but low levels of participation, civil-military relations were absorbed within a wider, stable political system. In contrast, he argued that in "praetorian societies" with low levels of institutionalization and high levels of participation, the coup becomes the primary way by which the military exerts its institutional influence.[6] Other contributors to this debate have focused on the importance of external threats in influencing military intervention in politics. Harold Lasswell, for example, suggested that high levels of external threat create a "garrison state," which in turn increases the willingness and ability of the military to intervene in politics, as well the popular acceptability of such action.[7] Conversely, Stanislav Andrzejewski argued that an *unoccupied* military, with no external threat to address, was more likely to interfere in domestic politics.[8] More recently, Michael Desch has proposed that there is a nuanced relationship between the strength of civilian control of the armed forces and levels of internal and external threat. He suggests that high levels of external threat and low levels of internal threat lead to stronger civilian control of the military, while high levels of both external and internal threat result in poor civilian control, low levels of external threat and high levels of internal threat result in the worst civilian control, and low levels of both external and internal threat result in mixed civilian control.[9]

It is perhaps understandable that in analyzing the problems of securing democratic control over the politicized armed forces the countries of central and eastern Europe inherited from the communist era, analysts and policymakers would turn to these preexisting theories. However, the experience of the past decade has illustrated that the

relevance of these models has often been limited. In particular, their focus on the degree of separateness of military and civilian sectors and the likelihood of the armed forces seizing political power has often been misplaced. In academic analysis, the concentration on models of civil-military relations developed in relation to the differing circumstances, traditions, and histories of the Western states has resulted in a narrow and rather self-referential debate whose relevance to processes of postcommunist transition has been limited.

Reconceptualizing Democracy and Civil-Military Relations

The current academic debate on the relationship between democracy and armed forces in postcommunist central and eastern Europe—and more broadly—is narrowed and distorted by the conceptual framework usually used to analyze the issue. Most start from the perspective that the key problem is the democratic control of the military. Thus, much of the academic literature implicitly focuses on *control of the military by the civilian political executive*. This is problematic in a number of ways. First, it assumes that the central challenge is securing civilian executive control of armed forces and that there is in this context relatively little difference between the experiences and problems of democratic and nondemocratic states with civil-military relations. Thus, the term "democratic control" is often used interchangeably with "civilian control." It is important to make an explicit distinction between these two concepts. The Soviet Union, for example, retained quite strong civilian control over its armed forces, but in a fashion that could in no way be deemed democratic. Second, it presupposes a confrontational relationship between civilian political leaders and the military, assumes that military autonomy is the heart of the problem, and skews analysis of civil-military relations towards the particular question of military intervention in domestic politics. Third, it largely ignores other important elements of the relationship between political power and the military—for example, the role of legislatures/parliaments in exercising political control over the armed forces or wider civil society debate on the military and defense.

In contrast, we argue that there is a need for a more developed, sophisticated, and explicitly normative conceptualization of the relationship between armed forces and political power in democracies. There is a consensus in the democratization literature that democracy is about much more than simply institutional structures; it is about the democratic quality of these structures in their everyday operation. For

example, in *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan identify the importance of behavioral and attitudinal factors, as well as constitutional and institutional ones, in determining the prospects for democratic consolidation.[10] Similarly, David Beetham, in *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, stresses that when assessing democracy what is important is not just "the formal rules of the political system, but also its practice."[11] For Beetham, competitive elections, procedures to ensure the openness and accountability of government, guarantees of civil and political rights, and a "democratic society" whose citizens have the capacity to allow the previous arenas to work, are the fundamental criteria of political democracy—and it is on this basis that our analysis of democracy and civil-military relations proceeds.[12] Thus, while we accept that control of the military by the legitimate, democratically elected authorities of the state—i.e., civilian, executive control of the military—is central to democratic civil-military relations, we also argue that democratic civil-military relations involve much more than the simple maximization of civilian power over the military. Democratic civil-military relations should instead be conceptualized in terms of the democratic legitimacy, governance, and accountability of a state's civil-military relationship. We define this wider concept as democratic governance of the defense and security sectors. In this context, we argue that our understanding of the relationship between democracy and the military needs to be refined and revised in the following five ways.

First, there is a need for a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the role of the military in domestic politics. Much of the academic literature on civil-military relations focuses on military intervention in politics in terms of coups, military regimes, or authoritarian regimes in which the military is a key backer or partner. This generates an assumption that the primary problem is the military's desire to intervene in domestic politics and the threat of direct political intervention in by the armed forces.[13] Such situations, however, are the most extreme cases and do not have much relevance for the consolidated democracies of the West and, we argue, for most of the countries of postcommunist Europe. In the central and eastern European cases, during the communist period the military functioned as one of the key pillars of the power of the Communist Party, to whom it was clearly subordinate. As a result, while the postcommunist states inherited militaries with a history of involvement in domestic politics, this was not so much as actors in their own right, but rather as instruments of the communist regime. Indeed, the only major break with this pattern was

the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981-1982, which took place against the background of a feared Soviet invasion. Thus, following the fall of communism, while there were residual links between armed forces and the communist regimes, there was also a history of civilian political control of the military and relatively little tradition or culture of direct military intervention in politics. As a consequence, the problematic elements of the relationship between armed forces and domestic politics have been different from those that the concept of military praetorianism might suggest.

In the postcommunist states, the primary problem has not been a desire by the military to intervene in domestic politics but rather the danger that general political and socioeconomic instability, deep political cleavages and new—and hence weak or contested—political institutions create circumstances which might draw the military into domestic politics. The most extreme example of this occurred in Russia in the early 1990s, when divisions between President Boris Yeltsin and his opponents and the Fall 1993 parliamentary "coup" forced a reluctant military to choose between the two sides and intervene against the parliamentary forces.[14] More recently, in May 2001, a division of the Georgian National Guard mutinied and briefly seized a military base in response to the dire socioeconomic circumstances of the country's armed forces.[15] The central and eastern European candidates for membership of NATO and the European Union have also experienced some of these problems, although they have been less serious than those in the former Soviet republics. In the most infamous case, in Poland in 1994, attempts by the then President Lech Walesa to gain the support of the military in struggles with his domestic political opponents provoked a minor political crisis.[16] In Slovenia, in the 1990-1994 period, Defense Minister Janez Janša attempted to sequester elements of the Slovenian armed forces to his own authority, in order to utilize them to intimidate and spy on his political opponents.[17] In Bulgaria in the 1990-1997 period, partisan divisions between the two main political parties resulted in the politicization of elements of the officer corps along party lines.[18]

Second, we need to recognize that democratic control of armed forces involves a number of different issues or dimensions. The focus of much of the academic literature on the danger of military praetorianism and the need for civilian executive control of the military assumes that the primary problem and challenge with regard to democratic control of the military relates to the armed forces' role in domestic politics. While we agree that the armed forces' role in *domestic politics* is central to

democratic control of the military (with the core normative assumption that in a democracy the military should remain the apolitical servant of the democratically elected government), we argue that democratic control of armed forces also involves two other issues: democratic control of *defense policy* and democratic control of the military dimensions of *foreign policy*.[19] Thus, democratic control of armed forces implies that the definition and development of defense policy should be under the control of democratic authorities, and that the military should confine itself to implementing decisions made by those authorities. In addition, since military power may play an important role in countries' foreign policies, democratic control of armed forces implies that military dimensions of states' foreign policies—in particular, decisions on the deployment and use of force—should be under the control of democratic authorities. However, since defense policy and military power as a tool of foreign policy involve complex military-technical issues, the balance between democratic control of defense and foreign policy on the one hand and sensible deference to military expertise on the other is often problematic in practice.[20] This wider conception of democratic control of armed forces is important for a number of reasons. First, it has greater relevance to the consolidated democracies of the West, where the risk of military intervention in domestic politics is low, but democratic control of the defense and military aspects of foreign policy pose ongoing challenges. Second, in assessing the extent to which countries have realized democratic control of armed forces there is sometimes a tendency to confuse the different dimensions noted here. For example, assessments of central and eastern European states' progress in establishing democratic control of armed forces depend to a significant degree on whether one is talking about the more general role of the military in domestic politics or the more specific issue of democratic control of defense policy. Third, this wider conception of democratic control of the military suggests that the challenge is more nuanced than is sometimes recognized and focuses attention on the broader issue of democratic management of the "security sector," a sector that includes not only the armed forces but also the related institutions for their management, paramilitary, internal security forces, and defense-industrial infrastructure.

The third area where there is a need for a more developed and sophisticated understanding of democratic control of the military relates to the literature on civil-military relations' prioritization of executive control of the military. While effective government by a democratically elected executive may be central to democracy, democracy also in-

volves—or from a normative perspective ought to involve—a balance of power between different branches of the state; constraints on the power of the executive, for example, in terms of guarantees of individual rights and the rule of law; and wider public debate on and engagement with important public policy issues (or what is referred to as a "civil society" beyond the immediate political institutions of the state). In the absence of these things, a democratically elected executive risks descending into the "tyranny of the majority" or becoming an "elected dictatorship." This suggests that the focus of attention should be not only on civilian executive control of the military but also on other wider aspects of democratic control of the armed forces. In particular, attention should be paid to the role of parliaments in providing oversight of the armed forces, defense policy, and the executive's control of the military and the wider civil society debate on armed forces and defense. Again, the experience of the postcommunist central and eastern European states illustrates the importance of these dimensions. In many of these countries civilian executive control of the military has often been relatively unproblematic, but the ability of parliaments to provide effective oversight of the armed forces and defense policy has been limited, as has wider civil society engagement with the military and defense.

Fourth, in addressing the relationship between democracy and the military, there is a need for more careful reflection on what is actually meant by the terms "military" and "armed forces." Most of the existing civil-military relations literature assumes that a country's armed forces consist of the regular military—that is to say the army, navy, and air force—and that these forces should be the primary focus of attention. In many countries, however, there are also other significant militarized formations, such as paramilitary police forces or Interior Ministry troops. In some cases, these can be both large—with tens or more thousands of troops at their disposal and heavy equipment such as tanks and armored personnel carriers—and politically influential, sometimes more so than the regular armed forces. In Russia and Ukraine such forces have more than 100,000 troops and heavy equipment at their disposal and play a more directly political role than the regular armed forces, for example, in managing internal political dissent.[21] In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Interior Ministry forces built up during the 1990s had about the same number of troops at their disposal as the regular armed forces and were central political actors, both as a key pillar supporting the Milošević regime and as instruments of state power in the Yugoslav wars (for example, during the Kosovo conflict).[22] The political-institutional arrangements for control of such forces and the

legislation covering their activities usually differ from those relating to the regular armed forces.

Fifth, much of the existing debate uses a narrowly defined 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. At worst, there is an assumption that democratic control of the armed forces is simply about the institutional structures within which civil-military relations take place. While institutional arrangements for political control of the military are undoubtedly significant, it is important to think about the democratization of civil-military relations in a more holistic manner. We refer to this differentiation as the distinction between first generation and second generation challenges in the democratization of civil-military relations.[23] In this context, first generation reforms are focused on structural reform. They concern the establishment of precisely those institutions and relationships outlined above, which provide the democratic framework for civil-military relations. Second generation reform issues are about the consolidation of these frameworks and the democratic substance that fills the structures. In practice, these second generation reform issues are largely related to issues of state capacity; that is, the ability of democratic state structures to provide for the effective management of the armed forces and defense policy. The rest of this article explores the nature of these problems in postcommunist central and eastern Europe and makes suggestions for future research and policy agendas in light of the assumptions and arguments advanced here.

State Capacity and Democratic Control of the Defense and Security Sectors

As we noted above, with the collapse of communism the countries of central and eastern Europe inherited armed forces that were politicized as instruments of communist party-state rule. Thus, the most immediate civil-military challenges facing democratic reformers were to sever the links between the armed forces and the communist regimes and establish new institutional structures for democratic political control of the military. After the revolutions of 1989 and the break-up of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, governments took rapid steps towards these particular goals, thus ending constitutional linkages between the armed forces and the Community Party, disbanding party cells within the military, and establishing new chains of command for the armed

forces. The absence of any strong tradition of military intervention in domestic politics, the communist era experience of civilian control of the military, and general support for democratization meant that there was relatively little resistance from the military to these first generation reforms, which were relatively successful in addressing the residual risk of praetorian military intervention in domestic politics. Establishing effective democratic control over defense policy has, however, proved much more problematic and remains the key second generation challenge for the countries of central and eastern Europe—one largely dependent on the development of state capacity. Three challenges are central to this: First is the development of effective structures for the planning and implementation of defense policy. Second is the development of effective systems for parliamentary oversight of civil-military relations and defense policy. Third is the engagement of civil society as a core component of oversight and accountability in defense and security matters.

Defense Policymaking

One of the key challenges of consolidating democratic governance of the defense and security sector lies in the capacity of the state to develop and especially implement defense policy. Effective policymaking requires the ability to determine the range of policy choices open to the government, an assessment of the relationship between those choices and the resources available, decisions on whatever changes are deemed necessary and the ability to implement the policy once decisions have been made. These things are dependent upon state capacity: the ability of the state to provide political leaders with the necessary information and analyses; a realistic assessment of the resources that can be made available for a particular policy area and the relationship between resources and policy choices; and the ability of state bureaucratic structures to implement policy decisions. Democratic state capacity, further, depends not simply on macro-level institutions—such as theoretical governmental/ministerial control over the armed forces and defense policy—but also on lower level bureaucratic structures and suitably qualified and trained civil servants.[24] In postcommunist central and eastern European, this lack of depth in institutional mechanisms for control of the armed forces and defense policy has been a key problem. Governments across the region have faced some combination of the following problems: the absence of detailed information on the armed forces and defense spending, poor analysis of the policy choices open to

them, unrealistic (and even in practice nonexistent) assessments of the relationship between available resources and defense policy choices, and bureaucratic structures, notably ministries of defense and general staffs, that are unable or unwilling to implement policy decisions. In the absence of effective mechanisms and procedures for defense policymaking, the democratic governance of the defense and security sectors becomes highly problematic. This entails legitimate and accountable democratic authorities who are able to make properly informed policy decisions and have those decisions implemented. If political authorities are unable to shape policy in this manner, whether because of limited administrative competence within the bureaucracy or obstruction by a particular interest group, then the democratic quality of this process is diminished.

The bureaucracy is the institutional means through which state policy is organized, administered, and implemented. In the field of defense policy, the Ministry of Defense is the key element of the bureaucracy—although the General Staff and armed forces High Command play an important role and the Interior Ministry may also be relevant, particularly as was noted above with regard to armed formations other than the regular military. While it is generally recognized that bureaucracies have institutional interests and agendas of their own, in a democracy a key principle is that the bureaucratic administration should enable the democratically legitimized executive to assert its political authority.[25] During the communist period, the defense and security bureaucracies were dominated by military personnel and by the military sector's institutional interest. Indeed, in the Soviet Union it was common practice for civilians gaining employment in the Ministry of Defense to be "militarized" by being given military ranks.[26] As a result, "civilianization" of defense bureaucracies—by increasing the proportion of civilians employed therein and, in particular, placing civilians in key policymaking positions—has been an important element in the implementation of democratic control of armed forces across central and eastern Europe. Further, under communism, strategic defense policy issues were generally not decided on a national level at all, but in theory by the High Command of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and in reality by the Soviet High Command. Thus, in countries such as Poland and Bulgaria, which were once "non-Soviet Warsaw Pact" states, the democratization of defense policy planning and implementation has also been about a process of domestication.[27]

In most countries in central and eastern Europe, significant progress has been made in terms of the civilianization of defense bureaucracies—

though this applies primarily to the candidates for membership of the EU and NATO. Defense policymaking still remains relatively dominated by the military in Russia and other former Soviet republics.[28] While this civilianization process has reduced the influence of the military within the defense bureaucracy, it has also created problems of its own and highlighted yet others. First, newly appointed civilians have generally had only limited knowledge and experience of defense and security matters. Second, these problems are compounded in states where civil servants are political appointees who are likely to be dismissed after a change of government. In these cases, the bureaucracy does not have the opportunity to develop an institutional memory of democratic defense policymaking. Third, the relatively poor pay of civil servants—compared at least to what well qualified people might earn in the private sector—undermines the ability of defense bureaucracies to retain qualified staff, while sometimes encouraging incompetence and corruption. Fourth, the absence of administrative and technical systems for the management of large, complex public policy issues—for example, defense budget management—undermines the ability to develop and implement defense policy. In combination these problems routinely frustrate the exercise of legitimate democratic authority, making the formulation of policy and the translation of that policy into reality problematic, and lead to a continuing reliance on the experience and expertise of the military. Thus, a lack of bureaucratic capacity in the Czech Ministry of Defense has meant that it has had difficulty managing the defense budget at anything other than a macro level, and its knowledge and control over more detailed elements of budgetary expenditure has been limited.[29] In Bulgaria, presidents Zheliu Zhelev and Petar Stoyanov both complained about the difficulty of making unprejudiced decisions on defense and security matters when their security advisors consisted almost wholly of military personnel.[30]

Indeed, one of the fundamental problems of civil-military relations in central and eastern Europe over the last decade has not been military interference in domestic political matters, but rather misinformed, inept, or disinterested civilian management of defense and security issues. Often as a consequence of communist-era military dominance of all components of the security sector, civilian politicians and civil servants have been reluctant to engage with defense and security issues, preferring to prioritize other issues of transition, such as reforming the economy or the more general consolidation of democracy.[31] As a consequence, informed civilian input on these issues was at least initially almost completely unavailable, and civilian politicians' en-

gagement with security and defense issues has often been characterized by apathy or even neglect. Not only has this lack of political leadership led to disproportionate military influence over some areas of defense policy, but also to inappropriate policy choices on the part of the civilian government. In the period between 1989 and 1997, for example, Bulgarian policymakers were largely uninterested in defense and security matters. In conjunction with a precipitous decline in military spending, this led to the deterioration and demoralization of the Bulgarian armed forces, as well as a stagnation of the military reform process.[32] Similarly, in Hungary defense policymaking has been characterized by the rather unrealistic and short-term defense policy decisions of a succession of civilian governments.[33] While in both cases the conditionality of close integration with NATO has served to raise the importance of defense and security and to concentrate governmental minds, a general lack of engagement by civilians in these issues persists throughout the region.

Parliamentary Oversight

As was argued above, parliamentary oversight of the armed forces and defense policy and of the executive's management of both is an important element of democratic civil-military relations that has been relatively neglected to date. In representative democracies, the democratically elected legislature is the institutional expression of popular accountability. Legislatures play a central role in holding the executive and bureaucracy to account by examining and approving legislation and broader public policy. In relation to defense policy, the legislature's major role concerns its ability to scrutinize policy, exercise control over the defense budget, and approve or reject legislation.[34] Moreover, the engagement of the legislature in the defense policy process introduces a crucial element of democratic legitimacy to a state's civil-military relationship. Effective parliamentary oversight of the armed forces and defense policy, however, depends on both the formal constitutional or legally defined powers of the legislature and the capacity of the legislature to exercise those powers in an effective and meaningful way in practice.

In the majority of central and eastern European states, first generation institutional reforms were implemented in the early and mid-1990s. These codified the powers of parliaments with regard to the armed forces and defense policy and established basic institutional arrangements for carrying out of these functions—for example, annual approval

of defense budgets within the context of overall state budgets, annual parliamentary debates on defense and the establishment of parliamentary defense or national security committees.[35] The effectiveness of these new arrangements has, however, often been limited by second generation problems of state capacity. In particular, there has been a relative lack of parliamentary interest in defense and security issues, limited access to information, and a reluctance on the part of the executive, the bureaucracy, and/or the armed forces to provide that information, a lack of resources to support the oversight function of legislatures and a lack of expertise among parliamentarians. As a consequence, parliamentary oversight of defense policy remains limited and of poor quality in much of postcommunist Europe, undermining the democratic legitimacy of defense policy, oversight of the executive and the armed forces, and the defense policies and armed forces of these countries themselves.

In the main, during the first years of postcommunist transition, general issues of political and economic restructuring were understandably prioritized over defense and security reform, a situation reflected in the limited amount of parliamentary time and energy devoted towards defense reform issues in most countries. Thus, while most parliaments had quite extensive powers in oversight of defense policy, often these were simply not utilized through a lack of engagement on the part of parliamentarians. In Poland, for example, military influence over defense policy remained strong throughout much of the 1990s, largely because there was not a significant enough caucus of politicians with an interest in defense issues to contest this dominance on a consistent basis. While the increasing importance of NATO accession has served to push defense and security questions further up the political agenda in much of central and eastern Europe, they still remain an area of specialist interest in many countries, which has the effect of pushing defense and civil-military issues down the parliamentary agenda. In relation to this point, and in common with the problems experienced by the bureaucracy and discussed above, there is also a distinct lack of defense and security expertise among civilian politicians across the region. This shortage of relevant expertise undermines the process of parliamentary oversight by preventing the overseers from carrying out their task effectively—even if they want to. Thus, it may prevent them from asking the right questions at a committee hearing or fully understanding the implications of the policies they are reviewing. A similar problem is caused if those who are scrutinizing policy do not have available adequate or accurate enough information to enable them to make

balanced judgments. In the postcommunist context, these difficulties can be compounded by the fact that there is often no alternative source of information on defense and security matters in the civil society. In this case, the information provided is likely to contain bias towards the military sector's own institutional interests. As Edward Page notes, the process of legislative scrutiny is, in practice, a complex bargaining relationship between the legislature and the executive. If the legislature does not have the ability to enter into this bargaining relationship on appropriate terms, then its ability to oversee policy in anything but the crudest fashion will be limited. The Czech parliament has extensive powers in relation to control of the defense budget, for example. In practice, however, the limited nature of the information it receives—particularly in relation to "meso" and "micro" defense expenditures—means that its oversight role is constrained to a macro-level rubberstamping of the defense budget in its entirety.[36]

"Civil Society" Engagement

Civil society engagement with defense and security issues is an important element of democratic civil-military relations that is usually neglected. This adds a wider, noninstitutional level of oversight and accountability to the policy process and creates alternative, unofficial sources of information and expertise that can be utilized by both policymakers and public alike. Civil society is a complex and contested concept, described by Ernest Gellner as "that diverse set of non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society."[37] Linz and Stepan define it as the arena in which "self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests."[38] In a very real way, it provides the "societal capacity" that enables citizens to participate in a democratic political system. Indeed, if the concept of participation is to have any meaning, it is important that those participating—the citizens of the democratic state—have the potential to shape and contribute to debates on public policy issues.[39] One of the major problems of postcommunist democratization has been the limited nature of and opportunities for popular engagement with government and public policy beyond the electoral process. This is, in part, a reflection of the legacy of the communist system, which chan-

neled all political, social, and economic organization and activity through the party-state nexus and prohibited any autonomous civil society. In many cases, this limited societal capacity has resulted in a lack of transparency and accountability of governmental decision-making and served to limit the electorate's capacity to critically reflect on governmental performance. Because of the traditionally limited nature of nonmilitary input into the security sector, this has particularly been the case in relation to defense policy.

In practice, civil society's contribution to a democratic civil-military relationship consists of the variety of formal and informal organizations and groups that contribute to debate on defense and security policy issues. This includes the media, nongovernmental organizations, including specialist think-tanks, pressure groups and so on, and defense academics in universities. In relation to democratic civil-military relations, these groups fulfil three main functions. First, they are an alternative, nongovernmental source of information on defense and security issues. In this capacity, civil society serves to inform both the public at large and the narrower policymaking community. Second, civil society provides the opportunity for popular debate, discussion, and criticism of defense and security matters—for example, through newspapers, public meetings, or specialist journals. Finally, civil society can act as an important mechanism for holding other actors in the civil-military relationship to account. It carries out this function by exposing malpractice, forming critical judgments on policy, and mobilizing public opinion.

If a key legacy of the communist period in central and eastern Europe was limited civilian involvement in defense and security issues at an official level, nonofficial, popular engagement was almost nonexistent. As a consequence, the growth of civil society engagement with defense and security issues has been a slow process. Indeed, the limited nature of societal engagement in defense and security matters has often served to limit the depth of democratic control of armed forces across the region—even in states that are considered to be more democratically developed. In the Czech Republic, for example, officials in the Research Department of the Ministry of Defense complain that there are practically no nongovernmental sources of defense expertise that either they or members of the parliamentary defense committee can use in the policymaking process. Further, a general lack of interest and expertise in the Czech media has meant that issues of defense and security are only rarely covered in the press. When they are, coverage is often delegated to the least experienced journalists, and levels of analysis suffer accord-

ingly. As a result, society as a whole remains relatively ill-informed about this important policy sector, which in turn limits its ability to make informed judgments about governmental performance.[40] Similarly, in Bulgaria the population in general has remained largely ignorant of defense and security matters, despite the problematic regional security environment of the past ten years. Moreover, nongovernmental defense expertise has been limited to one or two poorly funded think-tanks and a handful of specialist academics.[41] In both cases this situation is slowly changing, and the questions of NATO accession and NATO's intervention in Kosovo are both hotly debated topics. However, the general picture across central and eastern Europe is one of limited civil society engagement with defense and security issues.

Democratic Governance of the Defense and Security Sector in Central and Eastern Europe: Future Research and Policy Agendas

This article has argued that democratic civil-military relations involve more than simple civilian executive control of armed forces. Democratic civil-military relations are about the effective governance of the security sector in a framework of democratic legitimacy and accountability. This definition has important implications for how we think about democratic control of armed forces and defense policy in practice. In countries where the risk of praetorian military intervention in politics is low and the military broadly accepts its role in domestic politics as an apolitical servant of the elected authorities, the primary challenge is the broader and more complex one of establishing effective democratic governance of the defense and security sector. This involves three key elements: the establishment of democratic and effective bureaucratic-administrative defense policymaking structures; parliamentary oversight of the armed forces and defense policy; and wider civil society engagement with defense and security issues. The traditional literature on civil-military relations largely neglects these areas. Moreover, as was argued above, the development of effective democratic control of the defense and security sector depends not simply on macro-level institutional reforms (e.g., constitutions, chains of command, core defense laws) but also and arguably even more importantly on state capacity in terms of effective bureaucratic and administrative structures.

The definition proposed here, with its emphasis on effective governance, accountability, and legitimacy, also suggests that there may be a

Table 1

Typology of Civil-Military Relations in the Postcommunist Region

	Country[42]	CMR Characteristics
Group One	Bulgaria Croatia (from 2000) Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Romania Slovak Republic Slovenia	• *First generation issues of civil-military reform have largely been addressed:* • The armed forces are not a significant actor in domestic politics. • The armed forces do not have any praetorian tendencies. • The armed forces no longer have institutional or ideological connections with (communist or other) political parties. • Institutional arrangements for democratic control of armed forces have been established. • Parliaments increasingly provide oversight of the armed forces and the executive's control of the armed forces. • There is emerging civil society engagement in defense and security issues. • *In some cases, problems still exist in the following areas:* • Political divisions—particularly between center-right parties and former communists—and new but contested political institutions have at times provoked disputes between presidents, governments, and parliaments over control of the military and defense politics. • In this context, civilian politicians have sometimes attempted to draw the military into politics in order to gain the perceived advantage of being supported by or associated with the armed forces. • Second generation issues of democratic consolidation, effectiveness, and efficiency persist in areas such as defense planning, control of the defense budget and parliamentary oversight.

Table 1 (cont.)

Group Two	Russia Ukraine	• *First generation problems persist, despite some democratization of civil-military relations and politics more widely:* • Strong presidential role with weak parliaments and wider political cultures. • Civilian, executive control over the armed forces but limited parliamentary oversight of the executive in this role. • Some institutional mechanisms for democratic control of the armed forces have been established. • Democratic control of the security sector more widely—including interior ministry forces, intelligence services, and so on—remains problematic. • In Russia, the military remains a major force in domestic politics, as a partisan actor in support of elements in the civilian sector (the October 1993 parliamentary coup), as a large proportion of the electorate, as an important bloc in the Duma, and within foreign, security, and defense policymaking structures.
Group Three	Belarus Croatia (to 2000) Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Serbia-Montenegro Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	• *First generation democratization of civil-military relations has not yet occurred:* • Authoritarian or semi-authoritarian patterns of politics and civil-military relations, based on strong presidential political systems. • Civilian executive, usually presidential, control of armed forces exists based on the legacy of civilian communist control, but is itself an important feature of (semi-)authoritarian rule. • While the armed forces have not attempted to seize power and in general are not a key factor in domestic politics, they have been drawn into politics by civilian political leaders either as a force for legitimization or in direct support of the regime, and they retain significant political autonomy and influence over the civilian leaderships • New institutional mechanisms for democratic civilian control of armed forces have not been established or are weak and ineffective if they exist.

Table 1 (cont.)

Group Four	Albania	• Mechanisms for civilian executive control of defense policy (overall defense strategy force structure, defense spending, procurement) are nonexistent or weak and the military retains very considerable autonomy. • Parliamentary oversight of the armed forces and the executives control of the armed forces is limited or nonexistent. • Civil society is not engaged in defense and security issues. • Democratic control of the security sector more widely is also problematic.
	Armenia Azerbaijan Bosnia and Herzegovina Georgia Macedonia Moldova Tajikistan	• Both first and second generation civil-military reforms have been stalled by the weakness of the state: • Serious internal political and/or ethnic conflicts. • Weak central state and government institutions. • Existence of multiple armed forces and/or weakness of state undermines or precludes effective central state/government control of the armed forces. • Control of military power is a key foci of core political/ethnic conflicts. • Absence of effective central state/government political control of armed forces prevents progress in addressing second generation issues of control of defense policy, parliamentary oversight, and civil society input.

variety of different ways in which democratic governance of the defense and security sectors are implemented in practice. Thus, the way in which any state puts democratic governance of the defense and security sectors into practice will depend on its history, broader political institutions, and political culture. Indeed, the fact that particular institutional arrangements work well in a state with a strong tradition of democracy and a well developed state capacity is no guarantee of their utility in different circumstances. Moreover, there is a deeper question of what the right institutions actually are in differing national environments with different political traditions. Thus, for example, the constitutionally enshrined separation of powers in the United States has given the U.S. Congress more extensive and detailed powers over defense policy than in some European countries (such as the United Kingdom and France) where parliamentary powers relating to defense are more limited. If we accept that different models of democratic control of the armed forces are possible, then we must also accept that countries undergoing democratic transitions will face different civil-military challenges and may emerge from reform processes with different outcomes.

In the central and eastern European context, a decade after the collapse of communism, the establishment of democratic civil-military relations has moved on from first generation issues of institutional restructuring to second generation challenges relating to democratic control of defense policy. In practice, these often have more to do with wider issues of state capacity-building and administrative modernization than they do with the traditional concerns of the civil-military relations literature. In most cases, the problem is not the establishment of civilian political control over the armed forces or the separation of the military from politics, but rather that of the effective execution of democratic governance of the defense and security sector. In this context, what is needed is a widening and deepening of the practice of democratic governance of defense.

Thus, future research agendas need to concentrate on issues of governance and accountability in democratizing defense and security sectors. First, there is a need for more detailed analysis of the problem of democratic governance of defense policy in postcommunist states and the challenge of building state capacity in this area. A comparative study of defense and security sector bureaucratic-administrative reform in the region would be one way forward. Second, more attention needs to be paid to the role of legislatures in providing democratic oversight of armed forces and defense policy. Again, further comparative research is needed. Third, the role of civil society in relation to democratic

governance of defense and security is, in particular, underresearched. While the literature on democratic transitions highlights the general importance of nonstate, societal engagement in the democratization process, there is little clarity on what this actually means for specific sectors of public policy, especially in the defense and security area. Thus, there is a need for both conceptual analysis of the relationship between civil society and the defense and security sector and examination of how this unfolds in practice in the postcommunist states. Fourth, the concept of democratic governance of the defense and security sector as a whole also highlights the importance of another point noted earlier: that in the postcommunist states the armed forces include military formations other than the regular military. Thus, there is also a need for more research—including both basic factual information and analysis—of the nature, role, and governance of interior ministry troops, paramilitary police, and other nonregular armed forces. To summarize, exploration of the relationship between democracy, civil-military relations and defense needs to shift from the narrow idea of democratic control of armed forces to the broader concept of democratic governance of the defense and security sector—a lesson that has relevance not just for the states of postcommunist central and eastern Europe, but also for other democratizing states and the established democracies of the West.

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39. Whether they do so or not is another matter. What is important here is not that every citizen is an expert on all matters of governance, but that the opportunity exists for them to pursue a particular issue more fully if they so choose.

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