the armed forces have been tolerating, supporting or even directing a transition from authoritarian or sultanistic regimes to more democratic political systems, beyond the most basic electoral aspect of majority determination. Their effectively determining role in the transitions is highlighted by describing their positions on political uncertainty and stability threats, against the backdrop of their sometimes considerable vested interests. Three varying but principally identical answers shed light on the highly variegating conditions in which the militaries of the three countries operate. Ultimately, the core interests of the armies (ranging from self-preservation via cohesion to regime-survival), not democratic idealism or specific ideological positions, have defined their levels of involvement during the transition.

The Military and Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia

Felix Heiduk*

Abstract: This article examines the different roles that the military has played in Southeast Asia's young democracies. While reforms of the security sector have overall only gained moderate traction, the differences in reform outcomes between Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand are nonetheless striking. The article argues that in order to explain the different reform trajectories we need to move beyond the traditional focus on structural reform impediments towards an analysis of actors' preferences and questions of agency in the context of SSR. The article finds that the prevalent interpretations of military reform as a political tool to alter the states' domestic balance of power have been a crucial factor behind successful (Thailand) and unsuccessful (Philippines) military interventions. Conversely, far lower levels of reform politicization in Indonesia have enabled a successful implementation of a number of institutional reforms.

Keywords: Security Sector Reform, civil-military relations, military reform, Southeast Asia
Stichworte: Sicherheitssektorreform, zivil-militärische Beziehungen, Militärreform, Südostasien

1. Introduction

Transitions to democracy did not topple authoritarian regimes in Southeast Asia until the late 1980s / 1990s, when Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand underwent democratic transitions. The coups in Thailand in 2006 and 2014 and a number of unsuccessful coup attempts in the Philippines, however, lay bare that democratization processes in the region are far from irreversible. Conversely Indonesia's armed forces, which had long been the main pillar of Suharto's authoritarian new order, refrained from any interventions in politics in post-Suharto Indonesia.[1] This begets the question: How can the different roles that the military has played in democratic transitions in Southeast Asia be explained? What explains the fact that reforms of the security sector in Indonesia, at least at first glance, have been more successful than in Thailand or the Philippines?

The diversity in reform outcomes aside, all three countries share a number of characteristics germane to Security Sector Reform (SSR)[2]: highly politicized militaries have been the backbone of respective authoritarian regimes; civilian control of the armed forces was weak and ran predominantly along highly

personalized patronage networks; security forces were involved in rampant human rights abuses; the state's monopoly of the legitimate use of force was weak; and, due to long-running insurgencies, all three states perceived the main predicaments of national security to stem from internal rather than external threats. Hence, SSR's objective to help countries 'meet the range of security and justice challenges they face, in a manner consistent with democratic norms, and sound principles of governance and the rule of law'[3] appears to be of unremitting relevance to the region. Yet, SSR has so far only gained very moderate traction in the region. And rather than the holistic "whole-of-government" approach promoted by donor agencies, reforms have at best taken on a piecemeal, ad hoc character.[4]

Various explanations for the dearth of SSR in Southeast Asia have been given: Southeast Asian states had little external support because the Global War on Terror (GWOT) changed the strategic priorities of Western states from democratic reforms to counter-terrorism cooperation;[5] and ASEAN's non-binding approach to regional integration and its emphasis on non-interference have prevented SSR from being reinforced at the regional level.[6] Other

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1   Felix Heiduk, „From guardians to democrats? Attempts to explain change and continuity in the civil–military relations of post-authoritarian Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines", *The Pacific Review* 24, No. 2 (2011): 249–71.
2   While the term SSR encompasses all actors involved in the protection of the state and its citizens, including the military, police and intelligence services as well as private security forces and oversight institutions such as executive, parliament, judiciary and civil society organizations, the analytical focus of this article is on the armed forces because of the strength of the armed forces to act as a potential veto player in the democratization process.

3   OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC), *Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice* (Paris: OECD, 2007), 21.
4   Felix Heiduk, „Conclusion: Assessing Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia", in *Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia: From Policy to Practice*, ed. by Felix Heiduk (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 225-37.
5   Jake Sherman, „The "Global War on Terrorism" and Its Implications for US Security Sector Reform Support", in *The Future of Security Sector Reform*, ed. by Mark Sedra (Waterloo: The Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010), 59-73; Mark Beeson and Alex J. Bellamy, *Securing Southeast Asia: the politics of security sector reform* (London: Routledge, 2007).
6   David Law, „Intergovernmental Organisations and Their Role in Security Sector Reform", in *Intergovernmental Organisations and Security Sector Reform*, ed. by David Law (Berlin: Lit, 2007), 3-24.

explanations focus on the domestic realm, highlighting factors such as a weak legislature and judiciary, endemic corruption, entrenched military autonomy, and military praetorianism, as well as historical factors such as the principal role that the armed forces have played in nation-building processes in the region.[7] Therefore, the leading explanations point to the deep-rooted challenges faced by reform-minded (mostly civilian) actors to alter the structural impediments that hamper reforms. Without refuting these arguments, structural impediments do not tell the whole story. After all, in some cases like Indonesia, SSR-related reforms took place against 'structural' odds.

This article argues that in order to better understand why reforms gained traction in some cases, yet were obstructed or reversed in others, we need to unpack the policy process – especially the pushing and pulling between different stakeholders. To buttress this argument, the article first aims to dissect the interpretations and policy preferences held by different actors involved in SSR, and, in a second step, traces their impact on the reform processes. Thus, special attention will be given to questions of agency, especially the policy preferences held by key actors (post-authoritarian governments and their military counterparts), as well as their interactions in the context of SSR.[8] Such an approach can offer an alternative explanation for the general dearth of SSR in Southeast Asia: From the viewpoint of the dominant explanations, SSR is not effectively implemented due to structural impediments (political instability, endemic corruption etc.) obstructing reforms. In contrast, from the viewpoint of this study, the actors themselves at best pay lip-service to SSR, and particularistic interests, rather than adherence to holistic reform concepts such as SSR, actually drive the policy process.

2. Indonesia

The overhaul of Indonesia's political system that followed the end of Suharto's new order put great reform pressures on the armed forces, which were viewed by large parts of the public as the backbone of authoritarianism. Especially the military's *dwifungsi* doctrine, which had justified the military's dominance in politics, came under strong public criticism. Faced with strong reform pressure, the military issued the *paradigma baru* (new paradigm) in September 1999. Drafted by leading reform-minded generals, it outlined a number of reform steps the army was willing to take to withdraw from its involvement in politics. These included, amongst others, the suppression of the *dwifungsi* doctrine, a ban of active military personnel to obtain civilian positions, severing the military's ties from Suharto's Golkar party, separation of military and police, and the abolishment of its reserved seats in the parliament. These reforms were further specified in a series of laws passed by the parliament in the following years which stipulated the main functions of the military in a democratic political order, banned involvement in politics and the economy,

and established parliamentary oversight functions on force deployment, appointment, promotion and budgetary matters.[9]

Nonetheless, by and large, it was the military that determined the scope and pace of reforms. Thus, while the military withdrew from active involvement in day-to-day politics and a legal framework for democratic civil-military relations was erected in post-Suharto Indonesia, many reforms have not been fully implemented so far. For example, the military has actively resisted attempts to allow military personnel to be tried in civilian courts, thus, continuing to operate with some degree of impunity. It has also blocked civilian control with regard to promotion within its ranks or defence procurement.[10] Calls for an abolishment of the military's territorial command structure, which enables a nationwide military presence from the provincial to the village level thereby shadowing the civilian administration and which had allowed the military to influence politics at all levels, have also been successfully resisted by the armed forces. The TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia – Indonesian National Armed Forces) argued that any abolishment of the territorial command structure would disable the military to uphold the nation's stability and territorial integrity in the face of religious and secessionist tensions in Sulawesi, the Moluccas, Aceh and Papua.[11]

Furthermore, the military has yet to fully cease its business involvements. Arguing that the official defence budget does not meet the actual expenditures of the armed forces, the military maintains a wide portfolio of businesses. While businesses directly owned by branches of the armed forces were nationalized in 2009, large numbers continue to exist as charitable foundations and cooperatives with little civilian oversight.[12] The military as an institution has also maintained its autonomy with regard to its relations with the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Albeit now being formally under the jurisdiction of the MoD, the TNI still reports directly to the president and is included in cabinet meetings, arguing that "civilians" in the MoD lack sufficient knowledge on defence affairs. Thus, policy formulation and operational control in the field of security and defence remains by and large in the hands of the military.[13]

When examining the trajectory of SSR-related reforms in post-Suharto Indonesia, one needs to take note of the fact that the TNI accepted its new role above politics in a time of weakness. Under pressure to reform, the military was forced to launch a set of initial reforms that led to its withdrawal from national politics – the scope and pace of the reform process hereby was mainly controlled by the military itself due to the lack of clout

7   Muthiah Alagappa, „Investigating and Explaining Change: An Analytical Framework", in *Coercion and Governance: The Declining Political Role of the Military in Asia*, ed. by Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 29-68.

8   Aurel Croissant, David Kuehn, and Philip Lorenz, *Breaking with the past? Civil-military relations in the emerging democracies of East Asia*, Policy Studies 63 (Honolulu: East-West Center, 2012).

9   Damien Kingsbury, *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military* (London: Routledge, 2003).

10   Leonard C. Sebastian und Iisgindarsah, „Taking Stock of Military Reform in Indonesia", in *The Politics of Military Reform: Experiences from Indonesia and Nigeria*, ed. by Jürgen Rüland, Maria-Gabriela Manea, und Hans Born (Heidelberg: Springer, 2012).

11   Felix Heiduk, „State disintegration and power politics in post-Suharto Indonesia", *Third World Quarterly* 35, Nr. 2 (2014): 300-315.

12   Human Rights Watch, *"Unkept Promise": Failure to End Military Business Activity in Indonesia* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 12. Januar 2010), http://www.hrw.org/node/87577; Samatha Michaels and Ulma Haryanto, „Who is Minding the Indonesian Military's Business Ties?", *Jakarta Globe*, 13. Mai 2012, http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/archive/who-is-minding-the-indonesian-militarys-business-ties/.

13   Beni Sukadis, „Security sector reform post-SBY", *The Jakarta Post*, 31. Mai 2014, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/05/31/security-sector-reform-post-sby.html.

and expertise amongst civilians. The TNI's ability to polish its tarnished image in the face of security threats by centrifugal forces, coupled with the fragmentation of Indonesian politics, endemic corruption and a loss of confidence in the political elites, led to changes in the modes of civil-military interactions. Under the Megawati and Yudhoyono administrations, political elites at all levels of government began to actively court military generals for their support during elections.[14] They also increasingly relied on personal relations with the top brass to influence policy-making. As a result, pressure for reforms diminished considerably.[15] Hence, while the possibility of a military coup remains fairly low, SSR in Indonesia follows a trajectory whereby the acquiescence of successive governments to leave SSR in the hands of the TNI has greatly limited the scope of the reform process.

3. Philippines

In contrast to many other Southeast Asian countries, the patterns of civil-military relations after independence followed a "Western" trajectory in the sense that the armed forces were by and large under civilian control and did not meddle in politics. This changed under the Marcos dictatorship. After the declaration of martial law, Marcos transformed the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) into a highly politicized tool of the government to suppress any form of dissent by forming close patronage links with top generals (thereby tripling the size of the armed forces), as well as dismantling civilian oversight institutions. Undermining the military's merit-based promotion system, however, earned Marcos the wrath of mostly mid-ranking officers and led to fractionalizations within the military. During the mass protests that followed the fraud elections of 1986, parts of the military joined the protest movement and publicly withdrew their support for Marcos. While observers argue that personal motives rather than democratic ideals were behind the defection of parts of the military, the fractionalization of the armed forces was a key factor that led to the Philippines transition to democracy.[16]

With the revoking of martial law and the passing of a new constitution in 1987, President Corazon Aquino re-established civilian control and constrained a number of authoritarian prerogatives held by the armed forces. First and foremost, the new constitution made it impossible for military officers to hold positions in any civilian institutions. The oversized Philippine defence sector was scaled back by a drastic reduction of the defence budget, and the Philippine Congress was given supremacy on all issues related to appropriations and procurement of the military to establish budgetary control mechanisms. Similarly, the promotion system of the military was reformed. Whereas military reshuffles are still the domain of the president,

a Commission on Appointments comprised by members of Congress was established, whose consent is now required for the promotion of high-ranking military officers. Concurrently, a National Human Rights Commission was founded, as well as an office to investigate corruption cases within the military and to ensure that promoted military officers had a clean human rights record, too. In order to prevent the indefinite extension of tenure of so-called overstaying generals by the government to secure personal loyalties within the top echelon of the military, a compulsory retirement age was established.

With regard to the traditionally very high influence of the military on internal security affairs, which was at least in part the result of longstanding Maoist and secessionist insurgencies, the government of Corazon Aquino separated the police from the armed forces. The institutional and functional separation of the police from the armed forces aimed at transferring the internal security role to the police in order to re-direct the military's role to external defence.[17] While the 2000s, in the context of a resurgence of insurgent activities and the GWOT, saw a re-orientation of the AFP towards counter insurgency as laid out in the Philippine Defense Reform Program published in 2003, the incumbent president Benigno Aquino issued a new National Security Plan. It shifted focus again to external defence, as well as emphasizing good governance and "people-centred" reforms of the security sector.[18]

Thus, the post-Marcos Philippines witnessed a number of significant institutional reforms directed at reforming the security sector. Formally, these reforms brought the armed forces back under civilian control. However, a variety of shortcomings negatively impacted the effectiveness of these reforms, including politicization of the promotion system, the ongoing role of the AFP in internal security, military autonomy in national defence, and its kingmaker role for regime survival. The reforms regarding the promotion system have so far been largely ineffective due to its politicization by political leaders. They have maintained a view on the promotion of high-ranking officers as a reward for loyal generals via what has been called a 'revolving-door policy'. For example, Gloria Macapal-Arroyo, president between 2001 and 2010, went through eleven army chiefs of staff in her nine years of tenure. Incumbent president Benigno S. Aquino III already went through five in four years. By turning civilian control of the promotion system into a political tool to ensure the loyalty of high ranking officers, major military reforms have also been ineffective due to a lack of time of the post holders to be able to achieve any results.[19] Similarly, the control of the military budget through Congress has been frequently used by members of Congress to secure loyalty and support from the top echelons of the AFP rather than to push for budgetary reforms.[20]

14 Marcus Mietzner, *The Politics of Military Reform in Post-Suharto Indonesia: Elite Conflict, Nationalism, and Institutional Resistance*, Policy Studies 23 (Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2006).

15 Jun Honna, *Military Politics and Democratization in Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 2003).

16 Carolina G. Hernandez and Raymundo B. Ferrer, „The Military in Democratic Development: A Philippine Case Study", in *Military engagement: Influencing Armed Forces Worldwide to Support Democratic Transitions*, ed. by Dennis Blair, Volume II: Regional and Country Studies (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 144.

17 Paul Chambers, „A Precarious Path: The Evolution of Civil–Military Relations in the Philippines", *Asian Security* 8, Nr. 2 (2012): 138-63.

18 Government of the Philippines, „National Security Policy 2011-2016" (Manila, 2011), http://www.gov.ph/downloads/2011/08aug/NATIONAL-SECURITY-POLICY-2011-2016.pdf; Peter Chalk, *Rebuilding while performing: Military modernisation in the Philippines* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2014), https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/rebuilding-while-performing-military-modernisation-in-the-philippines.

19 Fabio Scarpello, „The Philippines' Halting Steps Toward Military Reform", *World Politics Review*, 15. Juni 2011, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/9172/the-philippines-halting-steps-toward-military-reform.

20 Renato Cruz de Castro, „Congressional Intervention in Philippine Post-Cold War Defense Policy", *Philippine Political Science Journal* 25, Nr. 4 (2005): 79-106.

More so, the field of national security and defence policies is still largely dominated by (ex) military through informal inclusion of active military in cabinet meetings, or the promotion of former soldiers into key positions in the bureaucracy to ensure the loyalty of the military.[21] Generally, the military's role in politics has shifted from junior partner under Marcos to kingmaker. Troubled by frequent military dissension and coup attempts, subsequent post-Marcos administration have relied on the backing of powerful military factions for their survival. Most notably, the administration of Gloria Macapal-Arroyo, which witnessed two failed coup attempts, has been accused of rigging the 2004 elections with the help of senior generals, which came to be known as the "Hello Garci" scandal, and all of whom later obtained senior (civilian or military) positions.[22] Along similar lines, former coup plotters have struck informal deals with successive governments, thereby escaping prosecution. Some of the former putschists, such as Antonio Trillanes or Gregorio Honasan, who were behind failed coups against former presidents Gloria Macapal-Arroyo and Corazon Aquino respectively, even were elected as Senators. Corruption eradication within the AFP has also been futile as the institution is recurrently affected by corruption scandals. This has severely tainted the military's public image up to the point that the AFP is regarded to be the most corrupt state institution.[23]

Furthermore, the re-focusing of the military on external defence has only very recently seen progress. Due to a more benign internal security situation, resulting from the signing of a peace accord with the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) in Mindanao, as well as recent clashes between Manila and Beijing over territorial claims in the South China Sea, the Philippine government has only very recently begun to modernize its armed forces so that they can project external deterrence. Up until then, however, the AFP was granted control over the national policies towards secessionist and Maoist insurgency movements. Successive civilian governments have for the most part provided the military with a carte blanche in this policy area. Under the Ramos presidency, internal security operations were formally returned from the police to the military. Under the Arroyo administration, Congress passed the Human Security Act, which, despite its name, mainly reinforced the AFP's clout by allowing warrantless searches, arrests and detentions by the security forces without Congressional oversight. Numerous cases of extrajudicial killings, abductions and torture by members of the security services have been reported by national and international human rights organizations, yet those involved are not prosecuted.[24]

While a myriad of legal reforms have been set out and implemented in the post-Marcos era which ensure civilian supremacy and control over the armed forces, in reality many of these control mechanisms have not functioned adequately. This is not simply the result of active resistance to these reforms by the armed forces, but equally so the outcome of frequent attempts by political elites to co-opt or ensure compliance of members of the armed forces in order to foster their particular interests.

4. Thailand

Modern Thailand has seen periods of elected civilian governments frequently replaced by military coups. The last coup, in May 2014, removed elected Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, whose brother Thaksin had been removed from office by a military coup eight years earlier, from power and paved the way for the instalment of a military-led transitional government headed by General Prayuth Chan-ocha, the passing of a new constitution by a military-appointed assembly as well as a military-appointed legislature dominated by active and retired military officers. Arguably, the 2014 coup marks the end point of a rollback of SSR in Thailand which started in the early 2000s. SSR in Thailand only gained moderate traction in the 1990s following the Black May uprising in 1992 against the military dictatorship. The massacre of student protesters in May 1992 by the army led to the resignation of the junta led by General Suchinda and enabled, in its aftermath, a range of SSR-related reforms.[25] Under pressure to redeem the military's tainted image and to withdraw from politics, retired general and then defence minister Chavalit proposed a number of reforms in 1996 with the aim of professionalizing the armed forces. These included placing the commander of the armed forces and the chiefs of staff under the control of the MoD, reducing the number of active military in the Defense Council, and the military's withdrawal from foreign policy-making, as well as establishing parliamentary control mechanisms such as greater transparency and control of the defence budget. Most of these reforms, however, never materialized. One exception being budgetary reforms as the Asian crisis of 1997 exerted great pressures on the armed forces to decrease the defence budget, reduce troop levels and attempted to cut down on the number of active generals by creating an early retirement scheme. Yet again, these reforms were carried out 'voluntarily' under the aegis of the armed forces with little civilian control in place.[26] The 1990s also witnessed a reduction of the number of military personnel in the Thai Senate from 55.2% (1992-1996) to 18.4% (1996-2000) as a result of constitutional reforms.[27]

Thailand's brief period of SSR-related reforms started to crumble when Thaksin Shinawatra's Tai Rak Tai party won a landslide victory in the 2001 elections. Competing over power with the unelected trinity of military, monarchy and bureaucracy, which until then had dominated Thai politics relatively undisturbed for decades, Thaksin began to co-opt factions of the military by offering senior posts to loyal officers and even managed to promote his own cousin to the position of army chief. Thaksin's

21 Paul Chambers, „Superficial Consolidation: Security Sector Governance and the Executive Branch in the Philippines Today", in *Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia: From Policy to Practice*, ed. by Felix Heiduk (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 102-30.

22 Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., „‚Hello Garci' generals promoted", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 17. Februar 2006, http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2479&dat=20060217&id=D1g1AAAAIBAJ&sjid=jiUMAAAAIBAJ&pg=2835,320489.

23 Pulse Asia, *Ulat ng Bayan – Nationwide Survey on corruption 2011* (Manila, 28. März 2011), http://www.pulseasia.ph/files/Download/3-28-2011%20MR3%20-%20UB2011-1%20MR%20on%20Corruption.pdf.

24 Philip Alston, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions* (Geneva: UN Human Rights Council, 2009).

25 Suchit Bunbongkarn, „The Military and Democracy in Thailand", in *The Military and Democracy in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. by R. J. May and Viberto Selochan (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2004), 47-58.

26 James Ockey, „Thailand: The Struggle to Redefine Civil-Military Relations", in *Coercion and Governance: The Declining Political Role of the Military in Asia*, ed. by Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 187-208.

27 Paul Chambers, „Thailand on the Brink: Resurgent Military, Eroded Democracy", *Asian Survey* 50, Nr. 5 (2010): 835-58.

attempts to gain control of the army as the country's most powerful institution was, according to observers, one of the main factors behind the toppling of the Shinawatra government through a coup in 2006.[28] In terms of SSR the 2006 coup marked a return to the 'old ways' of strong military influence over vast areas of public policy and a pro-interventionist attitude of the armed forces in general. The 2007 constitution greatly reduced civilian influence on the defence budgets and promotions within the military, guaranteed the military a quota of handpicked generals in the Senate and gave it carte blanche in all aspects of internal and external security.[29] Elections in 2008 were won by a reincarnation of Thaksin's party Tai Rak Tai, which had been banned earlier, the People's Power Party (PPP). Through a 'constitutional coup' in late 2008, the PPP lost power and was replaced by anti-Thaksin coalition government which governed from 2009 until 2011. Despite the inability of the coup to resolve the political conflict, public attitudes towards the armed forces remained positive.[30]

Despite the repression of pro-Thaksin forces, the next elections in 2011, however, were again won by another political reincarnation of Thaksin, the newly founded Pheu Thai Party, which replaced the PPP and was led by his sister Yingluck Shinawatra. The new Prime Minster quickly found herself at loggerheads with the arch-royalist, anti-Thaksin forces within the military when she announced budget cuts, promised to reduce the number of generals and to place greater emphasis on respect for democratic institutions as part of the military training, and most importantly launched investigations into alleged human rights violations during the security forces crackdowns on pro-Thaksin activists between 2009 and 2011. Yingluck's proposal of a so-called amnesty bill in 2012, which would have pardoned everyone facing charges from the political turmoil between 2004 and 2010, triggered anti-government protests. The political unrest that followed lasted for six months and saw nearly 30 people killed and hundreds injured. They eventually provided the military with the opportunity to topple the elected government to re-establish 'law and order'.[31]

By dissolving the parliament, taking full control of the executive, the judiciary and the military, detaining opposition activists, as well as curtailing press freedom and civil liberties, the coup has certainly ended any short to mid-term prospects for SSR in Thailand. Backed by the official endorsement of Thailand's king Bhumibol Adulyadej, the armed forces for the time being seem reluctant to return powers into civilian hands. Thailand's military appointed 200-member strong transitional National Legislative Assembly (NLA) consists of 105 military officers and ten police officers.[32] The cabinet is just as dominated by military personnel as the legislature.[33] No date has been established yet for new elections.

To understand the rollback of SSR in Thailand over the last decade without taking into consideration Thailand's wider political divisions and conflicts seems futile. Firstly, this includes the conflict between a wealthy oligarchy, backed by the military, which has ruled the country for decades, and the assertive coalition of lower and middle-classes demanding a greater share of political and economic power. As the coalition of largely lower and middle classes mobilized by Thaksin effectively held an electoral majority throughout the last decade, coups have been the only way to re-assert control of the political process for the old elites.[34] Secondly, some observers have also stressed the need to contextualize the political conflict within the ongoing struggle over the royal succession. The successor to the throne, crown prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, is believed to have ties to Thaksin. And as one observer put it: "What they share is a tenuous relationship with the old monarchist elite, including the military leadership, senior bureaucrats and the judiciary. That mistrust is reciprocated".[35] Yet, according to the existing laws, the crown prince will become the next king of Thailand. Control over the National Assembly at the time when Bhumibol's reign ends, however, ensures strong authority over the royal succession as the heir needs to be formally proclaimed by it.[36] Hence, the dominant interpretation of SSR-related reforms in Thailand is one that perceives reforms as a political instrument to alter the power balance in the state, rather than a technocratic process aimed at improving security sector governance.

5. Conclusion

While structural impediments to SSR, such as politicized military doctrines, inflated defence budgets, or military autonomy in policy-making, have certainly hindered SSR in all three countries under study, this article finds that the modes of interaction between civilian decision-makers and their military counterparts at least partially explain the different outcomes. This interaction in post-Suharto Indonesia has largely taken on a mode of acquiescence by transferring control of the reform process over to the armed forces themselves. While this has greatly limited the scope of reforms and marginalized civilian reform actors, it has on the other hand ensured the continuous withdrawal of the military from politics. Furthermore, a consensus to keep the TNI out of politics has enabled an, albeit imperfect, institutionalization of reforms during the transition period. Thus, a return of the military to politics seems at least for the time being unlikely.

In terms of reform outcomes, SSR in the Philippines and Thailand has taken highly different trajectories. The AFP's role as "kingmaker" in post-Marcos Philippines has significantly

28 Duncan McCargo, „Thailand: State of Anxiety", *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2008 (2008): 333-56; Deniz Kocak und Johannes Kode, „Impediments to Security Sector Reform in Thailand", in *Security Sector Reform in Southeast Asia: From Policy to Practice*, ed. by Felix Heiduk (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 83-101.

29 Thitinan Pongsudhirak, „Thailand since the coup", *Journal of Democracy* 19, Nr. 4 (2008): 140-53.

30 Asia Foundation, *2010 National Survey of the Thai Electorate: Exploring National Consensus and Color Polarization* (Bangkok, 2011).

31 Helen Davidson und Matthew Weaver, „Thailand Army Declares Martial Law, Denies Coup", *The Guardian*, 20. Mai 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/20/thailand-army-declares-martial-law-denies-coup-live.

32 „Junta chief defends make-up of National Legislative Assembly", *The Nation*, 2. August 2014, http://www.nationmultimedia.com/politics/Junta-chief-defends-make-up-of-National-Legislativ-30240069.html.

33 „Meet our new lawmakers", *Bangkok Post*, 1. August 2014, http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/politics/423567/meet-our-new-lawmakers.

34 Heiduk, „From guardians to democrats?".

35 Zachary Abuza, „The Elephant in the Room: Thailand's Royal Succession and the Coup", *Indo-Pacific Review*, 19.06.2014, http://www.indopacificreview.com/elephant-room-thailands-royal-succession-coup/.

36 Andrew MacGregor Marshall, „Thailand's secret story: the battle for a $37b royal estate", *Financial Review*, 31. Mai 2014, http://www.afr.com/p/world/thailand_secret_story_the_battle_QcvSA6u4clBHmLTFPLFQNJ.

widened its political leverage and autonomy. The continued politicization of the armed forces was aggravated by repeated attempts of successive governments to co-opt certain factions within the military to ensure regime survival. While formerly under civilian control, several civilian control mechanisms such as military promotion are frequently instrumentalized by civilian elites to foster personal patronage networks with high ranking generals. With regard to Thailand, little, if anything, is left of SSR after the coups in 2006 and 2014. For the time being, the military controls virtually all areas of public policy-making, operates independently of any form of control by civilian, democratically elected institutions, and is likely to do so for some time. The dearth of SSR, however, did not come about through the two coups alone, but is contingent on long-standing conceptualizations of SSR, within the domestic contexts in Southeast Asian countries, as a tool to alter the power balance in the state, rather than to improve the governance of the security sector, amongst civilian and military elites.

What the three cases furthermore illustrate is that actors in the region generally chose to support or curtail SSR on the basis of their (perceived) particular interests and their institutional background. Therefore, SSR-related reforms in all three cases have quickly become enmeshed in national power politics. Moreover, their scope as well as their success has, albeit to different degrees, relied on inter-personal loyalties and patronage networks between the respective political leadership and the armed forces. As a result, civilian control over the military remains insufficiently institutionalized in all three cases.

The Role of Society in the Control of Armed Forces – Implications for Democracy

Nadja Douglas*

Abstract: Contributing to the on-going debate on the second-generation challenges of civilian control of armed forces, this article discusses the role societal actors play in keeping a vigilant eye on the military organisation of their country. It argues in favour of enlarging the framework of civilian control in order to better take account of the plurality of both civilian actors as controlling body and military actors as referent object of control. Referring to on-going problems of right-wing extremism in the Bundeswehr and ethnic bonding in the Russian armed forces as illustrative cases, deficiencies of existing control mechanisms will be identified. Societal oversight, as outlined, plays an increasingly important role in terms of a compensation mechanism, irrespective of the character of the political regime.

Keywords: Civilian control, societal actors, Bundeswehr, Russian armed forces, democracy
Stichworte: Zivile Kontrolle, gesellschaftliche Akteure, Bundeswehr, russische Streitkräfte, Demokratie

1. Introduction

There is a wide recognition of the importance of civilian control of armed forces for democratisation processes. Civilian control as a necessary condition for democracy has not only been underlined in the respective literature on democratic transition (see for example O'Donnell/Schmitter 1986, Diamond/Plattner 1996, Croissant *et al.* 2011), but has also emerged as an international norm.[1] The abundant literature on civil-military relations has experienced various reconceptualisation efforts in recent years, among them endeavours to elaborate so-called second-generation criteria of democratic control (see for instance Bland 2001, Cottey et al. 2002, Forster 2002, Bruneau/Matei 2008, Lambert 2009).[2] This strand of literature seeks to go beyond the traditional reading of civil-military relations that views civilian control primarily as the subordination of the military to the political leadership and the prevention of military coups. It abandons the former state-centred view of an exclusive bargaining process between military and political leaders. Instead, there are proposals to (re-) define the "civil" and "military" components of the relationship (see Nelson 2002).[3]

The central idea of this article is that even if democratically-elected decision-makers formally control the armed forces

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1 See UN General Assembly Resolution 55/96 from 2000 regarding military accountability to the democratically elected civilian government (Res. 55/96, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp? symbol=A/RES/55/96& Lang =E); Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly recommendation 1713 from 2005 on "Democratic oversight of the security sector in member states" (http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/ adoptedtext/ta05/erec1713.htm); OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security from 1994 (OSCE Code of Conduct, Chap. VII, Art. 20, http://www.osce.org/fsc/41355?download=true).

2 These approaches share an interest in moving from the institutional level of political control of armed forces to establishing effective structures for the democratic governance of the security and defence sectors (cf. Cottey et al. 2002: 32). Furthermore, there is a concentration on what Bland calls the "civil-military relations software", meaning the "framework of ideas, principles and norms that shape civil-military behaviour in liberal democracies" (Bland 2001: 525).

3 This can be done on a narrow to broad continuum, implying on the one side a wide range of national security structures (from the military officer corps to an all-encompassing view including police, intelligence agencies, border control, paramilitary troops etc.) and on the other, civilian side, a spectrum ranging from few top decision-makers to a society-wide public sphere (cf. Nelson 2002: 161-162).