THE POLITICS OF REFORM: HOW ELITE AND DOMESTIC PREFERENCES SHAPE MILITARY MANPOWER SYSTEMS

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Georgetown University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Government

By

Ryan Layman Boeka, M.A.

Washington DC
May 29, 2018
THE POLITICS OF REFORM: HOW ELITE AND DOMESTIC PREFERENCES
SHAPE MILITARY MANPOWER SYSTEMS

Ryan Layman Boeka, M.A.

Thesis Advisor: Elizabeth A. Stanley, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Why do states reform their military manpower policies? Changing military manpower systems (MMS) entails economic, social, and political costs that often prevent states from adopting reforms even when doing so would better serve the interests of the state. Nevertheless, fundamental changes to states’ military manpower policies such as the U.S. decision to replace its cadre/conscript system with an all-volunteer force in 1973 occur relatively frequently, challenging the idea of institutions as enduring, or “sticky,” entities that are difficult to transform or destroy.

This dissertation examines the connecting logic in the relationship between domestic politics and changes in states’ military manpower policies. Previous studies have explored the links between MMS changes and factors such as demographics, socio-cultural and economic changes, and security considerations; however, they have not fully examined how, or under what conditions, these policy changes are likely to occur nor demonstrated that these factors influence states’ military manpower policies directly rather than through their effects on domestic political processes. This study improves upon existing literature by offering a theoretical model that connects changes in elite and domestic policy preferences with MMS changes and identifies the political pathways to MMS reform. While acknowledging the influence of security, economic, and socio-cultural factors in shaping the domestic political landscapes in which MMS changes
occur, this research suggests that MMS reforms are best explained by changes in government leaders’ policy preferences or in the preferences of the members of their winning coalitions.

Using process tracing and structured analysis guided by explicit research questions, I examine four MMS reforms in three states over various time periods in the post-World War II era: Argentina (1983-1995); Qatar (1971-2018), and Sweden (1994-2018). Each of these cases strongly support the model’s predictions and suggest that changes in domestic political environments, rather than economic, demographic, or security considerations, best explain why MMS changes occur. As an important component of states’ security policies, understanding why and under what conditions states reform their military manpower systems helps inform our understanding of how states design and implement national security strategy and may provide insights to explain changes in domestic and foreign policy more broadly.
Writing is largely a personal endeavor, but completing a dissertation requires tremendous support from others. I am somewhat hesitant to try to acknowledge those whose support made this project possible for I know that I will inevitably neglect to mention individuals who greatly impacted my research and writing. Nevertheless, I would be remiss if I did not attempt to identify and thank those whose support allowed me to complete this project.

First, I wish to thank the members of my committee—David Edelstein, Tom McNaugher, Dan Hopkins, and especially my committee chair, Liz Stanley, who provided detailed feedback on every draft that I ever produced. This dissertation, at best, loosely resembles the project that I first proposed to my committee in 2014, and it would not exist in its current form without her guidance at every step along the way.

I also want to thank Brigadier General Cindy Jebb, Colonel Suzanne Nielsen, Colonel Tania Chacho and my colleagues in the Department of Social Sciences at West Point and Georgetown. I am greatly indebted to Lukas Berg, Brandon Colas, Keith Hughes, and Jan Kallberg for helping me locate research materials and connecting me with interview subjects and to Jeff Bonheim, Adam Keller, Paul Tanghe, and Devlin Winkelstein for providing insightful comments on my draft chapters. Without feedback from Jeff and Devlin in the early stages of my writing, this project would never have gotten off the ground.

But most of all, I wish to thank my wife, Pam, and son, Charlie, for their inspiration and incredible patience. In addition to editing every draft that I produced and helping me to compile and format the final dissertation, Pam encouraged me to finish when I felt that I could not and allowed me to spend countless guilt-free hours in the basement conducting research and composing drafts. She deserves far more acknowledgement than I could ever hope to convey here.

And finally, I thank my mother, Debbie, who could not be here to see the completion of this project. My mom instilled in me a life-long love for learning and taught me to devote myself completely to every endeavor that I pursue. I know that she would burst with pride to read the pages that follow and that she would offer far more praise than this project deserves. I dedicate the research and writing of this dissertation in memory of her.

Ryan L. Boeka
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

Chapter 2: Changing Preferences and Changing Military Manpower Policies: The Politics of Military Manpower Reform ............................................................................................................. 32

Chapter 3: The Death of Conscript and an Institution: The End of Argentina’s Compulsory Military Service ......................................................................................................................... 78

Chapter 4: National Service in the Welfare State: Military Manpower Reform in Qatar ................................................................................................................................. 124

Chapter 5: An All-Volunteer Force for Sweden: Overturning 109 Years of Military Manpower Policy ................................................................................................................................. 176

Chapter 6: Reinstating Conscription: The End of Sweden’s Brief Experiment with an All-Volunteer Force ............................................................................................................................ 230

Chapter 7: Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 280

Appendix A: Qatar Interview Protocol .......................................................................................... 301

Appendix B: Sweden Interview Protocol ....................................................................................... 304

Bibliography .................................................................................................................................. 309
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Pathways to MMS Reform ................................................................. 54

Figure 2.2 Empirical Predictions ..................................................................... 61

Figure 3.1 Size of Las Fuerzas Armadas from 1983 to 1995 .............................. 98

Figure 3.2 Size and Composition of Las Fuerzas Armadas ............................... 118

Figure 3.3 Pathway to Argentina’s MMS Reform ............................................. 120

Figure 4.1 Map of Qatar and the Gulf States .................................................... 129

Figure 4.2 Doha’s Skyline in 2005, 2010, and 2012 ........................................ 134

Figure 4.3 Arms Exports to Qatar ................................................................. 163

Figure 4.4 Pathway to Qatar’s MMS Reform ................................................ 171

Figure 5.1 Number of Swedes Conscripted by Year .................................... 184

Figure 5.2 Pathway to Sweden’s 2010 MMS Reform .................................... 226

Figure 6.1 Pathway to Sweden’s 2017 MMS Reform .................................... 277

Figure 7.1 Pathways to MMS Reform ............................................................ 282
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Types of Military Manpower Systems.................................................................7

Table 3.1 Military Spending, 1983-1995.........................................................................97

Table 3.2 Support for Empirical Predictions ......................................................................121

Table 4.1 Support for Empirical Predictions ......................................................................172

Table 5.1 Military Spending and Personnel, 1990-2010......................................................183

Table 5.2 Public MMS Preferences, 2003-2009..................................................................210

Table 5.3 Support for Empirical Predictions ......................................................................228

Table 6.1 Public MMS Preferences, 2003-2017.................................................................258

Table 6.2 Public NATO Preferences, 1997-2017.............................................................259

Table 6.3 Support for Empirical Predictions ......................................................................278

Table 7.1 Summary of Results............................................................................................287
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Why do states alter military manpower systems? In the summer of 1966, amid increasing opposition to the Vietnam War, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson and Congress examined the Selective Service System and costs associated with transitioning from a military draft to an all-volunteer force (AVF) structure. Though both Congress and President Johnson concluded that transitioning to an AVF would be too expensive and rejected the idea of radically reforming the Selective Service System, domestic opposition to conscription did not subside (Rostker 2006, 30-31). Increasing unpopularity of the Vietnam War and disillusion with the draft motivated presidential candidate Richard Nixon to run on a campaign pledge to end the draft. Shortly after assuming office, President Nixon established a new committee headed by former Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates, which concluded that transitioning to an AVF would best serve U.S. national interests and improve the effectiveness of its armed forces.¹ With the unpopular war at a stalemate and opposition to the draft increasing, President Nixon signed Public Law 92-129, paving the way for the United States’ adoption of the AVF in 1973 (Rostker 2006, 4).

President Nixon’s decision to radically reform U.S. military manpower policy and abandon the draft is not anomalous and, in fact, represents one of six significant changes in U.S. military manpower policy in the 20th Century.² Furthermore, such changes in military manpower policies are not isolated to United States. Between 1946 and 2003, 60 other countries also

---

implemented manpower reforms changing whether their militaries relied on conscripts or volunteers.³

The frequency of military manpower reform post-World War II contrasts with traditional views of institutional longevity. Institutions are supposedly “enduring entities” that are difficult to transform or destroy (Mahoney 2000, 512); institutional arrangements such as military manpower systems (MMS) follow self-reinforcing sequences where the entrenchment of institutional forms prevents transformation.⁴ Once established, altering these institutional arrangements entails economic, social, and political costs that make them difficult to overturn or modify.⁵

If institutions such as MMS are “sticky,” why do states reform their military manpower policies, and what are the implications of doing so? Do structural conditions like threat environments compel states to modify the means by which they recruit and retain their military personnel, or do domestic factors like economic, socio-cultural, and political considerations drive states to implement MMS reforms? If domestic factors do drive manpower reforms, what are the specific causal mechanisms that produce MMS change?

This dissertation argues that military manpower policy reforms are best explained by the domestic politics of states’ MMS choices. Specifically, I argue that changes in states’ MMS

³ These statistics are derived from a dataset of national military manpower systems (MMS) from 1800 to 2003 (Toronto 2005). From 1945 to 2003, 61 states (including the United States) changed from volunteer to conscription-based force structures or vice versa. Because many of these states underwent multiple manpower reforms, the data set records a total of 122 MMS reforms during this time period.
⁵ See Pierson 2000; Mahoney 2000; and Peters et al. 2005. Mahoney argues that the benefits of the continued adoption of institutions may lock-in institutional patterns, making it difficult to transform the pattern or select alternative institutional forms (2000, 508; 515). Similarly, Peters et al. suggest that “deeply entrenched clientele and bureaucratic interests” make it difficult to overturn institutionalized policies, even when they become “outmoded” (2005, 1276).
policies accompany changes in domestic or elite MMS preferences. I assume that all leaders care to some degree about staying in power (Schultz 2013, 280-481) and argue that these office-seeking motivations cause leaders to align their states’ MMS policies with the preferences of their winning coalitions. Therefore, any changes in the MMS preferences of the winning coalition create a powerful incentive for leaders to enact military manpower reforms. But because these office-seeking motivations coexist with other concerns, such as power and security, prestige and legitimacy, and legacy (Schultz 2013, 480), leaders may hold MMS preferences that diverge from those of the members of their winning coalitions. Nevertheless, changes in leader MMS preferences will only result in changing military manpower policies if leaders believe that implementing their preferred military manpower policies will not jeopardize their prospects of political survival.

I don’t suggest that security considerations are irrelevant. Structural conditions like geostrategic environments shape the domestic political landscapes where these changes occur. However, because geostrategic environments are often ambiguous and leaders may not make strong connections between national security and their states’ military manpower policies, I argue that changes in domestic political incentives more often produce MMS change. Excluding extremely adverse changes to states’ geostrategic environments, like invasion by hostile neighbors or other significant challenges to the territorial or political sovereignty of the state, MMS reforms most often result from changes to states’ political, rather than security, environments.

In this chapter, I examine the puzzling nature of MMS reforms by outlining the reasons why we should expect military manpower policies to remain relatively “sticky” or unchanging. Next, I review previous explanations of the determinants of states’ military manpower policies
and situate my argument within the extant literature. Finally, I provide a brief explanation of why changes in MMS follow changes in domestic or elite MMS preferences and discuss how this study contributes to our understanding of the relationship between military manpower policy and national strategy; the economic, socio-cultural, and political implications of states’ manpower choices; and the factors that may contribute to institutional reforms in other policy areas.

THE “STICKINESS” OF MILITARY MANPOWER SYSTEMS

Military manpower systems, or MMS, “refe[re] generally to the way a society recruits, utilizes, and maintains manpower in its military institutions.”6 Thus, the term “MMS” frequently encompasses the state’s force generation policies, the roles and missions that it assigns to its armed forces, and the promotion and retention policies the state uses to achieve its desired force levels. However, I use the term MMS more narrowly as simply the type of recruitment system that states use to generate military manpower.

States may achieve their military manpower needs by relying solely on the use of volunteer service-members, requiring all or part of their populations to serve in the armed forces, or utilizing a combination of volunteer and conscripted forces. States with all-volunteer forces (AVF) meet their military manpower needs without the use of compulsory enrollment of any persons for military service. In 2016, 101 states maintained AVFs.7 Although the majority of Western states now maintain AVFs, states such as Denmark and Switzerland provide notable exceptions. AVFs exist in all regions of the globe and include states with a variety of political and cultural institutions and levels of economic development.

7 CIA Factbook 2016. This includes the United States and 12 other countries that do not actively subject any members of their population to compulsory military service but allow for conscription during times of national emergency (CIA Factbook 2016).
Conscription-based MMS-types meet the military manpower needs of the state by demanding that all or part of its population serve in the armed forces. Expansible systems maintain a small cadre of professional officers and non-commissioned officers (NCO) in peacetime that prepare to train large numbers of conscripts during times of war (Cohen 1985, 23). Examples of expansible systems include the U.S. military in the interwar years and the German military from 1920-1935 (Cohen 1985, 23). Like expansible MMS-types, cadre/conscript systems rely on a standing cadre of officers and NCOs to train new conscripts. However, states with these MMS-types utilize professional cadres to train conscripts that become part of the nation’s standing forces (Cohen 1985, 23). Examples of cadre/conscript systems include the standing draft in the United States from 1948-1973, the Soviet military, and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).8

Other types of conscription-based MMS-types include militias and universal military training (UMT) systems. Militias utilize citizen-soldiers that conduct periodic military training while maintaining employment in the civilian sector. In the event of war or other national emergencies, the state may activate these militia units.9 Finally, UMTs require all or part of the population to conduct a brief period of military instruction once they reach military age. These systems are distinct from other MMS-types with universal military service requirements because citizens that receive compulsory military instruction in UMTs are required to perform military service only if mobilized by the state in a time of war or other national emergency.

Each of these conscription-based systems may require all or only part of their populations to conduct military service. For example, Israel requires all Jews and Druze citizens to serve in

---

8 Israel also has a large reserve component that it mobilizes in times of war or increased threat levels.
9 Unlike AVFs such as the United States that maintain reserve components, militia systems require members of their populations to conduct periodic military training and potentially serve on active-duty against their will.
the IDF, whereas the United States drafted only a fraction of all eligible males for military service between 1948 and 1973 using a selective service system. Nevertheless, because the fundamental nature of recruitment in these MMS-types remains the same regardless of the size and composition of the pool of eligible military recruits, both states’ MMS-types represent cadre/conscript systems.

Finally, states whose armed forces are comprised of diverse military organizations that utilize different recruiting systems represent “mixed” MMS-types. Examples of states with “mixed” systems include Iran and Saddam-era Iraq that maintain a highly loyal paramilitary organization of volunteers and conventional units comprised of conscripts.10 Table 1.1 below provides a typology of MMS-types.11

10 Similar to “coup-proofing” strategies wherein the regime creates highly loyal paramilitary forces that serve to “check” conventional units (Quinlivan 1999), states with high levels of internal threats may benefit by having loyal units that consist entirely of volunteers and parallel units comprised of conscripts. 11 Cohen’s (1985) typology of major types of military service includes two additional MMS-types, ancien regime conscription and professional systems (see Table 1, pg. 23). Because the length of service obligations, rather than the nature of military recruitment, serves as the primary distinction between these systems and other manpower systems, I do not consider them to represent distinct MMS-types. Moreover, the existence of class-based recruitment practices in other types of conscription-based systems such as Israel’s mandatory service requirements that only affect its Jewish and Druze citizens eliminates the need to classify ancien regime systems as a distinct category of MMS.
### Table 1.1 — Types of Military Manpower Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All-Volunteer Force (AVF)</td>
<td>Military manpower generated exclusively through voluntary service</td>
<td>United States (1973 to present); India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansible</td>
<td>Small cadre of professional soldiers trains conscripts in wartime</td>
<td>Germany (1920-1935); United States (interwar years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadre/Conscript</td>
<td>Cadre of professional soldiers trains conscripts who then become part of the state’s standing military forces</td>
<td>United States (1948 to 1973); Israel; USSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Militia</td>
<td>Citizen-soldiers train periodically and perform active-duty service in times of war or national emergency</td>
<td>Cuba(^{12})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Military Training (UMT)</td>
<td>Military-age citizens receive a short period of military instruction and may be called upon to complete military service in times of war or national emergency</td>
<td>Australia (pre-WWI)(^{13})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mixed Systems”</td>
<td>Different organizations within the armed forces maintain different MMS-types</td>
<td>Iran; Saddam-era Iraq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fundamental changes to states’ military manpower policies such as the U.S. decision to replace its cadre/conscript system with an AVF in 1973 have social, economic, and political implications. Changes in MMS-type alter the relationship between the military and society and thus may present social costs that could make MMS reforms prohibitively costly. The potential social costs of changing military manpower policies include disrupting cultural values such as the role of the armed forces in society, altering the relationship between national service and citizenship, reducing employment opportunities for youth, and changing the nature of civil-military relations. Bastien Irondelle (2003, 177-178) notes that the fear of eroding civil-military relations, rising youth unemployment, base closures, and reduction in nationalism and social cohesion posed impediments to abolishing conscription in France. Similarly, the expected social disruption of transitioning to an AVF in Germany bolstered arguments for maintaining

\(^{12}\) Cuba organizes its population into defense zones at the local and provincial level. In the event of a crisis, these local defense zones become mobilized and fall under the command of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR). In 1999, it was estimated that nearly 39,000 members of the FAR consisted of members of the Ready Reserves that are required to conduct 45 days of annual active duty service (Hudson 2002).

\(^{13}\) Cohen (1985, 23).
conscription even as the strategic context of the post-Cold War era and fiscal considerations challenged its relevance (Longhurst 2003, 162).

Economic costs associated with changes in MMS may also impede policy reforms. Although the 1970 Gates Commission Report concluded that the economic costs of an AVF would be less than a conscripted force of comparable size and quality, other economic analyses found abandoning the U.S. draft to be prohibitively costly.\(^\text{14}\) An estimate by Walter Oi, a staunch critic of the draft, estimated the economic costs of transitioning to an AVF could exceed $4 billion a year.\(^\text{15}\)

Additionally, implementing MMS reforms presents political obstacles and risks to leaders that must rely on incomplete and possibly inaccurate information regarding the preferences of their winning coalitions or of the effects of MMS changes themselves.\(^\text{16}\) For example, Ironelle (2003) notes that conscription had attracted severe criticism following France’s disastrous performance in the Gulf War and French President Jacques Chirac saw transitioning to an AVF as a necessary measure to strengthen France’s armed forces and increase the country’s international legitimacy. Nevertheless, she argues that the French public’s ambivalence towards military manpower policy presented a significant obstacle to necessary MMS reform and that

\(^{14}\) See Gates Commission Report (1970, 29-31) and Rostker (2006, 30-31). The Gates Commission Report argued that the costs of maintaining an AVF were lower than maintaining a conscripted force because AVFs have lower turnover rates among first-term service-members, use manpower more efficiently, are more sensitive to the alternative value of recruits in the civilian economy, and impose fewer implicit costs on those called to serve and society writ large. In contrast, the independent Marshall Commission and Clark Panel chartered by President Johnson and Congress to explore the economic impact of MMS reform concluded that implementing an AVF would be prohibitively costly.

\(^{15}\) Oi 1967, 331. Using formal modeling, Oi estimates that a military with 265,000 volunteers would cost $4 billion a year more than a military with a conscripted force of comparable size. It should be noted, however, that Oi claims that these figures are distorted because the true economic costs should also include the “hidden costs” of conscription.

\(^{16}\) In explaining how U.S. presidents formulate policy agendas, Andrew Rudalevige argues that a “president’s gain from a given policy choice is a function of what potential solutions exist to given problems, what the likely real world effect of those solutions will be, what prospect each option has in attracting support of various constituencies, and how to blend these considerations together” (2002, 11).
Chirac very carefully showed his preferences for the AVF until public opinion began to shift (Irondelle 2003, 180).

In addition to public support, policy reforms may require political consensus to be effectively enacted. Because “politics involves struggles over the authority to establish, enforce, and change rules governing social action,” destroying or transforming institutions may be “prohibitively costly” (Pierson 2000, 259). Building consensus may require political leaders to expend political capital and prioritize some issues over others that might otherwise end up on the political agenda. Irondelle argues that the strength of the French presidency allowed President Chirac to overcome political resistance to the adoption of the AVF and push through his preferred policy reforms but notes that doing so required him to use all available resources of his office (2003, 182). Building political consensus may be particularly problematic in highly fractionalized states or in governments comprised of groups whose MMS preferences vary widely. For example, Zoltan Barany describes the difficulty of establishing a military manpower policy that could please both Serbs and Bosniaks in Bosnia-Herzegovina (2012, 91).

Because MMS reforms may entail social, economic, and political costs, the frequency with which states implement radical changes to their MMS policies presents an interesting puzzle. If reforming military manpower policies entails political obstacles and risks, what drives states to radically reform the way they generate and retain military manpower? Under what conditions might states initiate policy reforms, and can we predict when these reforms will occur?
WHY DO STATES CHANGE THEIR MILITARY MANPOWER SYSTEMS?

Scholars provide multiple, competing explanations for MMS change. Previous literature examining the factors influencing MMS reforms can be grouped under two broad headings—security-based accounts and ‘non-security’ explanations. Security-based explanations include neorealist theories of emulation as well as claims that states change the structure of their military organizations in response to changes in the nature of their geostrategic environments. Non-security based accounts explore the influence of state characteristics such as demographics and regime-type as well as economic, socio-cultural, and political variables on states’ MMS choices. In the sections that follow, I review the scholarly literature examining the determinants of states’ MMS policies and argue that these works have underappreciated domestic political factors that explain why states often choose to reform their MMS policies and the conditions under which these reforms are most likely to occur.

Security-based Accounts: Emulation of MMS-types

States may change their military manpower policies to emulate the MMS-types of powerful regional or international actors. These explanations of change follow from the neorealist logic that states adopt military strategies, innovations, and organizational structures that increase their military power and maximize their chances of survival in an anarchic system marked by competition and conflict. According to this logic, states have powerful incentives to

---

17 See for example Waltz (1979) and Posen (1993). Waltz claims that the effects of competition promote “sameness” by forcing states to conform to the successful practices of others, even when they would prefer not to out of domestic considerations (1979, 127-129). Although he contends that states less affected by competition have less of an imperative to adopt these successful practices, Waltz’ theory suggests that these non-conformist states are nonetheless subject to pressures of socialization (128). Barry Posen makes a similar claim, arguing that although neither political elites nor professional military officers embraced the mass army in 19th Century Europe, the exigencies of international competition drove states to adopt conscripted armies (1993, 121).
emulate the successful military innovations and organizational systems of the most powerful actors, because states that fail to adopt these proven practices risk their own destruction.

João Resende-Santos provides a neo-realist theory of military emulation that specifies the conditions under which the emulation of MMS-types is most likely to occur. While Waltz’ theory suggests that the pressures of competition in an anarchic system compel all actors to conform to the most successful practices and innovations, Resende-Santos offers a less deterministic theory, claiming that emulation corresponds to adverse shifts in states’ external security environments (2007, 43). In his examination of Chile, Argentina, and Brazil’s adoption of the mass army in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, Resende-Santos demonstrates that each of these states emulated the force structures of the preeminent military powers of Europe despite the wider social and political ramifications for doing so (2007, 2). Given the inability of states to accurately gauge their relative power positions following external shocks or adverse shifts in their local external security environments, emulating the MMS-types of more powerful actors provides a rational response to the imperatives of an uncertain and changing security environment (Resende-Santos 2007, 60).

Although Resende-Santos provides convincing evidence that these South American states sought to emulate the preeminent military powers of the day and that the imperatives of a highly competitive regional security environment most strongly influenced their MMS choices, the limited scope conditions of his theory reduce its generalizability. In the 19th and early 20th Centuries, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil maintained fiercely competitive and antagonistic relationships with one another.18 Given the extremely competitive nature of these states’ security

---

18 Resende-Santos describes South America as a “self-contained area of competition” based on historic rivalries and territorial disputes between the three major powers—Chile, Argentina, and Brazil (2007, 113).
environments, it is perhaps not surprising that strategic considerations played a prominent role in their decision to adopt mass conscript armies. Thus, by limiting the scope conditions of his theory to apply only to states with adverse changes in their external security environments, Resende-Santos offers little explanatory power for states with more favorable security environments.

The weak and uncertain relationship between military manpower policies and military effectiveness provides another challenge to neorealist claims that states adopt the MMS-types of the most powerful international actors. Existing scholarship has offered contradictory views of the relationship between MMS and military effectiveness.\(^{19}\) Scholars suggesting that conscription leads to greater levels of military effectiveness argue that AVFs have difficulty attracting and retaining high-caliber recruits (see Moskos 1983, Marlowe 1986, Bloch 2000, and Brower 2004 among others). Because inferior recruits may cause their leaders and fellow service members to doubt their levels of competency, lower quality of troops could also result in reduced levels of morale (Moskos 1983; Marlowe 1986).

On the other hand, scholars such as Doug Bandow (1991; 2000) and Stanley Falk (1969) note that AVFs have higher retention rates and extended periods of service that allow service-members to “hone their craft.” Pana Poutvaara and Andreas Wagener (2007) argue that conscripted militaries may use less advanced technology than AVFs because teaching short-term recruits highly technical skills might be inefficient or infeasible. As a consequence, they suggest that conscripted militaries should be expected to suffer greater casualties than AVFs, and empirical evidence by Horowitz et al. (2011) supports this prediction. Additionally, longer

\(^{19}\) See Cohen (1985) for an overview of the debate on the relationship between MMS-type and military effectiveness.
service obligations in AVFs could be expected to increase unit cohesion—a key component of morale (Cohen 1984, 172; Gate’s Commission Report 1970).

Given the uncertain relationship between military manpower policies and military effectiveness, it is not surprising that the empirical record of war and battle outcomes suggests that no single, dominant MMS-type exists. In statistical analyses of 232 country-war observations and 405 battles from 1900 to 2003, I find weak evidence for a relationship between MMS-type and war or battle outcomes (Boeka 2014). The results of these analyses indicate a positive relationship between AVFs and battlefield effectiveness; however, these results are highly sensitive to modeling specifications, and factors such as regime-type, threat levels, and preponderance of military power appear to be better predictors of military effectiveness than MMS-type. Given the absence of any significant relationship between MMS-type and military

---

\(^{20}\) Using data from war and battle outcomes in the 20\(^{th}\) and 21\(^{st}\) Centuries, I test the relationship between military manpower systems and military effectiveness. Because a wide range of factors determine military effectiveness, I control for other factors and state characteristics that might influence military effectiveness such as national wealth and the preponderance of military power (Desch 2010), technology and equipment (Biddle and Zirkle 1996), culture (Biddle 2010, Diamond 1997, Rosen 1995, and Kier 1997), strategy and terrain (Reiter and Stam 2002), civil-military relations (Biddle 2010 and Belkin 2005), human capital (Biddle 2010), regime-type (Lake 1992, Reiter and Stam 1998, Reiter and Stam 2002), and levels of internal and external threat (Brooks and Stanley 2007 and Mueller 2005).

Data for war outcomes comes from a modified version of the Correlates of War Dataset V.4.0. I rely primarily on a dataset from Biddle and Long (2004) for information on battle outcomes; however, I expand Biddle and Long’s data to include information from 24 additional battles from 1980 to 2003. I measure military manpower policies as a dichotomous variable with separate values for states with AVFs and conscription-based MMS-types. I measure war outcomes based on three possible values: “win,” “loss,” and “draw.” I measure battle outcomes using both categorical values of “win,” “loss,” and “draw” and battle loss exchange ratios (LER).

\(^{21}\) Models examining the relationship between battle loss exchange ratios and MMS-type provide statistically significant results only when variables measuring other factors that are thought to influence battle outcomes such as numerical preponderance, polity, and human capital are also included in the statistical analyses. However, including all control variables in the fully-specified model reduces the number of observations from 789 to 235 and systematically reduces the number of observations that include Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Additional tests examining the fully-specified model on a subset of the data that excludes all cases with either Germany or Japan as combatants suggests that missing data, rather than controlling for other potentially confounding factors, accounts for the statistically significant relationship between battlefield effectiveness and MMS-type identified in this model.
outcomes, it is doubtful that states should feel compelled to converge on any single MMS-type in order to meet the imperatives of a competitive international system. Additionally, the wide variation of MMS-types throughout the international system and within most geographic regions challenges neo-realist predictions of convergence on particular forms of MMS.

Finally, neorealist explanations cannot account for emulation of MMS-types that may occur through normative pressures, rather than security imperatives. Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell note that as innovations spread, actors may adopt strategies that enhance their legitimacy rather than performance.\(^\text{22}\) Chris Demchak suggests that modernizing states typically adopt AVFs in order to enhance their domestic and international legitimacy, and she claims that adopting AVFs is a hallmark of states desiring to modernize their armed forces (2003, 315).

While it is possible that normative pressures and concerns for prestige and legitimacy may influence states’ MMS-choices, existing studies have not fully explored the conditions under which these normative considerations may outweigh states’ concerns for military effectiveness and the maintenance of national security. Moreover, these studies have not attempted to explain whether international or domestic pressures are more determinate of states’ MMS choices when these sources of pressure exert countervailing influences on the state.

\(^{22}\) DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148. Goldman argues that the element of prestige is an important factor in the diffusion of military innovations (2003, 381), and Theo Farrell (2001) argues that norms of conventional warfare that prescribe capital-intensive force structures encourage new and developing states to adopt these technologies and organizational structures even if they don’t have the resource bases or security needs to support them. Although neither of these arguments focus specifically on the adoption of MMS-types by socialized states, their basic claims suggest that normative beliefs of appropriate forms of MMS and states’ desires to enhance their domestic and international prestige could lead states to adopt particular forms of MMS.
Security-based Accounts: Geostrategic Imperatives

Other theories of MMS selection that privilege security over non-security considerations suggest that the nature of states’ geostrategic environments shape the organizational structures of their armed forces. Whereas states with adverse threat environments generally maintain conscription-based MMS-types, AVFs may be better suited for states with fewer external threats. Consequentially, changes in the nature of states’ threat environments may result in MMS reforms. States’ geostrategic environments are also shaped by their membership in alliance networks, and participation in alliances may influence states’ manpower policies by reducing their military burden or by requiring them to maintain interoperable force structures. Finally, states’ national security priorities and foreign policies influence the roles and missions that they assign their armed forces, and changes in states’ military requirements may provide the impetus for MMS reform. For example, Flynn argues that Britain’s use of conscripts to conduct counterinsurgency operations and other limited wars proved the weakness of conscription and led to its demise in 1960.

The logic of arguments relating MMS-types to “strategic necessity” is somewhat intuitive, and a statistical examination of the relationship between states’ geostrategic

---

23 See Cohen 1985; Posen 1993; Moskos 2000, 5; Flynn 2002, Chapters 3 and 5; Choi and James 2003; 800; and Cohn and Toronto 2016.
24 For example, reduced threat levels post-Cold War era have encouraged NATO member states to drastically reduce the size of their military forces, eliminating the need to maintain large military forces based on conscription (Jehn and Selden 2002, 7; Asch et al. 2007, 1127).
25 For example, Williams notes that NATO encourages its member states to adopt AVFs so that they can dedicate financial resources to advanced technology rather than manpower expenditures as well as generate greater expeditionary capabilities (2004, 80). In contrast, Hannu Herranen contends that states with independent national defense strategies have different security needs, and he claims that conscription may be the optimal MMS for these geostrategically isolated states (2004, 102).
26 Because some MMS-types may be better suited to perform specific roles and missions than others, states may select manpower policies that best support their foreign policy objectives. See Cohen (1985, 23-69) for discussion of the strengths and weakness of each MMS-type and the roles and missions that they best support.
environments and their manpower policies identifies geostrategic factors such as threat levels and geopolitical ambitions as predictors of MMS-type. However, the authors’ proxies for the measurement of these variables calls into question the validity of these findings. Specifically, the authors’ decision to use militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) to proxy threat levels and their assumption that great power states assign similar roles and missions to their armed forces limit the validity of their findings. The MID data set includes a wide spectrum of conflict episodes, ranging from military alerts and exercises to the initiation of interstate war. By equating the threat levels caused by lower level conflict episodes with those of the most aggressive categories of MIDs, this study improperly concludes that incidences of MIDs denote threatening geostrategic environments. Furthermore, the authors’ suggestion that the global interests of great power states should lead them to “perceive a need to systematically acquire military manpower through conscription” (Cohn and Toronto 2016, 11) fails to recognize these states’ requirements to prepare for both limited and total wars (Cohen 1985). As Eliot Cohen suggests, the need to meet these competing military requirements explains why the United States and Great Britain have vacillated between conscripted and volunteer force structures.

Furthermore, the MMS-types of many states do not appear to correspond with their geostrategic requirements. For example, low threat levels in states such as Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and Austria (at least throughout the 1990s and early 21st Century) are inconsistent with the maintenance of conscription-based MMS-types. Even if we view the relationship

---

27 In a statistical analysis of 99 countries over 40 years, Lindsay Cohn and Nathan Toronto (2016) find support for their hypothesis that states with higher levels of external threat and geopolitical ambitions are more likely to maintain institutionalized conscription than states with more favorable geostrategic environments. Still, the authors find that labor market regulations provide a better predictor of states’ MMS-types.

28 For more on problems with the MID dataset, see Gibler et al. (2016). Following the MID coding rules to replicate the data set, the authors recommend dropping 240 cases and fail to find evidence of 19 cases in the historical record.
between states’ MMS-types and the constraints of their geostrategic environments as probabilistic rather than deterministic, the large number of MMS-types that cannot be accounted for by these explanations and the lag between changes in threat levels and changes in MMS-type in states such as modern-day France and Germany suggest that other factors in addition to geostrategic considerations drive MMS reforms.

Additionally, it is unclear whether or not states strongly consider military manpower policy in their strategic assessments. Military manpower policy affects at least two important security (or defense) policy outputs: force posture and force utilization. Nevertheless, a state’s choice of MMS may fail to play an important role in shaping its foreign policy for several reasons. First, leaders may not strongly consider the security implications of their states’ MMS choices due to the perceived weak links between MMS and national strategy. Sam Sarkesian (1987) describes MMS policy as an important element of U.S. national security but admits that it is difficult to link manpower policy and strategy. He claims that U.S. manpower planning generally fails to develop policy based on factors such as the types of missions that the state’s armed forces will conduct and the constraints that will be placed on military action. Furthermore, this planning often lacks realistic assessments of the ability to meet recruitment and retention

---

29 Hopple and Gathright 1987, 191. Because the state's ability to maintain desired troop levels depends on its military’s force generation and retention policies, failure to meet these personnel demands may require the state to alter its force posture. And because the financial costs of MMS policies vary widely, a state’s choice of MMS affects both the number and types of military units that it can maintain for a given cost and may entail trade-offs between personnel and advanced technology and equipment (Williams 2004, 80). Military manpower policies also affect force utilization decisions and by extension, the state’s decisions of whether and how to use force. Certain MMS-types may be better suited to some types of operations than others and may therefore shape the nature of their governments’ foreign policy goals. For example, Cohen (1985) argues that AVFs are better suited for limited wars and missions other than war, such as peacekeeping and stability and support operations. Due to constitutional prohibitions on the use of conscripts to fight foreign wars, the French only deployed volunteer service-members in support of the First Gulf War. Thus, despite having the second largest military in the U.S.-led coalition, the French government struggled to muster the number of troops it could deploy in support of these operations (McKenna 1997, 133).
goals as well as recruits’ ability to conduct their operational tasks in an increasingly complex operational environment. Finally, he alleges that manpower planning frequently fails to forecast future demands on the armed forces.\(^{30}\)

*Non-Security Explanations: Characteristics of the State*

Non-security explanations for states’ MMS choices can be grouped under four broad headings: (1) characteristics of the state, (2) socio-cultural considerations, and (3) economic and (4) political arguments. While these explanations tend to view states’ MMS choices as static in nature, it follows that changes in ‘non-security’ determinants of states’ MMS choices could likely result in MMS reforms. Proponents of state-based explanations argue that demographic factors such as ethnolinguistic fractionalization (ELF) and population size influence states’ MMS choices. Alon Peled (1998) and Fruzsina Tófalvi (2013) suggest that AVFs present attractive options for ethnically divided states, and Cohen (1985, 25) and Christopher Jehn and Zachary Selden (2002, 96) claim that with notable exceptions such as Russia and China, highly populous states also tend to adopt AVFs.\(^{31}\)

---

\(^{30}\) Robert Prie suggests four additional reasons why U.S. manpower requirements do not determine or constrain national strategy (1987, 57-62). First, he claims that most discussions of relative military power focus on the quantity of organizational units such as army divisions, aircraft squadrons, and naval battle groups rather than personnel. Prie notes that the U.S. Army went from 13 to 16 divisions without any increases in the size of the Army by simply reducing the “tooth-to-tail” ratio within these divisions (1987, 57). Second, Prie argues that financial costs, not people, often serve as the binding constraint of resource allocation. As a result, states may choose to limit their personnel strength not based on force caps or other manpower policy stipulations but because they intend to free up money for other defense-related expenses, such as the purchase or maintenance of additional technology or equipment. Additionally, Prie suggests that the “fuzzy nature of strategy development” precludes accurate assessments of the costs and benefits of various policy options to meet the U.S. national security objectives. Finally, Prie argues that the “ambiguity and imprecision” that surround the use of the term, “strategy,” complicates considerations of which MMS policies best support the state’s strategic interests (1987, 59-62).

\(^{31}\) Alon Peled claims that high levels of ELF encourage states to rely solely on volunteers from ethnic groups with strong ties to the state. Otherwise, these states risk having conscripts from ethnicities of questionable loyalty “turn their guns against their fellow soldiers” (1998, 1). A statistical analysis of 48 social movements in non-democratic states suggests that AVFs do in fact maintain greater levels of loyalty to the state, supporting Peled’s suggestion that AVFs present an attractive option to highly divided
Other state-based explanations have focused on the links between regime-type and military manpower policies. Scholars have offered mixed views of the relationship between democracy and MMS-type, so it is perhaps unsurprising that statistical analyses have found little relationship between regime-type and MMS. While virtually all communist states maintain conscription as an effective means of political socialization (Barany 2012, 213; Toronto 2005), volunteer force structures exist in other forms of autocracy.

Statistical analyses of states’ MMS-types and factors thought to influence these institutional choices suggest that state-level variables offer weak predictors of states’ MMS policies. Given the absence of a strong relationship between these factors and states’ MMS choices, it is doubtful that changes in state-level variables should compel states to enact MMS states (Tófalvi 2013). Highly populous states may also prefer AVFs because large populations ensure a sufficient pool of potential volunteers and reduce the proportion of the state’s total population that are needed to serve in order to maintain adequate force levels (Burk 1992, 57; Jahn and Selden 2002, 96).

Statistical analyses by Casey Mulligan and Andrei Shleifer (2005) and Cohn and Toronto (2016) find no evidence of a relationship between MMS and regime-type. See Edwin Micewski (2006, 211-215) for a detailed discussion of common arguments for and against military conscription in democratic states. Scholars suggesting that democracy is compatible with conscription argue that AVFs threaten the creation of a separate class of professional soldiers, resulting in bifurcated societies wherein “elected leaders eventually lose touch with the realities of military concerns” (Shemella 2006, 128; see also Cohen 1985, 123; Moskos 1983; Roth-Douquet and Schaffer 2006). Furthermore, proponents of conscription argue that it promotes superior civil-military relations and prevents the burden of defense from falling on specific sectors of the population such as minorities and the underprivileged (see for example Moskos 1983; Marlowe 1986; Roth-Douquet and Schaffer 2006). In contrast, scholars claiming that the AVF complements democracy suggest that conscription is incompatible with liberal principles of freedom from the encroachment of the state and serves as a necessary condition to fostering total war (Bandow 1988; Burk 1992). Likewise, other scholars challenge the notion that conscription provides a more equitable means of distributing the burden of national defense, noting the widespread use of deferments in democracies that maintain military conscription (Levi 1997; Flynn 2002; Mulligan and Shleifer 2004; Leander 2004; Frevert 2004; Geva 2013).

In a cross-country analysis of MMS-types from 1985-1996, Mulligan and Shleifer find weak support for claims that ELF and regime-type influence states’ military manpower policies (2005). In contrast to claims that highly populous states tend to adopt AVFs, the results of these statistical analyses suggest that conscription is positively correlated with population size. However, using a superior dataset with country-year data on MMS-type in their examination of MMS-types of 99 countries over 40 years, Cohn and Toronto (2016) find no evidence of a statistical relationship between MMS-type and regime-type or population.
reforms. Still, even if changes in state characteristics do not provide a sufficient condition for MMS reform, changes in these factors may nevertheless influence MMS changes. For example, Bernard Rostker argues that changes in U.S. demographics as the “baby boomer” generation came of military age played a decisive role in the decision to abandon the draft in 1973 (2006, 746; see also Cooper 1977, 3). Thus, although demographic changes alone did not lead the United States to abandon the draft, changing demographics may have helped to create the necessary conditions for MMS reform.

*Non-Military Explanations: Socio-Cultural Arguments*

Changes in the actual, or desired, relationship between the armed forces and society may also provide an impetus for MMS reform. Richard Cooper argues that the unrepresentative nature of the U.S. selective service draft led to the demise of conscription in 1973. While deferments for students and other more “subtle forms of discrimination” that characterized the post-WWII selective service deferment policy ensured that the poor and disadvantaged would be unfairly represented in the armed forces, Cooper argues that the basic policy problem resulted from changing demographics, which led to “a decreasing proportion of the population [that] would have to bear an increasingly large burden” of U.S. defense policy (1977, 3). The problem of determining “who serves when not all serve” is not limited to the U.S. selective service draft of the 1960s and early 1970s, however, and policies ensuring an unequal distribution of military service have also led to significant social tensions and contributed to the adoption of AVFs in France and Germany.34

---

Conscription has strong cultural appeal in societies that closely link the notion of citizenship with military service (Brower 2004; Herranen 2004), but AVFs may become an attractive option as the connections between the military and society erode. Just as critics of the AVF charge that the movement from obligatory national service to AVFs in Western societies has fundamentally changed the concept of citizenship and has weakened the connections between individual and collective identities (Burk 1992, 61-63), changes in the relationship between citizens and the armed forces may produce changes in military manpower policy.\footnote{For example, Leander (2004) argues that changes in the relationship between French society and the armed forces allowed France to abandon its long tradition of military conscription.}

Changing notions of citizenship and military service are not restricted to the level of society, but may also involve changes that affect the relationship between military service and specific social groups. Ronald Krebs (2007) uses a formal model to show how the rhetoric of military service has proven effective at times in advancing minority groups’ claims for citizenship rights. He demonstrates how the rhetorical strategy advanced by Israeli Druze helps explain their success in obtaining citizenship rights that were denied to other minority groups. Similarly, Ute Frevert notes that Jewish leaders pressed the German government to allow Jewish men to serve in the armed forces and become subject to the military draft with the expectation that military service would strengthen Jewish demands for expanded rights of citizenship.\footnote{Frevert 2004, 65. Although Germany temporarily allowed Jews to serve in its armed forces, in 1842 the German government drafted legislation banning Jewish men from serving in the armed forces, thus sealing German Jews’ fate as second-class citizens (Frevert 2004, 65).}

Scholars and policymakers have also suggested that conscription promotes social unity and development by serving as a “school of the nation” (Bloch 2000, 34; Frevert 2004, 282; Roth-Douquet and Schaeffer 2006, 233). Thus for highly fractionalized states, conscription may provide a means to create a spirit of nationalism and social unity. For example, Barany (2012,
103) notes that Lebanese politicians deemed military conscription as necessary to achieve integration and promote national unity following decades of civil conflict. Still, other scholars regard the notion that the military serves as a “school of the nation” as a myth, arguing that the military does not represent a total institution and that greater mobility and access to media provide more effective means of integrating modern societies.\textsuperscript{37} But even if the notion of the military serving as a “school of the nation” is, in fact, a myth, conscription may still represent an attractive option for states seeking to foster nationalism and integration so long as this myth is accepted by society. Writing in 2004, Anna Leander argued that while the erosion of the myths surrounding conscription led to its downfall in France, conscription persisted in Sweden because these myths were “vaguely articulated” and thus not subject to intense reflection (2004, 583).\textsuperscript{38}

Non-Military Explanations: Economic Arguments

Because AVFs and conscripted forces entail different financial costs that vary based on the size of the state’s armed forces, economic considerations may also weigh heavily in states’ decisions to select particular forms of MMS. With the exception of MMS policy formulation in newly independent states, previous scholarship connecting MMS policies with economic considerations has not directly examined the relationship between MMS change and economic considerations. Nevertheless, I briefly review the literature linking economic factors and MMS-

\textsuperscript{37} See for example Krebs (2004) and Leander (2004). Ronald Krebs argues that the idea of the military as the principal institution transmitting social values rests on a flawed theoretical underpinning. He analyzes three purported mechanisms of socialization—the military’s ability to socialize soldiers to embedded norms in the state’s manpower polices, the diffusion of social values through contact with citizens from various regional and social origins, and the indoctrination of future elites—and identifies common flaws that suggest that all three mechanisms of socialization are untenable. Anna Leander offers a similar critique, noting that in the post-Cold War era there is little possibility of getting the “experience of war” that is necessary for the development of martial values. Moreover, she suggests that increased mobility and other social institutions such as media and film provide a “nationalist” education that does not require military service (2004, 578).

\textsuperscript{38} Sweden, in fact, adopted an AVF in 2010. However in March 2017, Sweden replaced the AVF with an MMS that relies on both conscripts and volunteers.
types because it follows from these arguments that changing economic conditions could lead to MMS reforms.

Economists view the state’s choice of MMS as a tradeoff between the deadweight costs of taxation and economic distortions. Due to lower personnel costs of conscription, society suffers fewer deadweight costs of taxation. AVFs present greater financial costs than conscription-based MMS-types for any given size of armed forces because states with AVFs must pay their volunteer service-members higher wages in order to attract volunteers. 39 Not surprisingly, conscription is prevalent among newly independent states that must “build militar[ies] from scratch with very limited budgets” (Jehn and Selden 2002, 11).

However, market-based volunteer force structures more efficiently select personnel for military service and therefore minimize economic distortions that arise from “wasteful draft avoidance expenditures” such as decisions to marry, pursue higher education, or seek employment opportunities that may be suboptimal (Ross 1994, 129, footnote 14; see also Amacher et al. 1973). Other “static inefficiencies” of conscription include artificially low wages that induce wasteful allocation of personnel (Amacher et al. 1973), shorter service obligations, and greater rates of personnel turnover. 40 Due to the high opportunity costs of conscription, 

---

39 See the Gates Commission Report (1970); Van Doorn (1975); Ross (1994). Using formal modeling, Oi (1967, 331) estimates that a military with 265,000 volunteers would cost $4 billion dollars a year more than a military with an equal number of conscripts. Still Cooper’s 1977 analysis of the economic effects of ending the U.S. draft suggest that transitioning to the AVF resulted in increased costs of just $300 million per year—two fifths of one percent of the U.S. annual defense budget (1977, 28). Although U.S. military manpower costs increased by a total of $28 billion from 1964 to 1976. Cooper attributes these costs to changes in compensation and retirement policies that occurred well before the implementation of the AVF (1977, 24-31).

40 Oi 1967, 339 and Gates Commission Report 1970. Using economic data from the group of 21 OECD countries from 1960 to 2000, Keller et al. conclude that these inefficiencies lead to “dynamic distortions of the accumulation of human and physical capital” that adversely affect both levels of growth and gross domestic product per capita (2009, 9).
Adam Smith argued that “not more than one hundredth part of the inhabitants of any country [could] be employed as soldiers without ruining the country.”

Quantitative studies examining the relationship between economic factors and MMS-type have offered mixed results. Using a logistic regression model with data from 78 countries in 1983, Thomas Ross (1994) concludes that the most important determinant of states’ MMS-type is the size of their armed forces, though this variable has a diminishing marginal effect. In contrast, Casey Mulligan and Andrei Shleifer (2005) find that holding the relative size of the military constant, population size and the historical origins of a country’s laws are the strongest predictors of MMS-type and that the deadweight costs of taxation only appear to influence MMS policies in states with very large militaries. Still, Lindsay Cohn and Nathan Toronto (2016) find that MMS-types vary systematically by their levels of market regulation. Although their study focuses on the relationship between labor market regulations and institutionalized military

---

41 Smith (1776) 1982, 304.
42 Mulligan and Shleifer use the historical origins of a country’s laws as a proxy for the administrative costs of running a military draft. Compared with countries whose laws were influenced by England (common law), countries whose legal systems developed under the influence of France, Germany, Scandinavia, or the USSR (civil law) tend to rely large administrative apparatuses of the state to regulate a range of activities. Consequently, the authors argue that civil-law countries have low incremental costs of organizing and implementing a military draft and are therefore more likely to rely on conscription than are common-law countries (Mulligan and Shleifer 2005, 87). This is similar to arguments by Poutvaara and Wagener (2007) and Asch et al. (2007) who argue conscription may appeal to states with large bureaucratic systems that can easily incorporate the costs of establishing inductive centers and preventing evasion into the administrative system. The smaller this “fixed” cost relative to the costs of AVFs, which vary with force size, the more likely states will be to implement systems based on conscription (Asch et al. 2007, 1123).
43 Using the average number of hours worked per week, union density, and employment laws index as proxies for labor market regulation, Cohn and Toronto find strong support for their claim that conscription is more acceptable, and therefore more prevalent, in states with higher levels of labor market regulation. States with tightly regulated labor markets could be expected to have lower variance in wage opportunities, reducing the opportunity costs of conscription. Moreover, more generous employment benefits and higher levels of wealth redistribution in these states produce larger deadweight tax losses, which should reduce the appeal of AVFs that increase the tax burden (Cohn and Toronto 2016, 7).
manpower policies, it follows that changes in states’ labor market regulations may lead to MMS reform.

Mulligan and Shleifer’s quantitative analysis of MMS policies of 133 countries from 1985 to 1996 offers a vast improvement over Ross’ study, which focuses on MMS-policies in a single year in just 78 countries, controls for few other potentially confounding factors, and which Ross himself concedes suffers from significant data problems (Ross 1994, 122). Nonetheless, both of these studies treat states’ MMS choices solely as economic decisions. Their arguments rest on the underlying assumption that with adequate market incentives (i.e. compensation for volunteers), states can generate sufficient manpower for any MMS-type, albeit at varying financial costs. But should we expect market incentives to produce similar outcomes in capitalist versus non-capitalist societies? More importantly, these analyses fail to account for the political costs of various MMS policies, as well as other geostrategic/environmental constraints, state characteristics, and socio-cultural factors that may influence states’ choices of MMS. And while Cohn and Toronto’s analysis links economic, socio-cultural, and political considerations of military manpower policies, MMS changes in the United States and other OECD countries have not followed significant changes labor market regulations. Therefore, understanding why and the conditions under which states might implement MMS reforms requires the researcher to examine other economic, socio-cultural, political, or security-based factors that might better account for these institutional changes.

---

44 To their credit, Mulligan and Shleifer’s models include variables measuring regime-type, ELF, national wealth, and a dummy variable indicating whether Islam is the primary religion of the state. Nevertheless, factors that may also influence states’ choice of MMS such as nationalism and ‘strategic imperatives’ are notably excluded from their models. Moreover, because states with similar population sizes and historical origins may also face similar geostrategic environments and socio-cultural constraints, it is possible that these factors may in fact be more determinate of states’ MMS policies.

45 See Footnote 43 for a description of Cohn and Toronto’s model.
Non-Military Explanations: Political Arguments

A final group of non-military explanations suggests that states reform their military manpower policies based on political considerations, or *raisons d’état*. While acknowledging that external factors may exert pressure on states to change their MMS policies, these explanations suggest that political rather than security conditions ultimately drive MMS reform. Indeed, military manpower policies affect virtually all domestic actors who must finance and fill the ranks of the armed forces, but these actors do not share equally in the costs and benefits of the state’s manpower decisions. Because MMS policies promote political contestation by promoting the interests of some groups while opposing the interests of others, leaders have a powerful incentive to support the MMS policies that most closely align with the interests of their winning coalitions.\(^4\)\(^6\) As Cohen notes, “few topics are more political…than that of systems of military service” (1985, 20).

In her examination of French military doctrine during the interwar years, Elizabeth Kier argues that politicians respond to domestic rather than international incentives when determining the organizational structure of their armed forces (1997, 72). Likewise, Roger Broad suggests that politics overrode military considerations in Great Britain’s decision to adopt an all-volunteer force (AVF) structure in 1960 (2006, 125-126). In the case of the United States, John Chambers claims, “in American history, the nature of military formats has in the final analysis not been

\(^4\)\(^6\) Skidmore claims that domestic policies provoke group conflict and are thus more likely to sway politics than foreign policy (Skidmore 1993, 206). However, foreign policies dealing with issues as diverse as trade (Rogowski 1987; Rodrick 1997) and economic policies (Putnam 1988), expansionist military policies (Snyder 1991), and war (Levy 1988) also provoke group conflict. Similarly, MMS policies do not affect the interests of all domestic actors equally and are therefore likely to strongly influence the formulation of policy.
shaped by the military, but primarily by civilians in the public arena.” Chambers describes how the U.S. decision to institute the draft in 1917 was driven less by military considerations than by President Wilson’s desire to appease powerful labor unions that feared adverse impacts on their industries if the U.S. government did not manage its industrial base (1987, 267). Additionally, Chambers argues that although President Wilson initially sought to maintain an AVF, Wilson’s fears that the AVF would strengthen the political position of Theodore Roosevelt caused him to ultimately favor fielding the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) through conscription (1987, 136-141).

Other political explanations view domestic politics as a mediating variable between the state’s security imperatives and its military manpower policies. Deborah Avant argues that the adoption of new MMS-types requires external shocks such as military defeats or revolutions that challenge state leaders’ conceptions of the appropriate forms of MMS and create focal points around which political consensus and support among dominant coalitions may emerge (2000, 48). Similarly, Sten Rynning argues that although structural pressures set the antecedent conditions for change, changes in military doctrine and organization require “strategic political leadership” to formulate new military policies capable of winning sufficient domestic support. Political explanations of MMS reform provide a more nuanced account of states’ manpower policy decisions than do explanations focused solely on systemic pressures. However,

47 Chambers 1987, 7. President Truman’s responsiveness to domestic opposition to Selective Service and his decision to end the draft (albeit briefly) in 1947 despite the considerable demands on the U.S. military during the post-War occupation of Germany also supports Chambers’ conclusion (Rostker 2006, 26-27).
48 Rynning 2001, 91. In his analysis of France’s decision to adopt the AVF in 1996, Rynning describes how President Chirac was able to align domestic politics and ideology by appealing to French citizens’ desire to regain France’s “proper role in world politics” and by using the power of the French presidency to provide “institutional protection” for proponents of reform and discrediting the opposition (2001, 90-91). Thus although France’s inability to field an expeditionary force of comparable size to its allies in the Gulf War had exerted strong structural pressures for French military reform since 1991, MMS change did not occur until President Chirac was able to generate sufficient political consensus for reform.
existing political accounts of states’ MMS choices have focused on individual cases and not fully explored how, and under what conditions, domestic politics are more determinate of a state’s MMS choices than security imperatives. More importantly, theories arguing that changes to states’ MMS-types require political consensus have not systematically examined the relationship between states’ threat environments and their ability to achieve the levels of domestic support required to bring about institutional changes. For instance, scholars such as Tom Dyson (2008) and Rynning (2001) argue that political consensus allowed for the adoption of the AVF in post-Cold War France, but should we expect political consensus to be necessary, or even possible, to achieve in states with adverse security environments?

In the chapters that follow, I outline and assess a theory of domestic political change and MMS reform through a qualitative examination of seven case-studies. While acknowledging that the nature of states’ geostrategic environments may constrain leaders’ ability to enact MMS reforms, I argue that states’ geostrategic environments rarely dictate their military manpower policies. Instead, the theory outlined in the following chapter suggests that changes in domestic or elite MMS preferences serve as the underlying drivers of MMS reform.

**PLAN OF THE STUDY**

This dissertation seeks to answer why states adopt particular forms of MMS by examining the conditions under which they reform their military manpower policies. In the next chapter, I outline a theory of domestic political change and MMS reform, which predicts that MMS changes follow changes in domestic or elite MMS preferences. Chapters 3 through 6 assess the model through four case studies. Chapter 3 examines the MMS policy of Argentina during the first 12 years of democratization following the election of Raúl Alfonsín in 1983. With a favorable security environment and demographics and a well-documented shift in domestic
MMS preferences, Argentina provides a most likely case for the theory’s prediction that changes in MMS follow changes in domestic preferences.49

Chapter 4 examines Qatar’s 2014 national service law, which requires all of its male citizens between the ages of 18 and 35 to conduct training and military service for a period of three to four months.50 As the world’s wealthiest state,51 Qatar uses its immense economic resources to provide its citizens a monthly allowance of 7,000 U.S. dollars, cushy civil service employment, land grants, interest-free loans, and what amounts to free health care, higher education, and even utilities in exchange for political acquiescence (Kamrava 2009, 406-407; see also Robert 2011a and Mitchell 2013, Chapter 3). Consequently, the requirement for all male youth to conduct military training and service represents a puzzling policy for a “gold-plated welfare state” (Roberts 2011a). Additionally, because Qatari officials have cited an increasingly unfavorable security environment as a dominant factor in their decision to implement military conscription (Al Jazeera 2014), this case provides a strong test of the theory’s prediction that changes in domestic, rather than security, environments produce MMS changes.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine Sweden’s 2010 and 2017 MMS reforms, respectively. From 1901 to 2010, Sweden maintained a system of “universal” conscription for all male citizens. However, Sweden adopted an AVF in 2010 only to reinstate conscription just seven years later.

49 Omar Carrasco’s murder on March 6, 1994 precipitated the introduction of a volunteer force structure (see Hunter 1997, 464; Huser 2002, 154; Garaño 2010, 174).
50 The service obligation is reduced from four to three months for recruits with university degrees (Article 7 of Law No. 5/2014 on National Service). Following two to three months of military training, recruits spend their final month of national service embedded in operational units (Barany 2018, 19).
51 Qatar is arguably the world’s richest country. Measured nominally, Qatar’s gross domestic product per capita (GDPpc) is considerably less than Luxembourg’s (in 2014 Qatar’s nominal GDPpc was $93,990.40 compared with Luxembourg’s GDPpc of $118,208.84). However, when measured in purchasing power parity, Qatar’s GDPpc far exceeds Luxembourg’s (in 2014, Qatar’s GDPpc measured in purchasing power parity was $129,489.68 compared with Luxembourg’s GDPpc of $94,855.01). And, because foreign nationals residing in Qatar represent as much as 85 percent of the reported population (Kamrava 2013, 5), the annual share of the state’s GDP could be as high as $680,000 for Qatari citizens (Mitchell 2013, 47).
In both cases of MMS reform, government officials cited problems with Sweden’s existing military manpower policies and changing security needs as justifications for reform. Therefore, these cases also provide additional opportunities to assess whether domestic, rather than security, considerations drive states’ military manpower policies. Finally, Chapter 7 provides a summary of the findings, discusses the implications of the study, and offers suggestions for future research.

**CONCLUSION**

Existing scholarship has yet to produce a general theory of MMS change that can account for MMS reforms in a variety of cases and under variable conditions. By limiting their analyses to single or similar cases or by excluding other potential causal factors from their examinations, the previous literature provides an incomplete account of the process of MMS reform. But by examining multiple MMS reforms in states with varied regime-types, geostrategic environments, and economic, socio-cultural, and political settings, this analysis seeks to produce generalizable findings that can allow us to better understand how, and under what conditions, MMS changes occur.

Examining MMS-types is important for many reasons. First, military manpower makes an “irreplaceable and unique” contribution to the development and implementation of military strategy (Foster 1987, 14). As two experts on U.S. strategic planning note:

> Manpower policy is a necessary element of an overall national strategy. Factors that affect the number and quality of military forces, from privates to three-star generals, are inevitably derived from the doctrine for the use of those military forces. A successful policy will satisfy a military requirement for tough, intelligent combat troops in sufficient numbers to prevail in combat, the political need for a punch of sufficient credibility to deter aggression, the fiscal need to hold
down standing forces that contribute nothing to the gross national product, and social concerns about the just use of force in the modern world.52

Because manpower affects logistical requirements, makes decisions on the battlefield, consumes and employs resources, and physically interacts with battlefield environments to shape military outcomes in ways that advanced weapons systems and technology cannot (Foster 1987, 14-15), understanding why states select MMS policies can help us to better understand how states design and implement national security strategy.

Additionally, states’ military manpower policies have economic and socio-cultural implications. Economic costs vary widely by MMS-type (Oi 1967), and the manner in which states recruit their service-members significantly impacts the relationship between the armed forces and society (Bloch 2000; Leander 2004; Frevert 2004; Roth-Douquet and Schaeffer 2006). Investigating why states select particular forms of MMS may help us to better understand the economic and social impacts of military manpower policies, and how economic and socio-cultural considerations may impact states’ institutional choices.

Finally, examining the relationship between MMS and changes in domestic and elite MMS preferences can increase our understanding of the relationship between domestic political changes and other types of foreign and domestic policies. By investigating conditions where factors serve as casually active precursors of MMS change, this study may produce generalizable findings with insights into how, and under what conditions, these causal pathways may lead to other types of policy reforms.

CHAPTER 2
CHANGING PREFERENCES AND CHANGING MILITARY MANPOWER POLICIES: THE POLITICS OF MILITARY MANPOWER REFORM

Previous studies have shown a connection between domestic politics and foreign policy on issues ranging from war initiation (Levy 1988; Moaz and Russett 1993; O’Neal and Russett 1997; Snyder 1991; Lake 1992; Mansfield and Snyder 1995; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999; Schweller 2004) and termination (Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Chiozza and Goemans 2004; Stanley 2009; Croco 2011; Croco 2015; Croco and Weeks 2016), trade (Hiscox 2001; Mansfield et al. 2002; Hiscox 2003), foreign assistance (Milner and Tingley 2013), compliance with international agreements (Dai 2005; Vreeland 2008) and energy security (Lipscy 2013), and much of the literature examining the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy suggests that changes in foreign policy often follow changes in domestic politics.¹

In this chapter, I contribute to this body of literature by outlining pathways to MMS reform that link domestic political changes to changes in the way states generate their military manpower. Specifically, I argue that changes in elite or domestic MMS preferences precede changes in states’ MMS policies. I describe how these domestic political changes lead to MMS reform, discuss alternative explanations for MMS change, and outline the methods used in subsequent chapters to trace the process of MMS reform in Argentina, Qatar and Sweden.

I consider “MMS reform” to be any change in the type of recruitment system employed by the state’s security forces. Therefore, MMS changes include not only changes between volunteer and conscription-based MMS-types but also changes among various forms of

---

conscription-based policies. I do not consider changes in the composition of the pool of eligible military recruits such as Israel’s decision to allow Druze citizens to serve in the IDF or the United States’ proposal to extend selective service requirements to women as MMS reforms. While these types of changes to a state’s MMS policies undoubtedly have domestic political consequences and possible security implications, I choose to narrow the focus of this study to changes in the type of recruitment system. By deliberately narrowing the variance in the dependent variable of MMS-reform, I hope to provide a more focused examination that could serve as an initial building block for future work examining the relationship between domestic politics and broader changes to states’ military manpower policies.

THE POLITICS OF MMS REFORM

Institutions are (supposedly) “enduring entities” whose organizational patterns and structures cannot be easily transformed (Mahoney 2000, 512; see also Levi 1997; Pierson 2000, and Peters 2005). Changing MMS-types entails economic, social, and political costs (Resende-Santos 2007, 48), and these costs often prevent states from reforming their MMS policies, even when doing so may be in the best interest of the state. For example, Kerry Longhurst describes

---

2 These systems include AVF, expansible, cadre/conscript, militia, UMT, and “mixed” systems. For a description and examples of each of MMS-type, see Chapter 1, Table 1.1.
3 Alexander George and Andrew Bennett suggest that defining variables with fewer categories may sacrifice “richness and nuance” but gain parsimony (2005, 85).
4 Economic disincentives of altering a state’s MMS policies include the sunk costs of established institutions and the fixed costs of establishing new organizational structures. Casey Mulligan and Andrei Shleifer (2005) claim that former French colonies are more likely to maintain MMS-types based on conscription than the former colonies of common-law states due to the lower administrative costs of instituting and operating conscription in states with civil-law legal systems. The social costs of altering states’ MMS policies include social disruption resulting from changes in institutionalized patterns and practices. Over time, the spirits of voluntary or universal military service obligations can become embedded in states’ cultural and societal values. Anna Leander (2004) argues that conscription became so ingrained in Swedish and French culture that it proved difficult to overturn conscription in France and is unlikely to be replaced soon in Sweden (of note, Sweden transitioned to an AVF in 2010). Other examples of such path dependent outcomes would include states whose manpower decisions are influenced by colonial or historical legacies of conscription or voluntarism. The romanticism of the levée
the reasons for Germany’s maintenance of conscription in the post-Cold War era as “unteachable” from a geostrategic perspective, yet she argues that the “prevalence of existing structures and modes of thinking” thwarted efforts to enact necessary manpower reforms.5

If established MMS-types are “sticky,” or difficult to overturn, when are changes in MMS policies likely to occur? Military manpower policies affect virtually all domestic actors who must finance and fill the ranks of the armed forces, but these actors do not share equally in the costs or benefits of the state’s manpower decisions. MMS policies promote political contestation by promoting the interests of some groups while opposing the interests of others, and thus leaders have a powerful incentive to support the MMS policies that most closely align with the interests of their winning coalitions.6 Therefore, changes in the MMS preferences of actors who form leaders’ winning coalitions will likely produce corresponding changes in the MMS preferences of the ruling elite. But because office-seeking motivations coexist with concerns such as power and security, prestige, and legitimacy, MMS changes may also follow changes in the MMS preferences of elites that are independent from any changes in domestic MMS preferences. Therefore, changes in leaders’ MMS preferences may also produce MMS

5 Longhurst 2003, 161. Similarly, Tom Dyson (2008) claims that strong linkages between social and defense policy created a powerful constraint on the willingness of the German leaders to enact necessary MMS reforms. Because instituting MMS reforms often results in significant political ramifications, existing MMS policies may be difficult to overturn even when they can no longer support the state’s geostrategic requirements.
6 David Skidmore claims that domestic policies provoke group conflict and are thus more likely to sway politics than foreign policy (Skidmore 1993, 206). However, foreign policies dealing with issues as diverse as trade (Rogowski 1987; Rodrick 1997) and economic policies (Putnam 1988), expansionist military policies (Snyder 1991), and war (Levy 1988) also provoke group conflict. Similarly, MMS policies do not affect the interests of all domestic actors equally and are therefore likely to strongly influence the formulation of policy.
reforms so long as leaders do not believe that implementing their preferred MMS policies could jeopardize their prospects of retaining political office.

In the sections that follow, I outline two distinct pathways to MMS reform: changes in domestic and leader MMS preferences. While these changes in preferences provide the necessary conditions for MMS reforms to occur, they are insufficient to bring about changes in the state’s military manpower policies. For MMS changes to occur, leaders must connect the changes in their domestic political environments with their prospects for political survival and possess the ability to implement their preferred military manpower policies. Finally, because changes in domestic and elite MMS preferences often coincide with changes in the state’s leadership, I explain why MMS reforms are likely to coincide with leader changes.

*Changes in Domestic MMS Preferences*

I assume that all leaders care to some degree about staying in power and require the support of other domestic actors to remain in office and enact their policy preferences.⁷ Although the state’s choice of MMS affects virtually all domestic actors who must finance and fill the ranks of the armed forces, domestic actors such as labor, commercial industry, the military, the defense industry, and ethnic and social groups neither contribute equally to the financial and human costs of supplying the state’s military manpower nor do they benefit equally from doing so. In order to remain in political office, leaders are incentivized to support military manpower policies that align most closely with the MMS preferences of the members of their winning coalitions. Therefore, it follows that any changes in the MMS preferences of these domestic actors may in turn alter the preferences of office-seeking elites who rely on them for support.

---

⁷ Other theories relating domestic politics to foreign policy or international relations more broadly make similar assumptions (Hagan 1995, 124; Tsebelis 2002, 17; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2002; Schultz 2013, 480).
Military manpower policy reforms in Great Britain and the United States illustrate both the potential implications of MMS reforms on the interests of labor and industry and the powerful influence these groups have held over their states’ MMS policies. After witnessing what they perceived to be a great mismanagement of Great Britain’s industrial base following its 1916 adoption of conscription, U.S. business and professional elites successfully advocated for a selective national draft that would minimize disruptions of the work force and “essential production.” Labor and industry groups exerted a similar influence in the WWII MMS policies of Great Britain and the United States. Even after the public’s views had shifted in support of conscription, Prime Minister Chamberlain delayed adopting conscription due to the concerns of British labor (Broad 2006, 35). Similarly, the American Federation of Labor successfully lobbied for draft deferments for industrial workers and those in apprenticeship programs during WWII, and both Great Britain and the United States granted service exemptions to agricultural workers (Flynn 2002, 131; 169).

MMS policies also directly affect the interests of the arms industry; therefore, the arms industry could be expected to use its influence to promote MMS policies that align with these interests. Since President Eisenhower’s 1961 farewell address in which he warned of the dangers

---

8 Business and labor groups maintain a keen interest in the state’s MMS policies because the armed forces compete with industry for manpower in the active labor market (Hauk and Parlier 2000; Knowles et al. 2002). Manpower policies that support large troop sizes should be expected to threaten labor groups and industry, because they deplete the labor pool of potential factory workers and managers. Likewise, MMS policies that attract talented individuals to the military and away from industry could pose a significant threat to industries that require skilled workers.

9 It should be noted that while these economic and professional groups were persuasive in convincing the U.S. government to adopt a selective national draft, these groups failed to attain their ultimate goal of establishing a permanent universal military training (UMT) system (Chambers 1987, 267). Business and professional elites viewed the United States’ MMS as “antiquated, unresponsive, unpredictable, and inefficient” (Chambers 1987, 267). In contrast to the nation’s traditional reliance on wartime volunteers, these actors “sought a more rationalized, national directed system of military manpower which would also take into consideration the labor needs of a modern, interdependent national economy” (Chambers 1987, 267).
of the growing influence of the military-industrial complex (MIC) on U.S. foreign policy, scholars have argued that the political influence of these organizations has continued to grow at an alarming rate. While most of these critiques have focused on the ability of the MIC to hijack domestic and foreign policy and commit the state to policies that may not necessarily serve the national interest, it is possible that the defense industry might also influence the organizational structure of the armed forces. For example, because AVFs often privilege the use of advanced military technology and equipment to compensate for smaller troop sizes, adopting these MMS-types would be highly profitable for the industries that produce this warfighting equipment. Similarly, because smaller troop sizes in AVFs may require militaries to rely on civilian contractors to perform administrative, logistical, or even warfighting functions, private military companies and government contracting agencies should benefit from the maintenance of AVFs or small military force structures.

In addition to its impact on the interests of industry and labor, a state’s choice of MMS strongly affects the interests of the armed forces itself. Military manpower policy significantly

10 See for example Lieberson (1972), Snyder (1991), and Koistinen (2012). Stanley Lieberson examines the composition of U.S. Senate committees and notes that leaders of congressional districts with strong ties to the U.S. military typically pursue legislative agendas that serve to increase military expenditures (1972, 84-86). He concludes that even in districts where other legislative agendas would provide far greater benefits to other economic segments, important and powerful interest groups may nonetheless succeed in influencing legislation expanding military spending (1972, 90). Similarly, Paul Koistinen asserts that the U.S. MIC has successfully blocked efforts to reduce defense budgets, improve relations with adversaries, and adopt new foreign policy approaches to the developing world (2012, 8). The influence of the MIC is not limited to the United States, and Snyder notes that state-financed colonialism in Germany fueled expansionist policies that benefited the German navy and domestic steel companies at the German public’s expense (1991, 35).

11 Panu Poutvaara and Andreas Wagener (2007) argue that states with AVFs invest more in advanced technology and equipment because teaching short-term recruits highly technical skills is often inefficient or infeasible. For this reason, NATO encourages its member states to adopt AVFs in the belief that this will allow them to devote larger shares of their military expenditures to the purchase of advanced, interoperable equipment (2004, 80).

influences levels of military expenditure, so the military has a strong interest in and may attempt to use its influence to shape it.\footnote{Because governments with AVFs must compete with market forces to attract high quality recruits, volunteer service-members typically receive substantially greater pay and benefits than do conscripts. Michael Brozka estimates that the United States could save an estimated 25 percent of its military expenditure by maintaining an equivalent sized military comprised of conscripted forces (1995, 50). However, economists generally regard AVFs as more economically efficient than conscription-based forces due to higher levels of personnel turn-over in conscript force structures (see for example Smith 1776, Deger 1985, Amacher et al. 1973, and Keller et al. 2009). Thus, while personnel costs to include salaries, health care, and other benefits to service-members may be much higher for an equivalent sized AVF, the costs associating with training and equipping smaller volunteer forces with longer periods of service may be lower.} For example, Roger Broad claims that in addition to security demands rising from the growing Soviet threat, the British military’s interest in maintaining a large number of conscripted troops reflected the self-interest and bureaucratic functionalism of the British high command (2006, 59). Likewise, the resistance of Russian general officers to proposed MMS reforms has prevented the modernization of the Russian military (Liaropoulos 2008). In contrast, French MMS reforms succeeded in part because the French military elite came to view these reforms as necessary to maintain its operational effectiveness (McKenna 1997).

Because the armed forces and its service branches are not monolithic and have different operational requirements and manpower needs, MMS policies may promote the interests of one military organization while threatening the interests of another.\footnote{See Rosen (1988) and Legro (2005) for more on how the parochial interests of military organizations influence their responsiveness to policy directives. See also Mahnken (2003) for a discussion of the differences between service cultures within the U.S. military and how these differences affect their approaches to technology.} For example, the U.S. Air Force opposed the adoption of the AVF, due to concerns that it would not be able to recruit airmen of sufficient caliber to operate highly technical equipment (Rostker 2006, 162-165). In contrast, the U.S. Army and Navy supported the adoption of the AVF when they began to see...
these reforms as necessary to improve levels of discipline in their service branches and meet retention goals that were slipping in the early 1970s (see Rostker 2006, 4; 147; 160-162).

MMS policies also often create non-uniform demands on economic, political, cultural, ethnic, and religious groups. For example, Israeli MMS policies exclude various ethnic and religious groups from mandatory service. Because the notion of citizenship is closely tied to military service, the Israeli Druze successfully lobbied to remove the barriers to military service (see Krebs 2007 and Peled 1998, Chapter 4). Similarly, Zoltan Barany notes that Bosnian Serbs, Bosniaks, and Croats had highly divergent preferences regarding Bosnia’s MMS policies, resulting in intense negotiations before comprehensive defense reforms could be implemented.15

Even states with UMTs and other “universal” service requirements do not affect all segments of the population equally. Despite claims that universal service requirements entail equal costs for all citizens since all are required (or at least subject) to conduct military service, most states have policies that grant exemptions to certain groups or even shield or bar them from serving altogether.16 As demographic changes in the post-World War II era required fewer Americans to serve in the armed forces, the question of “who serves when not all serve” led to

15 The numerically inferior Bosnian Serbs feared a large conscripted military comprised primarily of Bosniaks while Bosniaks desired a large conscripted force to defend from possible aggression from Serbia. In contrast, the Croats supported a state-level military that could grant them greater influence in decision making (Barany 2012, 91).

16 Rather than ensuring equity among those required to serve, “mandatory” service often affects only the “unlucky few” who are obligated to conduct military service (Leander 2004a, 582). Mulligan and Shleifer note that in 1996, well over half of all countries with a military draft provided easier terms of service for college (and in some cases even secondary school) students (2004, 97). Although the numbers of states granting exemptions for draftees cited by Mulligan and Shleifer include the policies of autocratic states, policies of exemptions and deferment are deeply rooted in democracies as well. In her examination of military conscription in France, Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Levi (1997) notes that each of these states have always maintained some form of exemptions for elites, students, or specific economic sectors. In fact, she reports that the policy of buying replacements to serve in the place of those selected by the draft was so pervasive in 19th Century France that insurance companies often paid for and even located replacements for those who could afford them (Levi 1997, 89).
intense pressure from political parties (Chambers 1987, 256-258; Rostker 2006, 746), students and academics (Chambers 1975, 431), religious groups and leaders (Chambers 1975, 435), and organized social movements such as the War Resisters League (Chambers 1975, 462) that strongly contributed to Nixon’s decision to abandon the draft.

Finally, the MMS preferences of the broader public may change over time, creating incentives for office-seeking elites to promote MMS reforms. Unlike many other foreign or defense policy issues that may not be salient issues for the average citizen, a state’s choice of MMS directly affects the interests of all domestic actors. Military manpower decisions such as whether to rely on volunteers or draftees, how to finance and equip the state’s security forces, and how to employ these forces that are comprised of fellow members of the community, friends, and family members, place varying demands on the public to raise and maintain the state’s armed forces. Consequently, changes in the public’s support for existing MMS policies provides a powerful incentive for the ruling elite to enact MMS reforms.

Although changes in domestic MMS preferences may encourage policymakers to align their states’ military manpower policies with the interests of domestic actors whose support they require to remain in office, whether or not MMS changes occur depends on the strength of these incentives.

---

17 While the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy is highly contested, scholars generally agree that public opinion matters more for domestic issues than for foreign policy ones. This view of the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy holds that the public rarely establishes a link between foreign policy and their own interests (Nincic 1992, 127) and alleges that domestic issues more often sway politics than foreign policy issues because domestic policies provoke group conflict (Skidmore 1993, 206). Exceptions to this generalization include foreign policy issues such as trade (Rogowski 1987) and economic policy coordination (Putnam 1988), nuclear weapons programs (Hymans 2011), and the use of military force (Levy 1988; Nincic 1992, 128) that directly affect the interests of domestic actors and therefore may also elicit strong domestic responses.

18 Changes in public opinion served as a powerful catalyst for MMS reforms in Great Britain and the United States. Growing public discontent with the military draft in Great Britain played an instrumental role in the state’s decision to return to an AVF in 1960 (Broad 2006, 119-125; Flynn 2002, 219). Similarly, declining public support for conscription forced President Truman to end the draft (albeit briefly) in the immediate post-war years (Flynn 1993, 89) and strongly influenced President Nixon’s decision to endorse the AVF (Chambers 1975, 446; Rostker 2006, 6; 268; 746).
domestic preferences and whether policymakers connect these changes in domestic MMS preferences with their prospects for political survival. I assert that changes in domestic MMS preferences only result in corresponding policy changes if policymakers believe that failure to respond to changing domestic preferences will jeopardize their ability to retain office or enact other items on their policy agendas. From this claim, I develop the following general hypothesis:

**H1:** Changes in domestic MMS preferences will produce MMS reforms if policymakers connect these preference changes with their prospects of political survival.

From this general hypothesis, I derive several, specific predictions. First, because enacting policy reforms entails numerous political risks that may deter policymakers from pursuing policy changes, policymakers should only enact MMS reforms when they believe that doing so will increase their political standing among the members of their winning coalitions. Therefore, it matters which domestic actors’ MMS preferences change. Policymakers are likely to implement MMS reforms in response to changes in the MMS preferences of actors who form their winning coalitions; policymakers are unlikely to respond to changes in the MMS preferences of actors outside of the their winning coalitions.

**H1a:** Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not produce MMS reforms unless these domestic actors are part of policymakers’ winning coalitions.

Second, the willingness of policymakers to promote MMS reforms should depend largely on the strength of the policy preferences of their winning coalitions. Office-seeking motivations incentivize leaders to support policy issues that are salient with members of their winning coalitions or potential political supporters. Enacting policy reforms entails numerous political risks that may deter policymakers from pursuing policy changes unless the expected political gain from enacting these reforms exceeds the expected risks. Depending on the salience of the
policy issue, action, or inaction, may jeopardize leaders’ political futures. For highly salient issues that are of great concern to members of policymakers’ winning coalitions, inaction may lead to perceptions of incompetence among their political supporters. Conversely, “decisions of opportunity,” or acting on low-salient or non-salient issues, may galvanize political opponents by inadvertently creating potentially damaging, high-salience issues (Van Belle 1993, 175). Therefore, policymakers have incentives to promote MMS reforms only if military manpower issues are salient with members of their winning coalitions.

\[H1b: \text{Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not result in MMS reforms unless military manpower issues are salient with members of policymakers’ winning coalitions.}\]

Third, because political institutions determine the degree to which other domestic actors can influence policy priorities, differences in institutional forms should also affect the willingness of policymakers to pursue MMS reforms. Because democratic leaders have much larger selectorates, these policymakers must concern themselves with the MMS preferences of a wider range of domestic actors, including the broader public. In contrast, non-democratic leaders are more insulated from societal demands than their democratic counterparts (Henisz and Mansfield 2006). ¹⁹ Thus, while non-democratic leaders may face relatively few institutional restraints that might prevent them from reforming their states’ military manpower policies, they likely have fewer incentives to do so. As a result, I predict that that changes in the public’s MMS

---

¹⁹ This is not to say that all leaders of non-democratic states face the same institutional restraints. The vulnerability, or degree to which domestic audiences may punish non-democratic rulers, varies widely among non-democratic governments (see for example Hagan 1995, 124-125; Tsebelis 2002, 77; Magaloni 2006; Ghandi 2008; Weeks 2008; Weeks 2012; Croco and Weeks 2016). Non-democratic states with non-personalistic regimes (Weeks 2008; Weeks 2012); hegemonic parties (Magaloni 2006); and “democratic” institutions such as legislatures (Ghandi 2008) may have greater vulnerability than other forms autocracies.
preferences are more likely to produce MMS reforms in democracies than in non-democratic states.\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{H1c: Changes in the public’s MMS preferences are more likely to result in MMS reforms in democratic states than in nondemocratic ones.}

For instance, the Ethiopian government’s unresponsiveness to strong domestic opposition to its military manpower policies supports this prediction. After Ethiopia instituted a military draft in 1977 to support its counterinsurgency operations, the government faced growing opposition from the public (Ayele 2014). Disaffection with the draft soon resulted in lower levels of commitment to the war effort among military service members, and conscription opened the military to opponents of the state who then spread dissent throughout the armed forces.\textsuperscript{21} Nevertheless, despite widespread opposition among draftees and the broader public, Ethiopia maintained a conscription-based MMS until 1991.\textsuperscript{22}

\textit{Changes in Elite MMS Preferences}

While leaders’ desire to retain political office requires them to respond to changes in the MMS preferences of domestic actors who are a part of their winning coalitions, MMS reforms may also follow changes in leaders’ MMS preferences independently. I assume that leaders’ office-seeking motivations coexist with other concerns such as power and security, prestige and

\textsuperscript{20} I expect democratic leaders to place significant value on public opinion regardless of whether or not they are competing for an additional term in office. Leaders’ concerns with the election of fellow members of their political parties as well as the election outcome of their political successors challenges the notion that second-term presidents or leaders with relatively secure positions in office are immune from the need to maintain domestic support. Moreover, because the ability of leaders to enact their policy preferences is to some degree linked to their levels of domestic political support, even “secure” leaders must remain sensitive to the demands of the selectorate (Van Belle 1993, 154).


\textsuperscript{22} Data from Toronto (2005) indicates that Ethiopia maintained a conscription-based MMS from 1977 to 1991.
legitimacy, and their legacies (Schultz 2013, 480). Thus, their policy orientations and beliefs about the appropriate forms of MMS may lead them to develop MMS preferences that diverge from those of the members of their winning coalitions.

Ruling elites may hold different views about the appropriate forms of MMS, and the preferences of some leaders are undoubtedly more influential on the development of military manpower policy than are others.\(^{23}\) I consider relevant leaders or ruling elites to be those members of political coalitions, bureaucratic alignments, and other leader group relations that shape policy outputs.\(^{24}\) While ruling elites themselves may be considered domestic actors, especially in democratic states, their ability to more directly influence policy distinguishes them from other domestic actors.

I intentionally define leaders in vague terms to account for variance in the composition of leader groups’ and their influence over the policymaking process across regime-types and different political systems.\(^{25}\) Nevertheless, I use a somewhat narrow conception of leaders that includes only “veto players,” or the members of the ruling elite whose agreement is necessary to implement MMS reforms.\(^{26}\) Which domestic groups and actors constitute ‘veto players’ varies

---

\(^{23}\) Alexander George suggests that within leadership groups, elites may hold different philosophical and instrumental beliefs (1969, 202).

\(^{24}\) This is similar to definitions by Hopple and Gathright (1987, 194) and Croco (2011). Sarah Croco defines these other leader group relations as factions or coalitions characterized by their “close proximity to the decision-making process and political relationship[s] with other faction members, including the executive” (Croco 2011, 460).

\(^{25}\) Similarly, Margaret Hermann (2001, 47) argues that the wide variance in the exercise of authority among governments and ruling parties across the international system makes it extremely challenging to systematically compare governmental decision-making both across and within countries.

\(^{26}\) George Tsebelis defines veto players as “individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo” (2002, 19). Previous literature suggests that veto players may play an important role in macroeconomic (McIntyre 2001; Henisz and Mansfield 2006), nuclear (Hymans 2011), and other domestic and foreign policy issues (Tsebelis 2002). This conception of elite politics also closely resembles what Hermann (2001) describes as “decision units.” These decision units consist of “an individual or a set of individuals with the ability to commit the resources of society and, when faced with a problem, the authority to make a decision that cannot be reversed” (Hermann 2001, 48).
across time and across states with different political institutions, but such actors and political groupings typically include leaders of mainstream political parties, key cabinet members such as secretaries of defense and treasury, legislatures, bureaucracies, and members of governing coalitions or military juntas. 27

Beliefs encompass the ideas and assumptions that underpin leaders’ policy preferences. They include their orientations to other political actors (domestic and international), their views of the proper relationship between the military and society, and the appropriate balance between national welfare and security on the one hand and individual liberties and domestic priorities on the other. Previous literature has examined the relationship between leader beliefs and military strategy, national security policy, and the willingness to use force to achieve political ends. 28

Using Nathan Leite’s operational code, other scholars have examined how leaders’ “philosophical beliefs,” or world views, and “instrumental beliefs,” or beliefs about the appropriate means of accomplishing their political goals and objectives, shape their policy choices. 29 In a similar vein, I argue that leaders’ beliefs about the nature of their political and

---

27 Elizabeth Stanley’s “domestic coalitions” (2009, 39) and Hermann’s “decision units” (2001, 47) contain similar actors and political groups.
28 For example, Elizabeth Saunders (2009) shows how leaders’ beliefs of the nature of threats shape their governments’ strategies of intervention. Because President Kennedy saw a causal connection between the threatening foreign and security policies of North Vietnam and the domestic structures of the state, he pursued “transformative” strategies of counterinsurgency. In contrast, she claims that President Johnson pursued a “non-transformative” strategy that aimed to resolve the war with minimal influence in North Vietnam’s domestic affairs because he perceived the North Vietnamese threat to be mainly external (i.e. posed by its aggressive foreign and security policies rather than the internal organization of the state). Furthermore, Matthew Fuhrmann and Michael Horowitz (2015) have linked leader beliefs to the likelihood of their states’ pursuing nuclear weapons, and Michael Horowitz and Allan Stam (2014) show that prior military experience shapes leaders’ policy orientations and affects their likelihood of using military force while in office. Examining the background characteristics of more than 2,500 heads of state from 1875 to 2004, the authors find that leaders who have prior military experience but no combat experience or who are former rebel leaders are more likely to initiate militarized interstate disputes than leaders without military or combat experience.
29 Operational Code posits that leaders’ beliefs about nature of politics and conflict, the extent to which they can shape historical developments, and the appropriate strategies or tactics to achieve political outcomes can be used to explain political decision-making (George 1969, 195). While a leader’s
security environments and the most effective means of maintaining their political survival strongly influence their MMS preferences.

Changes in three types of beliefs may alter leaders’ MMS preferences, leading them to promote MMS reform. First, leaders may hold beliefs about the appropriate relationship between the state’s political institutions and the nature of military service. Whether states maintain democratic or non-democratic political institutions does not serve as a strong predictor of MMS-type (see Mulligan and Shleifer 2005 and Cohn and Toronto 2016); however, all communist states maintain conscription-based MMS-types because their governments view military service as an “effective vehicle for political socialization” (Barany 2012, 213). In contrast, views of the appropriate relationships between the military, society, and citizenship vary widely among democratic nations. Consequently, whether democratically elected leaders believe that conscription complements or threatens democracy may strongly influence their preferences regarding the state’s military manpower policies. For example, Sten Rynning argues that French Presidents François Mitterrand and Jacques Chirac adopted widely different approaches to MMS reform, in part because they held different beliefs about the role of conscription in maintaining a proper relationship between French society and the armed forces (2001, 106).

Beliefs about the appropriate relationship between the armed forces and society may also cause leaders to link their states’ MMS policies with the promotion of nationalism or modernity. If leaders connect military service with the development of martial or civic values that foster national identity and produce loyal and productive citizens, these beliefs may lead them promote operational code does not determine her policy choices, her operational code “structure[s] the menu of choice,” thereby constraining the range of alternative options and influencing the final policy decision (Walker 1990).

30 See Edwin Micewski (2006) for a comprehensive review of the debate between the relationship between military conscription and democracy.
Conscription-based MMS-types to achieve these ends. Therefore, it follows that changes in leaders’ beliefs about the role played by military service in nation-building may lead them to conclude that their current MMS forms are no longer required, or appropriate, to advance the state’s interests. For example, Anna Leander (2004) claims that the erosion of the “myths” about the relationship between military service and the transmission of social values and strengthening of French national identity paved the way for MMS reform in France.

South Korea’s “military played the role of a modernizer” in the developing state, but more often leaders view adopting AVFs as a requirement for achieving modernity. Chris Demchak describes “discarding conscription … [as] a singular hallmark of nations that want to modernize…” (2003, 315). Thus, although conscription may allow developing states to “build military[ies] from scratch within very limited budgets” (Jehn and Selden 2002, 11) and most nations require only constabulary forces to meet their security requirements (Demchak 2003, 308), leaders’ desires to be perceived as modern, hence legitimate, international actors may lead them to promote AVFs. For example, Justin McKenna (1997) argues French President Jacques Chirac sought to implement the AVF as a means to regain international prestige following France’s disastrous performance in the first Gulf War.

---

31 Conscription is often viewed as a “school of the nation” that can “produce loyal and virtuous citizens” (Leander 2004, 576) or serve as means to integrate “diverse, multicultural societies” (Leander 2004, 573). See Ronald Krebs (2007) for a poignant critique of these arguments.

32 By effectively managing its surplus of conscripts and producing a large pool of young men with technical skills required for work in heavy industries, conscription helped to modernize South Korea (Moon 2005, 51). See pages 55-64 for an expanded discussion of conscription’s contribution to the modernization of South Korea.

33 Emily Goldman and Andrew Ross claim that diffusion of military technology and ideas is not always driven by direct competition (2003, 377). Instead, they argue that emulation of military systems is often driven as much by desires to obtain legitimacy and “acceptance in the social system (e.g. Western society)” (2003, 380).

34 It should be noted that McKenna does not claim that concern for international prestige was the sole, or even most influential, driver of France’s adoption of the AVF. Instead, McKenna claims that French military reforms succeeded because Chirac possessed a “political astuteness” that recognized the changing view of conscription among both the French public and the military elite as well as the power of
A second type of belief that may influence leaders’ MMS preferences consists of leaders’ ideas about the nature of their geopolitical environments and the MMS-type(s) best suited to meet their states’ security requirements. Despite evidence suggesting a weak relationship between military effectiveness and MMS, elites and domestic actors’ may hold beliefs about the nature of their security environments and the relative effectiveness of MMS-types that strongly influence their MMS preferences. Therefore, changes in the state’s national security objectives and resulting changes in leaders’ beliefs about the MMS-type(s) that can best support these new priorities may produce MMS changes. For example, in the post-Cold War era, the nature of NATO operations has shifted from preparing to deter large conventional forces to conducting limited wars such as the 1991 Gulf War, humanitarian interventions and other peacekeeping operations (PKOs), and counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan. These changing operational requirements have, in part, led most NATO member states to adopt AVFs, which may be better suited to conduct these types of operations (Williams 2004, 84).

Finally, leaders’ beliefs about the relationship between MMS-type and military effectiveness may strongly influence their MMS preferences. While the empirical relationship between MMS and military effectiveness is weakly supported, leaders’ beliefs about the relative effectiveness of particular MMS-types may matter more than any actual relationship between

---

35 As of 2017, only six of 28 NATO members retain compulsory forms of military service. These six members include Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Norway, and Turkey (CIA World Factbook 2016). Eliot Cohen argues that “small wars” require force structures that provide high levels of readiness. Moreover, he suggests that because these operations typically generate little enthusiasm at home, it is easier for the state to deploy volunteers than conscripts (Cohen 1985, 115). He notes that France’s use of conscripts in Algeria and Portugal’s deployment of conscripts to Africa created considerable domestic backlash (eventually resulting in a coup in Portugal). Similarly, Cindy Williams (2004, 84) argues that AVFs are best suited to deploy troops in support of PKOs. While some large contributors such as pre-2001 France and pre-2011 Germany maintain conscription, many of these states have legislation preventing the deployment of conscripts in support of these operations.
military effectiveness and MMS. Leaders’ policy orientations and beliefs influence how they perceive threats, value different types of strategies, and allocate scarce resources to conduct these strategies (Saunders 2009, 121). Therefore, states may adopt new MMS policies in response to changing beliefs about the relative effectiveness of MMS-types, even if existing MMS policies have proven sufficient to meet the state’s security needs.

How elites and other domestic actors form these beliefs is important. Evidence suggesting that efforts by elites to “securitize” their state’s MMS policies strongly influence domestic MMS preferences would support the hypothesis that domestic politics, rather than security considerations, drive MMS reform.36 To the extent that leaders define “strategy” broadly, to include objectives such as political and economic stability, domestic considerations of a state’s MMS policy choices may become inseparable from the goal of promoting national security.37 Conversely, if actors hold beliefs about the relationship between MMS and security that are independent from other interests and concerns for national security drive their MMS choices, then such evidence would challenge my argument.

Isolating leaders’ beliefs about the appropriateness of their states’ military manpower policies from their concerns for political survival can be problematic. For example, efforts to increase the state’s international legitimacy similarly help the regime fulfill its domestic legitimacy needs (Hudson et al. 1993, 57). Nevertheless, leaders may hold strong MMS preferences that are independent from, or even counter to, the MMS preferences of the members

---

36 By labeling developments as “security problems,” elites may gain greater control over these issues. Once issues become “securitized,” leaders may be able to claim the right to combat them using extraordinary means (Waever 1993, 54).

37 However, in doing so, elites politicize these issues, making it difficult to separate actual from semantically constructed threats. But while seemingly problematic, this operational definition of “existential threats” does not require the researcher to discern actual from spuriously constructed threats because both are consistent with the prediction that domestic political factors dictate states’ MMS policies except under conditions of extremely high external threat.
of their winning coalitions. But because leaders must maintain sight of the political realities of their policy preferences, regardless of the strength of their own personal beliefs about the suitability of their states’ MMS policies, I predict that changes in leaders’ personal MMS preferences will result in MMS change only if they believe that promoting such reforms will not jeopardize their prospects of political survival.

**H2:** Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.

If leaders hold MMS preferences that diverge from those of their winning coalitions, under what, if any, conditions might leaders be willing to promote their preferred military manpower policies? If members of the winning coalition maintain opposing MMS preferences, I predict that leaders will consider the strength of these preferences when determining whether or not to implement MMS reforms. If leaders and their winning coalitions have opposing MMS preferences and military manpower issues are salient, leaders are unlikely to jeopardize their political futures by promoting MMS policies that are strongly opposed by their winning coalitions. Conversely, leaders may promote MMS reforms if they believe that their winning coalitions do not hold strong MMS preferences and thus implementing their preferred policies will not threaten their political survival.

**H2a:** Changes in elite MMS preferences will not likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition maintains strong, opposing MMS preferences.

**H2b:** Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.
The ability of elites to implement their preferred military manpower policies depends, in part, on the nature of their states’ political arrangements. Thus, even if leaders desire to implement military manpower reforms, they may be unable to implement their preferred policies due to institutional constraints. The literature on executive decision-making and regime-type generally holds that executives in non-democratic states have greater policy autonomy, because they are less encumbered than democracies by systems of checks and balances and the need to maintain broad-based public support (see for example Mansfield et al. 2000, Heinsz and Mansfield 2006, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2002, and Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). Thus, when compared with their democratic counterparts, non-democratic leaders face fewer institutional restraints that might limit their ability to promote their preferred MMS policies.

Although democracies likely have greater difficulty enacting policy reforms than do other regime-types, the ease with which policymakers may implement MMS reforms may also vary among democratic states. Because the strength of the executive relative to the legislature, opposition leaders, and other relevant political elite influence leaders’ ability to implement their preferred policies (Kozak 1988; Müller and Risse-Kappen 1993, 31; Rudalevige 2002), MMS reforms should be more likely to occur in states with institutional designs that favor the executive. For example, the powers inherent in the French presidency and the small number of veto players inherent in the French presidency and the small number of veto players allows any number of domestic actors to block policy reforms (Müller and Risse-Kappen 1993, 34). In contrast, leaders of centralized political systems such as France can more easily implement their preferred policies because these political structures contain fewer “veto players” and other institutional restraints that limit the executive’s ability to enact policy reforms (Tsebelis 2002, 165). Previous scholarship examining the role of veto players in policymaking on issues as diverse as nuclear proliferation (Hymans 2011), economic openness (Heinsz and Mansfield 2006), war termination (Stanley 2009) and macroeconomic policy (McIntyre 2001) has shown that the ability of executives to enact their policy preferences decreases as the number of veto players rises.

The ability of democratic leaders to implement their preferred policies also vary among presidential and parliamentary government systems. Although executives in parliamentary and presidential systems...
“veto points” in domestic political structures allowed President Jacques Chirac to “impose the move to a professional army on the chiefs of staff and the Ministry of Defense” (Irondelle 2003, 182-183). In contrast, the relatively weaker formal powers of the executive and strong linkages between social and defense policy subsystems disincentivized and constrained necessary military reforms in post-Cold War Germany (Dyson 2008).

**H2c:** Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.

Finally, although leaders are constrained by the preferences of their winning coalitions and are unlikely to promote their individually preferred MMS policies if doing so would equate to political suicide, leaders with strong MMS preferences that diverge from their winning coalitions’ may attempt to create support for, or at a minimum, lower the opposition to MMS reforms. They may use a range of strategies, including information campaigns designed to promote their preferred policies, influencing media coverage of military manpower issues, shifting domestic coalitions or leveraging key domestic actors to ease the passage of their preferred MMS policies, or securitizing the issue of MMS reform.

**H2d:** Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.

---

may have similar interests (Moe and Caldwell 1994, 178), presidents generally have greater levels of autonomy and may thus possess a greater ability to enact policy unilaterally (Moe and Caldwell 1994, 175-176). But although presidents may face fewer institutional restraints, it may be easier for leaders of parliamentary systems to gain consensus for their preferred policies because they serve as leader of both the executive and legislative branches of government (Tsebelis 2002, 82; Moe and Caldwell 1994, 178). Consequently, the distinctions between presidential and parliamentary systems may have little effect on the ability of executives to enact MMS reforms.
Leaders with strong MMS preferences may launch information campaigns designed to target the public or key domestic groups. Such campaigns might include attempts to increase the political salience of military manpower issues by influencing their coverage by the media and commissioning academic studies to highlight the potential economic or security benefits of proposed MMS reforms. Keith Hauk and Greg Parlir suggest that President Nixon’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force (the Gates Commission) was not formed to conduct an honest assessment of the potential security, economic, or societal effects of eliminating conscription; rather, they allege that the commission was “specifically chartered to develop a plan to eliminate conscription and move to an AVF” (2000, 74-75).

Additionally, elites with strong MMS preferences may attempt to shift domestic coalitions or leverage key domestic actors to build political consensus and ease the passage of their preferred MMS policies.\textsuperscript{39} Irondelle describes how despite his minority position on MMS-reform, Chirac was able to achieve institutional reforms by using all available powers of his office, such as leveraging the institutional calendar, appointing sympathetic officials to key positions, and increasing public support by defining the national agenda (2003, 182). Similarly, Rynning (2001) suggests that it was not just the strength of the French presidency that allowed Chirac to push through his desired MMS policies; rather, the introduction of the AVF depended largely on Chirac’s ability to form political consensus through strategic leadership. By linking his strategic agenda to power shifts that had occurred after the First Gulf War, Chirac was able to overcome resistance by the French military and introduce the AVF (Rynning 2010, 105-107).

Finally, leaders may build consensus for their policy preferences by framing their states’

\textsuperscript{39} Because “coalition-building occurs in the framework of political institutions,” processes that leaders use to form domestic coalitions should vary based on the nature of the state’s institutional structures (Müller and Risse-Kappen 1993, 35).
MMS choices as matters of national security. McKenna (1997) argues that France’s ability to adopt the AVF was due in part to the strength of the French presidency but claims that these reforms ultimately succeed due to Chirac’s ability to frame the debate and gain consensus from military and political elite. By framing the issue with respect to military considerations and the country’s desire to regain its international prestige following the First Gulf War, which had proved to be a “nightmare for French defense forces,” Chirac was able to build consensus for his desire to implement the AVF.

**Figure 2.1 – Pathways to MMS Reform**

*Leader Change and MMS Reform*

The preceding section and *Figure 2.1* above outline two pathways to MMS reform: changes in domestic and leader MMS preferences. While changes to states’ military manpower

---

40 Although the relationship between military effectiveness and MMS-type is at best weakly understood, elites may nonetheless gain support for MMS reforms by “securitizing” these policy decisions. By labeling military manpower issues “security problems,” elites may have the power to gain control of these issues, claiming the right to use extraordinary means to combat them (Waever 1993, 54). Moreover, securitizing MMS decisions may increase their issue salience, creating windows for policy reform. Thus by framing MMS reforms as vital to the security of the state, elites may have the power to make military manpower issues salient and build domestic support for MMS reforms.

41 McKenna (1997) argues that the First Gulf War highlighted the deficiencies of the French military compared to the British and American forces. “Out of a 'combat-ready' army of 280,000, plus the FAR’s 47,000 troops, the French were only able to muster a total of 12,000 for their Daguet Division” (McKenna 1997, 133).
policies often coincide with changes in leadership, leader change does not constitute a distinct mechanism of MMS change. Instead, I argue that MMS reforms often occur in the context of leader changes because leader changes may result in, or result from, changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences.

While changes in domestic or elite MMS preferences do not always coincide with changes in the state’s leadership and leader change does not always produce changes in MMS, I suggest that any changes in the state’s military manpower policies are likely to occur in the context of leader change. Specifically, I predict that changes to the state’s MMS policies will coincide with changes in the state’s leadership if these leader changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform. Leader changes may not only influence the willingness of leaders to implement MMS reforms but may also affect their ability to do so. New leaders may enter office with a desire to reform the state’s existing MMS policies, and they may also rely on the support of new winning coalitions whose members’ interests are best served through military manpower reforms. Additionally, changes in leadership may allow leaders to overcome policy gridlock by forming new coalitions of like-minded reformists or, in the case of “revolutionary transformations,” by removing institutional constraints that might otherwise prevent leaders from implementing their preferred policies.42

H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.

42 Joe Hagan defines “revolutionary transformations” as those changes that result in a fundamental restructuring of the state’s political institutions (1994, 145). Such changes include democratic transitions and the movement to more authoritarian forms of government such as the devolution of democracy in the Russian Federation and Turkey in the second decade of the 21st Century.
I consider leader changes to be changes of one or more actors in “the political group, or coalition of groups, who control the authoritative policymaking bodies of the state’s governmental institutions.” Thus, leader change encompasses domestic political change ranging from changes in executive leadership to fundamental restructuring of the state’s political institutions. Leader change may in turn lead governments to promote new MMS policies and remove or replace obstacles to reform.

Joe Hagan outlines four types of leader or regime changes, ranging from “mild” changes following the transfer of political power from one individual to another in the same political faction to “dramatic” changes produced by the overthrow of existing political orders (1994, 144). The first type of regime change consists of regularized transfers of power from an elite in one political party or faction to a member of the same political group (Hagan 1994, 144). Examples of such regime changes include the election of Republican President George H. W. Bush at the end of President Ronald Regan’s second term and the transfer of power from King Abdullah to King Salman in Saudi Arabia. The likelihood of new leadership promoting policy reforms is perhaps greater following non-regularized change (Hopple and Gathright 1987, 194.); however, regularized leader change between members of the same political party or factions may nonetheless result in policy changes so long as new administrations have different policy preferences than their predecessors.

Although Hagan’s description of this type of regime change includes only changes in state executives, I expand this notion to include changes in relevant policy elites such defense or

---

43 This is similar to Hagan’s definition of “regime change” (Hagan 1994, 141) and closely resembles the concept of “coalition shift,” which Stanley defines as a “consequential change in the identity of the decision makers or a substantive change in the type of government” (2009, 31).

44 Miroslav Nincic notes that U.S. foreign policy has been marked by discontinuity, and that major changes in foreign policy are often “…associated with presidential elections and transitions from one administration to another” (1992, 104-107).
finance ministers, leaders of legislative bodies, or other political actors whose support may be required to implement MMS reforms. This expanded notion of “leader change” closely resembles Stanley’s definition of “domestic coalition shifts,” which includes changes in major decision-makers such as cabinet leaders and junta members (2009, 31). Like changes in executive leadership, the replacement or removal of other policymakers may allow states to reform “sticky” MMS policies by “removing [coalition] members whose preferences created gridlock… [and by] facilitating the flow of information and removing spurious inputs” that may present obstacles to reform (Stanley 2009, 51).

“Major factional or coalition shift[s],” which include changes in the component factions of the central leadership body, political parties, or “autonomous political groups” in coalition governments, constitute another relatively “mild” type of regime change (Hagan 1994, 144). Such changes in the domestic balance of power may in turn create opportunities for policy change by allowing reform-minded policymakers to gather the political consensus necessary to overturn existing policies. Similar to changes in the executive, factional or coalition shifts may produce policy changes by replacing coalitions or factions opposed to MMS changes with political groups that support these policy reforms.

Regularized exchanges of power between contending political parties or factions form a third type of regime change (Hagan 1994, 145). Such changes include the transfer of power between leaders of two mainstream political parties such as the election of President Donald

---

45 Similarly, Gerald Hopple and Gene Gathright’s definition of elite change “includes not only the replacement of executive leadership but also key policymakers such as defense ministers” (1987, 194).
46 These factional or coalition shifts may occur in democracies and autocracies alike. Autocratic governments in China, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, to name a few, have complex political institutions with entrenched bureaucratic interests and dispersed political authority (Hagan 1995, 124). Likewise, though autocratic regimes such as Iran, Maoist China, and Sukarno’s Indonesia may appear to be dominated by a single, predominant leader, Hagan argues that they are in fact “racked by political infighting among contentious factions” (1995, 124).
Trump following eight years of the Obama administration, as well as power transfers in closed political systems such as the rise of the Ba’ath party in Iraq. Previous literature suggests these changes in domestic leadership have important effects on policy issues ranging from trade (Hiscox 2003) to “sticky war policies” (Stanley 2009; see also Croco 2011 and Croco and Weeks 2016). Because MMS policies are also “sticky,” overturning existing military manpower policies may require the replacement of the incumbent leaders with decision-makers that have new policy orientations and preferences. For example, McKenna argues that Chirac’s position outside of the Mitterrand administration allowed him to oppose France’s MMS policies (1997). When elected president, Chirac used his “de facto mandate” to implement MMS reforms (1997, 126).47 Similarly, U.S. President Richard Nixon campaigned on a pledge to end conscription and upon entering office, he immediately commissioned a study examining how to end the draft and launched a lottery system to reform the existing manpower system (see Flynn 2002, 236-238; Rostker 2006, Chapter 4).

In democratic states, significant policy changes may also precede regularized exchanges of power if political leaders attempt to weaken the influence of their political rivals by promoting policy reforms before elections. For example, candidates may make pledges that they believe will give them an electoral boost so long as they expect the political benefits of these pledges to materialize in the short-term.48 In his assessment of Great Britain’s decision to end conscription

47 McKenna argues that France’s decision to adopt the AVF was due in part to the strength of the French presidency and Chirac’s ability to frame the debate and gain consensus from military and political elite. He suggests that the special influence of the French president in issues of national defense allowed Chirac to “use the authority of the French president’s dominance in defense issues to both establish the credibility of his ideas and to undermine the legitimacy of his opponents” (1997, 126). See also Rynning (2001) and George Flynn (2002, 221-227) for a further discussion of how President Chirac used the office of the French presidency to institute MMS reforms.

48 For example, Nikolay Marinov et al. (2014) find a strong relationship between ISAF troop contributions and the proximity to national elections. When the costs of a security policy are realized in the short-term but the benefits of such policies accrue only in the long-term, they argue that leaders have
in 1960, Broad claims that “…political considerations overrode the strategic…” as the ruling Conservative Party saw the adoption of the AVF as a means of ensuring electoral victory over Labour (2006, 122-125). Likewise, following rising levels of public dissatisfaction with the Spanish military draft, the Partido Popular campaigned on pledge to end the draft as a “means to increase their electoral fortune” (Jehn and Selden 2002, 6).

Finally, “revolutionary transformations” that result in a fundamental restructuring of the state’s political institutions represent the most “dramatic” type of regime change (Hagan 1994, 145). These regime changes include changes in regime-type such as the democratization of previously authoritarian systems, state transformations following decolonization and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, and other institutional reforms such as changes in the electoral system or other means of leader succession. Although most former African colonies retained their existing MMS-types following decolonization, others such as Algeria implemented MMS changes after gaining their independence (Toronto 2005). Likewise, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan adopted AVFs after declaring independence from the Soviet Union.49

I suggest that the extent of leader change affects the likelihood that MMS changes will coincide with these changes in leadership. Although “mild” regime changes such as transfers of power between elites in the same political group may lead to MMS reforms if new decision-makers have different values or policy preferences, these new decision-makers likely share the same MMS preferences as their predecessors because their political support comes from the

same winning coalition. In contrast, “dramatic” regime changes such as “revolutionary transformations” and the replacement of policymakers with leaders of contending political parties and factions are most likely to produce changes in elite and/or domestic MMS preferences and lower barriers to MMS reform. Consequently, I predict that MMS changes are more likely to coincide with dramatic regime changes than more mild changes.

**H3a:** If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.

**H3b:** If leader changes represent “mild” regime changes such as the replacement of leaders from the same political groups, MMS changes are less likely to occur.

*Figure 2.2* below provides a summary of predictions outlined in the preceding discussion.
H1: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will produce MMS reforms if policymakers connect these changes with their prospects of political survival.
   H1a: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not produce MMS reforms unless these domestic actors are a part policymakers’ winning coalitions.
   H1b: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not result in MMS reforms unless military manpower issues are salient with members of policymakers’ winning coalitions.
   H1c: Changes in the public’s MMS preferences are more likely to result in MMS reforms in democratic states than in nondemocratic ones.

H2: Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.
   H2a: Changes in elite MMS preferences will not likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition maintains strong, opposing MMS preferences.
   H2b: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.
   H2c: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.
   H2d: Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.

H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.
   H3a: If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.
   H3b: If leader changes represent “mild” regime changes such as the replacement of leaders from the same political groups, MMS changes are less likely to occur.

Figure 2.2 – Empirical Predictions

Scope and Limitations of the Model

Understanding why and how states enact MMS reforms requires an examination of the domestic politics surrounding states’ MMS choices. Although the theory of MMS reform developed in this chapter acknowledges distinctions based on the type and strength of states’ political institutions, its central claim that changes in MMS follow changes in domestic and elite MMS preferences applies to all states, regardless of regime-type. Because leaders of all regime-types must maintain some degree of support from the members of their winning coalition (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2002; Schultz 2013, 480), domestic pressures for reform may motivate democratic and non-democratic rulers alike.
Domestic MMS preferences could be expected to have greater influence on the policy preferences of democratically elected leaders who may more easily be removed from office; however, non-democratic leaders must also be sensitive to public opinion or risk domestic instability that could threaten their prospects of political survival.\textsuperscript{50} Implementing reforms such as MMS changes requires that leaders have both the ability and willingness to change existing policies. Although non-democratic regimes generally have fewer veto players and other institutional restraints that may prevent leaders from enacting their preferred policies, the reliance on small-winning coalitions makes them more insulated from demands for policy changes from below (Henisz and Mansfield 2006).\textsuperscript{51} Similarly, although democratic leaders of highly centralized political systems may have greater autonomy to implement policy reforms, these leaders may have fewer political incentives to do so. Conversely, leaders of comparatively “weak” or politically fragmented states may face stronger incentives to reform their states’ MMS policies, but domestic institutional structures may limit their ability to enact these reforms. Consequently, we should not expect significant variation in the frequency of MMS reforms across regime types.

Additionally, I do not expect my theory of MMS reform to apply to particular geopolitical regions or time periods. Although much of the literature and case studies used to develop this argument focused on Western states, my core claim that changes in MMS follow changes in domestic and elite MMS preferences should apply to all geographical regions and political contexts; therefore, I deliberately select cases with regional variation. And although I

\textsuperscript{50} As Kevin Narizny notes, even “monarchs have to compete with other candidates to the throne” (2007, 27).

\textsuperscript{51} This generalization does not, however, describe all non-democratic states. Citing Peronist Argentina as an example, Tsebelis notes that the policy preferences of authoritarian regimes do not necessarily deviate from those of the public (2002, 77).
restrict the period of examination in these cases to the post-WWII era to facilitate research, I do not suggest that the theory’s predictions apply solely to this specific time period.

The theory outlined in this chapter provides a framework for understanding why and how states reform their manpower policies; however, it does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of MMS change that could predict the direction of these reforms. In other words, the theory predicts the conditions under which MMS changes may occur rather than the particular forms of MMS that states will adopt. Moreover, the theory neither addresses the origins of ideas that might change the nature of elite politics and/or leader beliefs nor attempts to provide a cognitive or psychological explanation of how leaders form these beliefs.\(^{52}\) Thus, while the theory assesses factors that may influence leaders’ beliefs, it does not address any psychological reasons for why elites might think a certain way about their states’ MMS policies.

Finally, the theory does not offer a mechanism for assessing the political judgments of leader’s MMS choices. The demands on the state to provide security from external and internal threats, economic growth and well-being, and social stability often conflict, making it difficult for leaders to do the things that they should do (Schultz 2013, 480; Schweller 2005; Nincic 1992, Chp.1). Nevertheless, determining whether MMS changes are “optimal” for the state is beyond the scope of this dissertation.\(^{53}\)

**ALTERNATIVE ARGUMENTS**

Because a wide range of factors influences states’ MMS choices, evaluating any theory of MMS reform requires the researcher to explore alternative theories of MMS selection that may

---

\(^{52}\) As John Kingdon notes, focusing on the origins of ideas that may change leaders’ preferences would lead to an infinite regress and produce few generalizable findings (2003, 206).

\(^{53}\) Philip Tetlock (2005, 4) argues that assessing political judgments of whether a given policy is “good” or “bad” hinges on difficult to assess counterfactuals.
better explain why, and under what conditions, states change their military manpower policies. In sharp contrast to the theory outlined above, statist approaches assume that decision makers formulate policy autonomously from societal influences. These theories suggest that like other foreign policy issues, military manpower policy may be “immune” from domestic politics.\textsuperscript{54} To assess the ability of these approaches to explain MMS reform, I test the following alternative hypothesis:

_**AH1: Leaders do not strongly consider domestic MMS preferences when considering MMS reforms.**_

I do not expect to find strong support for statist versions of MMS reform for at least two reasons. First, military manpower decisions directly affect the interests of a wide range of domestic actors. Consequently, MMS reforms should be expected to generate strong domestic interest, creating a powerful incentive for leaders to support the MMS policies that most closely align with the interests of their winning coalitions.\textsuperscript{55} Second, even if leaders have strong MMS preferences that exist independently from, or even counter to, domestic MMS preferences, leaders require the support of others to retain office and enact policy. Therefore, leaders must maintain sight of the political realities of their policy preferences, regardless of the strength of these preferences or their beliefs about the suitability of their states’ military manpower policies.

\textsuperscript{54} While “strong” versions of the statist approach assume that leaders formulate foreign policy in isolation from domestic political considerations, “weak” versions acknowledge a role, albeit small, for domestic political processes (Skidmore and Hudson 1993, 7-8). “Weak” statist approaches acknowledge the constraining influence of public opinion and other domestic political variables but claim that the impact of these factors depend largely on the structure of domestic political institutions and coalition-building processes rather than patterns of public attitude or the nature of specific issues (Risse-Kappan 1994).

\textsuperscript{55} Skidmore claims that domestic policies provoke group conflict and are thus more likely to sway politics than foreign policy (1993, 206). However, foreign policies dealing with issues as diverse as trade (Rogowski 1987; Rodrick 1997) and economic policies (Putnam 1988), expansionist military policies (Snyder 1991), and war (Levy 1988) also provoke group conflict. Similarly, MMS policies do not affect the interests of all domestic actors equally and are therefore likely to strongly influence the formulation of policy.
Because military manpower policy constitutes a component of the state’s overall security policy by determining how the state utilizes and fills the ranks of its armed forces, statist arguments suggesting that security, rather than political considerations, drive MMS reforms may offer a great deal of explanatory power. Statist arguments that view security as the ultimate driver of states’ military manpower policies suggest that changes in the nature of states’ security environments compel them to adopt new MMS-types that better support these changing security requirements. Therefore, I also examine the following alternative hypothesis:

**AH2: States reform their military manpower policies in response to changes in their security rather than domestic political environments.**

Notably, all major combatants in WWI and WWII relied on military conscripts to prosecute the war effort (Toronto 2005 and Broad 2006, 17). Prior to 1915, conscription was neither seriously debated nor considered by British politicians who “expected to pursue ‘business as usual’ in the case of its military manpower” (Flynn 2002, 30). However, by 1915 it had become clear to much of the British elite that they would have to implement an unpopular draft or fall desperately short of meeting the replacement requirements of the British Army. Once the prime minister finally introduced an MMS reform bill in 1916, the bill passed swiftly through Parliament and the British maintained compulsory military service throughout the remainder of the war (Flynn 2002, 33). Similarly, João Resende-Santos argues during periods of adverse shifts in states’ security environment, security imperatives lead states to emulate the military manpower policies of states with proven military effectiveness (2007, 12).

But while leaders certainly must secure the state before they can secure their domestic priorities, I expect cases where security considerations of MMS override the political to occur in a very limited number cases, namely those where states face existential threats such as extremely
hostile neighbors that challenge their territorial or political sovereignty or where states engage in total wars that require them to mobilize large segments of the population to support the war effort. And while security considerations may certainly influence domestic and elite MMS preferences under more favorable security conditions, I argue that these concerns do not serve as the primary driver of MMS reform for at least two reasons. First, given the contested relationship between MMS and military effectiveness, domestic actors and elites are unlikely to make close connections between MMS policies and the security of the state. The choice between conscription and volunteer force structures often results in a trade-off between quality of personnel, advanced technology and equipment, and force sizes (Congressional Budget Office 2007). However, this tradeoff is not as acute for states with advantages such as large population sizes or favorable demographics, high levels of national wealth, or superior human capital. Unlike states with less favorable resource endowments and economic capacity, leaders of these states may likely conclude that they have sufficient resources to accomplish their military requirements regardless of their MMS choices. Consequently, non-military considerations should ultimately determine the MMS policies of states whose capabilities or resource bases provide them with a wider range of viable MMS options.

Additionally, concerns for internal stability, rather than security from external threats, may also strongly influence states’ MMS choices. For many states, the greatest threats to their survival reside within their own borders. Stephen David (1991) and Michael Desch (1999) argue that the greatest threats to third-world countries are often internal, and Shemella (2006) notes

56 Like David Bell, I define “total war” as “a war involving the complete mobilization of a society’s resources to achieve the absolute destruction of the enemy, with all distinction erased between combatants and noncombatants” (2007, 7). I define “existential threats” as external threats that are so severe that they “require[e] emergency measures and justif[y] actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure” (Manners 2002, 11).
that because some states face little to no external threats, they instead arrange their security
apparatuses to best respond to internal threats.\footnote{Autocratic states may be more likely to respond to internal threats with military force than democracies with similar levels of domestic stability (Horowitz and Stam 2014), but concerns for internal stability influence military organization in autocracies and democracies alike (Shemella 2006). Scholars have long noted that states facing high risks of \textit{coup d'état} often employ “coup-proofing” measures designed to ensure loyalty among core groups of their security services (see for example Quinlivan 1999, Belkin 2005, Pilster and Bömelt 2011, and Girod 2015). Similar to “coup-proofing” strategies wherein the regime creates highly loyal paramilitary forces that serve to “check” conventional units (Quinlivan 1999), states with significant internal threats may benefit from having loyal units that consist entirely of volunteers and parallel units comprised of conscripts. In these types of “mixed-systems,” highly loyal volunteer units provide direct security for the regime and serve as a bulwark against potential coups, while conscripted units provide the bulk of the state’s defense against external threats. Because “coup-proofing” reduces integration of the various military service organizations and paramilitary units typically receive superior training and equipment at the expense of conventional units, “coup-proofing” may weaken the state’s ability to prosecute interstate wars (Quinlivan 1999). Nevertheless, adopting MMS-types that degrade the state’s ability to respond to external threats but improve its capacity to manage internal threats presents a sound policy choice for states with high levels of internal instability and significant coup risks.}

In addition to these statist arguments of MMS reform, I also explore whether other
domestic factors such as economic or socio-cultural considerations serve as the primary drivers
of MMS reforms. Because a state’s choice of MMS entails varying financial costs and affects the
relationship between the armed forces and society, changes in these “non-security”
considerations may also provide an impetus for MMS reform. Support for these alternative
approaches must demonstrate that economic or sociocultural factors influence leaders’ MMS
preferences independently from their effects on leaders’ concerns for political survival.
Alternatively, support for these approaches would include evidence demonstrating that leaders’
enacted MMS reforms in response to economic or socio-cultural factors despite expected
negative political consequences for doing so. Such evidence would present a strong challenge to
the theory outlined in this chapter and severely weaken its claim that MMS reform is “straight
politics.”
AH3: Rather than indirectly influencing MMS reforms through their effects on the domestic political environment, changes in the economic and sociocultural implications of states’ military manpower policies influence MMS reforms directly.

Existing accounts of MMS reform that privilege economic and sociocultural explanations have not demonstrated that these factors influence states’ MMS policies directly, rather than through their effects on domestic political processes. Instead, studies claiming to demonstrate independent, causal effects for sociocultural and economic variables have provided conflicting views of the influence of these factors and have controlled for few other potentially confounding factors, such as the political costs of enacting MMS reforms (e.g. Ross 1994; Mulligan and Shleifer 2005; Cohn and Toronto 2016). Consequently, I do not expect to find evidence suggesting that either economic or sociocultural factors serve as the primary drivers of MMS reform.

Finally, it is possible that no theory or model can accurately explain the process of MMS reform. The wide range of variables posited to influence MMS change suggests that the process of MMS reform is marked by equifinality. Although the model of domestic political change and MMS reform outlines two distinct causal pathways and suggests the conditions under which MMS change is most likely to occur, the complexity of MMS policy may preclude the possibility of drawing any meaningful conclusions about how and when MMS changes occur.

But even if there exists no parsimonious explanation of MMS reforms, studies of MMS change may still offer generalizations about this complex process and uncover factors or combinations of factors that make MMS change more likely. “Generalizations are hostage to exceptions” (Gavin Kennedy quoted in McPherson 1987, 201), but generalizations might be more useful than general theory when explaining complex phenomena with multiple causal
variables. Although any investigation that fails to produce a generalizable theory would perhaps result in less satisfying findings, “failing to learn everything is not tantamount to learning nothing” (Tetlock 2005, 9).

**METHODOLOGY**

To assess the model of domestic political change and MMS reform, I examine the MMS policies of three states over various time periods in the post-World War II era: Argentina (1983-1995); Qatar (1971-2018), and Sweden (1994-2018). Using process tracing and structured analyses guided by explicit research questions, these examinations assess the validity and scope conditions of the proposed model as well as several alternative explanations of MMS reform. Because this study acknowledges the complexity of manpower decisions and the potential that the process of policy reform is marked by equifinality, the use of process tracing also makes it possible to inductively determine new variables, hypotheses, and causal pathways that may not be captured in the proposed model or in previous studies.58

**Case Studies**

Selecting cases that differ in terms of factors thought to have causal significance and that represent various geopolitical regions helps to control for potentially confounding variables and may increase the generalizability of any findings. Therefore, this study examines cases from three regions that vary widely in their levels of economic development and output and have diverse geopolitical environments and political and sociocultural institutions. Chapter 3 examines Argentina’s transition from a conscription-based force structure to an AVF in the mid-

58 George and Bennett describe these research-building objectives as “theory testing” and “heuristic case studies” (2005, 74-76). They note that any single research design can accomplish both theory testing and heuristic goals as long as it makes careful use of evidence and does not attempt to make inferences in ways that are inappropriate to these goals.
1990s. Along with Peru, Argentina is one of just two countries in South America to undergo MMS reform in the post-WWII era. And although Peru perhaps better represents a typical South American country in terms of territorial size, demographics, and economic output, Argentina’s relative advantage in these factors, and as a consequence, its greater influence in regional and international organizations, makes it an interesting case to investigate.

The examination of Argentina’s MMS policy begins with the democratic election of Raúl Alfósín in 1983 and ends with the implementation of an AVF in 1995. Argentina’s adoption of the AVF is widely hailed as a direct response to public backlash against conscription following the murder of an Argentine conscript and thus should provide a “most likely case” for the theory. With a favorable security environment and demographics and a well-documented shift in domestic MMS preferences, Argentina provides a most likely case for the theory’s prediction that changes in MMS follow changes in domestic preferences. Therefore, any evidence suggesting that factors other than leaders’ responses to changing domestic MMS preferences would present a strong challenge to the theory’s predictions.

Chapter 5 explores recent MMS reforms in Qatar. The period of examination begins with an analysis of the domestic and foreign policy reforms under Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani (1996 to 2013) that transformed Qatar from a state that had “seldom entered the international consciousness” (Roberts 2017, 2) into a significant regional and international player that consistently “punches above its weight” (“A Bouncy Bantam” 2006) and ends with Qatar’s decision to implement a national service law in 2014. Under this new law, all male Qatari

59 Peru transitioned from a conscription-based MMS to an AVF in 2004 (Toronto 2005).
60 Omar Carrasco’s murder on March 6, 1994 precipitated the introduction of an AVF (see Hunter 1997, 464; Huser 2002, 154; Garaño 2010, 174).
between the ages of 18 and 35 must conduct training and military service for a period of three to four months.\textsuperscript{61}

I examine Qatar for multiple reasons. First, including a Gulf monarchy provides regional variation to my case selection and allows me to test whether the model applies to democracies and autocracies alike. Additionally, Qatar has become an increasingly important regional and international actor since the early 2000s.\textsuperscript{62} Its hyperactive foreign policy and immense financial resources challenge the traditional notion of small states as inconsequential actors whose vulnerability to more powerful states limits their policy choices and outcomes (Cooper and Momani 2011, 115). Thus, Qatar provides an opportunity to evaluate this notion of small states by examining its policy-making processes. Furthermore, Qatar provides an ideal case in which to evaluate the pathways to MMS reform alongside alternative arguments, which suggest security, economic, or demographic factors, rather than changing domestic or leader MMS preferences, explain why states reform their military manpower policies. Moreover, Qatar’s reforms present an interesting puzzle: why would a rentier state whose citizens are “more royal than the king” (Kamrava 2013, 159) revise the political compact and implement compulsory national service? Finally, the widespread use of English by Qatari elites and in official government documents and the location of Georgetown University’s campus in Qatar facilitate library and field research.

\textsuperscript{61} The service obligation is reduced from four to three months for recruits with university degrees (Article 7 of Law No. 5/2014 on National Service). Following two to three months of military training, recruits spend their final month of national service embedded in operational units (Barany 2018, 19).

\textsuperscript{62} Qatar has established a “diplomatic niche” (Kamrava 2013, 63) as a mediator and peace broker. Its proactive attempts at conflict resolution include high-profile mediation between Israel and Hamas (Cooper and Momani 2001, 121); Lebanon and Hezbollah (Fromherz 2012, 89); and negotiations between the United States, Great Britain, and Libya, which resulted in the dismantling of Libya’s nuclear program in 2003 (Fromherz 2012, 88). See Fromherz (2012, 88-90) for a summary of Qatar’s other notable mediation efforts.
Chapters 5 and 6 explore Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF in 2010 only to reinstate conscription in 2017. From 1901 to 2010, the *värnplikt* (translated as “defense duty”) subjected all Swedish males to military service. At the height of the Cold War, Sweden represented one of the world’s most militarized states and could place 850,000 men under arms in a country of just over 8 million people (Angstrom and Noreen 2017). But like other European states, Sweden’s security environment changed dramatically with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the primary mission of the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) shifted from national defense to support for operations abroad. Consequently, the size of the SAF shrank rapidly in the 1990s and 2000s, and conscription grew increasingly obsolete. But although Sweden adopted an AVF in 2010, it reinstated conscription just seven years later, citing problems with recruiting and the growing threat from Russia as justification for reform (Government Offices of Sweden, 2017).

Sweden provides an ideal case for several reasons. First, numerous works have examined the *värnplikt* and Sweden’s 2010 MMS reforms, making it a data rich case. Similarly, the open nature of Sweden’s politics and widely accessible government records facilitate the research of its most recent MMS reform. Finally, multiple factors to include socio-cultural, economic, and security considerations offer plausible explanations for Sweden’s MMS reforms and therefore allow for a rigorous test of the model alongside alternative explanations.

**Guiding Questions**

Previous scholarship has identified numerous factors that are purported to influence states’ MMS policies. The model of domestic political change and MMS reform guides each case study analysis; however, these analyses also fully explore alternative arguments that could

---

63 Sweden has a population of 10.1 million today (Statistics Sweden, SCB “Population Statistics”).
potentially better explain these MMS changes. To assess the proposed model and possible alternatives, each case study seeks to answer the following questions:

**Which leaders have the ability to affect the state’s military manpower policies, and which domestic actors form the leaders’ winning coalition?**

Each case study identifies the leaders and domestic actors whose agreement is necessary to implement MMS reforms. Because MMS preferences may vary widely among domestic actors and even members of the ruling elite, any study of the effects of preferences on policy implementation must clearly ascertain whose preferences matter. Therefore, each case study identifies the elites who have the authority to implement policy decisions or the ability to influence the preferences of those who do.\(^{64}\)

While these actors and groups vary widely across states with different political institutions, relevant political actors and groupings include leaders of mainstream political parties, key cabinet members such as secretaries of defense and finance, legislatures, bureaucracies, and members of governing coalitions or military juntas.\(^{65}\) Similarly, each case identifies the domestic actors whose support the influential members of the ruling elite require to remain in office. In other words, each case asks which domestic actors can influence the state’s military manpower policies by providing or withholding their political support.

---

\(^{64}\) This conception of elites closely resembles what Hermann (2001) describes as “decision units,” or members of the ruling elite “with the ability to commit the resources of society and, when faced with a problem, the authority to make a decision that cannot be reversed” (Hermann 2001, 48).

\(^{65}\) While the number of key decision-makers is likely to be smaller in non-democratic states than in democratic ones, the number of “veto players” should also be expected to vary across non-democratic states. For example, highly personalistic regimes such as North Korea likely contain far fewer veto players than states such as Iran where political power is dispersed among a complex array of theocratic rulers and elected officials.
What are the MMS preferences of leaders and relevant domestic actors, and do these preferences change over time?

After identifying the relevant leaders and domestic actors and political groupings whose support they require to remain in office, each case study determines the MMS preferences of these actors. Evidence of leaders’ responsiveness to changes in the MMS preferences of the selectorate such as corresponding changes in leaders’ MMS preferences or efforts to align the selectorate’s MMS preferences with their own would support the theory’s predictions. Therefore, each case study closely analyzes the MMS preferences of the selectorate to better understand if and how the selectorate’s MMS preferences shape the preferences of policy elite. Because leaders may hold policy preferences that diverge from those of their winning coalitions, each case examines leaders’ public and private statements to discern their MMS preferences.

Which beliefs influence leaders’ MMS preferences, and under what conditions do changes in leaders’ preferences result in MMS reforms?

Each case study also identifies leaders’ beliefs about the appropriateness or desirability of the state’s military manpower policies and seeks to determine which of these beliefs most strongly influences their MMS preferences. If changes in leaders’ beliefs result in changes in their MMS preferences, do concerns for political survival constrain their policy choices or lead them to influence the MMS preferences of their political supporters to more closely align them with their own?

Is the state’s choice of MMS a salient issue and does the salience of this issue shape leaders’ MMS preferences?
Each case study also examines the salience of military manpower policy issues. Evidence of issue salience includes factors such as the extent of media coverage related to military manpower issues, discourse in political speeches and election campaigns, and public displays of support for reforms such as statements by interest groups or political protests. Evidence of a positive relationship between issue salience and MMS reforms or any attempts by leaders to increase issue salience in support of their preferred policies would strongly support the theory’s predictions.

What are political leaders’ assessments of their geostrategic environments, and do they believe that particular forms of MMS are best suited to meet the state’s geostrategic requirements?

The theory of MMS reform outlined in this chapter predicts that political leaders promote MMS reforms only if they do not expect these reforms to jeopardize their ability to retain political office. Thus, even if leaders believe that other forms of MMS are better suited to meet the demands of their geostrategic environments, the theory posits that leaders only promote MMS reforms in response to changes in their geostrategic environments if they believe that such reforms will increase their likelihood of political survival. In contrast, statist theories posit that these geopolitical assessments influence military manpower policy, independent from their effects on the domestic political process. Therefore, each case study assesses the validity of these contradictory claims by identifying political leaders’ assessments of their geostrategic environments, observing how these assessments shape their understanding of the political consequences of their states’ military manpower policies, and concluding whether concerns for security or domestic politics ultimately drive MMS reforms.
What are the underlying and proximate causes of MMS reforms? In cases where reforms do not occur but are debated, what factors impede institutional reforms?

Because a multitude of domestic and international factors may influence states’ MMS policies, each case study examines a number of potentially causal factors to include economic and socio-cultural considerations, state characteristics, the nature of states’ geostrategic environments, and systemic constraints. Isolating leaders’ beliefs about the appropriateness or security implications of their states’ military manpower policies from their concerns for political survival can be problematic. As Ole Waever notes, unless the state first addresses issues that affect its survival as a political unit, “all other [issues] will become irrelevant” (1993, 53). Likewise, efforts to increase the state’s international legitimacy similarly help the regime fulfill its domestic legitimacy needs (Hudson et al. 1993, 57). Because economic, social, and security considerations affect political considerations and vice versa, each study seeks to distinguish the underlying causes of MMS reform from the proximate causes.

CONCLUSION

Theories of foreign policy often claim that ‘politics stops at the water’s edge’; however, domestic forces shape the nature of military institutions in all societies.

66 As Eliot Cohen notes, “few topics are more political…than that of systems of military service” (1985, 20). Since war serves as an extension of policy and the military itself is a state institution, perhaps Cohen’s claim should come as no surprise. Just as war represents “politics by other means,” I argue that a state’s choice of MMS is straight politics.

---

66 Samuel Huntington claims that as a state institution, the military is shaped by two forces: the “functional imperative” of defending the state from security threats and the “societal imperative arising from the social force, ideologies, and institutions dominant in society” (1957, 2).
The theory outlined in this chapter claims that states reform their MMS policies in response to changes in leader or domestic MMS preferences. Using the logic of political survival, the theory accounts for the incentives of office-seeking leaders as well as the institutional constraints that affect leaders’ ability to implement their preferred policies. In the following chapters, I assess the theory’s predictions by examining four case studies involving MMS reforms in Argentina, Qatar, and Sweden.

67 Domestic politics theories of foreign policy often emphasize domestic interests or domestic institutions (Schultz 2013, 481). The theory outlined in this chapter and MMS reforms emphasizes both.
CHAPTER 3
THE DEATH OF CONSCRIPT AND AN INSTITUTION: THE END OF ARGENTINA’S COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE

Omar Octavio Carrasco reported for basic military training in the Neuquén Province of Argentina on March 3, 1994. Three days later, the skinny and timid 19-year old conscript died from a brutal beating at the hands of his military instructors.¹ The news of Carrasco’s killing and attempted cover-up by military authorities led to an eruption of public protests and catapulted the issue of compulsory military service (CMS) into the national spotlight (Anderson 2016, 124; Waisbord 2004, 1080; 1093). Less than six months later, Argentina abruptly repealed CMS and replaced it with an all-volunteer force (AVF). As the Argentine daily Clarín noted, “[eliminating CMS] was not a planned policy nor the result of long parliamentary debates. What ended obligatory military service in Argentina was a fierce beating.”²

But how could a “fierce beating” produce such profound changes in the relations between the military and Argentine society and upend a 93-year-old institution? Carrasco was certainly not the first conscript to die at the hands of military cadre, and human rights groups had long called for a repeal of what they regarded as an unconstitutional institution that subjugated the rights of Argentine individuals to the state.³ Moreover, the Argentine public opposed CMS well before Carrasco’s death, and the Argentine National Congress had drafted multiple bills to

¹ “Una historia similar en la Argentina: el caso del soldado Carrasco,” Clarín, March, 26 1997.
² “Caso Carrasco: El crimen que cambió la vida de los argentines,” Clarín, August 29, 1999 (my translation).
³ See Garaño 2010 for a summary of the deaths of other conscripts and a history of efforts by the Frente Opositor del Servicio Militar Voluntario (FOSMO) and other human rights organizations to abolish CMS. In an article published by FOSMO, Eduardo Palacio, the father of a conscript who died at Camp Mayo on April 24, 1983 after being tortured by officers and NCOs “laments the recurring deaths of conscripts at the hands of military trainers and describes these “deaths and violence as the inevitable by-product of [CMS]” (1986, my translation).
modify or replace conscription since the end of military rule in 1983. Likewise, President Carlos Menem (1989-1999) favored an all-volunteer force well before he ended CMS through presidential decree (Huser 2002, 151; Pion-Berlin 1997, 133).

With such widespread support for MMS reform, why did the Argentine government not replace CMS before Carrasco’s death in 1994? In this chapter, I show how Carrasco’s killing and the media attention that followed strengthened domestic opposition to an already unpopular policy and led to the near immediate replacement CMS. The case of MMS reform in Argentina suggests that changes in the strength of domestic actors’ MMS preferences may be as consequential as changes in MMS preferences themselves.

In the sections that follow, I provide an overview of the history of CMS as well as a brief discussion of the history of the outsized role of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Argentina, or Fuerzas Armadas Argentinas (hereafter referred to simply as Fuerzas Armadas), in Argentine politics. Next, I identify the MMS preferences of domestic and government actors affected by Argentina’s military manpower policies. The scope of my analysis is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, I focus on the MMS preferences of domestic and government actors with the greatest ability to influence Argentina’s MMS policies: Presidents Alfonsín and Menem; the Argentine National Congress; the Fuerzas Armadas; human rights groups such as the Opposition Front against Compulsory Military Service, or el Frente Opositor al Servicio Militar Obligatorio (FOSMO), which focused specifically on the abolition of CMS; and the Argentine public. Next, I examine the factors that made CMS a salient political issue following Carrasco’s death before exploring other factors that may also account for MMS reforms in Argentina. Finally, I evaluate

---

4 Soprano claims that members of Congress proposed as many as 40 pieces of legislation that sought to reform, eliminate, or suspend conscription, but as he notes, none of these bills were even debated (see Soprano 2016, footnote 14 and Garaño 2010, 185).
these arguments and analyze Argentina’s MMS reforms using the model outlined in the previous chapter. I conclude that while Argentina’s replacement of CMS with an all-volunteer force closely resembles the first pathway to MMS reform (change in domestic MMS preferences), the case also suggests that weak changes in leader or domestic MMS preferences are insufficient to generate MMS reform.

**FROM CMS TO SMV: ARGENTINA’S MMS REFORM IN CONTEXT**

Although the 1853 Constitution allowed for compulsory military service, the Argentine military relied mainly on provincial militias and volunteer soldiers until 1901. Following increasing tensions with regional rivals and efforts to modernize the *Fuerzas Armadas* by Army General and Minister of War, Pablo Riccheri, Congress passed Ley 4.031, which established military service for all Argentine males between the ages of 23 and 45. Founded on the concept of *pueblo en armas* (Lafferriere and Soprano 2014, 17), the new “Riccheri Law” both modernized and expanded the *Fuerzas Armadas*, which became a cultural melting pot following waves of immigration from Europe. Reforms in 1967 modified the terms of service and called for a lottery of all eligible Argentine youth to determine who would serve; however, CMS remained a central feature of Argentine life until 1994.

---

5 See Lewis (2001, Chapters 3 and 4), the “Libro Blanco de la Defensa” (2010, Chapter IV Sections 1-3), and Norden (1996a, 158-163) for discussions of the military’s role in the foundation of the Argentine state. Article 21 of the 1853 Argentine Constitution (reinstated in 1983 and revised in 1994) states that “every Argentine citizen is obliged to bear arms in defense of his country and of this Constitution, in accordance with such laws as the Congress may enact to that effect and with such decrees of the National Executive” (my translation).


7 High levels of immigration throughout the late 19th and early 20th Centuries fueled a demographic transformation. Between 1871 and 1914, over three million immigrants, mainly from European nations, permanently settled in Argentina (Lewis 2001, 55). Guillermo Lafferriere and Germán Soprano argue that the 1901 CMS law served as “a device of nationalization and social control…in the framework of a national defense policy founded on the concept of the *pueblo en armas*” (2014, 17). (My translation.)

8 The Military Service Law of 1967 (Ley No. 17.531) significantly modified the Riccheri Law, establishing a minimum (one year) and maximum (two years) duration for compulsory military service.
A full comprehension of the significance of Argentina’s MMS reform requires an understanding of the outsized role that the *Fuerzas Armadas* played throughout much of the country’s history. Following the consolidation of the Argentine Confederation in 1862, the *Fuerzas Armadas* supported the creation of a modern, nationalist state by extending the government’s influence into territories and provinces that resisted its authority (Lewis 2001, 50-52; Norden 1996a, 159). Throughout much of the 20th Century, the *Fuerzas Armadas* assumed a prominent role in Argentine politics. In its perceived role as “guardian of the nation” (Norden 1996a, 160), the military forcefully removed every democratically elected leader from 1930-1976 (Pion-Berlin 1997, 46). Between 1950 and 1976 alone, the military attempted a total of 18 *coup d’état*, resulting in seven regime changes.

The legacy of the *Fuerzas Armadas* in the founding of the Argentine state as well as its history of active intervention in Argentine politics led the military to place itself “somewhat above the nation and the state” (Norden 1996a, 160). But although military intervention and recurring periods of autocratic rule had become a feature of Argentine politics, the military government known as *el Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (The Process of Reorganization), or simply the *Proceso*, oversaw unprecedented levels of corruption and economic mismanagement and violently suppressed real and imagined leftist groups. The *Proceso* government (1976 to 1983) engaged in “unprecedented levels of corruption” (Pion-Berlin 1997, 5) and enacted economic reforms that led to a dramatic reduction in real wages, stagnant economic growth, significant declines in industrial and manufacturing output, ballooning

---

(Article 12) and an annual lottery of all 18-year-old males to determine those who would serve (Article 33).

9 Prior to the consolidation of the Argentine Confederation, sanctioned by the Constitution of 1853, Argentina remained a confederation of provinces that provided for their own defense (“*Libro Blanco de la Defensa*” 2010, 57-58).

10 Data from Powell and Thyne (2011).
unemployment and foreign debt, and a rate of inflation exceeding 450 percent (Andersen 1993, 306; see also Pion-Berlin 1997, 55 and Norden 1996a, 67). Additionally, the military regime precipitated a disastrous war with Great Britain over the Falkland/Malvinas Islands and waged a violent countersubversive war to contain any and all sources of domestic dissidence. During this so-called “Dirty War,” between 9,000 and 30,000 Argentineans were killed or simply “disappeared.”

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the legacy of the Proceso engendered an unparalleled level of opposition to military forms of rule and corresponding support for democratic institutions. Thus, although changes to Argentina’s MMS policies occurred more than a decade after the end of military rule, these reforms cannot be understood independently of the fragile civil-military relations left in its wake. Following the return to democracy, the Argentine National Congress proposed numerous pieces of legislation to repeal or modify CMS. However, strong opposition from the military and the Ministry of Defense would ensure that these bills were not debated in Congress (Garaño 2010, 185). In August of 1994, just five months after Carrasco’s murder, President Carlos Menem issued a presidential decree replacing CMS with an AVF. Congress debated its own proposals for MMS reform the following month and approved the Law of

---

11 The 1984 report by the Comisión Nacional Sobre la Desaparición de Personas, or CONADEP, estimated a total of 9,000 disappearances during the “Dirty War.” This figure is significantly lower than the number estimated by many human rights groups (Huser 2002, 95; Norden 1996b, 75).
12 A 1986 poll indicates that the Argentine public ranked the military as one of the state’s least prestigious institutions, well behind all branches of government and political parties (Latin American Regional Report, Southern Cone, RS-87—01, 5 February 1987).
13 See Pion-Berlin (1997, 54-59) for a discussion of the Proceso and its effect on civil-military relations in Argentina.
14 See also Anderson (2016, 69) and Lafferriere and Soprano (2014, 22-24).
15 Decreto Nacional 1.537/1994 suspended compulsory service and outlined the eligibility requirements for volunteer service members.
Voluntary Military Service (Ley 24.429/1994), or Servicio Militar Voluntario (SMV), that December.\(^\text{16}\)

**ACTORS AND MMS PREFERENCES**

As a constitutional republic, an array of government and non-government actors have the ability to influence policy in Argentina. In this section, I identify the actors most likely to affect Argentina’s MMS policy and discuss their MMS preferences and contributions to (or efforts to obstruct) reform. Specifically, I analyze the MMS preferences and influence of both presidents in the post-*Proceso* era, the National Congress, the *Fuerzas Armadas*, human rights groups, the media, and the general public. I begin my analysis with a discussion of the MMS preferences and contributions of Presidents Raúl Alfonsín and Carlos Menem. Presidents in Argentina hold a great deal of executive power, so the adoption of any policy such as MMS reform cannot occur without the support of the president (see Norden 1996a, 85-87; 91).\(^\text{17}\)

*President Raúl Alfonsín*

Speaking at a press conference in 1983, Presidential Candidate Raúl Alfonsín expressed his belief that “a small, professional and well-equipped army” would best support the nation’s defense and political needs.\(^\text{18}\) Yet while his remarks alluded to major reforms of MMS or other

\(^{\text{16}}\) Congress passed the Law of Voluntary Military Service (Law 24.429/1994) on December 14, 1994 (see the *Diario de Sesiones de Cámara de Diputados*, September 14, 1994, hereafter cited as DSCD, for a summary of the debates surrounding this legislation). The law left open the possibility of conscription in the event of national emergencies but required that any reintroduction of conscription be subject to congressional approval (Article 19). Additionally, the law outlined provisions for exceptions for conscientious objectors (Article 26) and opened service to women for the first time (Article 8).

\(^{\text{17}}\) Section 99 of the Argentine Constitution confers the President with control of the Armed Forces to include their organization and distribution. In the immediate aftermath of the *Proceso*, Congress passed legislation that strengthened civilian control of the military and granted the President powers over the functions previously held by the chiefs of each branch of service (Law 23.023/1983, Article 12).

\(^{\text{18}}\) “Alfonsín Proposes ‘Drastic’ Cut in Military Budget,” *Noticias Argentinas*, 15 July 1983 (FBIS-LAM-83-139, B2.) In a separate speech to the annual Armed Forces Banquet in 1985, Alfonsín called for troop reductions and cuts in military spending to produce a military “whose size and preparation [would] be in
defense policies and Alfosín had previously been a member of a human rights organization whose agenda included the abolition of CMS, no major military reorganization occurred during his presidency (Huser 2002, 65). The absence of any attempt to reform CMS seems even more puzzling given the level of public opposition to conscription and campaign pledges by members of Alfosín’s own party to implement MMS reforms (Garaño 2010, 184).

At least three considerations may account for why President Alfosín did not seek to implement MMS reforms. First, although he entered office with a great deal of political capital and a “unprecedented window of opportunity” to implement defense reforms (Pion-Berlin 1997, 76), even a strong president presiding over a weak congress and even weaker military faces limits to what he can accomplish while in office. For Alfosín the need to strengthen the republic’s nascent democratic institutions and account for past human rights abuses took

19 During the Proceso, Alfosín had been a member of the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, or APDH) whose agenda included the abolishment of CMS (Garaño 2010, 174).

20 A 1983 survey found that 63 percent of Argentineans wanted to do away with conscription (cited in DSCD 1994, 2169). Although polling between 1985 and 1994 found less opposition to CMS, the results suggest that CMS remained highly unpopular with Argentineans.

21 Following years of economic mismanagement, horrid crimes against humanity, and the Fuerzas Armada’s disastrous defeat by the British in a war of its own making, the “balance of power had shifted decisively in favor of President Alfosín (Pion-Berlin 1991, 550). Given the Fuerzas Armada’s history of intervening in Argentine politics, Alfosín recognized that this balance of power could easily shift back towards the military, and he had an “urgent need to accomplish all that [he] could in the short term” (Pion-Berlin 1991, 549). This recognition of the limits of his authority is perhaps best exemplified by his approach to his top policy priority—accounting for past human rights violations. Fearing retaliation from the military, Alfosín originally sought to try only a few officers that had committed the most egregious crimes (Gleijeses 1988, 6; Pion-Berlin 1997, 82). In the end, Alfosín pursued a course of action that would “steer between a wholesale indictment of the armed forces on the one hand and amnesty on the other (Pion-Berlin 1997, 77).

As the legal process slowly unfolded over the course of the next three years, Alfosín recognized that the proceedings could not go on indefinitely. On December 24, 1984, Congress narrowly approved Alfosín’s favored “Punto Final,” or Final Point, bill. Although Alfonso touts the legislation as the “culmination of a policy” to achieve justice and reconciliation, human rights groups and the Argentine public viewed it as concession to the Fuerzas Armadas (Pion-Berlin 1997, 97-98).
precedence over policies to modernize, reorganize, and professionalize the military.\textsuperscript{22} In response to these demands, Alfonsín ensured that the leaders of the \textit{Proceso} and those officers who had issued orders leading to the deaths of civilians were held accountable for past crimes.\textsuperscript{23}

Additionally, he stripped the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} of much of its power by elevating the role of the civilian Ministry of Defense and establishing a clear hierarchy of authority from the president to the military chain of command.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{22} Though as David Pion-Berlin notes, Alfonsín’s focus on these “pragmatic” considerations increased during his second term of office when the public’s “recollecion of the \textit{Proceso} horrors receded from view” (1997, 76).

\textsuperscript{23} Just three days after assuming office, Alfonsín issued an executive decree calling for the trial of nine members of the Proceso government (Huser 2002, 93). Recognizing that the need to hold others in the military accountable without losing its support entirely, Alfonsín limited human rights trials to two types of offenders, those who had issued orders resulting in the commission of a crime and those who had exceeded their orders (Pion-Berlin 1991, 561; Anderson 2016, 56). Those who had simply followed orders would not face trial. Although the absolution of some military members connected with the crimes of the \textit{Proceso} angered some human rights groups, the trials of senior leaders and those who committed some of the most heinous crimes of the “Dirty War” demonstrated the Alfonsín government’s commitment to holding the military accountable for its past human rights violations (Anderson 2016, 69-70).

Reforms to the Military Code of Justice represented one of the most significant legislative achievements of Alfonsín’s administration. This 1984 law permitted the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to try human rights violators for offenses conducted during the “Dirty War.”\textsuperscript{23} More importantly, the law granted the Attorney General authority to exercise actions on these cases and “revoked the law of self-amnesty” that had allowed the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} to hold its members accountable before the law.\textsuperscript{23} The law also permitted the formation of the National Commission for the Disappearance of Persons (\textit{Comisión Nacional Sobre la Desaparición de Personas}, or CONADEP) which prepared 1086 files for use in cases denouncing violators of human rights abuses (Huser 2002, 95) and whose report, \textit{Nunca Más}, exposed the methods by which the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} had abducted and tortured its victims.

\textsuperscript{24} Because justice and reconciliation could not occur without subordinating the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} to the new democratic and economic order, Alfonsín and his Defense Minister, Raúl Borrás, sought to “reig[n] in the power of the military” (Huser 2002, 57). The 1853 Constitution established the President as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, yet the history of military intervention in Argentine politics suggests civilian control of the military rarely existed in practice. Through a series of decrees and legislation, Alfonsín erected a hierarchical structure that asserted the authority of the president over the commanders of the service branches, reorganized the military command under the authority of the Ministry of Defense, and elevated the \textit{Estado Mayor Conjunto}, or Argentina’s Joint Chiefs of Staff (Pion-Berlin 1991, 553; Huser 2002, 54-55). Together, these provisions served to strengthen the hand of the executive branch and weaken the authority and autonomy previously enjoyed by each branch of service (Pion-Berlin & Arceneaux 1998, 647; Pion-Berlin 1991, 553).
Reductions in the size and budget of the Fuerzas Armadas provided the most visible symbol of Alfonsín’s efforts to erode the material and social power of the Fuerzas Armadas.\textsuperscript{25} In his first year in office, Alfonsín approved a defense budget that was 40 percent less than the previous year’s budget (Huser 2002, 76). Annual military spending continued to decline throughout Alfonsín’s presidency, falling from a high of $2.34 billion in 1983 to just over $790 million in 1989.\textsuperscript{26} Similarly, the size of the Fuerzas Armadas was reduced by nearly 50 percent during Alfonsín’s presidency.\textsuperscript{27} These cuts had the greatest effect on the Army, which saw its manpower fall from 96,000 in 1983 to 53,000 in 1987.\textsuperscript{28}

Second, although a transition to an AVF would have aligned with Alfonsín’s stated goal of creating a “small, professional” military, the Alfonsín administration did not view the replacement of CMS as essential to achieving these policy priorities. Given the high cost of implementing an AVF, Alfonsín’s administration focused on shrinking rather than professionalizing the Fuerzas Armadas. Alfonsín’s defense minister expressed the administration’s opposition to a professional volunteer force stating: “In an economic situation like ours, it is very difficult to build a fully professional armed forces…. Personally, I believe that our CMS can be improved and that before

\textsuperscript{25} Gross economic mismanagement by the Proceso government had left the Argentine economy in a state of disrepair. In 1983, the state’s foreign debt totaled $45 billion, the inflation rate exceeded 600 percent per year, and real incomes had fallen below 1970 levels (Gleijeses 1988, 5). Military spending had grown to unsustainable levels during the government of the Proceso, and the foreign debt of the military alone accounted for nearly 8% of total national debt (“Defense Ministry Issues Report on Budget,” Noticias Argentinas, 19 April 1985, FBIS-LAT-85-076).

\textsuperscript{26} National Military Capabilities (NMC) Version 5.0. All figures represent current U.S. dollars. Rampant inflation during the period of analysis makes it difficult to measure military spending with a high degree of accuracy; however, NMC Version 5.0 uses a seven-year moving average to account for short-term fluctuations.

\textsuperscript{27} IISS Military Balance. Troop sizes fell from a high of 180,500 in 1983 to 73,000 in 1985 before recovering slightly to 95,000 in 1989.

\textsuperscript{28} Herbert Huser notes that these reductions were “motivated much more by political considerations than military ones” (2002, 63). Alfonsín viewed the Army “as all that was wrong with the Argentine armed forces: oversized, overfunded, wrongly committed to fighting internal wars, and ominously deployed in and around major cities” (Pion-Berlin 1997, 121).
moving from one system to the other, it is necessary to carry out a good analysis of the recruitment costs.”

Finally, Alfosín faced limits to how far he could oppose the military. The combined effects of prolonged human rights trials and economic austerity measures designed to curb the material and social power of the military led to an adversarial relationship between the Alfosín administration and the military (Pion-Berlin 1991, 563; Norden 1996a, 79; Huser 2002, 64). Rather than create a “smaller, but better, force,” Alfosín’s military reforms created a “smaller, bitter one” (Huser 2002, 87).

Increasing tensions between the Fuerzas Armadas and the Alfosín administration led to an assassination attempt against Alfosín in 1984 (Andersen 1993, 310) and multiple military uprisings during his final years in office. Protesting the human rights trials and draconian cuts to military personnel, a group of military officers and non-commissioned officers seized military posts throughout Argentina during the Easter holidays in 1987. With few troops willing to oppose the rebels, the Easter Week uprising largely achieved its demands: the replacement of the army chief of staff and an end to the military trials (Norden 1996a, 128-130; Norden 1996b, 77). And although subsequent rebellions in December 1987 and January 1988 achieved less success (Norden 1996a, 130-134; Norden 1996b, 74-75), the uprisings illustrated the deep animosity between Alfosín and much of the Fuerzas Armadas as well as the constraining influence of the armed forces over its democratic masters. If the scales of power had hung decisively in Alfosín’s favor at the beginning of his administration, they “had tipped back in favor of the armed forces” during his final years in office (Pion-Berlin 1997, 108).

Efforts to block proposals for MMS reform illustrate the limits of Alfonsín’s ability to oppose the Fuerzas Armada’s interests. Under pressure from the military, Alfonsín’s administration blocked a proposal from its own Radical Party to allow for conscientious objections to military service (Ferrari 1989). Likewise, the Ministry of Defense successfully blocked a June 1988 legislative proposal to reduce CMS and allow for alternative forms of service (Garaño 2010, 185).

These three considerations offer explanations for why Alfonsín did not seek to repeal CMS as part of larger defense reforms. But regardless of the reasons for his decision not to eliminate CMS, Alfonsín set the conditions for his successor to do so with ease. The failures of Alfonsín’s economic policies swept Menem into office and gave his Peronist Party broad political support and control of both chambers of Congress (Morgenstern and Manzetti 2003, 156). Moreover, Alfonsín’s adversarial relationship with the Fuerzas Armadas and his insistence on holding its members accountable for human rights abuses made Menem the “unofficial military favorite” in the 1989 elections and provided him “some breathing room in terms of civil-military relations” (Huser 2002, 125). Thus, when Menem put his weight decidedly behind MMS reform, he met minimal resistance from a military that had so vigorously defended CMS during the Alfonsín years.

*President Carlos Menem*

By the summer of 1989, the Argentine economy had “careen[ed] into complete disorder” (Echegaray and Elordi 2012, 188). After failing to reset the economy and amidst growing

---

30 Ferrari claims that Alfonsín’s administration blocked reforms that “would have irritated the military.”

31 Although Menem faced resistance by some factions of the military, the Fuerzas Armadas largely regarded him as less “anti-military” than Alfonsín (Huser 2002, 125).

32 In July of 1989, consumer price increases approached 200 percent (Echegaray and Elordi 2012, 188).
tensions with a resurgent military, Alfonsín resigned from office before the end of his second term. Not surprisingly, his Radical Party suffered badly in the 1989 presidential election, handing Carlos Menem’s Peronist Party a resounding victory and control of both chambers of the legislature. Although Menem entered office with a desire to replace CMS with an AVF, economic realities constrained his ability to implement MMS reforms until Carrasco’s killing thrust the issue into the national spotlight.

Menem placed little emphasis on military priorities during the initial years of his presidency. As Admiral Emilio Osses, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1989 to 1992, noted in July 1993, “The president has many other problems to resolve and at this moment defense is not a priority” (quoted in Pion-Berlin 1997, 126). Economics overshadowed other policy issues on Menem’s agenda. As a consequence, Menem’s military policies reflected two goals: reduce the cost of the defense budget and ensure that the Fuerzas Armadas would “not cause political problems” (Huser 2002, 135).

In a show of good faith to the Fuerzas Armadas, Menem moved quickly to end the review of past human rights abuses and issued pardons for 280 military officers accused of violations (Huser 2002, 126). Additionally, Menem pardoned many of those who had been convicted of crimes under the Alfonsín administration (Huser 2002, 132). By ending most of the remaining investigations, “President Menem closed the door on this legacy of the past” (Perelli

---

33 High expectations for economic recovery after the return to democracy had dwindled by the end of Alfonsín’s second term. A May 1984 poll showed overwhelming optimism in the general state of affairs of the country; by June 1988, nearly 75 percent of those polled disagreed with the notion that things were getting better (Pion-Berlin 1997, 64). By the end of Alfonsín’s term of office, Argentina had experienced 15 years with no economic growth (Anderson 2016, 126).

34 Whereas Alfonsín had sought to reign in the power of the military and account for its human rights abuses, Menem emphasized economic reforms (Anderson 123; Huser 2002, 126). Consequently, Menem placed little emphasis on defense and military issues (Huser 2002, 139), and the economics ministry often had “the final word” on defense matters (Pion-Berlin 1997, 133).
and Rial 1996, 62) and defused the crisis in civil-military relations that had plagued the last years of the Alfonsín administration.

But although Menem was viewed by the military as more benign than his predecessor (Norden 1996a, 153), he continued the budget cuts and troop reductions that had helped to foment animosity between Alfonsín and the Fuerzas Armadas. In two separate addresses to military audiences in 1990, Menem told service members that they would have to make sacrifices. His warning proved prophetic as extreme inflation and practically no investment in defense spending led to such significant cuts in military pay that even many officers were required to seek additional employment (Huser 2002, 143-144; 152). When combined with a dramatic decline in the size of the Fuerzas Armadas, Menem’s defense policies resulted in a hollowed cadre force with inadequate numbers of troops to man units or field equipment.

These inefficiencies in military manning, as well as Argentina’s increasing need for an expeditionary professional force to support peacekeeping operations, caused manpower issues to fall under intense scrutiny by the middle of Menem’s first administration (Huser 2002, 153; Pion-Berlin 1997, 132-133). Nevertheless, Menem’s economic priorities took precedence over his desire to reform the state’s military manpower policies. In 1992, Menem’s defense minister argued for increased defense spending by appealing to Menem’s desires to increase Argentina’s support for international peacekeeping operations and transition to an AVF (Pion-Berlin 1997, 132-133).

---

35 Although a bitter faction of the military launched a coup attempt in December 1990, this action had little support among the broader military who acted decisively to put down the uprising (Huser 2002, 129-130). Following this final rebellion, Huser argues that the “faction-distressed military was no longer a political actor to the extent that elements were openly challenging the constitutional arrangements or the extant military hierarchy” (2002, 133).


Despite the steep projected costs of implementing an AVF, Menem’s economic minister now found himself on the losing side of the MMS issue. After reviewing the military’s proposal for increased salaries to support the SMV, Menem’s economic minister asked: “From where do you want me to get 1.1 billion pesos?”

---

38 The economic minister held a considerable degree of power in Menem’s administration. Because Menem believed that the political viability of his administration could be best attained by achieving economic stability, the economics ministry most often had “the final word” concerning proposed military reforms (Pion-Berlin 1997, 133).


Menem suspended conscription through presidential decree on August 29th. In a speech at the annual Armed Forces comradeship dinner in July 1994, Menem discussed the impending abolition of CMS. After calling on all Argentineans to “close the breach” that had once separated the Fuerzas Armadas from civilians, he described the decision to replace CMS with the SMV as “one of [his] administrations most important [decisions].”

The Argentine National Congress

The Argentine Constitution grants Congress the authority to “establish the Armed Forces in times of peace and war and to create rules for their organization and government.” However, Congress’ influence is weak relative to that of the President, and it rarely plays a significant role in defense policymaking (Huser 71; Pion-Berlin 1997, 134-136). Indeed, most substantive changes to defense policy during the period of examination came through decree.

But despite Congress’ marginalized role in the realm of defense policymaking and divisions within the legislative branch regarding the issue of CMS, Congress presented 40 bills related to MMS reform between 1983 and 1987 alone (Soprano 2016, footnote 14). Although much of this legislation addressed the treatment of conscripts or sought to create exceptions to mandatory service for conscientious objectors, other bills set their sights squarely on the repeal of CMS. During Alfonsín’s administration, the Senate Defense Committee led by Radical Senator Ricardo Lafferriere drafted a bill to eliminate CMS. Nevertheless, divisions within the Radical

---

43 Constitution of Argentina, Section 75, Article 27.
44 See Pion-Berlin for a discussion of the informational and institutional weakness of the Argentine Congress regarding one of its most important powers—the power of the purse (1997-133-135). With regard to defense policy, Huser argues that “Congress was rarely a player in defense matters of any sort” and that most significant defense reforms occurred “under ministerial authority by executive order” (Huser 2002, 71). See Morgenstern and Manzetti for a discussion of the lack of legislative oversight under the Alfonsín and Menem administrations (2003, 155-161).
Party and pressure from the military ensured that the bill never emerged from committee (Anderson 2016, 69). But while the institutional weakness of Congress and divisions within the legislative branch prevented Congress from enacting MMS reforms in the decade following the return to democracy, the killing of Carrasco eroded any barriers to reform.

At the same time President Menem commissioned the military to draw up a proposal for MMS reform, Congress began to formulate legislation for the repeal of CMS. Deliberations in the lower chamber of Congress in September 1994 illustrate the effects of Carrasco’s killing and ensuing public protests on the nature of the MMS debate. Deputies made emotional appeals to resolve the historical and structural problems of conscription, referring to CMS as a “regime of slavery” that violated the individual liberties and lives of those subject to military draft (Diario de Sesiones de Cámara de Diputados 1994, hereafter cited as DSCD 1994, 2200-2201). Others cited changes in society, the demands of modern warfare, the inherent inequities and inefficiencies of the draft, and the role of conscription in past human rights abuses as justification for MMS reform.

But while, the deputies offered various reasons for reforming the state’s MMS policies, virtually all of their statements acknowledged the decisive role of Carrasco’s death in eliminating barriers to MMS reform. In his remarks, Deputy Polino remarked: “it is certain that this project has diverse origins. It is also true that if this unfortunate event that captivated the public opinion, the assassination of Carrasco, hadn’t happened, maybe today this unanimous body would not

45 While deputies cited diverse reasons for reform to include changes in demographics, social considerations, and military requirements, nearly all deputies recognized the significance of Carrasco’s death in uniting efforts to reform CMS. For example, while Deputy Kessler cited societal changes and the inequities and military inefficiencies of the draft in her appeal to end CMS, she urged her colleagues “not forget the problems that we have had in the Republic of Argentina, one of which we can mention here—a young man who died in the province of Nequén. This has put the final emphasis that we need so that the referendum can be realized and transform and begin a third era” (DSCD 1994, 2181). (My translation.)
exist and this project would not see the light of day.”  

Similarly, Deputy Víctor Peláez acknowledged that “there were signs [of the failure of CMS], but it took Carrasco’s death to bring us to where we are today.” Acknowledging the catalyzing effect of Carrasco’s murder on the MMS debate, he suggested that Congress name the bill that would emerge from the chamber, the “Carrasco Law.”

The proposal to replace CMS did not receive unanimous support; however, the records of these deliberations suggest that the deputies who opposed the reforms acknowledged the political pressures that Carrasco’s death had generated. Before expressing his reservations about repealing CMS, Deputy Álvaro Alsogaray suggested that the only difference between the current proposal and previous bills calling for the elimination of CMS was the “shock” and “public antipathy” to the military caused by Carrasco’s killing. In an expression of what he saw as the “anti-military attitude” of the proposed legislation and contempt for those who supported it, he accused the proponents of the legislation as taking advantage of Carrasco’s death to promote a policy based on political calculations. Similarly, one deputy described the reforms as an “electoral strategy” (DSCD 1994, 2193) and another described them as “an impulse of the president” (DSCD 1994, 2192-2193).

Congress emerged from these debates with a reform bill and passed the Voluntary Service Act in December of that year. Like Menem’s decree before it, the bill did not repeal

---

46 DSCD 1994, 2187. (My translation.)
47 DSCD 1994, 2201 (my translation). Deputy Peláez claimed that 100 of his colleagues had put forth a total of 17 projects calling for MMS reform. He suggested that Carrasco’s killing distinguished the current legislative proposal from previous attempts at reform.
48 Ibid.
49 Deputy Álvaro Alsogaray accused those who supported MMS reforms of “trying to take advantage of [a] proposal that would undoubtedly be attractive for today’s youth” (DSCD 1994, 2188). (My translation.)
50 Although the Voluntary Service Act (Law 24.429/1994) did not go into effect until January 10, 1995, the legislation was completed on December 14, 1994.
CMS; rather it suspended the draft except for exceptional cases in which the quotas established annually by the President could not be fulfilled.\textsuperscript{51} Still, the legislation redefined the nature of military service in Argentina and upended an institution that had been a part of Argentine life for over 90 years. After multiple failed attempts to reform the state’s unpopular MMS policies, the killing of Carrasco and resulting public opposition to CMS permitted reforms that had previously been unattainable.

\textit{Las Fuerzas Armadas}

Although some reformed-minded officers drafted proposals to reform CMS after its disastrous performance in the Malvinas War (“Plan to Change Compulsory Service Eyed,” \textit{Clarín}, 4 August 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-155, 29), the majority of the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} strongly opposed reforming CMS.\textsuperscript{52} Consequently, the military resisted changes to the state’s MMS policies despite efforts by both presidents, Congress, and other domestic actors to reform them. Only when domestic opposition to CMS grew too great for political leaders to ignore were the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} unable to oppose their efforts to replace CMS with the SMV.

Seven years of inept rule marked by economic mismanagement, state-sponsored terrorism, and a misguided war of choice over the Malvinas severely undermined the once powerful position that the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} occupied in Argentine politics (Pion-Berlin 1991, Law 24.429/1994, Article 19.\textsuperscript{52} Large sectors of the military remained resistant to reform. An article in an Argentine military journal written by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army in 1983 illustrates the level of antipathy the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} held towards reforming CMS. In the article, the Chief describes critics of CMS as “ill-informed” and charges that they haven’t “studied the subject with the seriousness that it deserves” (“Conscripción o fuerza de voluntarios,” \textit{Revista de Educación}, Annex 40). (My translation.) While acknowledging that many aspects of CMS could be improved, he argues that reforming a policy under the “Malvinas syndrome” is irrational and would be damaging to the country. He concludes by cautioning that experiences of other countries should be taken into account and warns of the perils of implementing an AVF: lack of discipline, increased costs, and the danger of citizens becoming disinterested in national defense.
551; Pion-Berlin 1997, 60-62; Pion-Berlin and Arceneaux 1998, 634) and gave civilian leaders a wide degree of latitude to enact changes in defense policy that further weakened the *Fuerzas Armadas*. Efforts to hold human rights violators accountable for past crimes not only sought justice and reconciliation for the victims and their families, but also the subordination of the military to civilian rule. Likewise, defense reforms such as the 1983 Reorganization of Executive Power (Ley 23.023), 1988 Law of National Defense (Ley 23.554), and 1992 Interior Security Law (Ley 24.059) curbed the military’s power and ensured that civilians maintained control of the state’s defense policy.53

If the strength of an instrument of the state is based on the size of its share of the national budget, the drastic reductions in military spending left the *Fuerzas Armadas* in a near moribund state. Table 3.1 below depicts the sharp reduction in military spending following the collapse of the *Proceso* government in 1983. Although civil-military relations improved under Menem, levels of military spending (when accounting for inflation) declined even further despite the general expansion of Argentina’s economy.

---

53 The *Fuerzas Armadas* controlled Argentina’s defense policy throughout much of its history (Huser 2002, 133). Consequently, both the Alfonsín and Menem governments enacted reforms to weaken the power of the *Fuerzas Armadas* and ensure civilian control of the military. Among the many reforms of the Alfonsín era that curbed the influence of the *Fuerzas Armadas*, none were perhaps as significant as the 1988 Law of National Defense (Law 23.554/1988), which annulled the previous Defense Law of 1966 that had allowed for a broad interpretation of national security. This broad legal definition of national security had led to the securitization of Argentine politics as well as a “rationale for permeant war without borders against an ideological enemy that would require the armed forces to react to internal as well as external threats” (Pion-Berlin 1991, 565-566). The new defense law delimited the role of the *Fuerzas Armadas* strictly to external threats against the state. Of equal importance, the law notably excluded the *Fuerzas Armadas* from the list of principals of the National Defense Council charged with assisting and advising the President on defense matters (Article 14).
Table 3.1 – Military Spending, 1983-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Spending in 2015 USD (x1000)</th>
<th>Change from Previous Year</th>
<th>Percentage of GDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>13,764</td>
<td>14.34%</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>10,799</td>
<td>-21.53%</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>9,978</td>
<td>-7.61%</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>9,938</td>
<td>-0.40%</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>9,913</td>
<td>-0.26%</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>9,909</td>
<td>-0.04%</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>8,054</td>
<td>-18.71%</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5,470</td>
<td>-32.09%</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>5,489</td>
<td>-0.34%</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>5,197</td>
<td>-5.31%</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4,904</td>
<td>-5.64%</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>5,247</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5,144</td>
<td>-1.98%</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SIPRI

As a result of massive reductions in military spending, once generous salaries fell by 25 percent in the first year of Alfonsín’s presidency (Pion-Berlin 1991, 553). The combination of inflation and reductions in military salaries meant that an officer in the Alfonsín years earned one tenth of what he might have earned in the Proceso era (Huser 2002, 78).54 As a result, roughly half of all officers and non-commissioned officers had to seek employment outside of the military to supplement their incomes (Pion-Berlin 1997, 121; Huser 2002, 152).55

A presidential decree transferring all military-owned industries and properties to the Ministry of Defense further reduced the material power and social status of the Fuerzas Armadas.56 Over the years, the military had built a lucrative industrial complex that included 14 subsidiary factories and vast financial interests in steelworks, petrochemicals, and arms sales

---

54 Due to the combination of high inflation and salary increases, Huser claims that a colonel who earned the equivalent of $4000 U.S. per month during the Proceso earned roughly $400 U.S. per month during the Alfonsín years (2002, 78).
55 The need for military officers to seek outside employment persisted throughout the Menem years (Huser 2002, 152; “Part-Time System at Risk,” La Nación, FBIS-LAT-94-150, 37).
56 Decreto Nacional 280/1983 transferred control of the Fuerzas Armadas-run Fabricaciones Militares (Military Industrial Complex) to the Ministry of Defense (Huser 2002, 84-87). Historically, an Argentine Army major general chaired the Fabricaciones Militares, and large numbers of retired military officers sat on the boards of its subsidiary companies (Huser 2002, 84).
Military properties included country clubs and private resorts that bestowed the *Fuerzas Armadas* with a special status and lifestyle beyond anything attainable by other sectors of society.\(^{57}\)

The sharp reduction in military spending under civilian governance corresponded with an equally sharp reduction in force sizes. *Figure 3.1* below illustrates the rapid downsizing of the *Fuerzas Armadas* after Argentina’s return to democracy. Troop sizes fell to less than half of their 1983 levels within the first two years of the return to democratic rule and reached their nadir in 1992.

![Figure 3.1 – Size of Las Fuerzas Armadas from 1983 to 1995](image)

But although defense policy changes reduced the power of the military relative to their civilian authorities, the “military [was] still a force to be reckoned with” (Huser 2002, 110). The Military Reform Act of 1988 sat in the Senate for over two years, largely due to opposition from

---

\(^{57}\) While these reforms complimented Alfonsín’s economic plan and desire to maintain a force within the “possibilities of the state,” they also sought to diminish “both the foundation of military power and their social status” (Anderson 2016, 66).
the service chiefs over the broad powers of defense granted to the president and the redefinition of national security that limited the Fuerzas Armadas to an external security role.\footnote{See discussion of Law 23.554/1988 in Footnote 53 above.} Likewise, the Fuerzas Armadas thwarted efforts by Congress to even begin debate on legislation allowing for an alternative, social service for conscientious objectors as well as separate legislative proposals calling for reductions to CMS (Garaño 2010, 184-186; Anderson 2016, 125).\footnote{Santiago Garaño notes that after the Alfosín administration sent Congress a CMS exemption bill in 1984, the executive branch decided to “freeze any modification of CMS that might irritate the military” (2010, 184).} And when the Senate Committee on Defense considered eliminating CMS entirely, anticipated backlash from the military prevented the bill from even leaving the committee. As the chair of the committee noted: “We thought that if we did away with the draft, they [the military] might well do away with us” (Anderson 2016, 69).\footnote{Anderson notes that the Radical Congress “tabled the issue [of MMS reform] for fear that pursuing it would produce a coup…” (2016, 125). The Fuerzas Armadas did not limit its intimidation to members of Congress. The newspaper, Nuevo Sur, accused the Alfosín administration of blocking MMS reforms that “might irritate the Armed Forces” (Ferrari 1989).}

But despite the military’s resistance to MMS reforms, the SMV would replace CMS once President Menem and Congress placed their full weight behind the reforms. In May of 1994, President Menem asked the Fuerzas Armadas to draw up a reform project that considered the social impact of Carrasco’s killing (“Plan to Change Compulsory Service Eyed”, Clarín, 4 August 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-155, 28-29); in August, the military presented a plan to replace CMS with the SMV.\footnote{“Recruiting Campaign Previewed,” La Nación, 26 June 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-150, 36. Yet while the military drafted its proposal for MMS reforms, the military expressed concerns with the elimination of the CMS to include high personnel costs, recruiting shortfalls, and disciplinary problems such as the possibility of desertion of volunteers assigned to remote outposts in the southern provinces.} If failure to end CMS under Alfosín represented a “the limit of the power of democratic institutions” (Anderson 2016, 71), the end of CMS revealed the limits of the military’s influence.
Human Rights Groups

During the Proceso and the early years of the Alfonsín administration, human rights activism was intimately tied to the “Dirty War” (Garaño 2010, 176; Peruzzotti 2002b, 84); however, in the late 1980s and early 1990s this activism expanded into a broader human rights movement and civic associationism that sought to make Argentina’s institutions more “responsive and accountable to the public” (Peruzzotti 2002a, 2-3). These associations and social movements challenged the legitimacy of the state and led to the “adoption of a more offensive type of politics aimed not simply at protecting society but at reforming the state as well” (Peruzzotti 2002b, 89).62

A “heterogeneous conglomerate” of human rights groups emerged from the highly repressive nature of the Proceso government, which suspended constitutional liberties and organized a systematic campaign to eliminate political opponents (Peruzzotti 2002b, 84; Garaño 2010, 176). While many groups such as the Madres de Plaza de Mayo (or simply, the “Mothers”) limited their membership to relatives of victims of state repression, other human rights organizations included religious leaders, lawyers, politicians, and average citizens.63

62 Enrique Peruzzotti argues that these social movements moved “beyond a defensive posture to adopt a more offensive stand in demand toward the state” (2002b, 89). Through rights-oriented discourse and by demanding an “effective constitutional complex” with a clear separation of powers and juridical independence, he suggests that these groups “altered well-established features of Argentine political culture… and provided the validity claims for the refoundation [sic] of Argentine democracy and for the recreation of an autonomous civil society” (Peruzzotti 2002b, 86).

63 Groups such as the “Mothers,” Relatives of the Disappeared and Detained for Political Reasons, and “Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo” 00ed their membership to relatives of victims of state repression, while groups such as the Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos (the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights, or MEDH), the Servicio de Paz y Justicia (The Service of Peace and Justice, or SERPAJ), the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (The Center for Social and Legal Studies, or CELS), and the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, or APDH) were comprised of religious leaders, lawyers, politicians, and average citizens. See Guest (1990) for a detailed discussion of the major human rights groups in the post-Proceso era. See Andersen (1993, 304) for a brief description of the APDH.

Of the numerous human rights groups that emerged during the Proceso-era, the “Mothers” constituted the movement’s most visible actor and commanded perhaps the greatest level of support from other
During the years of the *Proceso* government, these human rights groups monitored human rights violations by the state and provided legal services to victims and their families. After the return to democratic government, several of these groups remained active in Argentine politics and used their influence to pressure the civilian government to hold human rights violators accountable for past abuses.64

While the agenda of the *Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos* (the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, or APDH) included the abolition of CMS (Garaño 2010, 174) and organizations such as the Center for Social and Legal Studies, or CELS, focused on a variety of issues to include crimes committed by the state against conscripts, the *Frente Opositor del Servicio Militar Obligatorio* (FOSMO) focused specifically on reforming Argentina’s military manpower policies. In a press conference in April 1983, the founder of FOSMO, Eduardo Pimentel, announced his decision to exercise *patria potestad*—a parent’s right of custody—which he claimed superseded any obligation to allow his recently drafted son to serve in the *Fuerzas Armadas* (Garaño 2010, 175). His public announcement and the publication of articles critical of CMS had a “multiplier effect,” encouraging other draft dodgers

national and international groups (Guest 1990, 52-56 and 212-213; Andersen 1993, 203; Peruzzotti 2002b, 84). On April 30, 1977, a group of 14 mothers of the “disappeared” gathered in front of the presidential palace in the Plaza de Mayo to demand answers about the fates of their missing children. Unable to obtain an audience of President Videla, the mothers resolved to protest in front of the presidential palace every Thursday until the government restored their children to them (Guest 1990, 52-56). Soon the mothers’ campaign had the backing of other human rights groups, and the small weekly demonstrations grew in size (Brown 1985, 104; Hodges 1991, 254; Lewis 2002, 189). The first protest march consisted of 14 mothers; in December of 1982, 100,000 protestors participated in the group’s “March of the Resistance” (Guest 1990, 255).

64 With financial backing of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International League for Human Rights in New York, CELS filed legal challenges against the state for individual cases of human rights abuses (Guest 1990, 212-213) and published a scathing, 500-page report titled, *Nunca Más* (Never Again), which listed the names 8,961 persons “known to have disappeared” during the “Dirty War” (Lewis 2002, 204; Guest 1990, 383-386). Likewise, groups like the “Mothers” continued to resist a civilian government that they viewed as “deferential” to the military establishment” (Hodges 1991, 257) and too willing to let human rights violators “off the hook” (Guest 1990, 407).
and drawing attention to debates over conscientious objection and the illiberal nature of CMS (Garaño 2010, 176).

FOSMO promoted its mission of abolishing CMS through a series of arguments challenging the constitutionality and necessity of conscription.65 Rather than requiring youth to conduct military service against their will, FOSMO advocated for “substitute activities” such as civil service that could better “shape Argentine youth” to confront the challenges facing the newly consolidated democracy (Garaño 2010, 179). Additionally, FOSMO sought to reveal the maltreatment of conscripts and to bring awareness to the effect of “normalizing military discipline throughout society” (Garaño 2010, 180). In a letter to the editor of an Argentine daily, one of the group’s founding members, Eduardo Palacio, described the death of his son who had been tortured by his superior officers and non-commissioned officers as the “inevitable by-product of the system” in which physical abuse is “the rule rather than the exception.” Rather than simply reform CMS, Palacio argued that conscription “must be definitively abolished” (Palacio 1986).

FOSMO and other human rights groups did little to affect Argentina’s military manpower policies in the initial years after the return to democracy. Despite FOSMO’s efforts to raise public opposition to CMS, arguments calling for the abolition of a strongly rooted state institution that “represented a meaningful experience for significant sectors of society” failed to resonate with many Argentineans who “considered conscription a rite of passage into adulthood” (Garaño 2010, 181; 187). Likewise, the public’s growing weariness with the broader human

---

65 In one of the founding documents of FOSMO, the organization calls for the abolishment of CMS, arguing that reductions in time of service or other half-measures will not resolve the injustices of compulsory service. The document questions both the constitutionality and necessity of CMS, noting the abysmal performance of the conscript army in the Malvinas War and the role that education, rather than military service, plays in instilling national values and assimilating immigrants (“¿Sabés porqué el Servicio Militar es obligatorio?” 1985).
rights movement had significantly reduced the influence of human rights groups by the early 1990s. By 1991, a former leader of the Proceso nearly earned enough votes to win the governorship of a province he had tyrannically administered just eight years beforehand.

But despite the shortcomings of FOSMO and other human rights groups, the human rights movement changed the social landscape of Argentina by helping to restore a civic associationism that had all but vanished during the years of the Proceso.

The established networks and channels of communication between these groups and the continuing violations of human rights by state institutions (most notably the police) led to the reemergence of civic associations that sought to hold state institutions accountable and protect civil society from the unrestricted and discretionary use of state power. By bringing attention to the perceived injustices of CMS, these groups laid the groundwork for a new type of civil rights-oriented politics that challenged the moral and constitutional foundations of CMS and would prove

---

66 By the early 1990s, the Argentine public had grown weary of the “Mothers” (Guest 1990, 407), and the broader human rights movement suffered from a loss of public appeal as a result of its “maximalist approach” (Peruzzotti 2002b, 85; see also Malamud-Goti 1996, 165). Likewise, the 1989 attack by leftist groups on La Tablada military barracks damaged the credibility of the broader movement (Lewis 2002, 230-231), and the public grew less and less concerned with human rights issues as the economic situation worsened in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Lewis 2002, 236; Malamud-Goti 1996, 181).

67 General Domingo Bussi won 43 percent of the votes in the 1991 gubernatorial election of the northern province of Tucumán, losing to his Peronist rival by just three percentage points (Malamud-Goti 1996, 6-7). When his popular opponent was unable to run for reelection in 1995, General Bussi won the election handily (Lewis 2002, 236).

68 Brown (1985, 97) notes that most working-class Argentine youth joined trade unions, neighborhood committees, and other civic organizations in the early 1970s. By 1976, many of these groups had become the targets of state-sponsored violence.

69 These groups and associations included local and national organizations such as Poder Ciudadano (Citizen Power), Conciencia (Conscience), Ciudadanos en Acción (Citizens of Action), Acción del Consumidor (Consumer Actions), Memoria Activa (Active Memory), and numerous neighborhood associations, social movements, and popular mobilizations (Peruzzotti 2002b, 89). The ability of these movements and associations to organize highly publicized mass mobilizations following numerous incidents of police violence in the early 1990s provides the most visible evidence of the growing influence of these groups (see Peruzzotti 2002b, 87-88 for a discussion of the waves of local protests following notable cases of police abuses).
crucial in mobilizing thousands of protestors demanding MMS reform following Carrasco’s death (Waisbord 2004, 1090; Peruzzotti 2002b, 86).

*The Argentine Public*

A 1986 poll commissioned by the Buenos Aires daily, Clarín, revealed that the Argentine public ranked the military as one the state’s least prestigious institutions, behind the Catholic Church, all three branches of government, political parties, universities, and the media.\(^{70}\) When asked in a separate poll whether the military “contributed to the country’s well-being,” just under half agreed with the statement and a slight majority indicated that they viewed the military as “harmful” (Huser 2002, 109-110).\(^{71}\) Given the unpopularity of the *Fuerzas Armadas*, it perhaps comes as no surprise that the majority of the public also opposed CMS. A survey conducted in 1983 found that 63 percent of Argentineans wanted to do away with conscription.\(^{72}\)

But although the majority of Argentineans opposed CMS, opposition to conscription was not universal. As the human rights movement began to focus on the treatment of conscripts, it met resistance from sectors of the population that viewed military service as “a rite of passage into male adulthood through the inculcation of a warrior mentality” (Garaño 2010, 181). In this view, men who opposed CMS were “cowards…whose masculinity was deeply questioned” (Garaño 2010, 180).

---


\(^{71}\) A 1985 poll found that the Argentine public ranked the *Fuerzas Armadas* last in prestige in a list of 12 “major groups” (cited in Pion-Berlin 1991, 551).

\(^{72}\) During the September 1994 House of Deputies debate over proposed MMS reforms, Deputy Jesús Rodríguez cited a 1983 survey, which found that 63 percent of Argentineans wanted to eliminate conscription (cited in DSCD 1994, 2169). Likewise, a 1988 poll of adult residents of Buenos Aires found that just over 42 percent of all respondents approved of CMS. However, the results indicated that only a slightly higher proportion of respondents “disagreed” with CMS (Kolsky Poll # 1988-SIST9), resulting in a margin of error of nearly five percent at the 95 percent confidence interval.
For other Argentineans, any concerns for MMS were simply outweighed by concerns about economic issues, corruption, and crime (Waisbord 1994, 20). Polls in the early 1990s consistently identified corruption as one of the nation’s most “urgent problems” (Waisbord 1994, 20). Likewise, rising crime rates and concerns about the economy in the early 1990s largely replaced the public’s concerns about human rights. Additionally, the dwindling numbers of conscripts recruited annually included a very small percentage of Argentine youth, so it is likely that the average Argentinean gave little thought to a policy that was unlikely to affect him or a loved one personally.

Despite the lack of broad public support for CMS and the work by organizations such as FOSMO to bring the issue of conscription into the national debate, CMS did not become a politically salient issue until Carrasco’s killing thrust it into the national spotlight. In a poll conducted two months after Carrasco’s killing and attempted cover-up by the Fuerzas Armadas, less than one percent of respondents claimed to support obligatory military service. With the public overwhelming behind MMS reforms, Congress and President Menem moved quickly to replace CMS with the SMV. Unlike other countries that transitioned from compulsory to

73 Despite its “long history of troubled civil-military relations,” defense issues have remained a low priority for both leaders and citizens due to unique historical and structural factors (Pion-Berlin & Trinkunas 2007, 78). Specifically, favorable geography and relatively low security threats combined with “civilian preferences for diplomatic over military solutions to conflict” have incentivized Argentine politicians to focus on policy issues unrelated to national defense (Pion-Berlin & Trinkunas 2007, 84). As Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas quip, “politicians can earn political capital by filling potholes…”; there is little political capital “to be gained in making defense an expenditure or policy priority” (2007, 86).


75 In 1983, conscripts comprised 118,000 of the 180,500 members of the Fuerzas Armadas; from 1991-1995, conscripts accounted for average of just 16,680 soldiers (numbers from IISS Military Balance).

76 A poll conducted in May 1994 found that just nine out of 1293 respondents approved of CMS, although nearly 54 percent of respondents favored some sort of obligatory social service in the place of military service (Estudio Carciela C. Romer and Associates Poll # TOP023, Politics and Leaders, 1994[computer file]).
voluntary military service in the immediate post-Cold War era, Argentina “adopted a voluntary system in a record time of months,” not years.\(^{77}\)

*The Media*

Although none of the major news outlets took an open stance in the CMS debate that followed Carrasco’s killing, the Argentine media played a significant role in promoting MMS reform. After one of the nation’s most prominent newspapers, *La Nación*, uncovered Carrasco’s murder, the public closely followed coverage of the unfolding scandal and the judicial proceedings of those responsible for his death (Peruzzotti 2002a, 8). In turn, this extensive media coverage helped to generate “intense and prolonged public mobilizations” demanding MMS reform (Waisbord 2004, 1093; Peruzzotti 2002a, 8).

Following the return to democratic rule, the role of the media evolved from government “lapdog” to government “watchdog” (Alves 2005). President Alfonsín supported a free and independent press (Waisbord 1994, 26), and major broadcast and print media previously under government control (or at least subject to government suppression) became increasingly independent and willing to pursue studies exposing abuses of state power and government corruption (Pinto 2008, 754).\(^{78}\) As interest in scandals grew and the public began to seek diverse

---

\(^{77}\) Lafferriere and Soprano 2014, 20 (my translation).

\(^{78}\) During the *Proceso*, media censorship prevented the development of an independent press that could bring attention to instances of government crimes or corruption (Brown 1985, 97; Waisbord 1996, 349-350). The few journalists and editors who did attempt to publish stories critical of the government were met with intimidation, violence, and even death. Approximately 100 journalists comprised the list of 9,000 to 30,000 Argentines who disappeared during the “Dirty War” (Millman 1992; Alves 2005, 194-195). The return to democracy certainly did not end all types of intimidation and violence against journalists (see Waisbord 1996, 348 Alves 2005, 198; and Vincent 1992); however, post-*Proceso* Argentina largely maintained a free and open press.
views from media outlets willing hold government actors accountable, all of the major media outlets were forced to adopt similar investigative reporting styles.\textsuperscript{79}

This investigative style of journalism served “as a watchdog over the powerful” (Vincent 1992) and an “ally of many of the movements and civic associations engaged in the politics of rights and accountability” (Peruzzotti 2002b, 90). Exposés about government malfeasance and corruption were widely discussed in public squares (Millman 1992), and public polls consistently, and increasingly, ranked corruption as one the nation’s greatest problems (Waisbord 1994, 20). As a result, social movements could more easily arouse public anger and mobilize support following instances of abuse of state power, and elected officials paid close attention to the coverage of scandals.\textsuperscript{80}

Carrasco was not the first conscript to die at the hands of his military trainers, but his death and the resulting scandal generated far more media attention and public outrage than did previous cases involving the abuse of conscripts.\textsuperscript{81} At least three factors provide likely explanations for why Carrasco’s killing captured the media’s attention. First, by the time of Carrasco’s killing in 1994, there was a pervasiveness of “watchdog journalism” that did not exist at the time of similar incidents involving the abuse of conscripts (Pinto 2008, 754).\textsuperscript{82} Although

\textsuperscript{79} See Millman (1992), Alves (2005) and Waisbord (1994, 28) for a discussion of the influence of the investigative reporting style of Página/12 on other media outlets.

\textsuperscript{80} President Menem maintained a combative relationship with a press that uncovered numerous scandals that embroiled his administration (see Waisbord 1994, 27 and Vincent 1992). After Página/12 published a series of articles highlighting Menem’s marital problems and scandals involving members of his cabinet and family, Menem pulled all government advertisements from the paper (Vincent 1992; Waisbord 2002, 389-390).

\textsuperscript{81} See Garaño (2010, 183) for a discussion of the deaths of other Argentine conscripts.

\textsuperscript{82} A content analysis of the three largest media outlets in Argentina—La Nación, Clarín, and Página/12, suggests that “watchdog reporting” increased significantly from 1985 to 1995 (Pinto 2008, 754). Measuring “watchdog reporting” along two dimensions—autonomy of news organizations and assertiveness in reporting—across 957 articles published during the period of examination, the results indicate that “watchdog reporting” grew sharply from 1985 to 1990 before declining slightly from 1990-1995 (Pinto 2008, 761).
Argentina maintained a “free and adversarial press” throughout most of the 1980s, reporting of scandals remained exceptional (Waisbord 1994, 26-27). However, “watchdog journalism” became increasingly widespread throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s as Página/12 became a major player in the media landscape and other papers began to emulate its “muckraking” style of journalism.83 Relatedly, as the number of media outlets grew and more and more Argentineans gained access to national news outlets, stories such as Carrasco’s killing came into greater public view.84 Finally, the combination of a case involving excessive state power wielded by a widely unpopular institution with slowly unfolding evidence of an attempted cover-up created a near-perfect media scandal.85 After La Nación uncovered the story of Carrasco’s killing, other media outlets picked up the story and provided continued coverage as evidence of military wrong-doing unfolded (Peruzzotti 2002b, 89).86

Extensive media attention produced public outrage at Carrasco’s killing and led to widespread protests calling for the abolishment of CMS (Peruzzotti 2002a, 8; Peruzzotti 2002b, 88-89; Waisbord 2004, 1090). These protests, in turn, placed tremendous pressure on elected

83 Established in 1987 as a small, left-leaning paper, Página/12 readership and influence grew rapidly after it ran a series of “gate” scandals that brought down many of Menem’s top advisors (Millman 1992; Alves 2005, 194-2001). Soon, the paper was emulated by other outlets (Waisbord 1994, 28; Millman 1992; Alves 2005), and the once small paper whose budget only allowed it to print 12 pages became the third most widely-read daily in Argentina.

84 Technological innovation and massive deregulation greatly expanded the number of media outlets and made them increasingly accessible to the Argentine public (Pinto 2008, 754). Although most towns and cities had one to two television stations in late 1970s, an explosion in the number of television stations in the 1980s made Argentina the “most cabled country in Latin America” (Waisbord 2004, 1077-1078; see also Reyes-Matta 1992, 78-79). The proliferation of radio and television stations and their accessibility to the public gave the media greater influence than the political organizations that had once dominated public life (Waisbord 2004, 1077-1078).

85 Human rights scandals were more likely to draw media attention from a scandal-weary public than other “gate” scandals that simply involved incidents of government corruption (Waisbord 2004). The story of “mild-mannered private Omar Carrasco and his poverty-stricken family … pitted against contemptuous military officers and immoral judges” resonated broadly with an indignant Argentine public concerned with power abuses (Waisbord 2004, 1095).

86 In 1996, stories about Carrasco’s killing still made headlines in the country’s major news outlets (see for example, see Berri 1996).
officials to reform the state’s military manpower policies. President Menem attempted to
dismiss the scandal when it first broke; however, as public outrage grew, he moved aggressively
to end CMS and praised the media for its role in informing the public of the nature of Carrasco’s
death and the ensuing cover-up.

UNDERSTANDING ARGENTINA’S MMS REFORMS

The preceding analysis suggests that MMS reform in Argentina followed changes in the
strength and intensity of domestic opposition to CMS. Although polls suggest that the Argentine
public disapproved of conscription throughout the period of examination and organizations such
as FOSMO actively sought the replacement of CMS, domestic MMS preferences did not
translate to MMS reform until 1994. By igniting domestic opposition to CMS and bringing
national attention to the state’s MMS policies, the killing of Omar Carrasco created the necessary
conditions for reform.

Once CMS became politically untenable, Menem moved quickly to implement MMS
reforms. Sensing a narrow window for reform and mindful of the 1995 presidential election,
Menem opened the recruiting effort for the SMV before his senior military and civilian advisors
had even finalized their proposal for MMS reform, let alone assessed its implications. But
although promoting a policy reform with such a steep price tag stood in stark contrast to
Menem’s previous economic policies, it would be incautious to claim that Argentina’s MMS
reform represented a rare case of policy trumping economics. Menem’s economic policies had

87 Deliberations of the September 1994 Diario de Sesiones Cámara de Diputados reveal the significant
influence that public protests following Carrasco’s death exerted on the nature of the MMS debate.
88 Responding to initial reports from La Nación, Menem accused the paper of promoting a “class
struggle” and the “division of the armed forces” (quoted in Malamud-Goti 1996, 6-7). In a clear about-
face less than three months later, Menem praised “the broadest freedom of the press ever known in the
Argentine nation” for its role in uncovering the scandal (see “Menem on Military Honor at Armed Forces
largely stabilized the Argentine economy by 1993 and the economic policies of his second administration “were a far cry from [those of his] first in terms of [their] reforming impetus” (Bambaci et al. 2002, 76). Therefore, it is possible that Menem simply moved to implement his preferred MMS policies after achieving his economic goals. However, Menem’s commitment to MMS reform during the Mexican Tequila Crisis, which presented a grave threat to the nation’s economic stability as well as his initial rebuke of media outlets that published Carrasco’s killing suggest that Menem did not reform the state’s MMS policies on his own terms.  

The salience of the CMS issue following Carrasco’s killing proved equally consequential for Congress. Although Congress had debated reforms in the past, Carrasco’s killing and the ensuing public protests forced Argentina’s institutions to respond to the CMS issue. During the summer of 1994, members of Congress developed 17 separate MMS reform projects calling for the end of CMS. When considering the near unanimous support for the proposed legislation to replace CMS with SMV, one deputy asked rhetorically: “Why now? It’s Carrasco!”

The adoption of SMV followed changes in the politics of MMS reform. While Carrasco’s killing served as the catalyst for reforms, changes in the relationship between Argentine civil society and state institutions ensured that the change in domestic MMS preferences would result in a change in MMS policy. The growth of the human rights movement and corresponding strengthening of civil society represented an important change in Argentine culture and politics. Alfonsín lamented that he had inherited a weak military but no corresponding strengthening of society (Gleijeses 1988, 6). Yet by the time of Carrasco’s killing, a network of civic associations

---

89 The 1994 Tequila Crisis presented a grave economic threat to countries across Latin America and led Argentina to enact pension reform, implement policies designed to increase labor market flexibilization, and to privatize many of its provincial banks (Bambaci et al. 2002, 76).

90 Remarks by Deputy Víctor Paláez (DSCD 1994, 2201). (My translation.)
and social movements that actively challenged what it perceived to be arbitrary abuses of state power had emerged (Peruzzotti 2002b, 87-91).

As the goals of the post-human rights movement shifted from simply holding human rights violators accountable to defending society from state intervention, established features of Argentine political culture such as CMS became delegitimized (Peruzzotti 2002b, 86). Associations and organizations such as FOSMO highlighted the injustices of CMS and elevated the public’s voice in the debate against conscription (Peruzzotti 2002b, 87). An explosion in the number of media outlets and the rise of “watchdog journalism” ensured that events such as Carrasco’s killing garnered wide attention. Carrasco’s killing would not likely have been a scandal without the media (Waisbord 2004, 1080), and President Menem acknowledged as much in his July 1994 address at the annual Armed Forces comradeship dinner. Menem conceded that incidents like Carrasco’s killing had occurred in the past, but he suggested that what distinguished Carrasco’s killing from the deaths of previous conscripts was that now “the people [could] learn about [it] without restrictions thanks to the broadest freedom of the press ever known in the Argentine nation.”

The demands of civil society to overturn CMS produced broad political consensus for MMS reform (Lafferriere and Soprano 2014, 42). This influence had a profound effect on members of Congress and enabled the legislature to pass a reform bill where numerous previous attempts had failed. Likewise, the social impact of Argentina’s MMS policies and the 1995 elections strongly influenced President Menem’s decision to replace CMS with the SMV. Although domestic opposition to CMS existed well before 1983, the salience of the MMS issue and public response to Carrasco’s killing led to a rapid change in Argentina’s MMS policies.

---

Alternative Arguments

The timing of Argentina’s decision to replace CMS and the sense of urgency with which both President Menem and Congress pursued MMS reform suggest that changes in the intensity of domestic MMS preferences following Carrasco’s killing led to reforms. However, it is possible that other factors may account for Argentina’s decision to replace CMS with the SMV. In this section, I consider whether changes in Argentina’s security environment, the roles and missions of the Fuerzas Armadas, or changes in demographics or military manpower requirements better explain its MMS reforms. As I discuss below, none of these factors offer a compelling or comprehensive explanation of MMS reform that accounts for both the timing and the sense of urgency with which President Menem and Congress sought to end CMS. Instead, Argentina’s decision to replace CMS with the SMV appears to have been directly related to the killing of Carrasco and the resulting changes in the politics of MMS reform.

Changes in the Security Environment

If an increasingly hostile security environment at the turn of the 20th Century led Argentina to adopt a conscription-based military modelled off of the leee en masse of contemporary European military powers, could an increasingly favorable geopolitical environment have led Argentina to adopt a smaller, professional military some 90 years later?92 Historical rivalries with Chile and Brazil centered largely on territorial disputes and produced a foreign policy based on a “geopolitical conceptualization of an omnipresent threat and nation-state competition” (Norden 1996c, 243).93 Argentina’s disputes with its neighbors never resulted

92 See Pion-Berlin (1997, 48), Resende-Santos (2007), and “Libro Blanco de la Defensa” (2010, 61) for more on Argentina’s decision to adopt CMS at the turn of the 20th Century.
93 See also Resende-Santos (2007) and Mani (2011) for detailed discussions of the intense military rivalries that characterized the Southern Cone region until the 1980s.
in war; however, frequent militarized interstate disputes and a narrowly avoided war with Chile in 1978 ensured that military threats remained a primary concern for Argentina’s leaders (Mani 2011, 48). And despite Argentina’s decisive defeat in the Malvinas War that led to the ouster of its military rulers, tensions with Great Britain remained high.94

The demilitarization of Argentina’s approach to foreign policy and the economic liberalization and movement towards representative democracies throughout the Southern Cone led to dramatic changes in Argentina’s geopolitical environment. The National Defense Law of 1988 delimited the role of the Fuerzas Armadas in the state’s foreign policymaking process and eliminated the militarized National Security Doctrine that had dominated its domestic and foreign policy since the 1960s.95 Both Alfosín and Menem prioritized resolving territorial disputes and improving relations with Argentina’s neighbors. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Argentina successfully resolved the longstanding dispute over the Beagle Channel that had nearly led to war with Chile in 1978 (Mani 2011, 83-85) and established a “nuclear-free zone” with Chile and Brazil (Mani 2011, 119).96 As a 1999 White Paper describes, “in this new context, the old concept that neighbors were adversaries and that they represented an eventual

---

94 Argentina never fully accepted the loss of the Malvinas. The 1994 Constitution describes the recovery of these islands as a “permanent and unrelinquished goal of the Argentine people” and includes a temporary provision stating: “the Argentine Nation ratifies its legitimate and non-prescribing sovereignty over the Malvinas, Georgias del Sur and Sandwhich del Sur Islands and over the corresponding maritime and insular zones, as they are an integral part of the National territory” (my translation). A poll conducted 14 years after the Malvinas War found that over 40 percent of Argentineans still supported the devolution of the islands (cited in Mani 2011, 93).

95 The 1988 Law of National Defense annulled the previous Defense Law of 1966, which allowed for a broad interpretation of national security, and delimited the role of the Fuerzas Armadas strictly to external threats against the state. The law also excluded the Fuerzas Armadas from the list of principles of the National Defense Council charged with assisting and advising the President on defense matters (Article 14).

96 The 1991 Guadalajara Agreement committed Brazil and Argentina to disclose their respective nuclear programs. The subsequent Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control implemented this agreement, and in 1994 Argentina joined the 1967 Tlatelolco Treaty, which prohibits the development of nuclear weapons among member states. See the White Paper on National Defense, RESDAL: Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (1999, Part III Chapter VI Section 5).
threat to our security is being replaced by the idea that our neighbors’ risks are our risks as well. Yesterday’s rival becomes today’s ally.”

Increasing economic ties and regional integration also improved relations between Argentina and its neighbors. Through bilateral agreements such as the Argentine Brazilian Economic Integration Program and the establishment of the trade bloc, MERCOSUR, Argentina’s trade with its erstwhile adversaries expanded dramatically. While economic integration supported Menem’s economic policies, he also viewed economic arrangements such as MERCOSUR as an important element of regional stability (Huser 2002, 136). When discussing MERCOSUR and Argentina’s increasing economic ties with Brazil, Defense Minister Oscar Camilión claimed that “the possibility of conflicts with Brazil is nil.”

But although increasingly favorable changes in Argentina’s security environment may have obviated the need for a large, standing conscript military, there is little evidence to suggest that reduced threats to Argentina’s security strongly influenced its MMS policy. President Menem justified the state’s MMS reforms on socio-cultural grounds rather than security considerations. And although he recognized that Argentina’s security environment did not support the maintenance of CMS, Menem relegated defense issues to other priorities, namely

---

98 At a time when Argentina’s exports to other parts of the world declined, Argentina’s exports within the region increased by over 20 percent (Norden 1996c, 255).
100 In his address to annual Armed Forces Comradeship Dinner, Menem did not suggest that the transition to an AVF would improve the fighting capability of the Fuerzas Armadas; rather, he sought to convince his audience that abandoning CMS would not “in any way affect military operative capacity” (“Menem on Military Honor at Armed Forces Dinner,” Noticias, 6 July 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-130, 29). In contrast, Menem advised the military commission tasked with developing a plan for the SMV to remain conscious of the social impact of Carrasco’s killing (“Plan to Change Compulsory Service Eyed,” Clarín, 11 August 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-155, 21).
economic reforms.  

More importantly, security-based explanations of MMS reform cannot explain the timing of Argentina’s decision to replace CMS with SMV. Argentina’s security environment had grown increasingly benign throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, and virtually all outstanding territorial disputes with its regional rivals had been resolved by 1994 (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007, 84). In a 1985 interview with the newspaper *La Voz*, Argentina’s defense minister stressed that the “decompression of the international situation due to the diminishing possibility of impending conflicts…allows [Argentina] to plan [its] defense in a more orderly and rational way” (cited in Garaño 2010, 184). So while changes in Argentina’s security environment may have allowed policymakers to replace CMS once it became apparent that the policy was no longer politically viable, these changes cannot explain why MMS reforms did not occur until 1994.

**Changes in the Roles/Missions of the *Fuerzas Armadas***

If changes in Argentina’s security environment cannot fully account for its decision to replace CMS with SMV, could changes in the roles or missions of the *Fuerzas Armadas* better explain Argentina’s MMS reform? In the early 1990s, Argentina began to play an active and interventionist role in regional and international peacekeeping operations (PKOs) as part of Menem’s effort to increase the country’s international prestige and to remove its label as a “pariah state” (Pion-Berlin & Trinkunas 2007, 96). Between 1991 to 1995, Argentina deployed an average of 1400 service members each year to support these non-traditional operations.

---

101 Although Menem recognized that an AVF better suited the *Fuerzas Armada*’s expanded roles and missions (Huser 2002, 151; Pion-Berlin 1997, 133), he relegated defense issues to his larger macroeconomic objectives (Pion-Berlin 1997, 126).

102 See Margheritis (2010, 4) and Norden (1996a, 197; 205) for more on Argentina’s increasingly active role in non-traditional operations.

103 Argentina provided a contingent of 1000 troops to Croatia in 1993 (Norden 1996c, 257), 1500 troops in support of UN PKOs in 1994 (“Plans Announced for 1,500 Troops for UN,” *Madrid EFE*, 14 April 1994).
With an average of less than 72,000 total troops in the *Fuerzas Armadas* during the Menem years, Argentina’s contributions relative to the size of its armed forces were quite significant.\(^{104}\)

Support for these non-traditional operations created pressure for MMS reform.\(^{105}\) AVFs are traditionally viewed as better suited for non-traditional operations such as peacekeeping missions (see Cohen 1985), and Menem’s defense minister sought to increase military spending to support Menem’s complementary goals of supporting non-traditional operations and fielding an AVF. Additionally, because the UN prohibits the use of conscripts in support of PKOs, Argentina could only rely on volunteer service members to field these peacekeeping units. However, Argentina had little trouble finding volunteers for these operations (Huser 2002, 164), and Menem’s plans to reduce military spending trumped his desires to devote more funds to PKOs and to implement an AVF until MMS reform became a politically salient issue. Thus, while changing mission requirements may have strengthened Menem’s preferences for an AVF, these changes were not the proximate cause of MMS reform.

**MMS Reform and Military Effectiveness**

Argentina’s desire to improve the effectiveness of the *Fuerzas Armadas* provides another possible explanation for MMS reforms. Following the disastrous performance of its conscript-based forces in the Malvinas War, elements of the *Fuerzas Armadas* began to assess the operational impact of transitioning to an AVF. But like many other defense reforms identified in

---

\(^{104}\) The IISS Military Balance indicates that the average size of the *Fuerzas Armadas* was 71,817 from 1990 to 1995.

\(^{105}\) Inefficiencies in military manning as well as Argentina’s increasing need for an expeditionary professional force caused manpower issues to fall under intense scrutiny as early as 1992 (Huser 2002, 151; Pion-Berlin 1997, 133).
the aftermath of the Malvina’s War, the Fuerzas Armadas resisted its implementation.\textsuperscript{106} And although both Alfosín and Menem sought to modernize and restructure the Fuerzas Armadas military, both presidents were far more concerned with the efficiency (read cost) of the Fuerzas Armadas rather than its effectiveness. Even Menem’s arguments in favor of the SMV suggest that MMS reforms did not seek to improve the effectiveness of the Fuerzas Armadas. Rather than argue that the proposed MMS reforms would enhance the Fuerzas Armada’s effectiveness, Menem sought to convince opponents that transitioning to a voluntary force structure would not reduce the Fuerzas Armada’s effectiveness.\textsuperscript{107} Finally, like other security-based explanations, attempts to link MMS reform with concerns for military effectiveness suffer from a timing problem—the conditions that might have driven reform existed well before 1994.

Changes in Military Manpower Requirements and Demographics

Massive troop reductions and the reduced need to fill the state’s military manpower requirements through conscription provide another possible explanation for the replacement of CMS with the SMV. As Figure 3.2 below illustrates, the proportion of conscripts in the Fuerzas Armadas fell annually after the return to democratic rule. While conscripts accounted for over 65 percent of Argentina’s military manpower in 1983, they made up just over 19 percent of the Fuerzas Armadas in 1991.\textsuperscript{108}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Following its defeat in the Malvinas War, the Fuerzas Armadas initiated a series of studies assessing the operational impact of transitioning to an AVF (see White Paper on National Defense, \textit{RESDAL: Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina}, 1999, Part VIII Chapter XX Section II and “Plan to Change Compulsory Service Eyed,” Clarín, 4 August 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-155, 28). Nevertheless, the Fuerzas Armadas chose to forgo any serious examination of its failures and resisted necessary reforms (Pion-Berlin 1997, 148-149).
\item See Footnote 100.
\item In 1983, 118,000 of the 180,500 service members in the Fuerzas Armadas were conscripts. In 1992, the 65,000-strong Fuerzas Armadas contained just 12,800 conscripts (IISS Military Balance). Although the number of conscripts increased to 18,100 in 1993 and remained at over 18,000 until the repeal of CMS, conscripts accounted for less than 27 percent of the total number of service members during this period.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Demographic changes may also explain Argentina’s MMS reforms. The steady decline in the number of youth conscripted into military service each year combined with an expanding pool of eligible service members may simply have obviated the need to fill the ranks of the Fuerzas Armadas with conscripts. From 1983 to 1995, the Argentine population grew by an annual rate of 1.71 percent while the number of conscripts fell from 118,000 in 1983 to a low of 12,800 in 1992.\textsuperscript{109}

The shrinking percentage of Argentine youth conscripted annually also highlighted the growing inequities of CMS. With 18 to 24 year-old males comprising one of the largest demographic groups and the number of draftees falling annually, less than one percent of Argentine males were conscripted annually (Lafferriere and Soprano 2014, 36). As a result, the inequities of conscription became a focal point of the debate to repeal conscription, and the

\textsuperscript{109} Population and conscript data are from the IISS Military Balance.
notion that the draft served as a vital instrument for instilling a sense of patriotism, nationalism, and moral and civic values grew increasingly dubious.\textsuperscript{110}

Although changes in demographics and manpower requirements may certainly have affected society’s views of the equity and necessity of CMS, these changes alone cannot explain the timing of Argentina’s MMS reform. Increasingly favorable demographics and reduced military personnel requirements existed well before 1994. In fact, as Figure 3.2 above illustrates, the demand for conscripts had reached its nadir in 1992 and had actually begun to increase in the years immediately preceding MMS reform.\textsuperscript{111} Whereas conscripts only made up 19.6 percent of the 65,000 \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} service members in 1991, conscripts comprised over 25 percent of the slightly larger \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} from 1992 to 1995.\textsuperscript{112} Likewise, military opposition to voluntary service indicates that the \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} did not believe that the reduced manpower requirements obviated the need to draft Argentine youth. In a report to Defense Minister Camilión, the chiefs of all three service branches expressed their fear of recruiting shortfalls.\textsuperscript{113} The fact that President Menem himself initiated the SMV recruitment campaign in July 1994 suggests that he shared the \textit{Fuerzas Armada}’s concern that recruiting targets could not easily be met with an AVF. Finally, the inequities of the draft had existed long before the large reductions in military manning throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Although the proportion of Argentine youth required to serve did decrease, it did so by only one twentieth of one percent.\textsuperscript{114}

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{110} See FOSMO publications, Palacio (1986) and “Un derecho” (1985) for a discussion of the inequities of CMS.
\item Conscript data from the IISS Military Balance.
\item\textsuperscript{112} Conscript and \textit{Fuerzas Armadas} data are from the IISS Military Balance.
\item “Volunteers Needed,” Clarín, 5 July 1994, FBIS-LAT-94-150, 37.
\item The percentage of conscripts relative to the total population fell from .36 percent in 1980 to .31 percent in 1991 (Lafferriere and Soprano 2014, 36).
\end{itemize}
Assessing the Model

The replacement of CMS with SMV followed changes in domestic rather than leader MMS preferences (see Figure 3.3 below). Although Menem considered implementing an AVF well before Carrasco’s killing, he prioritized other items (namely economic reforms) on his agenda until CMS became a politically salient issue. As the preceding analysis illustrates, changes in Menem’s MMS preferences followed changes in the Argentine public’s MMS preferences rather than changes in his beliefs about the relative military effectiveness of an AVF or the appropriateness of the state’s MMS policies. Less than five months after strongly rebuking journalists for publishing stories about Carrasco’s killing and the Fuerzas Armada’s attempted cover-up, Menem responded to widespread public protests against CMS by implementing the SMV.

**Figure 3.3 – Pathway to Argentina’s MMS Reform**

As I have argued elsewhere, MMS reform followed a change in the strength and intensity of the Argentine public’s MMS preferences rather than a change in the MMS preferences themselves. Carrasco’s killing and the ensuing public protests forced Argentina’s institutions to respond to the CMS issue. Mindful of the political implications of failing to repeal CMS, President Menem moved quickly to reform the state’s MMS policies. Similarly, the changing
politics of MMS reform produced broad consensus within the legislative branch and allowed the 1994 bill to move quickly through Congress.

As Table 3.2 illustrates, the process of MMS reform closely follows the predictions of the first set of hypotheses outlined in the previous chapter. Menem and Congress closely connected MMS reforms with their political survival and acknowledged the political consequences of failing to respond to the public’s demand to replace CMS (H1). And although both Congress and Menem weakly favored replacing CMS, they did not do so until MMS reforms became a salient issue following Carrasco’s killing (H1c).115

Table 3.2 – Support for Empirical Predictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis (H)</th>
<th>Predictions</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will produce MMS reforms if policymakers connect these changes with their prospects of political survival.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1a: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not produce MMS reforms unless these domestic actors are a part of policymakers’ winning coalitions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not result in MMS reforms unless military manpower issues are salient with members of policymakers’ winning coalitions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1c: Changes in the public’s MMS preferences are more likely to result in MMS reforms in democratic states than in nondemocratic ones.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Argentina’s MMS reforms offer mixed support for Hypothesis 3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences.

---

115 As a democracy, the Argentine public clearly makes up the winning coalition of President Menem and members of the National Congress (H1a). However, the examination of a single case cannot conclude whether, in fact, changes in domestic MMS preferences are more likely to result in democracies than in non-democracies (H1b).
preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform. Alfonsín sought to modernize and reorganize the Fuerzas Armadas, and both the public and members of Alfonsín’s Radical Party opposed CMS. However, Alfonsín’s desire to reduce the power and influence of the Fuerzas Armadas and to hold its members accountable for human rights abuses overshadowed other defense reforms on his agenda. The “dramatic” regime change in 1989 brought a president from an opposing political party into office who also sought to modernize and reform the Fuerzas Armadas but who also favored replacing CMS with an AVF. However, only when this change in leader MMS preferences was accompanied by widespread domestic opposition to CMS did the change in leadership result in MMS reform.\textsuperscript{116}

CONCLUSION

The killing of Omar Carrasco led to the collapse a 93-year-old institution and redefined the relationship between Argentina’s citizens and its military. Although declining social and material power of the Fuerzas Armadas, changing demographics and conscription requirements, and an increasingly favorable security environment reduced the need to rely on conscripts, rising public opposition to CMS was the proximate cause of Argentina’s MMS reform. Although MMS reform did not rank high on President Menem’s agenda and Congress had failed to pass MMS reforms in the past, Carrasco’s killing and the ensuing public protests forced Argentina’s institutions to respond to the CMS issue.

The examination of Argentina’s MMS reforms leads to several notable conclusions. First, the case study suggests that weak changes in leader or domestic MMS preferences may not lead to MMS reform. The Argentine public opposed CMS throughout the period of examination, yet

\textsuperscript{116} Similar to prediction H1b, the examination of a single case study cannot conclude whether, in fact, dramatic regime changes are more likely to result in democracies than mild ones (H3b).
domestic preferences did not force Argentina’s institutions to respond until they were amplified by Carrasco’s killing and the *Fuerzas Armada*’s attempted cover-up. Likewise, although members of Congress and President Menem supported SMV, these MMS preferences did not translate into MMS reform until strong domestic opposition to conscription made maintaining CMS politically untenable.

Additionally, Argentina’s MMS reforms demonstrate how crises or shocks may lead to drastic changes in MMS preferences and force military manpower issues onto the political agenda and/or remove existing barriers to reform. Carrasco’s killing served as a flashpoint in Argentine politics and thrust the CMS issue onto Congress and Menem’s agendas. Recognizing the political imperative to respond to the public outcry and replace CMS, Menem subordinated his other policy priorities to the need to reform the state’s MMS policies. Similarly, the internal divisions and military opposition that had thwarted previous attempts by Congress to replace or modify CMS dissolved after Carrasco’s killing changed the politics of MMS reform.

Finally, the process of MMS reform in Argentina supports the assumption that leaders’ concerns for political survival supersede their concerns for achieving other policy items on their agenda. Although Menem favored MMS reform well before he issued the presidential decree that replaced CMS with SMV, he subordinated his MMS preferences to his economic agenda until domestic opposition to CMS forced him to respond. Mindful of both the economic costs of transitioning to an AVF and the political consequences for failing to do so, Menem aggressively pursued MMS reform.
CHAPTER 4
NATIONAL SERVICE IN THE WELFARE STATE: MILITARY MANPOWER REFORM IN QATAR

Qatar is the consummate rentier state. As the world’s richest country, Qatar uses its immense economic resources to provide a “cradle-to-grave welfare system” for its roughly 300,000 citizens. In exchange for political acquiescence, Qatari citizens can expect to receive a monthly allowance of 7,000 U.S. dollars, cushy civil service employment, land grants, interest-free loans, and what amounts to free health care, higher education, and even utilities. As Gerd Nonneman suggests, Qatar represents the “inverse of no taxation without representation” (2006, 5).

From its days as a British protectorate until 2014, Qatar maintained a small AVF whose enlisted ranks were largely filled by non-Qatari residents. However, in 2014, Qatar implemented

---

1 Qatar is arguably the world’s richest country. Measured nominally, Qatar’s gross domestic product per capita (GDPpc) is considerably less than Luxembourg’s (in 2014 Qatar’s nominal GDPpc was $93,990.40 compared with Luxembourg’s GDPpc of $118,208.84). However, when measured in purchasing power parity, Qatar’s GDPpc far exceeds Luxembourg’s (in 2014, Qatar’s GDPpc measured in purchasing power parity was $129,489.68 compared with Luxembourg’s GDPpc of $94,855.01). And, because foreign nationals residing in Qatar represent as much as 85 percent of the reported population (Kamrava 2013, 5), the annual share of the state’s GDP could be as high as $680,000 for Qatari citizens (Mitchell 2013, 47).

2 2015 Census data published by the Ministry of Development and Planning Statistics (MDPS) reports Qatar’s population as 2,404,776 (Qatar MDPS 2016, Chapter 1, Table 5). The Qatari Statistics authority considers the number of foreign workers residing in the state a secret and thus does not distinguish Qatari citizens from foreign workers in its official reporting (Roberts 2017, 2, Footnote 7; Mitchell 2013, 45). In lieu of available statistics, commonly accepted extrapolations of population data report the number of Qatari citizens as somewhere between 250,000 to 300,000 (See Roberts 2017, 2; Gartenstein-Ross and Schanzer 2013; Kamrava 2013, 5; Mitchell 2013, 46; and Tok et al. 2016).

3 In Qatar, “popular dissent is headed off by a gold-plated welfare state” (Roberts 2011a). See Mitchell (2013, Chapter 3) for a detailed discussion of the extensive patronage network that Qatar uses to maintain political acquiescence from its citizens and potential political rivals (see also Kamrava 2009, 406-407).

---
a national service law, which requires all of its male citizens between the ages of 18 and 35 to conduct training and military service for a period of three to four months. What accounts for this apparent contradiction in “the gold-plated welfare state” (Roberts 2011a)? Perhaps Qatar’s vulnerability as a small state in a hostile neighborhood convinced its leaders that shifting from an AVF to conscription was necessary to maintain its defense. Alternatively, Qatar’s MMS reforms may have followed from its increasingly active foreign policy, pessimistic economic forecasts, or demographic challenges. While these considerations provide plausible explanations for the radical shift in Qatar’s military manpower policies, they, at best, provide incomplete accounts.

Instead, I argue that Qatar’s MMS reform represents an element of a larger shift in Qatari domestic politics that has become more inwardly-focused since 2013. Specifically, I claim that the shift to national service coincided with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani’s accession as emir and that these MMS reforms supported the new emir’s goal of strengthening the Qatari state through deliberate nation-building efforts designed to reinforce Qatar’s national identity, develop the capacity of its citizens and “groom [them] for useful, productive work” (Al Thani 2013a), and reduce Qatari’s reliance on the state.

Why examine MMS reforms in Qatar? With just 11,800 active-duty service members, Qatar maintains the second smallest army in the Middle East. Likewise, Qatar’s small population of 2.4 million (only 300,000 of which are citizens) and vast economic resources make

---

4 The service obligation is reduced from four to three months for recruits with university degrees (Article 7 of Law No. 5/2014 on National Service). Following two to three months of military training, recruits spend their final month of national service embedded in operational units (Barany 2018, 19).

5 Data from IISS Military Balance (2017). With just 8,200 active duty service members, Bahrain maintains the smallest military in the Gulf Region.
it somewhat of an outlier, even in a region with other small petro-states. Additionally, the secretive nature of Qatar’s defense polices make analyzing the causes of MMS reforms difficult while the near-absolute authority of the emir suggests that any conclusions derived from an analysis of Qatar’s MMS reforms may not be generalizable to a broader set of cases.

Despite these limitations, Qatar’s MMS reforms offer an interesting and important case study for several reasons. First, since the early 2000s, Qatar has become an increasingly important regional and international actor. Qatar’s hyperactive foreign policy and immense financial resources challenge the traditional notion of small states as inconsequential actors whose vulnerability to more powerful states limits their policy choices and outcomes (Cooper and Momani 2011, 115). Thus, Qatar provides an opportunity evaluate this notion of small states by examining its policy-making processes. And because Qatar’s MMS reforms occurred alongside similar reforms in the UAE and Kuwait, an examination of Qatar’s MMS reforms may help to inform our understanding of recent MMS changes in other Gulf States.

6 See Footnote 1 for more on Qatar’s population statistics. Qatar maintains the smallest population and highest GDP per capita in the region. With a partial claim to the world’s largest natural gas field, Qatar is the world’s leading exporter of liquefied natural gas (Qatar National Bank 2013, 2). As a result of its vast resource wealth, Qatar’s economic resources far exceed those of other wealthy Gulf monarchies. The second wealthiest state in the region, UAE, boasts a GDPpc of $43,346.53 (2014 USD) compared to official estimates of $93,990.40 for Qatar (IMF 2017).

7 In describing the challenges of conducting research on Qatari politics, David Roberts suggests that “the conservative and private nature of Qataris themselves and the lack of any kind of meaningful policy documents, white papers, official explanations, and overall transparency throughout government” make “arriving at any firm conclusions” extremely difficult (2012, 233).

8 Qatar has established a “diplomatic niche” (Kamrava 2013, 63) as a mediator and peace broker. Its proactive attempts at conflict resolution include high-profile mediation between Israel and Hamas (Cooper and Momani 20011, 121); Lebanon and Hezbollah (Fromherz 2012,89); and negotiations between the United States, Great Britain, and Libya, which resulted in the dismantling of Libya’s nuclear program in 2003 (Fromherz 2012, 88). See Fromherz (2012, 88-90) for a summary of Qatar’s other notable mediation efforts.

9 Since 2014, the UAE and Kuwait have also introduced conscription. Although a thorough examination of MMS reforms in these countries is beyond the scope of this chapter, a broader investigation of MMS policies in the region would likely inform an analysis of Qatar’s MMS reform, particularly given the difficulty of examining the policymaking process of its closed political system.
Additionally, Qatar offers an excellent opportunity to evaluate the pathways to MMS reform alongside alternative arguments, which suggest security, economic, or demographic factors better explain Qatar’s decision to implement a national service law. Finally, Qatar’s reforms present an interesting puzzle: why would a rentier state whose citizens are “more royal than the king” (Kamrava 2013, 159) revise the political compact and implement compulsory national service? As I explain in the following sections, Qatar’s MMS reforms illustrate how military manpower policies can support other policy priorities and promote regime legitimacy. Compulsory service for Qatar’s citizens marks a radical change from the state’s previous MMS policies and represents a fundamental altering of state-societal relations. Nevertheless, Qatar’s decision to implement national service represents a logical policy choice when viewed in the context of the new emir’s broader policies designed to foster nationalism and reduce Qatari’s dependence on the state.

In the following sections, I provide a brief overview of the political and military history of Qatar and identify the MMS preferences of domestic and government actors with the greatest ability to influence Qatar’s MMS policies: emirs Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Qatar Armed Forces (QAF) and Ministry of State for Defence Affairs, and the Qatari public. Next, I present my argument that Qatar’s move to national service reflects a deliberate shift to more internally-focused policies by Tamim and evaluate this argument against other possible explanations of Qatar’s MMS reform. Finally, I analyze these arguments using the pathways to MMS reform model and discuss the limitations of this analysis.
A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF QATAR’S POLITICAL AND MILITARY HISTORY

Almost all examinations of modern-day Qatar describe the small, wealthy monarchy as a “pygmy with the punch of a giant” (or employ some variation of this colorful description). Nevertheless, throughout most of its history, Qatar maintained the ignominious reputation as “the most boring place in the Gulf” (Roberts 2017, 2). With a landmass of just 11,586 square kilometers, Qatar is roughly the size of Belgium and just smaller than the state of Connecticut (CIA World Factbook 2016). Sparsely populated and with a backwards economy based primarily on pearling, Qatar lacked all of the traditionally conceived bases of power. However, following rapid economic development in the late 1990s, a state that had “seldom entered the international consciousness” (Roberts 2017, 2) transformed into a significant regional and international player that consistently “punches above its weight” (“A Bouncy Bantam” 2006).

The rise of modern Qatar closely follows the rise of the powerful Al Thani family. Despite the fact that a Qatari sheikh from a rival tribe claimed rule over the small town that would eventually become the capital city, Doha, the British designated Qatar as a subject of Bahrain in 1820. Over the next 50 years, quarrels between rival members of the Bahraini sheikdom and the Wahhabi ruler of the powerful Al-Saud tribe frequently unfolded on the Qatari peninsula. But while several Qatari tribes sought to take advantage of these power struggles, an

10 *The Economist* has described Qatar as a “Pygmy with the Punch of a Giant” (November 5, 2011) and “A Bouncy Bantam” (September 7, 2006). Other works such as Kamrava (2013), Roberts (2011), Katzman (2017), Mitchell (2013), Nuruzzaman (2015), and Tok et al. (2016) have adopted these or similar monikers for the Gulf emirate.

11 An ongoing feud between the Al Thanis and Bahraini Khalifas continues to affect relations between Qatar and Bahrain. See Fromherz (2012, 45) and Cordesman (1997, 214-215) for a discussion of the origins of this feud.
1868 treaty between the British and Sheikh Muhamad bin Thani recognized Qatar as an independent political entity and establish the Al Thani dynasty that remains in power today.\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{qatar_map.png}
\caption{Map of Qatar and the Gulf States}
\end{figure}

Located in the strategic Persian Gulf and surrounded by hostile, expansive sheikdoms, Qatar was always a target of its more powerful neighbors. The Al Thanis maintained tenuous control of the Qatari peninsula through the support of their British and Ottoman protectors and by using their security patrons’ rivalry to the family’s advantage.\textsuperscript{13} The British reduced the threats from Bahrain and the Zubara tribe in northern Qatar while the Ottomans served as an important check on the territorial ambitions of the neighboring Al-Saud tribe (Fromherz 2012, 57-60). In 1892, Qatar asserted independence from its Ottoman protectors when they attempted to strengthen their control over the peninsula. In what is today celebrated as Qatar’s National Day, nomadic fighters under the leadership of Sheikh Jasim bin Muhamad bin Thani defeated Turkish soldiers at the Battle of Wajbah (Fromherz 2012, 60-62). Although the Ottomans would

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} The 1868 Anglo-Qatari Treaty resulted in little direct political interference from the British until it began extracting large quantities of oil in 1949 (Fromherz 2012, 66-73). See also Cordesman (1997, 215).
\item \textsuperscript{13} British recognition bestowed the Al Thani rule with legitimacy, and Britain’s desire to maintain stability in the Gulf region provided the family with protection from warring tribes (Fromherz 2012, 60). See Cordesman (1997, 215) for a discussion of how Qatar retained a degree of autonomy by playing the Ottomans off the British.
\end{itemize}
eventually renounce suzerainty of Qatar 1913, increasing threats from the Al Saud-led Wahhabis would force Qatar to sign a treaty with Great Britain in 1916, making it a formal protectorate of the British Empire (Fromherz 2012, 62; Cordesman 1997, 216).

When the British announced their intention to leave the Gulf Region in 1968, Qatar considered joining the seven sheikdoms that today comprise the United Arab Emirates. However, Qatar saw little economic benefit in joining the federation of states and instead decided to declare its full independence in 1971 (Cordesman 1997, 217-218). A small state with an even smaller military, Qatar continued to rely on external patrons for its security as an independent state. Qatar initially sought protection from one of its principal security concerns—Saudi Arabia (Roberts 2017, 40). However, the First Gulf War convinced Qatar’s leaders that Saudi Arabia could not protect itself, let alone Qatar (Roberts 2017, 31), and Qatar entered into a formal security agreement with the United States in 1992.\(^\text{14}\) U.S.-Qatari security cooperation deepened after September 11, 2001; today, Qatar hosts some 10,000 U.S. troops, the forward headquarters of U.S. Central Command, and Al Udeid Air Base, which serves as the largest prepositioning base outside of the continental United States (Roberts 2017, 39; Tok et al. 2016, 2).\(^\text{15}\)

Qatar’s reliance on external patrons for security meant that it never had to raise a military of any meaningful size. From the beginning of its modern history in the late 18\(^{\text{th}}\) Century until its independence in 1971, Qatar never maintained a regular standing force, and with the exception of isolated skirmishes, Qatar never had to call on its citizens to defend the homeland (Roberts

\(^\text{14}\) Qatar signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement with the United States in 1992. This agreement provides the United States access to Qatari military facilities and the ability to preposition military equipment (Katzman 2017).

\(^\text{15}\) See Kamrava (2013, 89) for a discussion of leaked diplomatic cables, which reveal Qatar’s deliberate decision to relegate much of its defense to the United States.
At independence, the Qatar Armed Forces (QAF) consisted of a single Royal Guard regiment and a few other small security units (Cordesman 1997, 268). Qatar increased the size of its armed forces to roughly 5,000 in the early 1980s, and had steadily expanded the size of its forces to 11,100 by 1995 (Cordesman 1997, 268).

Although military spending grew rapidly under the leadership of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani (1996-2013), the size of the QAF and its personnel policies remained consistent. Due to the high number of foreign nationals in Qatar and the unappealing nature of military service to Qatari citizens who benefit from a cradle-to-grave welfare, the vast majority of Qatari military service members consist of expatriates and other non-Qatari residents. Because Qatar does not report information about the number of foreign nationals in its military, it is difficult to ascertain the exact composition the QAF. However, most experts agree that non-Qataris account for anywhere from 50 to 70 percent of all uniformed personnel.

Shortly after Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani succeeded his father as emir in June 2013, the new emir announced his intention to radically alter the state’s MMS policies. In February 2014, Qatar implemented Law No. 5 of 2014 on National Service, which requires all Qatari males between the ages of 18 and 35 to conduct training and military service for a period of three to four months depending on their education levels. Following the completion of

---

16 Barany notes that Qatar has never had to rely on conscription due to British protection and the ability to draw military staff from tribal elites and royal family members (2018, 17). Although the British developed Qatari police and armed forces in the 1940s and 1950s, “at no time in the 20th Century was a Qatari meaningfully charged with protecting his country” (Roberts 2017, 40).

17 Estimates derived from non-attributional discussions with Western military advisors in Qatar. Cordesman (1997, 273) similarly estimates that foreign nationals make up as much as 70 percent of QAF personnel. Enlisted ranks are predominately comprised of expatriate service members while Qatari citizens fill officer and non-commissioned officer billets (Barany 2018, 17); however, Western advisors confirm that residents from Jordan and other Sunni Muslim-countries occasionally serve as officers and NCOs.

18 The service obligation is reduced from four to three months for recruits with university degrees (Article 7 of Law No. 5/2014 on National Service).
training and service requirements, the law requires all draftees to remain on reserve status for 10 years or until their 40th birthday. And although the law outlines broad categories of exemptions, it imposes heavy penalties on those who fail to comply with national service requirements.  

**ACTORS AND MMS PREFERENCES**

The 2014 national service law marked a radical change in Qatar’s MMS policies and the relationship between the Qatari state, armed forces, and society. In this section, I identify the interests and MMS preferences of Qatar’s leaders and other domestic actors with the greatest ability to influence the state’s military manpower policies. Specifically, I examine the MMS preferences and influence of Emirs Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Qatar Armed Forces and Ministry of State for Defence Affairs (MINDEF), and the Qatari public.

Although Qatar is technically a constitutional monarchy, in practice the emir’s power is absolute (Al-Sayed 2016, 42). With no independent legislature, judiciary, or meaningful institutions to limit his powers, there is no meaningful distinction between the emir and the state (Kamrava 2013, 104; Crystal 1989, 440). Therefore, I begin my analysis with a discussion of

---

19 Although touted as a universal service law, the law exempts those who are deemed medically unfit, have no siblings, or whose parents died as “martyrs” or were discharged from military service due to illness (Article 15). Penalties for noncompliance include fines of up to 50,000 Qatari rials ($13,513) and a year of imprisonment, and penalties for persons convicted of falsifying documents or dismembering themselves with the intent of avoiding national service face minimum prison sentencing of one month and a fine of no more than 20,000 Qatari rials ($5,405).

20 Although they acknowledge that the emir has absolute control of Qatar’s formal institutions, Fromherz (2012, 127-129) and Tok and his co-authors (2016, 3) caution against overlooking other important sources of power. Fromherz suggests that the power of the emir is “circumscribed in subtle ways” by highly localized and informal tribal arrangements that are “hard for Western political scientists trained in formal institutional politics and economics to understand or quantify” (2012, 128).

21 The 2004 Constitution grants extraordinary powers to the emir (See The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar 2004). The constitution declares that the emir “shall be inviolable” and that he must be respected by all” (Article 64). The emir ratifies all legislation (Article 67), appoints all cabinet members and has the power to remove them at will (Articles 72 and 73). Although Qatar has a legislative body—the Majlis Al Shura, or “Shura Council”—the powers of the emir undermine the effectiveness of the Shura
the policy priorities of Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani who ruled Qatar from 1995 to 2013. Qatar enacted its MMS reforms after Hamad’s son, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, had succeeded him as emir; however, it is quite possible that Hamad continued to influence policymaking from behind the scenes (see Henderson 2017; Simon 2017; Katzman 2017, 5).

And although the following analysis of Hamad’s foreign and domestic policies reveals little information about his MMS preferences, understanding Qatar’s MMS reforms requires an appreciation of the shortcomings of Hamad’s hyperactive foreign policy and Tamim’s more inward-looking focus that followed as a result.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani

Hamad succeeded his father, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, as emir in 1995 following a bloodless coup. In many ways, Hamad’s assumption of power marked the beginning of Qatar’s transition to a modern state (Fromherz 2012, 83; Hammond 2014). Although political liberalization remained “as elusive as ever” (Kamrava 2009, 402), Hamad took significant steps to liberalize the economy and “push and prod traditional Qatari tribes toward globalization and the adaptation of mainly Western institutions” (Fromherz 2012, 21-22). Through economic reforms and heavy investment in liquefaction technologies, Hamad capitalized on the state’s vast natural gas resources and used this resource windfall to fund massive projects in infrastructure, attract Western businesses, and establish “Education City,” which hosts campuses of several Council (Al-Sayed 2016, 38). The emir can suspend laws (Article 106), amend the constitution (Article 144), and suspend the Shura Council by decree (Article 104). And although the constitution stipulates that 30 of the Council’s 45 members should be selected by general election, Hamad, and now Tamim, continue to postpone these elections (Lambert 2011, 89; Kamrava 2013, 124). As a consequence, it is virtually impossible for the Council to gather the support of two thirds of the councilmembers necessary to overrule the emir’s objections to any draft law (Articles 105 and 106).
prominent Western Universities. As the pictures of Doha’s skyline illustrate, the city that existed when Hamad assumed power was hardly recognizable when he stepped down.

![Figure 4.2 – Doha’s Skyline in 2005, 2010 and 2012](http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showpost.php?s=d5d54e127d66a3439693b8e60abda6e4&p=97814703&postcount%20=401 (posted November 29, 2012; accessed December 14, 2017))

Hamad’s greatest legacy, however, was transforming Qatar from a small, largely irrelevant Gulf monarchy into a major regional and international player. Unlike his father before him or leaders of other small states in the region, Hamad was not content to have Qatar “fly low under the radar” and live under Saudi Arabia’s shadow (Cooper and Momani 2011, 127; see also Lambert 2011). With the support of his high-profile Prime and Foreign minister, Hamad bin Jassim (often referred to as simply, HBJ), Hamad used an active foreign policy to establish Qatar as a “benevolent mediator” with a “diplomatic niche” for conflict resolution (Kamrava 2013, 63; see also Khatib 2013, 418 and Ulrichsen 2014, 81-83).

Enshrined as a central element of Qatar’s foreign policy in the state’s 2004 constitution, mediation formed the core of Hamad’s broader diplomatic and foreign policy strategy. Qatar’s

---

22 See Fromherz (2012, 83-84) and Kamrava (2013, 153-156) for more on the modernization and rapid development programs under Hamad.

23 Qatar’s involvement in international mediations as the principal mediator is highly unique given its small size. Traditionally, such roles are reserved for “regional heavyweights” and are conducted under the aegis of the UN or other institutional bodies (Kamrava 2011, 540-541).

24 Article 7 states: “The foreign policy of the State is based on the principles of strengthening international
vast economic resources, willingness to engage in intense personal diplomacy, and reputation as an “impartial mediator” (Kamrava 2011, 542) allowed Hamad and HBJ to insert Qatar into the middle of some of the most intractable conflicts in the region, often with a large degree of success. A partial listing of Qatar’s more high profile mediation efforts include its role in negotiating the dismantling of Libya’s nuclear program in 2003 (Fromherz 2012, 88); peace talks between Chad and Sudan in 2008 (Fromherz 2012, 88); mediation between Israel, Hamas and Fatah (Cooper and Momani 2011, 121); highly successful mediation efforts in Lebanon in 2008 (Fromherz 2012, 89); and Qatar’s forceful interventions in Libya and Syria following the Arab Spring (Kamrava 2013, 170; Ulrichsen 2014, specifically Chapter 5).

Hamad’s active foreign policy reflected two closely related motivations: a desire to increase the state’s international prestige and the need to maintain its security in a hostile region. Expanding Qatar’s influence on the international stage helped to detract attention from Hamad’s failure to fulfill his promises of political liberalization and underpinned his goal of transforming Qatar’s economy by attracting foreign capital (Khatib 2013, 419-420). An integral part of the state’s “branding process” (Ulrichsen 2014, 68; see also Cooper and Momani 2009; Kamrava 2011, 542; and Roberts 2017, 17), Hamad’s high-profile mediation efforts sought to bring attention to the small, Gulf emirate and project Qatar as a place “open for business and investment” (Cooper and Momani 2009, 103). Additionally, Hamad sought to increase Qatar’s regional and international profile to “gain influence in strategic areas” (Kamrava 2011, 542; see peace and security by means of encouraging peaceful resolution of international disputes, supporting the right of peoples to self-determination, not interfering in the domestic affairs of other states, and cooperating with peace-loving nations.”

The distribution of foreign assistance also served as a central tool of Hamad’s foreign policy. Under Hamad, Qatar greatly expanded the volume and scope of its foreign assistance (Khatib 2013, 425-426), providing extensive aid to countries such as Lebanon, Mali, Libya (Ulrichsen 2012, 13), and even the United States following Hurricane Katrina (Roberts 2017, 176).
also Ulrichsen 2014, 70-71) and “protect [Qatar] from the perils of small-state anonymity and vulnerability” that left Kuwait defenseless in 1990 (Khatib 2013, 418-420).

Qatar’s expanding role as a regional moderator and peace broker formed an integral part of Hamad’s broader diplomatic efforts to prevent regional conflicts that might “spread closer to home” (Khatib 2013, 418; see also Kamrava 2011, 542) and to balance regional powers, radical groups, and Western interests. According to one security analyst at the Gulf Research Center in Dubai, Hamad’s foreign policies “really put all the contradictions of the Middle East in one box” (cited in Worth 2008). Hamad hosted Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, but also sought to improve relations with Israel. At times Hamad demonstrated deference to neighboring Saudi Arabia, yet Qatar also maintained relations with Iran.26 Qatar remained an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) yet willingly courted controversy through its media foreign policy arm—Al Jazeera.27 However, as historian Allen Fromherz notes, there was a method behind Hamad’s seemingly incoherent approach to foreign policy (2012, 22-23). Qatar’s vulnerabilities as a small state often require it to “play both sides” (Cooper and Momani 2011b, 127), and Hamad’s balanced foreign policy provided Qatar with great flexibility and a credible claim to be an impartial mediator.28 As one Qatari official quipped, “the idea is to keep everyone happy—or if we can’t, to keep everybody reasonably unhappy” (quoted in Worth 2008).

26 Qatar maintains a complicated relationship with Iran. Qatar views Iran as one of its principal threats (Kamrava 2013, 137; Roberts 2017, 178; Fromherz 2012, 96-100) yet maintains much more positive relations with Iran than do its Gulf neighbors (Gartenstein-Ross and Schanzer 2013). At times, Qatar’s ties with Iran have restrained its relations with the United States, but leaked cables reveal the superficial nature of its relationship with Iran (Kamrava 2013, 74; Roberts 2017, 74). Kamrava suggests that Qatar’s relatively warm relations with Iran are, in fact, rooted in the small state’s fear of its more powerful neighbor (Kamrava 2013, 87).

27 Since its establishment in 1996, Al Jazeera has formed a key arm of Hamad’s foreign policy. In addition to high-profile mediation efforts, Hamad utilized the Qatari media platform, Al Jazeera, to project to the outside world and promote the state’s interests (see Cooper and Momani 2011a, 113-114; Roberts 2017, 98).

28 For more on Qatar’s balanced approach to foreign policy, see Nuruzzaman (2015, 227), Cooper and Momani (2011b, 117), Kamrava 2013, 72-78), and Khatib (2013, 420).
Despite Hamad’s immense popularity at home, by 2013, many Qataris had come to believe that the emir’s policies had gone too far to antagonize Qatar’s neighbors and challenge Qatar’s traditional culture.\(^{29}\) Furthermore, the deteriorating situation in Libya and Syria (Khatib 2013, 420-22) and the ouster of the Qatari-backed Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt demonstrated the limits of Qatar’s hyperactive foreign policy.\(^{30}\) By 2013, Qatar was a friend of none and the target of ire of its more powerful neighbors.

After months of speculation about a leadership transition, Hamad voluntarily abdicated his position to his son, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, on June 25, 2013. Given that all political transitions in modern Qatar had occurred following coups d’état, this peaceful transfer of power was highly unusual, if not unprecedented.\(^{31}\) Accounts of why Hamad chose to step down vary widely,\(^{32}\) but regardless of Hamad’s motivations, the transition of power from the aging emir to his 33-year-old son “resonated powerfully with the tenor of the Arab Spring that Qatar had done so much to support” (Ulrichsen 2014, 175). In his abdication speech, Hamad explained, “I have not desired power for the sake of power nor endeavored to rule for personal motivations.” He then proclaimed, “the time has come to open a new page in the journey of our nation that would have a new generation carry the responsibilities (armed) with their innovative ideas and active energies” (H. Al Thani 2013). As Hamad suggested, the transition of power

\(^{29}\) A 2013 survey of Qataris found that 77 percent of respondents believed that “the states should spend more on resources inside the country” (cited in Hammond 2014). Furthermore, rising concerns among more socially conservative sectors of Qatari society believed that Hamad’s education (Mitchell 2013, 249-250) and “intense Westernization reforms” (Hammond 2014) had gone too far.

\(^{30}\) See Roberts (2017, 123) for more on Qatar’s foreign policy failures following the Arab Spring.

\(^{31}\) Hamad, like his father before him, came to power following a bloodless coup. At a time when many other Arab leaders were being forced out of office despite desperate attempts to cling to power, Hamad’s voluntary abdication was all the more surprising (Lynch 2013).

\(^{32}\) David Roberts argues, “there is no compelling evidence to explain why Hamad decided to step down” (2017, 149). While some accounts suggest that Hamad stepped down to “demonstrate that succession was not to be feared,” others suggest that he abdicated due to health concerns related to a condition with his kidneys (Roberts 2017, 149).
marked the beginning of a new era of Qatari politics in which domestic policies have taken priority over foreign policy and Tamim has sought to alter the relations between Qataris, the armed forces, and the state.

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

Tamim had long been an important member of his father’s inner circle before succeeding him as emir. In 2003, Tamim replaced his elder brother, Sheikh Jasim bin Hamad Al Thani, who had fallen out of favor with his father over his opposition to Hamad’s development strategy (Ulrichsen 2014, 84), as heir apparent. As one of Hamad’s principle advisors and his successor in-waiting, Tamim maintained an expansive portfolio: Tamim led the influential Qatari Investment Authority (Katzman 2017, 5); oversaw the internal security of the state (“Qatar was ‘Making Too Many Enemies’” 2013); served as chair of the Supreme Oversight Committee for implementing Qatar National Vision 2030; and was a, if not the, central decision-maker in matters related to defense (Roberts 2017, 160).

After assuming power in 2013, Tamim further centralized policymaking in the office of the emir. Under Hamad, policy decisions were concentrated into the hands of three individuals—Hamad himself, HBJ, and Tamim (Khatib 2013, 429). However, no such coalition of advisors exists under Tamim. Referring to Hamad’s group of principal advisors as Qatar Inc., Mehran Kamrava suggests that under Tamim, Qatar Inc. has been reduced to one.33

When he succeeded his father as emir, many at home and abroad anticipated sweeping changes to Qatar’s foreign and domestic policies.34 As heir apparent, Tamim had enacted

---

33 Interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 13, 2017.
34 Simeon (2014) notes that “hopes were high” in Saudi Arabia and the UAE that the “young new emir would recalibrate Qatar’s approach to regional affairs.” Likewise, an article in World Tribune published just after Tamim’s assumption as emir claims that both Hamad and Tamim recognized the failings of Qatar’s interventions in Egypt, Libya, and Syria and the resulting tensions between Qatar and its
policies that restored Arabic as the language of instruction at Qatar University and banned the sale of pork and alcohol in a popular tourist district—two policies that played well at home and signaled Tamim’s willingness to address the perceived erosion of Qatari culture and traditions (Roberts 2017, 164-166; Ulrichsen 2014, 84). Likewise, the success of Qatar’s mediation in the first decade of the 21st Century led to a “trend of over-reach” during the Arab Spring that strained Qatar’s relations with its neighbors and led many Qataris to question the strategic merit of Hamad’s hyperactive foreign policy (Ulrichsen 2014, 93). Acutely aware of the growing tensions with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states over Qatar’s support for the Muslim Brotherhood and unfavorable coverage of Al Jazeera, Tamim ordered a new, lower profile foreign policy designed to improve Qatar’s relationships with its regional allies. According to one diplomat, “Tamim argued that as a tiny country Qatar was making too many enemies and needed to take a step back” (quoted in “Qatar was ‘Making Too Many Enemies’” 2013).

Recognizing the need to be more emollient and avoid unnecessary abrasions of fellow GCC members, Tamim made several notable concessions to Qatar’s neighbors: Tamim’s government asked some members of the Muslim Brotherhood to relocate, ensured Al Jazeera adjusted its content to appear less hostile to neighboring governments (Al Qassemi 2011), and deployed troops and aircraft to Yemen in support of Saudi and UAE-led military operations against Houthi rebels (Roberts 2017, 162-163).

Citing Western diplomats and a leading Saudi analyst, the article predicts a significant shift in Qatar’s foreign policy (“Qatar was ‘Making too many Enemies’: New Emir, New Foreign Policy” 2013). Western diplomats and analysts suggest that this foreign policy shift had been drafted in the spring before Hamad’s abdication, suggesting that he also recognized the need to reduce tensions with Qatar’s neighbors (“Qatar was ‘Making Too Many Enemies’” 2013).

Gerd Nonneman, interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 11, 2017.

Although deploying troops and aircraft to support an overseas conflict might suggest a continuation of Qatar’s increasingly active foreign policy following the Arab Spring, Roberts argues that this action, in fact, illustrates Tamim’s more conservative foreign policy approach. Rather than a continuation of policies that resulted in forceful interventions in Libya and Syria, Qatar’s support for Saudi and UAE-led
But although the extent to which Tamim altered Qatar’s foreign policies is subject to debate,\textsuperscript{38} his reforms to Qatar’s domestic and military policies are indisputable. Tamim entered office vowing to focus on domestic affairs (Dickinson 2014b), and he initiated a major cabinet shuffle that elevated the role of the interior minister. In a telling signal of his vision for the direction for the country, Tamim moved quickly to replace HBJ, who as both Qatar’s foreign minister and prime minister “had long been synonymous with Qatar’s foreign policy,” and assign his interior minister the additional title of Foreign Minister.\textsuperscript{39}

Tamim assumed power at a time of growing concern among many Qataris that cultural changes were eroding Qatar’s traditional values and that the country’s youth “were losing the essence of what it meant to be Qatari” (Roberts 2017, 175). In an overt nod to these sentiments (Roberts 2017, 160), Tamim used his accession speech to warn of the dangers associated with corruption, dependency on the state, and “non-productive personalit[ies]” (Al Thani 2013b). Likewise, in a speech that bore resemblance to President John F. Kennedy’s famous call to Americans’ to accept their duties as citizens, Tamim called on Qatar’s citizens to share in the burdens and responsibilities of sustaining the country’s economic growth and development (Al Thani 2015).

\textsuperscript{38} Roberts (2017, 162-163) suggests that Tamim shows little interest in foreign policy and that Qatar’s policies have grown more reactive under his leadership; however, others suggest that Tamim has brought little, if any, changes to Qatar’s foreign policy (see for example Laub 2017; Hammond 2014; Simeon 2014; Shapiro 2013).

\textsuperscript{39} It is easy to understate the significance of this cabinet move. Next to Sheikh Hamad, Hamad bin Jassim (HBJ) was perhaps the “most powerful politician in the emirate” (“Qatar was ‘Making too Many Enemies’” 2013). Roberts (2013a) suggests that Hamad’s abdication and the replacement of HBJ represented the removal of “the two central architects of Qatar’s modern history.”
As Roberts notes, Tamim’s speeches proved to be more than mere rhetoric (2017, 157-158). Recognizing the need for fiscal prudence in an era of falling energy prices, Tamim cut public sector wages for the first time in a decade and implemented a value added tax (VAT) in 2017 (“Qatar Cabinet Approves Draft Law on Income Tax and VAT” 2017). Combined, these policies signify a revolutionary departure from Qatar’s political compact in which Qatari citizens exchange political acquiescence for cradle-to-grave welfare (Roberts 2017, 158). While these policy changes could be expected to receive a cold reception among Qataris, Tamim has proved himself to be a deft politician by linking Qatar’s fiscal situation to the perceived loss of values and discipline in Qatar’s youth—an issue that “strikes a deeply resonant chord” in a society that fears for the corruption of its youth (Roberts 2017, 160).

Tamim’s more inward-looking focus has also included reforms to increase the functionality and independence of Qatar’s military. In his 2016 address to the 45th Session of the Advisory Council, Tamim called for “self-sufficiency” in Qatar’s national security (Al Thani 2016). Speaking at Georgetown University the previous year, Tamim argued: “we shouldn’t only be depending on America. [We] Arab countries, we should do our own work, and then we should ask the Americans if we need help to help us solve our problems” (quoted in Quackenbush 2015).

---

40 In his accession speech, Tamim spoke of the economic challenges resulting from falling energy prices and growing dependency on the state (Al Thani 2013b). Likewise, in his inaugural address to the Advisory Council that fall, Tamim spoke of the need to “groom” socially responsible and productive citizens in the context of an economic slowdown and rising public expenditures (Al Thani 2013a).

41 See Qatar Economic Outlook 2015-2017 (Qatar Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics 2015, 27) for figures on public sector wage cuts. Notably, these modest cuts in public wages came on the heels of a 60 percent increase in public sector wages in 2011 (Ulrichsen 2014, 85).

42 In his first speech to the Advisory Council as emir, Tamim expressed fears of a loss of values and discipline in Qatar’s youth who have grown up in a culture of “consumption” (Al Thani 2013a).
Increased defense budgets and purchases of military hardware suggest that these calls for military reforms were more than just rhetoric. The most sweeping changes to Qatar’s military, however, involved drastic reforms to Qatar’s military manpower policies, which had remained unchanged since Qatar’s independence. In November 2013, Tamim announced that Qatar would soon begin conscripting Qatari citizens for national service. The following February, Qatar’s parliamentary body promulgated Law No. 5 of 2014 on National Service, and Qatar’s first class of conscripted recruits began national service training that spring (Scott 2015).

The Military

With an end strength of just 11,800 personnel, Qatar maintains the second smallest military in the Middle East. Despite significant increases in military pay in 2011, military service remains a relatively undesirable means of employment for Qataris who could otherwise find employment in the private sector, a cushy government job, or simply not work at all. Consequently, the QAF relies heavily on foreign nationals to meet its personnel requirements.

---

43 Qatar is highly secretive about its military spending, even by the standards of the Gulf region (IISS Military Balance 2014, 302). The IISS Military Balance provides only estimates of Qatar’s spending after 2012, and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has not even reported Qatar’s defense spending data since 2010. The IISS Military Balance estimates that Qatar’s defence spending decreased slightly from 2014 to 2016; however, increased military spending under Tamim is “self-evident” (Robert 2017, 160). In 2014, Qatar purchased U.S. Patriot missile batteries and Apache helicopters for $11 billion, and Qatar spent another $21 billion on F-15QA aircraft in 2016. With a reported defense budget of less than $4 billion (IISS Military Balance 2017), these significant purchases suggest that Qatar’s defense spending has, in fact, grown considerably under Tamim.

44 According to a report released by the Qatar News Agency, Tamim’s government decided to introduce legislation calling for obligatory national serve to “achieve the interests of the defense of the homeland, and constant readiness to maintain the security and stability of the country” (Scott 2013). However, as I argue elsewhere in this chapter, the reasons for the law appear to have less to do with national security in a traditional sense than they do with supporting the emir’s broader, internally-focused policies.

45 Data from IISS Military Balance (2017). With just 8,200 active duty service members, Bahrain maintains the smallest military in the Gulf Region.

46 With no publically available data, it is difficult to track changes in military wages over time. However, Roberts (2017, 160-161) and Ulrichsen (2018, 85) suggest that military salaries rose by 100 to 120 percent at the direction of Tamim in his role as Chair of the Supreme Oversight Committee for Qatar National Vision 2030 (see Qatar MDPS 2008).
The exact numbers of foreign nationals serving in the military are undisclosed; however, it is widely known that Qatar relies on enlisted troops from predominately Sunni majority countries (particularly Jordan, Pakistan and Yemen) while native Qatars serve as officers and non-commissioned officers (Barany 2018, 17). According to one senior military advisor, it is likely that Qatari citizens comprise less than 2,000 of the 11,800 service members in the QAF.

The first class of national service recruits included approximately 2,000 Qatari men, and seven additional cohorts have undergone training and service requirements since April of 2014 (Barany 2018, 18-19). However, because recruits only spend a single month of their national service obligation embedded with operational units (Barany 2018, 19), national service does not affect the size of the active duty force. On the other hand, national service has expanded the size of Qatar’s inactive reserves. After completing national service training, Qatari remain on reserve status until they reach the age of 40 or are recalled to active duty status (Barany 2018, 18). During the first phase of reserve service, which lasts five to ten years after the completion of national service training, Qatari may be recalled to conduct training or service requirements for up to 14 days annually (Barany 2018, 18). However, it is unclear whether or not the QAF has, in fact, called up national service graduates to conduct military drill or refresher training or if it intends to do so in the future. Multiple off-the-record conversations and email correspondence with Western military advisors in Qatar suggest that no such call-ups have occurred to-date.

Perhaps unsurprising given the near absolute power of the emir and the small size of the QAF, the military has very little influence over policy decisions. The Minister of State for

---

47 In an off-the-record interview conducted in June of 2017, one Western military advisor confirmed that under certain circumstances Qatar allows foreign nationals to serve as military officers. For example, he cited personally working with a Qatari pilot from Jordan.

48 Most Western military advisors estimate that Qatari comprise between 30 and 50 percent of the QAF; however, one senior advisor stated off-the-record that as few as 2000 of Qatar’s 11,800 military personnel are Qatari citizens.
Defense Affairs (MINDEF) performs most defense policy functions; however, the emir serves as the Minister of Defense. Moreover, the MINDEF is considered a lesser among equals in the emir’s cabinet, which itself has very little decision-making authority. Unlike most other cabinet positions held by Al Thanis, the MINDEF has historically been a member of the Al Attiyah family. Consequently, the position of MINDEF holds a “slightly lower status than that of a full minister” (Katzman 2017, 3). Thus while we might expect the military’s interests to at times run counter to the emir’s, public disagreement between the emir and the QAF simply does not exist.

Although the military would perhaps be the institution best positioned to launch a coup, there exists no real threat of a military intervention in Qatari politics. Strong public support of the emir, “careful manipulation of military officers and positions” within the MINDEF, and the largely ceremonial role of the QAF significantly reduce the threat the military might pose to the emir (Fromherz 2012, 143-145). The most significant threat to the emir’s rule has always come from within the broader Al Thani family, and it is unlikely that a military coup would succeed (or even occur) without the strong backing of a rival family member. Qatar has a long history of bloodless coups; however, rival family members, not the military, have directed each of these coups. Moreover, the QAF’s powerful Amiri Guard, which reports directly to the emir, serves as a “coup-proofing” mechanism.

---

49 Constitutional provisions place significant limits on the power of the emir’s Council of Ministers, but the position of MINDEF may be especially weak (Al-Sayed 2016, 39).
50 Gerd Nonneman, interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 11, 2017.
51 Until Hamad’s voluntary abdication in 2013, all previous transitions of power in Qatar had occurred through family-led coups (Henderson 2013).
52 See Pilster and Böhmel (1997) and Quinlivin (1999) for detailed discussions “coup-proofing.” By dividing military forces into rival organizations and paramilitary organizations such as the Amiri Guard that fall outside of the normal command structure, regimes can prevent their militaries from coordinating acts of insubordination as well as create cadres of loyal forces (Pilster and Böhmel 1997, 336).
The absence of any open disagreement between the emir and the military make ascertaining its MMS preferences difficult. Nevertheless, public statements by senior military leaders suggest that conscription has been well-received by the armed forces. According to the Qatar News Agency, the government introduced the National Service Law to “achieve the interests of the defense of the homeland and constant readiness to maintain the security and stability of the country” (Scott 2013). However, much of senior military leaders’ praise for national service has centered around its contributions to nation-building and the development of Qatar’s youth rather than military’s effectiveness. Speaking before the launch of the national service program, the MINDEF claimed that the new law would help to make Qataris “ideal citizens” (quoted in Scott 2015). Likewise, the assistant commander of the Students Training Centre of Qatar Armed Forces suggested that national service would “help to instill a positive attitude” in Qatari youth while “promot[ing] loyalty to the country [and] self-reliance and discipline.”53

For senior officials who have cited security implications of national service, their statements have placed equal emphasis on the law’s role in nation-building. The Chairman of the National Service Authority suggested that national service aims “to enable [Qataris] to participate effectively in the defence of the homeland and its people” while at the same time acknowledging the program’s role in “instill[ing] a sense of national belonging and patriotism.”54 Similarly, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces praised national service as a means “to take advantage of human resources to support the armed forces in crisis and emergency, instill a sense

53 Quoted in “200 Young Qataries to Apply for ‘Mandatory’ Military Course” 2014.
54 Quoted in “Armed Forces National Service Recruits Graduate” 2016.
of belonging to the homeland in the hearts of young people, boost their fitness levels, and prepare them to contribute to the comprehensive development Qatar is witnessing.”

Public

In a closed political system such as Qatar’s, it is difficult to gauge public opinion of policy issues such as MMS. However, public opinion surveys suggest that Qataris concern themselves with issues of national security and the perceived erosion of cultural identity, and national service appears to have broad public appeal (Roberts 2017, 161). Conversations with Qataris reveal enthusiastic support for the law, to include among Qatari youth, who are directly affected by this change in policy. Beyond anecdotal evidence of support, Qatari youth rushed to register for the new program before its implementation, and enrollment in the program far exceeded Qatari officials expectations.

Still, it is easy to overstate the extent to which public opinion may influence policies such as MMS. Qataris are “notoriously apathetic” (Kamrava 2009), and there exists little of anything resembling civic engagement in Qatar (Fromherz 2012, 2). With the world’s highest per-capita income and generous support from the welfare state, it is perhaps no surprise that the “benign autocracy” remains highly popular among the Qatari public (Kamrava 2013, 135; see also

55 Ibid.
56 The 2014 Global Values Survey revealed that 75 percent of Qataris worried about a war involving Qatar and 72 percent worried about terrorist attacks “very much” (Inglehart 2014, 16-17). Likewise, Roberts describes the “perceived erosion of [Qataris’] cultural identity” as an issue of growing concern (2017, 16).
57 Speaking to the local Arabic daily Arrayah, a cross-section of young Qatari men described Qatar’s national service program as “a practical way for expressing love and loyalty for the country” (“Qataris Welcome National Service” 2014). Barany (2017) cites similar support for national service among Qataris, and professors at Georgetown University’s Qatar campus claim that their students overwhelmingly support Qatar’s new MMS policies (see interviews with Kamrava, Nonneman, and Miller).
58 See “Armed Forces National Service Recruits Graduate” (2016) and “Qataris Welcome National Service” (2014). After the announcement of the program but before its implementation, Qatari youth rushed to enroll in the new program (Scott 2015).
Roberts 2017, 177). With a near “absolute monarchy and virtually no domestic dissent,” the emir is relatively free to pursue his policy agenda without consideration for how well these policies might “play at home” (Worth 2008). Security and defense decisions remain “almost exclusively the prerogative of Qatar’s most senior elite” (Roberts 2017, 41), and public consultation on domestic and foreign policies is all but absent.

This lack of public influence goes beyond apathy and is the product of deliberate efforts by the Qatari government to curb the development of civic society that might challenge the supremacy of the state (Kamrava 2009, 406-409). “Popular dissent is headed off by a gold-plated welfare state” (Roberts 2011a), and the “cradle-to-grave welfare system” serves to undercut any efforts to develop Qatar’s civic society (Kamrava 2009, 406). The power of patronage manifests itself in multiple forms of rent distribution to include monthly stipends for Qatari citizens, free education and housing that is guaranteed by legislation, a large social safety net, and generous pensions that grew even larger after the Arab Spring. Unsurprisingly, Qatar ranks higher than all other states on several metrics of quality of life. The Qatari state has also stifled the growth of grassroots civic society through a series of government-funded, quasi-private institutions designed to “forestall the development of similarly-oriented, politically autonomous organizations” (Kamrava 2009, 407-408). Through

---

59 See also Roberts (2017, 4), Rosman-Stollman (2009, 188), and Gartenstein-Ross and Schanzer. (2013). Roberts claims that an “unconstrained Qatari elite... derives little direction from anything that could be described as public sentiment,” and Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Jonathan Schanzer simply describe domestic opposition in Qatar as a “non-factor.” Similarly, Rosman-Stollman argues that Doha’s economic power and relatively homogenous society allows the emir more freedom to initiate and implement reforms than his regional counterparts.

60 See Kamrava (2009, 406-407), Fromherz (2012, 112), and Nonneman (2006, 5) for more on Qatar’s extensive patronage network. In 2011, Qatar increased its already high public salaries by an average of 60 percent (Emiri Decree No. 50 of 2011).

61 The results of the 2014 World Value Survey indicate that Qatari reported greater access to health care and higher perceptions of physical and economic security than any other nation (Inglehart 2014).

62 Although the 2004 Constitution allows for civic associations, autonomous civic organizations do not exist in practice (see Khatib 2013, 430; Kamrava 2009, 407-408).
these institutions, the state has extended its reach into areas such as education and religion that are often neglected by authoritarian states yet constitute “potential centers for the formulation of anti-state anger and resentment” (Kamrava 2009, 407). Additionally, Qatar’s government actively seeks to co-opt social groups and classes that could potentially challenge the state. Both Hamad and Tamim have doled out prestigious cabinet positions and made other concessions to placate potential rivals.63

But while Qatar’s system of patronage and institutional arrangements provide an exceptionally high degree of policymaking autonomy for Qatar’s elite, it would be unfair to conclude that Qatar’s leaders are indifferent to public sentiment. Qatar’s oversized role in foreign politics played out well at home (Roberts 2017, 136); however, these policies began to lose public support following the Arab Spring (Nuruzzaman 2015, 235). In a 2012 survey of Qatari citizens conducted by the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) of Qatar University, more than 70 percent of respondents disapproved of Qatar’s recent interventions abroad.64 Likewise, many Qatari’s began to voice concerns about Qatar’s “breakneck development” and the rapid social changes it bore (Hammond 2014). While Hamad responded to many of these popular sensibilities, Tamim has appeared especially willing to alter domestic policies to reflect public desires.65 Roberts describes national service as a “token policy” that

---

63 A survey conducted in the mid-2000s revealed that Hamad appointed more family members to cabinet positions (17) than did any of his GCC counterparts (cited in Kamrava 2009, 414). Tamim has continued this trend, removing a potential rival—Hamad bin Jassim—and elevating the stature of his interior minister—Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani.

64 Cited in Gengler (2012, 70-71). Respondents faulted Qatar’s recent interventions for attempting to “solv[e] other countries’ problems,… paying a lot of money for other countries,… [drawing the] criticism of other Arab countries,…[and] making new enemies.” In a 2013 survey conducted by the same group, 77 percent of respondents felt that Qatar should invest more at home than in “overseas investments and policy gambits” (cited in Hammond 2014 and discussed further in Mitchell 2013, 170; 245; 250).

65 Following complaints of drunken expatriates by Qatari nationals, Hamad quickly reversed policies allowing the sale of alcohol and pork on the Pearl-Qatar—a popular tourist attraction off the coast of Doha (Kamrava 2013, 135). However, Hammond (2014) credits Tamim with this policy reversal and suggests that he has proven more willing than his father to “send a message to Qataris that [he] is paying
“pander[ed] to wider public opinion” (2017, 165); however, he provides no evidence to suggest that the Qatari public demanded national service, much less that this sentiment translated into MMS reform. Nevertheless, Tamim’s decision to reform the state’s MMS policies appears to be in keeping with the public’s desire to focus on challenges at home rather than those abroad.

UNDERSTANDING QATAR’S MMS REFORMS

The policy orientation of Qatar’s new emir produced radical changes to the state’s MMS policies. Tamim entered office with an inward-looking focus, and national service formed a part of his broader goals for the direction of the country. The somewhat revolutionary rhetoric in Tamim’s accession speech and his annual addresses to the Advisory Council reveal his desire to address the challenges to Qatar’s continued development and prosperity through the accomplishment of the following goals: foster Qatari identity and nationalism, address social problems and develop social capital, and reduce Qatari’s reliance on the state.66 By instilling loyalty and a sense of belonging to the state; promoting values of hard work, discipline, and social responsibility; and grooming Qataris to be productive citizens, the implementation of national service formed a logical extension of Tamim’s broader policy goals.

Qatar’s roadmap for continued, comprehensive development—Qatar National Vision 2030 (published by the Qatar Ministry of Development and Planning and Statistics in 2008 and

66 Much like the U.S. President’s State of the Union address, the emir’s annual address to the Advisory Council serves as a “comprehensive speech in which [the emir] discusses the affairs of the state” (2004 Constitution, Article 87). The goals outlined by Tamim in these speeches align closely with the five broad goals outlined in Qatar National Vision 2030: “modernization and preservation of traditions; the needs of this generation and the needs of future generations; managed growth and uncontrolled expansion; the size and quantity of the expatriate labor force and the selected path of development; and economic growth, social development and environmental management” (QMDPS 2008, 2).
hereafter referred to as QMDPS)—identifies “modernization and preservation of traditions” as one of five major challenges facing Qatar (QMDPS 2008, 3). In response to the inherent tension between Qatar’s comprehensive development and the perceived erosion of its traditions and national identity, Tamim has taken deliberate steps to promote nationalism and preserve Qatar’s culture and traditions.67 For example, Tamim called for shifting the language of instruction at Qatar University from English to Arabic and ended policies allowing the purchase of alcohol and pork in a luxury residential district popular with tourists.68 Similarly, national service supports his broader efforts to manage the conflict between Qatar’s continued development and the preservation of its traditions and culture through its emphasis on cultural, religious, and civic training.69 Rather than simply prepare recruits for military service, national service “imbue[s] young men with a sense of national unity and camaraderie” to ensure they do not “los[e] the essence of what it mean[s] to be a Qatari” (Roberts 2017, 175).70

In addition to promoting nationalism, national service provides an efficient mechanism to address a number of social problems. Rapid economic and social change have coincided with a rising divorce rate and a perceived decline of family ties and social values.71 Because much of

67 Recognizing the need to legitimate their claim to power, the Al Thanis have long sought to establish a “founding myth” that might “tie [Qataris] to their land” (Crystal 1989, 162). Since their founding in the early 1970s, the Qatar National Museum and the Information Ministry have played important roles in promoting Qatari culture and controlling the narrative of Qatar’s history (Crystal 1995, 164). More recently, Hamad placed greater emphasis on Qatar’s National Day and changed the date to align with the anniversary of the uniting of the tribes of the Al Thanis (Crystal 1995, 162-163; Roberts 2017, 175).

68 Although both of these changes occurred before Tamim succeeded his father as emir, Tamim is credited with promoting and implementing these policies (Hammond 2014; Roberts 2017, 161; 164-165).

69 In addition to instruction in military tactics and light physical fitness and weapons training, national service training includes cultural, religious, and self-development programs (Armed Forces National Service Recruits Graduate” 2016).

70 In an interview with the Peninsula daily, Brigadier General Mohammed Misfer Al Ayadi—Chairman, National Service Authority—said that the national service program aimed to instill a sense of national belonging and patriotism and foster societal cohesion (“Armed Forces National Service Recruits Graduate” 2016).

71 From 1995 to 2009, divorces per 1,000 married Qataris increased from 17.4 to 19.2 (Qatar National Development Strategy, QMDPS 2011-2016, 166). Although this figure might seem low by Western
national service training is about promoting family values and ethical living, the program plays in integral role in the state’s “cross-cutting measures to strengthen family ties, values, and relationships” (QMDPS 2011, 26).72

Notably, the National Service Law directly affects the demographic group that draws the most ire—Qatari youth. Many older Qatari share the view that the younger generation has “lost the essence of what it means to be Qatari” (Kamrava 2017; see also Roberts 2017, 160). In his first speech to the Advisory Council as emir, Tamim expressed fears that Qatari might fail to pass on the “genuine values of work, humility, and good manners, and treating others with respect” to the country’s youth and that young Qatari might not “find meaning and purpose in their life” while growing up in a “civilisation [sic] of consumption” (Al Thani 2013a). By requiring all recruits to undergo values and military training, national service seeks to imbue young Qatari men with the values and discipline that will allow them to contribute to the state’s continued comprehensive development.

National service also provides a means to combat Qatar’s growing obesity epidemic and overall rise in illnesses associated with inactivity.73 Health care spending in Qatar rose five fold from 2001 to 2011, and the Qatar National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (hereafter referred to as QNDS 2011-16 and cited as QMDPS 2011) reports that nearly 40 percent of Qatari adults are overweight, with nearly one third crossing the threshold of obese or morbidly obese

 standards, Qatar views it as an alarming trend and responded by requiring all Qatari couples to attend and complete pre-marriage counseling and education programs as a precondition for government-provided marriage funds (QMDPS 2011, 166-167).

72 National service includes values and ethics training that supports Qatar’s efforts to “balance the forces of modernization and globalization with the support of traditional family values and patterns of family formation” (QMDPS 2011, 26). Perhaps surprising given the prominent role of Islam in Qatari society and daily life, much of this training is conducted by followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mehran Kamrava, interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 13, 2017).

73 QMDPS 2011 identifies “health-related risks of inactivity” as a significant challenge facing the country (QMDPS 2011, 26).
Perhaps unsurprisingly, figures from QNDS 2011-2016 indicate that over 50 percent of Qatari adults do not engage in regular physical activity (QMDPS 2011, 197). With an emphasis on physical fitness training (Scott 2015), national service supports Qatar’s preventative health strategy by inculcating healthy lifestyle habits in the next generation of Qataris.

Furthermore, national service promotes the development of social capital by promoting values of discipline and hard work and social responsibility. Years of lavish state-sponsored welfare programs created “chronic shortage[s] of talented, and hardworking Qataris” (Roberts 2017, 181) and placed the burden of fueling the state’s outsized economy on the backs of those willing to work. As one Qatari I spoke with quipped, “I work hard so that ten people don’t have to.”

Acknowledging the disincentives to work created by the state’s rentier policies and their potential impact on future economic growth, Tamim called on Qataris to be “productive” rather than simply “consumers.” He offered two goals for the development of Qatar’s citizens: “qualifying [them] for useful and productive work and grooming [them] to find meaning to [their lives] in the serving of [their] country and society” (Al Thani 2013a). By instilling values of discipline, loyalty, and hard work in Qatar’s privileged citizens, national service offers a means to attain both of these goals.

Similarly, national service provides a means to address the long-term economic challenges facing Qatar as part of Tamim’s broader effort to reduce Qatari’s reliance on the state.

---

74 QMDPS 2011 lists “fostering a capable and motivated work force” as one of its major goals (QMDPS 2011, 146).

75 In his inaugural address to the Advisory Council, Tamim spoke of “grooming” the next generation of Qataris to become “producers” rather than “consumers” (Al Thani 2013a). Similarly, he used his 2015 address to call on citizens to accept the “responsibilities and burdens” of Qatar’s continued development (Al Thani 2015).
Qatar became the world’s leading exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in 2006 (Qatar National Bank 2013, 2) and touted the world’s the fastest growing economy from 2008 to 2012 (Miller and al-Mansouri 2016, 56); however states such as Mozambique, Tanzania, Russia, Australia, and the United States have recently begun to challenge Qatar’s market share (Robert 2015).76 If the United States surpasses Qatar as the world’s largest exporter of LNG as current trends project, Qatar will lose the ability to set market prices, and its massive current account and fiscal surpluses may turn into current account deficits (Bordoff Losz 2017; Dargin 2014; Fattoluh et al. 2014).

The volatility in energy prices makes it difficult for Qatar’s leaders to chart the best course for the state’s continued comprehensive development programs (QMDPS 2011, 76) and may soon pose significant constraints on the state’s ability to provide robust social welfare programs. In Fiscal Year 2014-2015, government expenditures fell for the first time in a decade,77 and Qatar has recently begun cutting some subsidies in response to budget shortfalls (Katzman 2017, 18). Moreover, in 2015 the GCC announced that it would implement a region-wide value added tax (VAT), and Qatar implemented its own VAT in 2017 (“Qatar Cabinet Approves Draft Law on Income Tax and VAT” 2017).

With a higher GDP per capita than any state in the world and exceedingly generous state-supported benefits for all Qatari citizens, the average Qatari is in many ways “more royal than the king” (Kamrava 2013, 159). Along with other policies such as the recently implemented VAT, national service forms part of a broader series of reforms designed to demand more of Qatari citizens. In a sharp break from the rhetoric of past emirs, Tamim has alluded to

76 Iran actually controls a larger portion of its shared natural gas field with Qatar, but sanctions have limited its ability to export LNG.
77 Qatar Economic Outlook 2015-2017 (QMDPS 2015, 27).
revolutionary changes in the relationship between Qatari society and the state (Roberts 2017, 158). In his accession speech, Tamim spoke of the economic challenges resulting from falling energy prices and Qataris’ growing dependence on the state (Al Thani 2013b). Likewise, in his inaugural address to the Advisory Council that fall, Tamim spoke of the need for increased social responsibility and productive citizens in the context of an economic slowdown and rising public expenditures (Al Thani 2013a). Implementing a national service obligation complements the shift from Hamad’s outward-looking, hyperactive foreign policy to Tamim’s focus on the internal affairs of the state. By imbuing Qatari youth with a sense of national pride and Qatari identity and promoting values of hard work, loyalty, healthy-living, and social responsibility, Qatar’s MMS reforms directly support Tamim’s vision for the country. In the sections that follow, I explore other factors and considerations that may also help to explain this radical shift in Qatar’s MMS policies.

Alternative Arguments

In an article discussing the recent moves to conscription in Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE, Zoltan Barany suggests that five common factors explain these MMS reforms: (1) a perception among older generations that their countries’ young men had grown “soft,” (2) growing concern over health-related risks due to inactivity, (3) a desire by governments to “mold [their citizens] into a real community through training and shared experiences,” (4) increasing demand for military manpower requirements to support activist foreign policies, and (5) increasing security

78 Tamim issued a call for Qatar’s citizens to accept the “responsibilities and burdens” of the country’s continued development (Al Thani 2015). Similarly, he described “social responsibility” as a key element to maintaining Qatar’s high standard of living in his inaugural address to the Council (Al Thani 2013a), and in his 2014 address he charged that Qatar’s sustained growth would depend on the discipline and “type of individual rear[ed]” in Qatar.

79 This supports the QNDS 2011-2016 goal of “creating a more productive, skilled, and motivated labour [sic] force” (QMDPS 2011, 146).
threats from Iran and the terrorist group, ISIS. As I have argued in the previous section, Barany’s first three factors mirror concerns expressed by Tamim and indeed contributed to his decision to implement national service. However, the nature of Qatar’s national service program calls into question its ability to increase the state’s security, and Tamim’s moderate foreign policies and focus on domestic priorities suggest that Qatar’s MMS reforms likely occurred in response to Hamad’s activist foreign policies rather than in support of them.

In the sections below, I explore these and other alternative explanations to better understand Qatar’s MMS reform. Specifically, I explore whether external or internal security considerations, military modernization and expanding roles and missions for the QAF, demographic challenges, pessimistic economic forecasts, efforts to “Qatarize” the QAF, or MMS reforms in neighboring Gulf states may have also influenced Qatar’s MMS reforms.

External Security Considerations

Kamrava describes “four intractable security dilemmas” that define Qatar’s national security outlook: (1) a classic security dilemma stemming from its rocky relations with neighboring states; (2) an alliance security dilemma in which Qatar must manage relations between allies and adversaries simultaneously; (3) the inherent trade-off in remaining under the umbrella of U.S. security and ensuring domestic stability; and (4) the “paradoxical choice” of relying on external security patrons or keeping external powers out of the region (Kamrava 2013, 38). As a small state wedged between two powerful neighbors—Saudi Arabia and Iran—competing for regional hegemony, threats to Qatar’s security abound. Although Qatar faces

---

80 The UAE implemented conscription for the first time in its history in 2014 (CIA World Factbook 2016), and Kuwait reinstated conscription in 2017 (Toumi 2017).
confrontational competition from neighboring Bahrain and the UAE, Qatar remains most vulnerable to its colossal neighbor to the south and west. Qatar’s history of strained relations with Saudi Arabia go back well before its founding as a modern state (see Crystal 1989, 164-167; Fromherz 2012, 91-94; and Kamrava 2013, 76), and more recent tensions between the two states have resulted in a series of diplomatic spats, several skirmishes along their shared border, and at least two failed Saudi-supported coup attempts in 1995 and 2005, and the withdrawal of the Saudi ambassador in 2014 and 2017.

Given Qatar’s small size and unfavorable geography, Qatar has “always had to make strategic decisions to protect its fragile but viable independence” (Fromherz 2012, 33). Through a policy of “hedging,” or shoring up relations with one potential adversary to balance another, Qatar has engaged in a series of foreign policy gambits designed enhance its security and “pleas[e] as many players as possible” (Kamrava 2013, 74). Qatar supported the establishment of the GCC and remains an active member; however, its policies often challenge those of the Council’s other members. Likewise, Qatar perceives Iran as one of its principle security threats but maintains a close relationship with this potential adversary to balance the influence of Saudi Arabia and the United States. And although the United States serves as Qatar’s principal

---

81 See Fromherz (2012, 94-96) and Kamrava (2013, 28) for a history of Qatar’s acrimonious relationships with Bahrain and the UAE. For a discussion of more recent relations between Qatar and its fellow GCC members, see Ulrichsen (2017), Hammond (2014), and and Katzman (2017, 8-9).
82 See Crystal (1989, 164-167), Fromherz (2012, 91-94), and Kamrava (2013, 76) for discussions of Qatar’s complicated history with its colossal neighbor.
83 See Roberts (2017, 79) and Kamrava (2013, 72-78) for broader discussions of Qatar’s policy of hedging.
84 Although Qatar views Iran as one of its principal security threats (Roberts 2017, 178), shared control of the world’s largest natural gas field ensures that Qatar maintains open relations with its erstwhile adversary (Kamrava 2013, 75). Leaked cables suggest that U.S. officials understand the superficiality of Qatar’s relationship with Iran and accept that Qatar will pursue a strategy of hedging its Persian neighbor (Kamrava 2013, 74-75).
security patron, Qatar has proven willing to frustrate U.S. priorities in the region (Shapiro 2013).

The implementation of Qatar’s national service program unfolded against the backdrop of increasing tensions between Qatar and its neighbors. Soon after Tamim entered office, rising tensions with Qatar’s neighbors culminated in a significant diplomatic crisis in which Bahrain, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia withdrew their diplomatic envoys from Qatar (Simeon 2014). Citing alleged interference in the internal affairs of fellow GCC members, support for groups that threatened regional stability (read Muslim Brotherhood), and unfavorable programing on Qatar’s Al Jazeera network, Saudi Arabia summoned Tamim to Riyadh where he pledged to “bring [his] country in line with the rest of the GCC” (Dickinson 2014b; Ulrichsen 2017).

Press releases discussing the announcement of Qatar’s MMS reform cited the country’s need to enhance its defense preparedness as justification for national service, but just how much, if any, did security considerations factor into Qatar’s decision to reform its MMS policies? An examination of Qatar’s security environment suggests that the most likely security-related explanations for its MMS reforms include the need (perceived or actual) to increase the capacity and effectiveness of the QAF, the ability of Qatar to mobilize its population in the event of a national security crisis, and a desire to reduce Qatar’s reliance on U.S. security patronage.

85 Shapiro (2013) claims that “while Qatar is not necessarily an enemy of the United States, it is certainly not an ally.” Qatar has maintained a defense agreement with the United States since 1992, and today houses the headquarters of the United States Central Command and nearly 10,000 forward-deployed U.S. troops (Katzman 2017, 13-14). Although the United States has relied heavily on Qatar’s support for military operations since 9-11, U.S. disapproval of Qatar’s alleged support of radical Islamist groups have at times strained U.S.-Qatari relations (see Dickinson 2014a; Burns and Schreck 2014).

86 The 2014 diplomatic crisis presented Tamim his first major foreign policy challenge as emir. Highly dependent on Saudi Arabia for food imports and fearing an escalation of the crisis, Tamim asked some members of the Muslim Brotherhood who had fled Egypt after the 2013 coup to leave Qatar (Roberts 2017, 151-152). Still Tamim did not agree (or at least adhere) to Saudi demands that Qatar reduce its “hostile coverage” of the El Sisi government (Roberts 2017, 152-153).

87 See for example “Conscription Law to be Enforced in Qatar” 2013 and Scott 2013 and 2014.
Tamim’s emphasis on professionalization of the QAF and increased military spending suggest that he did, in fact, desire to increase the capacity and effectiveness of the QAF (Roberts 2017, 160-161). Nevertheless, it remains unclear how national service might fit into these broader defense goals. With a population of 2.4 million, Qatar has a vast pool of foreign labor from which it can draw to meet its miniscule military manning requirements. And because recruits conduct training, much of which has little if anything to do with military skills, for just four months (or less for college graduates), it is unclear how the use of short-term conscripts might increase the effectiveness or capacity of the QAF.

Similarly, a perceived need to mobilize Qatari citizens in the event of a national security crisis do not appear to have driven the state’s MMS reforms. A 2016 press release by the Qatar News Agency describes the aim Qatar’s national service program as “mobilising [sic] Qataris for the defence [sic] of the country and to ensure a ‘regular force’ that would be backed up by reservists, if necessary” (“Armed Forces National Service Recruits Graduate” 2016). While a national service program would certainly build a corps of trained (albeit briefly) citizens that could come to the defense of the state in a time of crisis, the incredibly small number of Qatari citizens limits the effects that any national mobilization effort might achieve. When asked if Qatar would mobilize its military in response to Saudi Arabia’s closing of their shared border in June of 2017, one senior Western military advisor scoffed: “the QAF would serve as little more than a speed bump [against any attacking force], and they [Qatar’s leaders] know it.”

---

88 See Footnote 43 for a discussion of defense spending under Tamim.
89 National service has increasingly focused on military training since 2015 (Scott 2015), but even a four-month period of service dedicated entirely to military training would be insufficient to develop the skills demanded of modern warfare.
90 Non-attributional interview with a Western military advisor in Qatar.
Finally, Qatar’s MMS reforms may indicate its desire to decrease its reliance on the U.S. security umbrella.\(^9\) In his speech to 45\(^{th}\) Session of the Advisory Council, Tamim spoke of the need to increase Qatar’s “self-sufficiency” with regard to national security (Al Thani 2016). However, given the incredibly small size of the QAF and no indication of any desire to expand its ranks, Qatar will likely continue to rely on external security patronage for the foreseeable future. Despite recent tensions with the United States that briefly held up the sale of U.S. manufactured weapons and equipment and led to rumors of the United States’ intention to move its strategic air base out Qatar, Qatar has demonstrated a willingness to placate U.S. concerns (see Dickinson 2014a; Burns and Schreck 2014).

**Internal Security Considerations**

Considerations of Qatar’s external security environment provide little rationale for national service, but could concerns for domestic security explain this radical change in Qatar’s MMS policies? Qatar is a remarkably stable country, and there has never been a serious threat to the Al Thani’s claim to rule (Kamrava 2009, 405; Crystal 1989, 428). Moreover, Tamim, like his father before him, is revered by the Qatari public.\(^9\) But despite his immense popularity, Tamim is not immune to threats to his rule, particularly from within the Al Thani family.\(^9\) The extended Al Thani family includes over 5,000 members (Cordesman 1997, 227), and these relatives likely serve as one of the few (albeit weak) checks on the emir’s power (Fromherz 2012, 135; Kamrava 2009, 403). Throughout the 20\(^{th}\) Century, coups d’état served as the primary means of

\(^9\) In recent years Qatar has actively sought other security partners in an effort to reduce its reliance on the United States (Phillips 2017, 44).

\(^9\) Kamrava (2013, 135) and Roberts (2017, 177) refer to Hamad as a “benevolent dictator,” and Tamim’s support for domestically popular policies suggest that he is as popular as his father.

\(^9\) There has never been a serious threat to the Al Thani’s claim to rule (Kamrava 2009, 405; Crystal 1989, 428). Instead, the greatest threats to the emir have historically come from within the family itself (Kamrava 2009, 411; Chrystal 1989, 438).
transferring power from one Al-Thani to the next, and Tamim succeeded his father at a time when family tensions from the previous coup still ran deep.\textsuperscript{94}

Moreover, Qatari domestic politics was “far from trouble-free” in the aftermath of the Arab Spring (Ulrichsen 2014, 163). As Kristian Ulrichsen notes, the “near-total absence of any political demands…emanating from Qatari nationals” set Qatar apart from all other states in the region (2014, 103-104). However, Qatar’s support for anti-authoritarian struggles soon brought attention to its own domestic politics, and the publication of a 2012 book titled, \textit{The People Want Reform…in Qatar, Too}, was met with considerable interest in intellectual circles (Ulrichsen 2014, 160-161). At the same time, a poll conducted by SESRI suggested that Qatari’s confidence in state institutions had dropped considerably from 2011 levels.\textsuperscript{95}

But despite any indications of domestic instability or other potential threats to Tamim’s rule, it remains unclear just how national service might support the security of the regime. A national service program that strengthens national solidarity and generates loyalty to the state could potentially serve as an effective means of coup-proofing; however, it is unclear how a conscripted Army of Qatari loyalists could assist the emir in the event of a coup attempt. Any successful coup would depend on the support of QAF officers, which have always been Qatari.

Additionally, threats from within the Al Thani family represent much less of a threat to the emir than one might expect. Qatar’s vast financial resources and extensive patronage network ensure that Tamim can placate any potential rivals, and Emirs Khalifa (1972-1995) and Hamad’s

\textsuperscript{94} With the exception of Hamad’s voluntary abdication of power, all transitions of power since 1949 have followed \textit{coup d’état} led by members of the emir’s family (Crystal 1995, 147; Cordesman 1997, 224). See Fromherz (2012, 93) for a discussion of the Saudi-backed coup attempt in 2005 and Henderson (2013) for discussion of tensions within the Al Thani family that have lingered since Hamad succeeded his father in a successful coup.

\textsuperscript{95} Cited in Ulrichsen 2014, 163). Survey results indicated that Qatari’s confidence in the QAF fell from 87 to 78 percent, while confidence in the court system fell by 10 percentage points and confidence in the Shura (consultive) Council decreased from 65 to 54 percent.
efforts to diversify their bases of power have significantly reduced the influence of the ruling family (Roberts 2017, 6). Consequently, the 2014 U.S. Congressional Research Service Report on Qatar described the Al Thani’s internal rivalries as “significant but manageable” (Blanchard 2014, 1), and the absence of any threat to Tamim’s rule during the 2017 diplomatic crisis attests to stability of his regime (Ramesh 2017).96

Creating a generation of loyal Qatari citizens could, in fact, strengthen Tamim’s hold on power, but implementing national service to protect against direct challenges to his rule provides an unlikely explanation for Qatar’s MMS reforms. However, when viewed in the context of potential threats to the state resulting from social tensions caused by modernization and development or the decreasing ability of the rentier state to maintain its end of the political compact, national service does, in fact, support regime stability. By fostering nationalism, increasing self-reliance, and promoting traditional values, national service offers a means to address the most likely long-term challenges facing the regime.

Military Modernization

Unlike his father who prioritized education and foreign policy, Tamim has focused much of his energy and attention on professionalizing and modernizing the QAF. Tamim has indicated a desire to establish a military staff college to improve the professionalization and training of the officer corps (Roberts 2017, 160), and he has continued the increases in defense spending initiated by Hamad.97 Since 2013, Qatar has gone on a massive military spending spree,

---

96 Some feared (or, in the case of Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E., hoped) that the blockade would provide opportunistic family members the ability to challenge the emir, but the surge in nationalism following the 2017 diplomatic crises appears to have strengthened rather than weakened Tamim’s hold on power. 97 Qatar is highly secretive about its military spending even by the standards of the Gulf region (IISS Military Balance 2014, 302); however, Qatar’s recent purchases of advanced military hardware indicate that Tamim has increased Qatar’s defense spending. See Footnote 43 for a discussion of these expenditures totaling an estimated $31 billion.
purchasing high-end military equipment such as Patriot air-defense and Javelin anti-tank missile systems, U.S. F-15 and French Rafale fighter jets, early warning radar systems, Apache helicopters, and C-17 heavy-lift aircraft to replace the QAF’s antiquated military equipment.98

Qatar lacks sufficient numbers of trained personnel to operate and maintain its growing quantities of advanced military equipment.99 To make matters worse, many of these recent arms purchases include U.S. equipment, which cannot be operated or maintained by many of Qatar’s foreign national service members.100 As Figure 4.3 below illustrates, Qatar has grown increasingly reliant on U.S. advanced technology and military equipment since 2009. Recruiting sufficient numbers of Qatari’s to operate this advanced equipment is challenging; recruiting sufficient numbers of Qatari’s to maintain it is even more difficult. As one senior Western advisor laments, “there is no way you can get a Qatari to join the military to fix a truck.”101

---

98 See Katzman (2017, 13-14) for a more complete list of Qatar’s recent purchases of U.S. and French-made military equipment. See U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency (2016) news release for information about Qatar’s recent $700 million purchase of eight C-17 heavy-lift aircraft.
99 Cordesman (1997, 278) notes that Qatar has always relied on foreign support for its maintenance, logistics, and training; however, discussions with Western military advisors suggest that the problem has grown more severe following Qatar’s recent purchases of advanced military equipment (non-attributional interviews with the author).
100 The U.S. government places strict controls on third-party transfers of military equipment (TPT). Because the U.S. Congress authorizes TPT to individual countries, only foreign nationals from countries with TPT authorizations can operate or maintain TPT equipment. As a result, many of Qatar’s mechanics and operators are unable to use its recently purchased equipment.
101 Non-attributional interview with the author.
Could national service ensure that the QAF has the required personnel to operate and maintain its technologically advanced military equipment? With service requirements of just three to four months (only one of which consists of time in operational units) it is difficult to see how Qatari recruits could help the QAF meet its personnel shortfalls. Learning the technical skills required to operate advanced technology and equipment far exceeds the three to four months of training required by Qatar’s national service program. Training for U.S. Apache pilots lasts 32 weeks, and soldiers who enlist as aircraft maintainers conduct 17 weeks of specialized training following 10 weeks of initial entry training. Assuming that Qatar’s recruits could somehow develop the necessary skills to operate and maintain this advanced technology and equipment in a condensed training period, the single month that recruits spend embedded in operational units does not allow them employ these skills for any meaningful length of time and therefore offers an incredibly inefficient solution to the QAF’s personnel challenges.

102 The 32 weeks of pilot training does not include the six-month basic officer leaders course (BOLC) or the significant time in service that most warrant officers have before they become pilots. Additionally, U.S. Army flight school follows a demanding POI (points of instruction, or “syllabus”) that could not be easily truncated.
Assuming that recruits reenlist after the completion of their brief service obligations, national service could provide a way for the QAF to produce sufficient numbers of operators and mechanics. However, the QAF is highly secretive about releasing statistics related to military personnel, so it is impossible to know for sure how many recruits stay in the QAF beyond their initial commitment. In the U.S. military, the average retention rate of first-term soldiers from 2011 to 2017 was 61.99 percent. But because the average Qatari has far more employment opportunities (or simply the ability to live comfortably without seeking employment), the percentage of Qataris remaining in the QAF beyond their initial service obligation is likely to be much lower.

Expanding Military Roles

Direct support for military operations to overthrow Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi marked a turning point in Qatar’s foreign policy. In the early 2000s, Qatar established itself as a regional and international peace broker and utilized diplomacy and economic might to extend its influence in the region. In Libya, however, Qatar deployed six Mirage fighter jets, flew regular transport missions with armaments for the rebels, and deployed special operations units to the front lines (Roberts 2011a). Many at home and abroad expected Tamim to moderate Qatar’s increasingly aggressive foreign policy, but since 2013, Qatar has continued to support military operations in Syria, deployed 1,000 troops and 10 fighter jets to Yemen, and supported the fight against ISIS in Iraq by providing boots on the ground and logistical support with its recently purchased heavy-lift aircraft (Roberts 2017, 162-163).

103 “Seven Year Historical Retention Data” provided by Headquarters Department of the U.S. Army, available by email request.
104 See Kamrava (2009), Kamrava (2013), and Ulrichsen (2014) among others.
Although Qatar’s support for these operations and the expeditionary capabilities provided by its recent military spending spree suggest that Tamim’s foreign policy aspirations may, in fact, be more ambitious than his father’s, these activities do not necessarily portend permanent changes to the roles and missions of the QAF. As Roberts notes, Tamim’s foreign policy is better characterized as “reactive” than active (2017, 162-163). He suggests that political pressure from neighboring Gulf states, rather than “an overtly expeditionary streak,” explain why Tamim supported military operations in Yemen and Iraq.\(^{105}\)

But even if Qatar’s recent expeditionary streak does suggest a fundamental change in the roles and missions it assigns to its armed forces, it remains unclear how implementing national service might support this shift. Developing a more expeditionary force would likely require Qatar to increase the size of the QAF and create a more professional, better trained force. Requiring all Qataris to serve would provide an effective means of expanding the size of the QAF, but Qatar has so far shown little desire to raise troop levels.\(^{106}\) And although Tamim has sought to modernize and professionalize the QAF through increased military spending and establishing a military staff college, developing well-trained, professional soldiers takes much longer than the three to four month service obligation of Qatar’s citizen-soldiers. And while it could be the case that Qatar’s military and civilian leaders promoted national service with the hope that Qataris’ exposure to military life would encourage them to remain in the QAF beyond their three to four-month service obligations, the unappealing nature of military life and the ease

\(^{105}\) Qatar’s support for operations in Yemen allowed Tamim to prove that Qatar was “sufficiently aligned with its GCC allies,” and the QAF’s attacks against ISIS helped to dispel rumors that Qatar was funding the group (Roberts 2017, 162).

\(^{106}\) The size of the QAF has remained constant since Qatar increased the size of the QAF from 11,100 to 11,800 in 1997 (IISS Military Balance, 1997).
with which Qataris can find high-paying, less demanding government jobs, suggests that such a strategy would be unlikely to succeed.\textsuperscript{107}

Demographic Challenges

Qatar has the smallest population of any state in the region (Katzman 2013, 13), and because as few as 300,000 of Qatar’s 2.4 million residents are citizens, Qatar’s demographic challenges are even more severe than the results of its census portray. The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics does not disaggregate the number of native Qataris from foreign-national residents. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine that the number of military-age males who are also Qatari citizens is large enough to allow Qatar to meet its military manpower needs without compulsory service. But do demographic challenges provide a plausible rationale for national service?

Qatar’s demographic challenges do not explain Qatar’s MMS reform, and in fact, provide a compelling reason for Qatar to continue to rely heavily on foreign nationals to meet its military manpower needs. Military-age males comprise an astonishing 38.5 percent of Qatar’s population, which means that the QAF has to recruit less than two percent of this demographic to meet its military recruiting goals.\textsuperscript{108} In the absence of any military necessity to implement national service and with no apparent security benefits for doing so, any explanation of Qatar’s MMS

\textsuperscript{107} Kamrava suggests that the “cradle-to-grave welfare state” and opportunity to work in less demanding civil service jobs makes military life highly unappealing for the average Qatari (interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 13, 2017).

\textsuperscript{108} The April 2015 Census reports a total of 1,008,654 males between the ages of 18 and 34 years old (Ministry of Development and Planning Statistics 2015). Using the reported size of Qatar’s first class of national service recruits (2000 as reported in Scott 2015) as an estimate of the size of the QAF’s annual recruiting classes, I estimate that Qatar would need to recruit 1.98 percent of this population to meet its annual recruiting needs.
reform requires a broader understanding of the economic and socio-cultural reasons for shifting the burden of defense from foreign nationals to Qatari.

“Qatarization”

An emphasis on “Qatarization,” or efforts to increase the proportion of Qatari employed in the public and private sectors, may also explain Qatar’s MMS reforms. Tensions between Qatari nationals and expatriate workers are both deep and historical (Fromherz 2012, 2010), and Qatar’s leaders have frequently promoted Qatarization as a means of pandering to the Qatari public’s negative views towards expatriates. With very few Qatari in the military, Qatarization provides a seemingly reasonable explanation for MMS reform. However, the short time that recruits spend embedded with operational units means that national service does little to alter the composition of the QAF. Likewise, the ease with which Qatari can find less demanding employment suggests that few recruits are likely to extend their military service beyond their short service obligations. Consequently, the QNDS 2011-2016 goals of “incentivizing Qatari to participate in the private sector” and “increasing effective male participation in the labour [sic] force” (QMDPS 2011, 146) provide a more likely connection between Qatarization and national service. By instilling discipline, a strong work ethic, and a sense of responsibility in Qatar’s youth, national service complements broader Qatarization efforts to increase the number of Qatari employed in the private sector and reduce dependence on the state.

---

109 Qatar has enacted Qatarization policies at various times throughout its history (Fromherz 2012, 9-13, but Qatar has recently engaged in “ambitious Qatarization campaign” to increase the percentage of Qatari in both the public and private sectors (Mitchell 2013, 87-88; see also Kamrava 2009, 407, and QNDS 2011, 148).
110 See Mitchell (2013, 87-88) and Kamrava (2009, 407) for discussions of Qatar’s most recent Qatarization efforts.
Regional Influences

Could the implementation of conscription in other Gulf states explain Qatar’s decision to introduce national service? The implementation of national service in Qatar occurred alongside similar MMS reforms in the UAE and Kuwait in 2014 and 2015, respectively.111 Like Qatar’s MMS reforms, the introduction of conscription in the UAE marked a radical change from the state’s previous MMS policies. Although Kuwait previously maintained conscription from its independence in 1961 until 2001, the Kuwaiti government’s decision to restore a policy that had been widely unpopular and was viewed as largely ineffective by Kuwaiti leaders at the time came as a surprise to many (Barany 2018, 17).

What influence, if any, did similar MMS reforms in Kuwait and the UAE have on Qatar’s decision to implement national service? Institutional isomorphism describes the powerful, “constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148-149). These pressures towards institutional conformity typically occur through three mechanisms—coercion, normative pressures, or mimetic processes (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 150).

Although each of these Gulf monarchies faced similar environmental conditions and constraints in 2014 and 2015, none of these mechanisms appear to have led to institutional isomorphism regarding their MMS policies. There exists no evidence of coercion, and it is unlikely that Qatar’s Gulf neighbors would have the ability to change or, for that matter, maintain any interest in changing Qatar’s MMS policies. Likewise, Qatar’s identity as a “maverick” that defies expectations of small states suggests that normative pressures provide a

111 See Barany (2018, 17-19) for a brief discussion of MMS reforms in these Gulf states. Kuwait’s national assembly approved conscription in April of 2015; however, conscription did not take effect until mid-2017.
weak explanation for its MMS reforms. Certainly Tamim has demonstrated a willingness to appease Qatar’s neighbors by abandoning the more incendiary aspects of his father’s foreign policy and offering support for GCC operations in Yemen, but these policy changes provide evidence of Qatar attempting to placate its neighbors, not of socialization. More importantly, it is unclear how or why Qatar might be socialized to support policies that do not have a strong normative attachment in the region and, in fact, run counter to the norms that define state-societal relations in each of the Gulf states.

Finally, mimetic processes do not appear to explain the implementation of Qatar’s national service law. National service obligations in Qatar are quite different from the compulsory service requirements in Kuwait and the UAE. Conscript duties in both the UAE and Kuwait entail much longer service obligations than those required by Qatar’s national service law. Emirati conscripts serve for nine months to two years depending on their education levels while Kuwait’s conscripts serve for 12 months (Barany 2018, 18). Furthermore, arguments suggesting that Qatar attempted to mimic the MMS policies of its neighbors suffer from a timing problem—Qatar implemented national service one month before the UAE introduced conscription and a full year before Kuwait’s National Assembly approved similar policy reforms (Barany 2018, 18).

But although Qatar’s MMS reforms do not appear to be an outcome of institutional isomorphism, observing Qatar’s MMS policies in a regional context may help to explain why Qatar chose to introduce national service. As Barany (2018, 21) notes, the conditions that drove Qatar to implement national service, namely socioeconomic challenges and the desire to “foster

---

112 The UAE’s legislative body approved conscription in March of 2014 while Kuwait’s National Assembly passed legislation calling for conscription in April of 2015 (though conscription did not begin until mid-2017).
stronger ties between citizens and the state,” also likely influenced MMS reforms in the UAE and Kuwait. Moreover, suggesting that MMS reforms in Qatar do not exhibit patterns of institutional isomorphism does not suggest that Qatar’s decision to implement national service occurred in isolation. In fact, the UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar discussed conscription in the months preceding their MMS reforms at the 2013 World Economic Forum on the Middle East (Barany 2018, 20). Because Qatar, the UAE, and Kuwait face similar challenges and constraints, and it is unlikely that any policies addressing the challenges faced by one state would not receive consideration by its neighbors. A more thorough examination of MMS reforms in the Gulf Region is beyond the scope of this study; however, any such examination would likely contribute to a more complete understanding of Qatar’s MMS policies.

Assessing the Model

The preceding analysis reveals that alternative explanations of Qatar’s MMS reform provide, at best, incomplete accounts. Incredibly short training and service obligations and the timing of Qatar’s MMS reform suggest that the state’s increasingly hostile security environment, demographic challenges, military modernization efforts, and broader goals of Qatarization did not result in MMS reform. Instead, the implementation of national service appears to have followed directly from the policy preferences of its new emir. Tamim entered office with a desire to focus inwardly on the threats to Qatar’s comprehensive development goals. By instilling values of hard work, discipline, self-reliance, and loyalty to the state, national service provides an indirect mechanism to address the long-term social, economic, and political challenges confronting the state.
Despite widespread public support for national service, Qatar’s MMS reform followed a change in leader rather than domestic MMS preferences. Tamim has certainly shown a willingness to support policies that are popular with the public;\textsuperscript{113} however, the power and centrality of the emir leaves little to “no means of channeling public sentiment into policy circles” (Roberts 2017, 41). And even if public concerns about broader social, economic, and political issues influenced Tamim’s decision to implement national service, there is no evidence to suggest that the public demanded changes to the state’s MMS policies. As Rory Miller suggests, “[Tamim] may as well have required Qataris to complete three to four months of medical training.”\textsuperscript{114}

As Table 4.1 below illustrates, Qatar’s MMS reforms align closely with many of the model’s predictions. No evidence suggests that Tamim feared reforming the state’s MMS policies might threaten his political support, and in fact, evidence suggests that he believed national service would strengthen Qatar’s ability to respond to social, economic, and political challenges ($H2$). Additionally, no evidence suggests these reforms met opposition from the public or immediate family members that might challenge his rule ($H2b$). To the contrary, the

\textsuperscript{113} See Roberts (2017, 160-161) and Hammond (2014).
\textsuperscript{114} Interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on 15 June, 2017.
implementation of national service was welcomed by the public and the military, and policies designed to strengthen national solidarity are unlikely to have been opposed by those in his inner circle, namely his dual-hatted Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. Likewise, the near absolute powers granted to the emir all but guaranteed that his MMS preferences eventually become policy (H2c). As Roberts (2011b) notes, “Qatari elite … find themselves in the somewhat unique position of being able to turn personal conviction into policy.” And although Tamim did not promote (at least publicly) national service, he used his influential annual remarks to the Advisory Council to discuss the challenges that national service was intended to address (H2d).\textsuperscript{115}

\textit{Table 4.1 — Support for Empirical Predictions}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H2: Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2c: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2d: Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.</td>
<td>Weakly Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.</td>
<td>Supported*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b: If leader changes represent “mild” regime changes such as the replacement of leaders from the same political groups, MMS changes are less likely to occur.</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, Qatar’s MMS reforms provide mixed support for Hypothesis 3: \textit{Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.} On the one hand, the timing of MMS

\textsuperscript{115} Although Tamim has not publically expressed support for national service himself, Barany (2018, 19) notes that senior members of the royal family have helped to promote national service by frequently visiting training centers and graduation ceremonies and praising national service in the media.
reform shortly after Tamim succeeded his father as emir suggests a connection between Qatar’s change in leadership and its MMS policies. On the other hand, many foreign leaders and close watchers of Qatari politics question the extent to which Hamad, known as the “father-emir,” continues to exert great influence over Qatari politics (Henderson 2017). Hamad replaced his eldest son with Tamim as heir apparent in 2003 (Katzman 2017, 5), included Tamim in his inner circle of advisors, and planned his abdication at least two years before he handed power to Tamim. Therefore, it is unlikely that Tamim’s policy preferences differed much from his father’s, particularly on a policy designed to fundamentally alter the relationship between Qataris and the state. But regardless of whether Hamad continues to “pull the strings” (Henderson 2017), the “mild regime change” in 2013 accompanied a change in emphasis from foreign affairs to internally focused polices like national service ($H3b$).

**CONCLUSION**

The replacement of a volunteer system with compulsory national service represents a fundamental change in the relationship between the Qatari government, armed forces, and society. The analysis of Qatar’s MMS reforms suggests that the decision to implement national service followed the second pathway to MMS reform (change in leader MMS preferences), but ultimately, it is hard to make definitive conclusions about policy decisions in a closed political system like Qatar’s. With “no culture of leaders publicly explaining policy decision-making in any depth or with candour [sic], no local media scrupulously investigating and interrogating policy trends…, no official government white papers, and a crucial lack of insightful, useful, in-depth interviews with protagonists” (Robert 2017, 76), policy decisions in Qatar do not easily

---

116 Gerd Nonneman, interview with the author conducted in Doha, Qatar on June 11, 2017.
lend themselves to analysis.\footnote{Similarly, Hammond (2014) argues: “With a narrow group of decision-makers leading the country in a closed domestic political and media environment, Qatar has in the past appeared impervious to analysis,” and Lynch (2013) succinctly summarizes Qatar’s foreign policy by stating: “Nobody knows.”} But despite the lack of smoking-gun evidence that might conclusively explain this policy change, an understanding of Tamim’s broader policy preferences in the context of the social, economic, and political threats to Qatar’s continued development allow the researcher to make reasonable inferences and draw “judicious conclusions” (Roberts 2017, 76) about the motivations behind Qatar’s MMS reform.

The examination of Qatar’s MMS reform reveals at least three notable conclusions. First, this examination suggests that a broad array of factors influence leader MMS preferences. Economic and social challenges confronting the state may help to explain leaders’ decisions to implement national service, but viewing these elements in isolation would likely overlook important connections between relevant factors. As the analysis of Qatar’s MMS reform suggests, such reforms can only be understood by examining the broader context in which they occur. Second, this analysis demonstrates how MMS reforms may be linked to other policy changes. The roll-back of public sector wages, and the implementation of the VAT all reinforced Tamim’s larger goals of securing the future prosperity of Qatar by reducing Qataris’ reliance on the state. Thus, as I suggest in the introductory chapter, understanding MMS reforms may help us to better understand the relationship between domestic political changes and other types of foreign and domestic policy reforms. Finally, Qatar’s MMS reforms demonstrate how military manpower policies can buttress regime legitimacy. By requiring Qataris to conduct military service, Qatar’s MMS reforms represent a fundamental altering of the political compact that represents the “inverse of no taxation without representation” (Nonneman 2006, 5). By fostering nationalism and “grooming” Qataris for productive work, national service may offer legitimacy
to the rentier state at a time when it can no longer afford to offer such generous subsidies to its citizens.
CHAPTER 5
AN ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE FOR SWEDEN: OVERTURNING 109 YEARS OF MILITARY MANPOWER POLICY

As a neutral (or at least non-aligned) state, Sweden has remained outside of war for over 200 years.\(^1\) Walking through the Swedish Army Museum (Armémuseum), one is struck by how Sweden glorifies not its history of military prowess and great power status in 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) Century Europe but its identity as a neutral actor that managed to avoid the devastating wars that engulfed its European neighbors. Yet despite maintaining over 200 years of continuous peace, Sweden represented one of the world’s most militarized states throughout much of the 20\(^{th}\) Century. From 1901 to 2010, the värnplikt (translated as “defense duty”) subjected all Swedish males to military service.\(^2\) At the height of the Cold War, Sweden conscripted all of its male youth and required all citizens to perform civil defense duties in times of war or national emergencies. The phonebooks delivered to every Swedish home included a section titled, “If War Comes,” that provided instructions of what to do in the event of a military invasion and encouraged its citizens to wage a guerilla resistance if the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) were defeated and the government fell (Egnell et al. 2014, 45-46).

---

\(^1\) This chapter benefited from multiple interviews with Swedish military and government leaders and faculty at the Swedish National Defence University conducted in March 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden. Christer Bohlin assisted with the translation of all Swedish language sources cited in this chapter.

\(^2\) The term, värnplikt, has connotations that “facilitate a reading of it as virtuous”(Leander 2004b, 120). Värna means to not only to “defend, guard, or protect,” but also to “care.” The connotation “evokes the defense of something dear, weak, and defenseless.” The word, plikt, translates as “duty.” The use of the term, duty, rather than service underlines that the värn is a “responsibility weighing on the citizen” that cannot be “offered to someone else” (Leander 2004b, 120).
But like other European states, Sweden’s security environment changed dramatically with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As the threat of being dragged into a world war by the Western and communist blocs receded, Sweden’s need to maintain a large, conscript-based military became obsolete. Focused almost entirely on territorial defense throughout most of the 20th Century, the SAF transformed into a “more deployable, expeditionary force” in the mid-1990s and 2000s (“Pushing the Boundaries” 2009), contributing hundreds of troops to both UN and non-UN led operations. Following years of massive drawdowns in military spending and personnel, Sweden suspended conscription in 2010 and implemented an all-volunteer force (AVF).

Why did Sweden overturn an MMS that had provided the basis of Sweden’s national defense for 109 years and that “was built into the very fabric of Swedish identity” (Egnell et al. 2014, 45)? Important changes in Sweden’s security environment following the end of the Cold War provide an obvious justification, but these changes had existed for nearly 20 years before Sweden adopted an AVF. Likewise, the transformation of the SAF from a national defense force to an increasingly internationally-focused and expeditionary military provides a plausible explanation for Sweden’s MMS reforms; however, this reorientation of Sweden’s defense policies had been ongoing since the mid-1990s, and other Scandinavian states that assigned similar roles and missions to their armed forces maintained conscription-based force structures. Perhaps declining conscription rates undermined the legitimacy of a system that had once

---

3 Sweden has long been one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping operations (Ruffa 2013, 345) and became an active partner of NATO in the 1990s. For more on Sweden’s increasing ties to NATO, see Herolf (2006), Dahl (2012), Gostkowski (2013), Raeder (2014), Fridén (2015), Britz (2016), and Dalsjö (2017). For a discussion of recent trends in Sweden’s support for UN and non-UN operations and specific troop contributions, see Heldt (2012).
affected virtually all of Sweden’s male youth? But while declining rates of conscription certainly made the system inequitable (and arguably unjust), conscription never became deeply unpopular and continued to be viewed as a “rite of passage” (Egnell et al. 2014, 45) by many Swedes.

If the conditions that drove Sweden to suspend conscription had existed for years before Sweden reformed its military manpower policies, why did Sweden not adopt an AVF sooner? I argue that the replacement of a government that maintained an ideological attachment to conscription with a government willing to take a more rational approach to Sweden’s military manpower policies allowed Sweden to adopt an MMS that better aligned with its security needs and foreign policy objectives. Certainly, changes in Sweden’s security environment and the roles and missions assigned to the SAF encouraged the new government to make reforms, but these factors alone were insufficient. Instead, overturning a 109-year-old MMS required a change in the MMS preferences of Sweden’s government leadership.

In the sections that follow, I discuss the history of the värnplikt and the state’s broader security and foreign policies. Next, I explain how Sweden formulates its defense policies and identify the preferences of domestic and government actors with the greatest ability to influence Sweden’s MMS policies: the parliamentary Defense Commission (Försvarsberedningen), the Social Democratic and Alliance for Sweden governments, the Ministry of Defense and the SAF, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance, the Swedish Defense Industry, and the Swedish public and media. Then, I present my argument that Sweden’s change in MMS policy followed a political transition leading to a change in leader MMS preferences and evaluate this argument alongside other plausible explanations for Sweden’s MMS reforms. Finally, I analyze these

4 All 18-year-old males were subject to screening, but Sweden exempted conscientious objectors and those with medical issues from service (Simon and Abdel Moneim 2011, 103; Leander 2004b, 125).
arguments using the pathways to MMS reform model and introduce some of the themes and arguments discussed in Chapter 6, which examines Sweden’s decision to overturn these short-lived reforms in 2017.

**SWEDEN’S MMS REFORMS IN CONTEXT**

By the early 19th Century, Sweden had removed any illusions that it would return to great power status and adopted a foreign policy based on neutrality and territorial defense. Sweden experimented with various forms of military conscription throughout the 19th Century and in 1901 implemented the *värnplikt*, which significantly increased the length of conscripts’ training and established near-universal conscription for its male youth.5 Although Sweden modified the length of training and eligibility requirements nearly 20 times, Sweden maintained a version of the *värnplikt* continuously from 1901 until 2010.6

---

5 For a discussion of Sweden’s military manpower policies before 1901, see SOU 2014: 73, Sørensen (2000, 113), Nordstrom (2002, 73-74), and Leander (2004a, 583). The SAF consisted primarily of hired men from 1680-1901 (SOU 2014: 73, 23). Sweden’s allotment system required each military district to provide a specified number of soldiers; however, most districts used special troops and sailors to work in place of peasant farmers (SOU 2014:73, 227). Thus, despite maintaining compulsory service requirements, the SAF primarily consisted of volunteers and mercenaries before 1901. Even after Sweden established the *värnplikt* in 1901, it continued to rely on volunteers to supply a portion of its military manpower until 1952 (see Bergström 2011). Still, the *värnplikt* demanded service from virtually all of its male youth until conscription numbers began to decline in the 1990s (see also Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 138-139).

6 For a discussion of the *värnplikt*, see Nordstrom (2002, 89-91), Leander (2004a, 120-121), and Simon and Abdel-Moneim (2011, 101). Under the *värnplikt*, all 18-year-old Swedish males conducted a period of military training and service. The 1901 law established a training and service period of 240 days (Nordstrom 2002, 101); however, the length of this training and service obligation changed multiple times throughout the *värnplikt*’s history. After completion of their initial training and service obligations, conscripts were released from active duty to serve in the Home Guard militia or civil defense until the age of 47 (see Footnote 9 below for more on the Home Guard and civil defense). The Total Service Defense Act of 1994 (*totalförskvarsplikt*) extended civil defense duties to all Swedish citizens between the ages of 16 and 70, to include women and foreigners residing in Sweden (Simon and Abdel-Moneim 2011, 103; Leander 2004b, 599). However, this extension of defense duties mattered more in “principle” than in “practice” (Leander 2004b, 599). Under the *totalförskvarsplikt* women and non-citizen residents could be required to serve in the non-military civil defense forces; however, compulsory service in the SAF and the Home Guard continued to apply only to males.
At the height of the värnplikt, Sweden could place 850,000 men under arms in a country of just over 8 million people (Angstrom and Noreen 2017). After completing their initial training and service requirements, Swedish men continued to contribute to Sweden’s defense by serving in the SAF reserves or as part of the Home Guard militia or civil defence. In the event of an invasion, the Home Guard force would form an extra line of military defense, while citizens in the civil defense would maintain essential services like electricity, transportation networks, and medical services. When including those in the Home Guard and civil defence organizations, the number of Swedes directly involved in the country’s total defense planning included somewhere between two and half to three million citizens—more than one third of the country’s entire population (Gyldén 1994, 12).

In addition to maintaining a credible deterrence through large, conscript-based defense forces, Sweden supported (and still supports) a doctrine of “non-align[ment] in peacetime, aiming for neutrality in the case of war” (Dahl 2012, 2; Drent and Meijnders 2015, 17; Kunz 2015, 9). Despite appeals by Germany to form a military alliance and a crisis with Great Britain that nearly resulted in war, Sweden remained a neutral state throughout WWI (Tarnstrom 1996, 271-277). As the threat of another war on the European continent loomed, Sweden rapidly expanded the size of its armed forces through a massive call-up of previous conscript classes and by requiring over one quarter of the 1938 conscript class to remain on active duty after the

---

7 Sweden has a population of 10.1 million today (SCB population statistics).
8 Following an average of 11 months of training and active duty service, conscripts maintained a reserve commitment until their 47th birthdays (Simon and Abel-Moneim 2011, 104).
9 The Swedish Home Guard consists of military units that “support the entire range of defence activities – from civil support in peacetime to armed combat in war.” As a large militia force, the Home Guard provides a “national and territorial bulwark for the defence and protection of Sweden.” In contrast, the civil defense is a not an organization but non-military operation that supports the SAF during states of emergency. During national emergencies, the civil defense is charged with maintaining essential services and other tasks “that make it possible for society to handle situations when preparedness is raised.” For more on these defense organizations, see Government Offices of Sweden (2017).

Sweden’s experiences in both world wars convinced its leaders that remaining non-aligned would provide the best means to secure the country’s interests; however, a recently declassified report challenges the notion that Sweden remained neutral and instead suggests that Sweden secretly coordinated its defense policies with the United States and NATO (English translation of SOU 1994: 11). Still, Sweden maintained an overtly neutral status so as to neither provoke an attack by the USSR nor find itself unwillingly drawn into a conflict between the Soviet and Western blocs (Roberts 1976, 70).

Sweden expected that continental Europe would serve as the main battlefield of any war between the USSR and the West; however, it feared that an attack against Sweden might occur “in conjunction with a major conflict [between the USSR and the West].” While Sweden’s leaders acknowledged that its military could do little to stop an attack from a great power, they believed that large, well-equipped conscript forces and advanced technology and equipment would convince any would-be-attackers that the costs of invasion would outweigh any possible

---

10 Tarnstrom argues that Sweden maintained its neutrality by making the fewest possible concessions while steadily building up its defenses to deter a Nazi attack.
11 The horrors of the Second World War initially convinced Sweden to pursue a defense pact with other Nordic nations. However, Sweden’s proposal to form a Nordic security community found little support from the Finns who felt that Sweden had abandoned them during the Russo-Finnish War and the Danes and Norwegians who felt betrayed by Sweden’s wartime concessions to the Nazis (Tarnstrom 1996, 338 and Nordstrom 2002, 135). Thus, Sweden found itself isolated at a time when growing tensions between the USSR and the United States made it increasingly vulnerable to both superpowers (Andrén and Lyth 2013, 125).
12 In a 1964 television interview, Prime Minister Tage Erlander (1946-1969) stated: “I do not believe that Sweden could be an objective to be attacked, except in conjunction with a major conflict” (cited in Roberts 1976, 77).
benefits. Although Sweden pursued a nuclear weapons program until the late 1960s (Kunz 2015, 9; Gyldén 1994, 17-19), Sweden maintained a policy of conventional deterrence throughout the Cold War (Roberts 1976, 95). During the 1950s and 1960s, Sweden spent almost five percent of its GDP on defense, and by 1970 it had created one of the world’s most powerful militaries (Tarnstrom 1996, 357). Sweden maintained nearly 30 operational brigades and eight divisions, and maintained a robust national defense industry that allowed for “self-sufficiency in armaments” (Ikegami 2013, 440). Through substantial spending on research and development, Sweden indigenously developed and produced all of its major weapon systems to include submarines, battle tanks, and fighter aircraft (Fridén 2015).

Beginning in the 1990s, changes in Sweden’s defense and foreign policies greatly altered its military manpower requirements. Seeking to capitalize on the peace dividend following the Cold War, Sweden drastically reduced the size and funding of the SAF (see Table 5.1 below). Between 1990 and 2009, annual military spending fell from 2.6 to 1.2 percent of GDP while the total size of the SAF shrank from 773,500 to 275,050 personnel. This downsizing led to drastic organizational cuts. By 2004, the Army contained one tenth of the brigades and battalions it had operated just 15 years earlier (Hedin 2011, 3). The other services fared similarly: between 1992

---

13 Prime Minister Tage Erlander (1946-1969) summarized this view in a 1964 television interview stating: “There is no reason for an isolated attack on Sweden, and we do not therefore take such an attack much into account...Accordingly, we are building up a defence which has naturally not much chance of surviving against a concentrated attack by a great power, but which, nevertheless, may be rather troublesome to overcome if Sweden is a secondary objective...” (cited in Roberts 1976, 77).

14 For a discussion of Swedish defense spending during the Cold War, see Dörfer (1992, 136).

15 See SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 1949 to 2016 for country-year data of defense expenditures and IISS’s The Military Balance for military manpower data. Total size of the SAF includes active duty, reserves, and Home Guard personnel.

16 During this time period, SAF maneuver battalions were cut from 62 to seven (Dalsjö 2017, 13) and the SAF abolished 60 regiments (Winnerstig 2014a, 42).
and 2009, five of the air force’s seven squadrons were retired, and the number of combat ships were reduced from 42 to 11 (Dalsjö 2017, 13).

Table 5.1 – Military Spending and Personnel, 1990-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Military Spending (2015 US $billion)</th>
<th>Percentage of GDP</th>
<th>Military Personnel (Active)</th>
<th>Conscripts</th>
<th>Total Military Personnel (to include reserves and Home Guard)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6.529</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>64,500</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>773,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>6.151</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>63,000</td>
<td>46,800</td>
<td>772,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>5.977</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>60,500</td>
<td>38,800</td>
<td>769,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>5.959</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>64,800</td>
<td>36,600</td>
<td>793,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>5.946</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>64,000</td>
<td>36,600</td>
<td>793,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5.959</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>64,000</td>
<td>31,600</td>
<td>793,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>6.037</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>62,600</td>
<td>42,100</td>
<td>791,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>5.735</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>53,350</td>
<td>38,750</td>
<td>623,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>5.899</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>53,100</td>
<td>34,900</td>
<td>623,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>6.122</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>53,100</td>
<td>35,600</td>
<td>623,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6.251</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>52,700</td>
<td>32,800</td>
<td>622,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5.931</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>33,900</td>
<td>15,900</td>
<td>295,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5.773</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>33,900</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>295,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5.731</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>12,300</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>5.394</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>12,300</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5.464</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>12,300</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5.379</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>11,600</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5.520</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>10,150</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4.909</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>7,350</td>
<td>289,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4.815</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>16,900</td>
<td>7,400</td>
<td>278,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.210</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>13,050</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>275,050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SIPRI and IISS’s The Military Balance

As the SAF shrank, so too did the size of annual conscription classes. As Figure 5.1 below illustrates, the number of Swedes conscripted annually fell sharply through the 1990s until the introduction of the AVF in 2010. Before 1995, virtually all men between the ages of 18 and 47 served in the SAF (Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 139); by 2009, less than 7,500 were required to serve.
In addition to becoming a “leaner but meaner” force (Gyldén 1994, 93), the post-Cold War SAF evolved from a territorial defense force into a military increasingly focused on international operations. The once nationally-focused Försvarsmakten became one of the largest contributors of UN peacekeeping forces, joined NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1994, and played an active role in NATO-led operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan to name a few. Greater integration with Europe further reduced Sweden’s military manpower needs and

17 Declining military budgets and low military readiness during the SAF’s downsizing suggest that the force simply grew “leaner.” Historians Frederick Thisner and Frederick Erickson of the Swedish National Defense University (SNDU) suggest that efforts to make the SAF smaller, but better equipped did not last long as defense spending became the “piggy bank” that funded other domestic priorities (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm Sweden on 19 March 2018).

18 Sweden supported UN peacekeeping operations throughout the Cold War (Ruffa 2013, 344-345) but as a neutral state, refrained from participating in operations outside of UN mandates. However, Sweden slowly became one of NATO’s most reliable partners after joining the EU and NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1995 and 1994, respectively (Dalsjö 2017, 11). More active in NATO than most of its 28 formal members, Sweden has participated in every NATO operation except Operation Allied Force in Kosovo and Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean (Dahl 2012, 2). Consequently, Sweden is commonly referred to as “partner number one” or “ally number 29” (Dahl 2012). For more on Sweden’s relationship with NATO, see Herolf (2006), Christiansson (2010), Bertlemen (2014), Winnerstig (2014a and 2014b), and Britz (2016).
led to a greater emphasis on professional and technologically sophisticated forces (Sørensen 2000, 328-329).

Following its victory over the incumbent Social Democrats in the 2006 general election, the Moderate Party-led Alliance for Sweden conducted a review of Sweden’s military manpower policies. Citing inefficiencies with the *värnplikt* and a changed security environment that had rendered conscription obsolete (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 77-79), the new government suspended conscription on July 1, 2010. While explicitly retaining the ability to reinstate conscription if deemed necessary by the government to maintain “Sweden’s defense preparedness” (SFS 2010: 447, see Chapter 1 Section 3a§), the 2010 legislation effectively ended the conscription-based *värnplikt*.

**ACTORS AND MMS PREFERENCES**

The suspension of conscription and its replacement with an AVF represented the most significant change to Sweden’s MMS policies in 109 years. In this section, I briefly explain the defense policymaking process in Sweden before identifying the policy preferences of government and other domestic actors with the greatest ability to influence Sweden’s MMS reforms. Specifically, I examine the MMS preferences and influence of the Parliamentary Defense Commission (*Försvarsberedningen*); the Social Democratic (1994 to 2006) and Alliance for Sweden (2006 to 2014) governments; the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Finance; the SAF; the Swedish Defense Industry (SDI); and the Swedish public and media.

As a constitutional monarchy, legislative and executive power rests within Sweden’s parliamentary body, the Riksdag. Like other policymaking processes, the formulation of Swedish

---

19 Under the AVF law (SFS 2010: 447), the government directed the SAF to recruit 3500 to 4000 annually to serve for period of 6-8 years.
defense policy is notable for its deliberative, rationalistic, consensual, and open nature. These characteristics produce a decision-making style that “never seems rash, abrupt, irrational, or indeed, exciting” (Anton 1969 cited in Petersson 2016, 650) and facilitates an understanding of Sweden’s policymaking process by researchers and other outside observers.

In this deliberative legislative process, all laws originate as initiatives proposed by the Riksdag, special interest groups, public authorities, or even private citizens. Before becoming law, these proposals follow a “cumbersome” three-step process based on a political culture of “sounding out and ‘anchoring’ of policy proposals in different segments of Swedish society” to generate broad consensus (Petersson 2011, 650). First, relevant ministries such as Defense, Finance, and Foreign Affairs, appoint commissions of inquiry to investigate specific issues and recommend solutions (Petersson 2011, 656). In the case of defense policies, these directives often originate from the Ministry of Defence or standing parliamentary Defence Committee who establish and direct special committees to investigate specific defense-related issues. Reforms of major defense policies such as MMS most often originate through a special commission—the Defence Commission, or Försvarsberedningen—whose reports from the basis Sweden’s defense bills that are produced every four to five years.

After the appointed commissions submit their findings to relevant interest groups for comment, they publish their recommendations in official reports that form the basis of legislation.

---

20 For more on the consensual nature of Swedish policymaking, see Stern (1991, 69-72), Miles (2006, 77) and Drent and Meijnders (2015, 16).
21 Virtually all Swedish laws, reports, official statements and speeches, and other government documents are available online through the Government Offices of Sweden’s website at http://www.government.se.
22 See Government Offices of Sweden 2015 for a summary of Sweden’s legislative process. In the case of defense policies, proposals are most often initiated by the Ministry of Defence, the standing Parliamentary Defence Committee, or the Parliamentary Defence Commission, or Försvarsberedningen, discussed in the following section.
23 See the following section for a discussion of the Defence Commission.
submitted by the Cabinet to the Riksdag (Drent and Meijinders 2015, 21). In the case of defense bills, the standing parliamentary Defence Committee scrutinizes these reports and then submits its own proposal to the entire Riksdag for deliberation and vote (Drent and Meijinders 2015, 21; Petersson 2011, 656). Finally, the Ministry of Defence and other administrative agencies have the opportunity to “supplement the parliamentary decision with detailed regulations and instructions” for the SAF and other agencies affected by the legislation (Petersson 2011, 656).

Given both its unique nature and prominent role in the formulation of major changes to Swedish defense policies, I begin the analysis of actors’ MMS preferences with a discussion of reports produced by the parliamentary Defence Commissions from 1999 to 2008. Comprised of relevant experts such as members of the SAF and security policy analysts as well members of all political parties represented in the Riksdag (Drent and Meijenders 2015, 5; Petersson 2016, 656), the Defence Commission ideally represents an apolitical body. However, because the Minister of Defence (MINDEF) appoints the chair of the commission and provides specific guidance and policy focus areas, the commission’s findings generally do not diverge from the government’s policy preferences. Nevertheless, I choose to analyze the deliberations and findings of the Defence Commissions from 1999 to 2008 separately to provide additional context for the MMS reform and also to highlight key areas of agreement and disagreement among the reports produced under the Social Democratic and Alliance governments.

*The Defence Commission (Försvarsberedningen)*

The Defence Commission provides a “forum for consultation” (Government Offices of Sweden 2017) on security and defense policies between the government and opposition parties and serves as “an important tool to reach broad consensus” (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 21).

---

24 Drent and Meijinders suggest that the MINDEF “has quite a grip on the process” (2015, 23).
Although neither required by law nor codified in any legislation, the government typically appoints the Defence Commission every four years following national elections (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 18).\textsuperscript{25} In consultation with the government, the Minister of Defense (MINDEF) selects the chair of the Commission (usually from the largest party in government) and establishes its mandate (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 18).\textsuperscript{26} The remaining members of the Commission include representatives from each political party in the Riksdag as well as experts from various government offices and the SAF (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 18).\textsuperscript{27}

The Defence Commission produces its findings in two separate reports over the course of approximately 18 months. The first report assesses the “challenges and threats of the security environment” and informs the second report, which provides policy recommendations for managing the challenges outlined in the initial report (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 19). Although these recommendations generally form the basis of the Government’s defense bill, the investigation and reports also serve the much broader purposes of “creat[ing] a common understanding on defence across multiple national stakeholders encompassing the legislature, the executive, experts and interest groups,” generating “public acceptance for defence and defence spending,” and “facilitat[ing] long-term stability and predictability” in defense planning (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 24).

\textsuperscript{25} Since 1994 all governments have established Defence Commissions to survey broad security issues and produce detailed reports that inform the government’s quadrennial defense bill. Before the 1990s, the Supreme Commander of the SAF presented a report on military needs for the next five years, but failure to foresee the end of Cold War and a severe economic crisis in 1990s led to the current adaptation (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 16-17).

\textsuperscript{26} The Defence Commission generally focuses on broad issues that will affect Sweden’s defense policies for the next five years and beyond. Commissions analyze important national, regional, and international developments and assess their potential impacts on Sweden’s future defense (Government of Sweden 2017).

\textsuperscript{27} These representatives generally, but not always, also serve as part of the standing Defense Committee (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 19).
All of the Defence Commission reports produced from 1999 to 2008 acknowledged the need for Sweden to respond to direct threats to Swedish territory and participate in regional and international missions; however, the reports reveal an evolution in Sweden’s defence priorities and threat perception over time. While the 1999 report cites the ability to “defend Sweden against an armed attack” as the top priority of Sweden’s defense organizations, later reports emphasize a much broader view of security and place greater emphasis on the ability of Sweden to participate in international operations.

The reports also highlight a divergence in the views of Social Democrat and Alliance-appointed Commissions regarding the SAF’s ability to meet its operational requirements with a conscript-based force structure. Reports produced from 1999 to 2004 under the Social Democrat-led government recommend maintaining conscription, citing the importance of having citizens maintain responsibility for the country’s defenses (Ds 1999: 2, 209) and the need to rapidly increase the size of the SAF in the event of a military attack against the Swedish homeland (Ds 1999: 2, 209). Acknowledging the challenges with fielding units that could rapidly deploy in support of international missions, these reports recommend measures to increase recruitment while retaining conscription as the basis for military manpower. For example, the 1999, 2001, and 2004 reports recommend requiring all officers to serve in international missions and

---

28 The final report of the 1999 Defence Commission suggests that Sweden’s security “depends largely on developments in the outside world and through cooperation with other countries (Ds 1999: 2, 14). Likewise, the 2004 report acknowledges that Sweden’s participation in international operations “promote[s] [Sweden’s] own peace and security” and cites the need for greater “rapid response capabilities (Ds. 2004: 30, 15).

29 Although the 2004 Commission suggested that Sweden cannot rule out the possibility that direct military threats may arise in the future, it argued that “a military attack against Sweden remain[ed] unlikely for the foreseeable future” (Ds. 2004: 30, 13).
shortening basic military training to encourage more conscripts join international missions on a voluntary basis.\(^{30}\)

Unlike earlier reports that sought to address challenges with Sweden’s military manpower needs by working within its conscript-based system, reports produced under the Alliance strongly advocate for replacing conscription with an AVF. Citing the need for a more “flexible defense,” the 2007-2008 Defence Commission’s initial report called for a move from a “threat-driven defense” to one fielded on a voluntary basis (Ds 2007:46, 49). The final report in 2008 expounded on this recommendation, calling for a “voluntarily staffed organization to create a foundation for accessibility, flexibility, and mobility” (Ds 2008: 48, 71). Citing the length of time required to organize, train, and prepare international units to deploy in support of operational requirements, the report argued that a volunteer system would provide more “available” and “accessible” forces that would be better “suited to the complexity” of the SAF’s operational requirements (Ds 2008:48, 12; 30).\(^{31}\)

*The Social Democrats (1994-2006)*

The Social Democrats comprise Sweden’s oldest, and historically most influential, political party. Since its founding in 1889, the Social Democrats have dominated Swedish politics, leading majority or minority governments for all but 12 years from 1932 to 2006.\(^{32}\) As changes in Sweden’s security environment and economic considerations led Sweden to

\(^{30}\) See Ds 1999:2, 212; Ds 2001: 44, 163; and Ds 2004: 30, 12. Sweden limited the use of conscripts to operations in Swedish territory. Therefore, Sweden’s expeditionary units consisted solely of officers and conscripts who volunteered for overseas operations.

\(^{31}\) The initial report of the 2007-2008 Commission notes that it took up to a year for Sweden to deploy SAF units abroad (Ds 2008: 48, 29) and describes adopting a voluntary system as a “prerequisite for making the [SAF] more deployable and mobile” (Ds 2008: 48, 43).

dramatically reduce the size of the SAF in the mid-1990s, the Social Democrat-led government held on tightly to Sweden’s long tradition of conscription.

As a center-left party, Social Democrats have historically prioritized domestic social policies over matters of defense.\(^{33}\) In his annual statements of government policy, Prime Minister Göran Persson (1996 to 2006) limited discussions of Sweden’s defense to the threat of international terrorism and the SAF’s role in supporting peace operations abroad and instead emphasized the government’s domestic initiatives to increase employment, develop Sweden’s infrastructure, and strengthen social welfare.\(^{34}\) Arguing that Sweden’s improved security situation obviated the need to maintain a massive force structure designed to deter would-be-attackers, Persson saw the need to build a smaller, flexible defense and encouraged his countrymen to “rid themselves of oldish attitudes with roots in the Europe of bloc confrontation” (Gyldén 1994, 84-85).\(^{35}\) But despite his party’s stated desire to build a “leaner but meaner” force structure, reforms under the Social Democrats had much more to do with downsizing than reforming Sweden’s antiquated defense structure (Gyldén 1994, 84-85).

An economic crisis in the 1990s and the need to assess the significant changes in Sweden’s security environment led the Social Democratic government to call for a “strategic timeout” (Kunz 2015, 11). Rather than focus on the implementation of planned defense reforms designed to better meet the demands of Sweden’s changing security environment, the Social

---

\(^{33}\) Swedish National Defense University historians Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018.

\(^{34}\) See 2004 and 2005 Statements of Government Policy from Prime Minister Göran Persson to the Riksdag.

\(^{35}\) While calling for a need to increase Sweden’s “capacity” to support international peacebuilding operations, Persson’s 2004 Statement of Government Policy explicitly stated that the “adjustment of the Armed Forces [would] continue, on the basis of the proposals put forward by the Defence Commission and compulsory military service” (Persson 2004, my emphasis).
Democrats used this timeout to focus on other aspects of their domestic agenda.\textsuperscript{36} According to one politician involved in the discussion of these defense reforms, defense policy requirements were “entirely pursued with economic concerns as [the] basis” (Kunz 2015, 15).\textsuperscript{37} When describing his government’s desire to balance the state budget, Persson famously said, “one can always take the last billion from defense” (cited in Fridén 2015).

The emphasis on producing a leaner force structure resulted in a massive downsizing of the SAF. From 1994 to 2006, troop end strength fell from 793,000 to just 289,600. A shrinking force structure eliminated the need to conscript large numbers of young males each year, and by 2006, Sweden’s once-universal conscription directly affected less than 12,000 Swedes.\textsuperscript{38}

As the \textit{värnplikt} required service from fewer and fewer Swedish male youth, the Social Democrats sought to extend “defense duty” to all Swedes as a means of \textit{folkförankring}, or “anchoring” defense duties in the population (Leander 2004b, 119-121). Under the Total Service Defense Act of 1994 (\textit{totalförskvarsplikt}), all Swedish citizens between the ages of 16 and 70, to include women and foreigners residing in Sweden, became liable for service in Sweden’s civil defence (Leander 2004a, 589). Although the extension of defense duty to all residents “had few tangible effects on the actual organization and practice of military service,” the

\textsuperscript{36} Thisner describes this timeout as a “strategic coffee break” given the extent to which he suggests the Social Democrat government neglected defense issues in favor of its domestic policy priorities throughout the 1990s and early 2000s (interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018). As the government declared in its 2004 Defence Bill, “the favourable [sic] development in the world around us means that we can reduce the size of our total defence, which in turn means we can decrease the number of [military] units, schools and centres [sic]” (English Summary of Prop. 2004/05:5, 11).

\textsuperscript{37} See Kunz (2015, 11-15). Kunz argues that economic considerations drove military reforms during this time period and that security considerations were given “secondary relevance” (2015, 15).

\textsuperscript{38} Sweden conscripted 11,600 Swedes in 2006 (IISS’s \textit{The Military Balance}).
*totalförskvarsplikt* demonstrated the Social Democrats’ concern for *folkförankring* as well as its perceived need to address the increasing inequities of the *värnplikt*.\(^{39}\)

But despite declining rates of conscription that called into question the egalitarian nature of the *värnplikt*, the Social Democrats remained ideologically attached to a system that “anchored” the country’s defense requirements in Swedish society (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 80).\(^{40}\) The Social Democrats were highly suspicious of the SAF in its early years; however, by the late 1920s the party had abandoned its “nihilistic view” of military defense and promoted the *värnplikt* as a “pivotal institution” that could eliminate class barriers and serve as a “potent site for education” (Leander 2004a, 123).\(^{41}\) As the party developed its vision for Sweden as a *Folkhem*, or people’s home, it began to view the *värnplikt* as means of promoting “social rights, equality, social mobility and … impos[ing] the control of politics over the military” (Leander 2004a, 123). Thus, although the system that had once conscripted all Swedish male youth now affected a small fraction of the population, the Social Democrats remained committed to an institution that had once “promoted, actively constructed, and of course defended” its vision of Sweden as an egalitarian and class-less society (Leander 2004a, 123).\(^{42}\)

---

\(^{39}\) Leander suggests that the *totalförskvarsplikt* mattered only in “principle” rather than in “practice” since Sweden continued to rely solely on male citizens for compulsory military service and residents would only be required to perform civil defence duties in the event of war or other national emergencies (2004a, 589).

\(^{40}\) Throughout its history, conscription served as one of the primary means of *folkförankring*, or “anchoring” defense duties in the population (Leander 2004b, 119-121).

\(^{41}\) Ericksson suggests that the Social Democrats changed from a “nihilistic view” of the SAF to a “pro-defence and conscription” stance in the late 1920s. Like Leander, he notes that the party viewed the *värnplikt* as a “social leveler” that also served as a means to “democratize the defence forces (personal communication, 8 May 2018).

\(^{42}\) Thisner suggests that although the Social Democrats sought to save money by “scrapping the military establishment” through significant reductions in military personnel and expenditures, the party remained ideologically attached to an institution that formed part of the “Swedish Model” (personal communication, 8 May 2018). Likewise, Ericksson argues that the Social Democrats remained strongly wedded to the concept of “*gör din plikt, kräv din rätt*,” translated roughly as “do your duty, demand your rights” (personal communication, 8 May 2018).
Declining rates of conscription coincided with changing roles and missions for the SAF. The Social Democrats recognized that Sweden’s participation in international operations required it to maintain “rapidly deployable forces” (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 48; 80) and that the SAF would need to reform its personnel policies to meet these demands (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 70). However, despite acknowledging the inefficiencies associated with conscripting large numbers of Swedish youth to attract volunteers to fill the SAF’s expeditionary units (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 80; 105-106), the Social Democrats continued to view conscription as the necessary basis for its military manpower (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 105-106).

As the size of annual conscript classes declined and the SAF became increasingly internationally-focused, the Social Democrat-led government began to allow SAF to employ long-term professional forces to fill its rapidly deployable units (Hedin 2001, 9). Nevertheless, when a 2001 committee tasked with focusing on the long-term challenges to Sweden’s security proposed replacing conscription with an AVF to better align with the SAF’s changing military manpower needs, the Government expressly forbade the committee members from exploring an all-volunteer force structure. Thus, with strong government support for the värnplikt and an unwillingness to consider major MMS reforms, conscription would continue to provide the basis of Sweden’s military manpower until a new government with different MMS preferences controlled the Riksdag.

---

43 The decision to allow the SAF to employ standing forces was highly significant. Several incidents of the SAF intervening to “silence” revolts in the early 20th Century led to strict limits on the military’s ability to intervene in domestic affairs (Leander 2004b, 127-128) and produced a deep-seated fear of standing military forces (Thisner, interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018). Former Defense Minister Sten Tolgfors describes the issue of employing standing, professional soldiers as the key issue of the 2009 Defence Bill, which resulted in Sweden replacing the värnplikt with an AVF (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018).

44 Stefan Ring, officer in the SAF’s Perspective/Long-term Planning and member of the 2001 committee, interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018.
The Alliance for Sweden

The Moderate-led, four-party coalition known as the Alliance for Sweden, or simply, “the Alliance,” governed during the “height of security change” in Sweden (Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 4). Having previously governed Sweden from 1991 to 1994, this coalition of Moderate, Liberal, Centre, and Christian Democratic Parties returned to power after the 2006 general election. Although the Alliance represented a center-right government, their positions on major issues did not differ significantly from those of the Social Democrats. However, the Alliance placed greater emphasis on increasing government efficiency and sought to improve Sweden’s MMS as part of these broader reforms.

The Alliance did not campaign on MMS reform, and defense issues, in fact, were very low on the government’s list of legislative priorities. Former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg recalls that the Alliance conducted extensive preparatory works in many policy areas before assuming control of the Riksdag but did not place similar emphasis on defense. Likewise, his successor, Sten Tolgfors, suggests that MMS reforms likely placed “somewhere around 17th on the list” of the government’s policy priorities. Nevertheless, the Alliance conducted a “more hard-nosed” assessment of the security environment than the previous government had (Dalsjö 2017, 15) and quickly came to view Sweden’s existing MMS as inadequate.

Once able to mobilize roughly 850,000 trained citizens in the event of war or other national emergency, by 2006 just 9,500 SAF personnel were found to be deployable within a

---

45 As the leader of the majority Moderate Party, Fredrik Reinfeldt served as Prime Minister, but his cabinet consisted of members of all parties represented in the coalition government.
46 Swedish National Defense University historians Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018.
47 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018. Odenberg describes MMS, in particular, as a non-issue for the coalition prior to the 2006 election.
48 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018.
year of notification (Petersson 2011, 702). After analyses of Sweden’s defense requirements
concluded that the SAF could not meet the state’s growing demands to participate in
international operations and that approximately two-thirds of its military manpower would not be
operationally ready for at least one to three years following any attack on Swedish soil (Michel
2011, 13), the Alliance directed an investigation to explore constitutional changes necessary to
replace conscription with a professional AVF structure.\(^{49}\) Citing the need to maintain “a more
useful, accessible, and flexible defense,” the government’s 2009 Defence Bill called for Sweden
to adopt an AVF (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 3). Noting the lack of readiness in the existing,
conscription-based system (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 51; 59) the bill called for “rapidly available
forces” that better suited the state’s changing defense requirements (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 35; 38).

In addition to increased readiness, the government viewed professional volunteer forces
as better able to perform the full range of military tasks required by the SAF’s expeditionary
units (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 49). Under the \(\text{värnplikt}\), conscripts served for an average 11 months
(Simon and Abel-Moneim 2011, 104), and those who volunteered to serve in expeditionary units
served for an average of two years. With six-year enlistment periods, the AVF provided longer-
serving volunteers additional time to acquire advanced technical skills and prepare for operations
in an increasingly complex world.\(^{50}\) Additionally, the Alliance saw the AVF as an ideal means to
increase military service among women.\(^{51}\) By eliminating conscription requirements that only
affected men, the government sought to remove an institution that inherently led to greater

\(^{49}\) The government decided on December 6, 2007 (Act No. 21 on the Directive, Dir. 2007: 147 to task an
investigation to review the constitutional changes necessary to recruit staff on a voluntary basis (Prop.
2008/09: 140, 7).

\(^{50}\) The 2009 Defence Bill called for the six-year employment period to be extended “if appropriate for the
soldiers of the future” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 80).

\(^{51}\) The underrepresentation of women in the SAF also concerned the Social Democrats, and the 2001
Defence Commission report identified the recruitment of female officers as a key issue for the SAF (Ds.
participation of men in Sweden’s defense and “strengthen the supply of personnel in the [SAF]” (Ds 2008: 48, 72) by making military service more attractive to women (Ds 2008: 48, 72-74).

Finally, the Alliance viewed the AVF as the most efficient means of recruiting sufficient numbers of service members to meet the state’s security needs. Maintaining a parallel structure comprised of a separate territorially-oriented conscripted force and expeditionary units comprised of volunteers required the SAF to recruit large numbers of conscripts annually in hopes that sufficient numbers of conscripts would volunteer to serve abroad (SOU 2009: 63, 24).52 Perhaps most importantly, the Alliance saw the efficiencies of the AVF as a means of further reducing its military budgets (SOU 2009: 63, 39). By relying more heavily on its reserve, or “time-service employees,” and eliminating market distortions and miscellaneous expenses such as providing conscripts with free trips home during leave periods, the Alliance predicted that the AVF would produce cost savings of two billion Swedish krona (SEK), or roughly $231 million (SOU 2009: 63, 39).

In contrast to the deliberative and consensual nature that typically defines Sweden’s defense policymaking process, the Alliance implemented its preferred MMS before all investigative commissions had published their findings and without the support of any opposition party members.53 The government’s decision to implement the AVF reflected the

52 Former Defence Minister Odenberg states that he initiated the directive to explore the AVF in large part due to the inefficiencies of “calling up 120,000 [Swedes for military screening] just to get the 3,000 to 4,000 needed” to meet the SAF’s military requirements.
53 Former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg, who left government in 2007, suggests that the Alliance was “in too much of hurry” to reform Sweden’s MMS and that “the work [research] wasn’t done thoroughly.” Although he does not claim to know for certain why the government did not investigate the reforms more thoroughly or work harder to achieve “broad consensus,” Odenberg suspects that economic considerations drove the party to seek a quick implementation of the reforms (interview with the author on 22 March 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden). However, his successor, Sten Tolgfors, disputes any suggestion that the party rushed these reforms. Instead, he insists that the government followed “a step-by-step approach, initiated by the Armed Forces, and carried out by the work of government investigation committees and gradual political decisions” (personal communication, 25 April). Suggesting that a longer review process could not have foreseen the challenges that would soon plague the AVF, he argues that
recommendations of both the SAF and the Defence Commission, and the Alliance initiated a series of investigations to analyze Sweden’s military manpower needs and the implications of MMS reform. Nevertheless, the government published the 2009 Defence Bill before the commission tasked with exploring the constitutional changes and other measures necessary to enable the SAF to recruit volunteers had even completed its analysis and implemented the AVF before its own special investigator tasked with analyzing the future demands of the new staffing requirements had published its findings.\(^{54}\)

With no alternatives offered by the political opposition, the pace at which the government moved to implement its desired MMS reforms likely precluded a more thorough analysis that might have identified some of the challenges the AVF would face in the years following its implementation.\(^{55}\) For example, neither the reports produced by the Defence Commission nor those of commissions and investigations initiated by the Alliance analyzed Sweden’s difficult history of recruiting volunteers in the first 51 years of the *värnplikt*.\(^{56}\) Moreover, an independent analysis published four months after the implementation of the AVF charged that the Alliance had based its estimates for the SAF’s recruiting needs on “poor planning assumptions and false

---

\(^{54}\) The 2009 Defence Bill (Prop. 2008/09: 140) was proposed in March of 2019 and the Final Report of the Comprehensive Defense Investigation (SOU 2009: 63) based on the committee’s findings was published in June. Likewise, the AVF law went into effect on 1 July 2010, a full four months before the report, *Human Resources in a Reformed Defense*, was published (SOU 2010: 86).

\(^{55}\) Former Defence Minister Tolgfors laments that there “was no alternative political suggestion of how to reform the SAF” and argues that such a debate or discussion of alternatives “would have made the policy decision (or all available options) clear” (interview with the author on 20 March 2018).

\(^{56}\) See Bergström 2011 for a review of the *volontärrer* system, which operated during the first 50 years of the *värnplikt*. Under the *volontärrer*, Sweden maintained a small, standing force of volunteer professionals alongside its conscripted forces.
international comparisons” and failed to accurately assess the economic impact of its reforms (Jonsson and Nordland 2010), charges that would prove accurate in just a few years’ time. 

Although all represented parties supported the findings of the 2007-2008 Defence Commission, which called for MMS reform, the opposition withdrew their support from the 2009 Defence Bill (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 22). Nevertheless, the bill passed in a party-line vote of 153 to 150, and the AVF became law on July 1, 2010. The värnplikt had supplied Sweden with military manpower and played an integral role in Swedish identity for 109 years. But as discussed in Chapter 6, the Alliance’s new MMS policy would be remarkably short-lived in comparison.

Ministry of Defence (MINDEF)

In Sweden, agencies such as the SAF are controlled through collective decisions at the cabinet-level rather than through individual ministries. This lack of “so-called ministerial rule” strengthens the power of the Prime Minister and her cabinet at the expense of individual ministers who have “little ability to control and lead the activities of their agencies” (Egnell et al. 2014, 49). Additionally, the small size of the Ministry of Defence and its geographical and organizational separation from its agency (the SAF) creates opportunities for “shirking.” When coupled with the fact that Sweden’s defense ministers often lack expertise in matters of defense,

57 As Tolgfors notes, the Defence Commission did, in fact, achieve the support of the representative member of the Social Democrats, who later withdrew his support from the 2009 Defence Bill in its final stages (interview with the author).
58 For a breakdown of the vote on the 2009 Defence Bill, see Sveriges Riksdag at http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/arende/betankande/forsvarets-inriktning_GW01F%C3%B6U10.
59 See Peter Feaver’s (2003) agency model of civil-military relations, in which “agents” (the military) have opportunities to violate the “principle’s” (government) orders through “shirking.” Angstrom and Noreen argue that the organizational and geographical separation of the Ministry of Defense and the SAF creates a “coordination gap between the actors in which national strategy can be ignored” (2017, 135). See also Egnell et al. (2014, 48-50).
the ability of the MINDEF to exert a powerful, independent influence on the state’s MMS policies appears questionable. However, the MINDEF’s ability to appoint the chair and provide direction to the Defence Commission ensures that he maintains “quite a firm grip on the process” (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 23). Thus, I analyze the MMS preferences of former Alliance Ministers of Defence Mikael Odenberg and Sten Tolgfors to better understand Sweden’s decision to replace the värnplikt with an AVF.

Mikael Odenberg served as the Alliance’s first MINDEF following its victory in the November 2006 general elections. Citing disagreements with the Minister of Finance, Anders Borg, over defense spending, Odenberg resigned in 2007 after just 11 months as MINDEF. 60 Although he had not entered office with plans to reform the SAF, Odenberg suggests that challenges with its existing personnel policies quickly became one of several issues that demanded his attention.61 Citing the incompatibility of conscription with the SAF’s increasingly international focus as well as the inefficiencies and inequities of screening 120,000 youth to select just 3,000 to 4,000 recruits and forcing some to serve involuntarily while turning away willing volunteers, Odenberg launched an investigation into Sweden’s MMS policies before leaving office.62

After Odenberg resigned, Prime Minister Reinfeldt named his Minister of Trade, Sten Tolgfors, as the new MINDEF. Tolgfors shared Odenberg’s assessment of the inefficiencies of conscription and immediately picked up where his predecessor had left off with the investigation of Sweden’s military manpower policies.63 To meet the SAF’s growing requirements to

---

60 “Swedish Defence Minister Resigns over Cuts” (2007).
61 Odenberg, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018.
62 Ibid. Odenberg claims that he “pushed the start button [on the AVF] to try and sort these [issues] out.”
63 Tolgfors, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
participate in international operations, he desired a system that would allow the SAF to “use all soldiers for the same tasks.”

In a 2009 speech at the Swedish Presidency Conference on Environment, Climate Change, and Security, Tolgfors suggested that planning for the “old, large-scale [Russian] invasion” scenario no longer comprised Sweden’s greatest security concern. However, he acknowledged that Russia continued to focus on developing more “rapidly mobile operational units . . . intended for operations in Russia or very near Russia” (cited in Michel 2011, 11). Therefore, he viewed the “fractured structure” of the SAF, in which just 30,000 of the SAF’s total personnel could be mobilized within a year of notification and the remainder of its forces within three years, as inadequate to maintain Sweden’s national defense needs as well.

With clearly identified problems with Sweden’s existing military manpower policies and a belief that the AVF offered a more “rational” means of meeting the SAF’s manpower needs, Tolgfors launched a series of investigative committees to explore MMS reform, and he consulted with relevant groups to include the SAF and labor unions to find solutions that could appease all affected parties. Moreover, Tolgfors also looked outside of Sweden to observe and assess the military manpower policies of other states and made the discussion of Sweden’s MMS a “standing agenda point in bilateral meetings” with Sweden’s military partners.

Despite his efforts to conduct a “step-by-step approach” to MMS reform, Odenberg

Tolgfors states that he found the process of maintaining a parallel structure of territorially-focused conscript-based units and units comprised of volunteers to conduct international operations as “irrational.”

64 Ibid. In the opening statement of the 2009 Defence Bill, Tolgfors cited the increasing demands of the SAF to conduct international operations as a justification for defence reforms (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 1).

65 Citing Russia’s invasion of South Ossetia in 2008, Tolgfors argued that the ability to mobilize troops within one to three years of a Russian invasion would be of little use to a defending state (Prop. 2008/2009: 140, 28).

66 Tolgfors, personal communication, 25 April 2018.

67 Ibid.
charges that Tolgfors “was in too much of a hurry” to replace the *värnplikt* with an AVF and argues that he should have worked harder to gain consensus from all political parties.\(^6^8\) But although the decision to implement the AVF without the support of opposition parties broke with Sweden’s strong tradition of consensus in defence policymaking, Tolgfors suggests that the political opposition was simply not interested in debating Sweden’s MMS policies and notes that the Social Democratic representative on the Defense Commission had, in fact, offered his support for the 2009 Defence Bill before later withdrawing it at his party’s request.\(^6^9\) With “no alternative proposals for the direction of the Armed Forces” from opposition parties and no “manual for reform of century-old manning systems or defence structures,” Tolgfors states that he “made the necessary political and practical decisions” to support Sweden’s changing defense needs.\(^7^0\) But regardless of whether or not the speed with which Tolgfors’ implemented the AVF prevented him from building political consensus for his party’s MMS reforms, the next chapter explains how the lack of political support for the AVF led to a reversal of the Alliance’s MMS reforms when they lost control of the Riksdag.

*The Swedish Armed Forces (SAF)*

Throughout Sweden’s long history of near universal conscription, the duty to serve was “built into the very fabric of Swedish society” (Egnell et al. 2014, 45). However, the *värnplikt* moved from a central position in Swedish society to a “relatively obscure place in the Swedish bureaucracy” (Egnell et al. 2014, 45) as the size and capability of the SAF decreased, the likelihood of an armed attack against Sweden became increasingly remote, and the focus on operations far from Sweden made war-making “a marginalized state activity” (Holmberg 2015,

\(^6^8\) Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018.
\(^6^9\) Ibid.
\(^7^0\) Tolgfors, personal communication, 25 April 2018.
Nevertheless, the unique relationship between the SAF and the MINDEF, which provides the SAF with a degree of autonomy and an enhanced ability to “shirk,” suggests that the SAF could influence the state’s MMS policies by promoting policies it desires and resisting the implementation of reforms that do not align with its parochial interests.\textsuperscript{71}

The SAF is not a homogenous organization, and elements within it both supported and opposed Sweden’s defense reforms (Hedin 2011, 6). While many SAF officers opposed the defense transformation, which entailed massive reductions in military personnel and expenditures as well as the movement away from national defense to a focus on military operations abroad (Petersson 2011, 713; Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 187), others viewed the military’s increasingly international focus as way to maintain relevance at a time when the need to defend the homeland seemed highly unlikely.\textsuperscript{72} For these officers, the AVF provided the best means to ensure the SAF could recruit sufficient volunteers. Thus, despite reforms that dramatically reduced the size of the SAF and the numbers of annual conscripts in the late 1990s and early 2000s, many in the SAF regarded conscription as “the obvious and, above all, only model for supplying the Armed Forces with soldiers” (Hedin 2011, 9).

Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, SAF Chief of Defence Staff, suggests that outside of a “few conservative pockets,” the AVF had broad support among the SAF

\textsuperscript{71} Professor Robert Egnell of the Swedish National Defense University suggests that a competence gap between the SAF and Sweden’s civilian leaders and a lack of “political sensitivity” among the SAF’s leadership promotes “shirking” (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).

\textsuperscript{72} Stefan Ring, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018. For an opposing view, see Holmberg and Hallenberg (2017). These authors suggest that the SAF was reluctant to embrace its new international role (2017a, 187). They suggest that although younger officers were inclined to volunteer for international operations, older officers generally opposed them (Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 187).
leadership. In December 2007, the SAF produced a prospective plans report, which argued that Sweden should move towards a system of professional soldiers. Having seen the “irrational effects” of maintaining a separate conscript-based force for territorial defence and units comprised of volunteers to conduct operations abroad, the SAF believed that such a system would increase its capacity to conduct international missions and improve the effectiveness of its fighting forces. Thus, despite some pockets of resistance with the SAF, support for the AVF among the SAF’s leadership provided credibility to the government’s proposal and ensured that the SAF obtained the MMS it desired.

Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance

Excluding the Ministry of Defence, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance are the ministries best situated to influence Sweden’s defense policies. As discussed above, these ministries weigh in on Defence Commission reports and have a formal role in the defense policymaking process. And because the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance played an outsized role in Prime Minister Reinfeldt’s cabinet, these ministries were perhaps better situated to shape the defense policies of the Alliance than of typical governments.

73 Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018. SAF leadership predominately supported the AVF and, in fact, drafted a prospective plans report calling for an AVF. Most younger officers supported the SAF’s increasing orientation towards international operations; however many older officers were generally “quite satisfied with doing national defence” (Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 192). Consequently, much of the “military organization was reluctant to embrace the new tasks [resulting from the shift in the SAF’s primary mission] and manage the implications that followed from these” (Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 187).


75 Former Defence Minister Tolgfors suggests that this report was highly influential in shaping the AVF law (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm Sweden on 20 March 2018).

76 The Swedish daily, Expressen, reports that Finance Minister Borg served as a “particularly dominant finance minister” throughout his eight years in office (“Skandalen kan betyda slutet för Anders Borgs miljonrullning” [“The Scandal Can Mean the End of Anders Borg’s High Rolling]” 2017). Likewise, Egnell suggests that Foreign Affairs Minister Carl Bildt played a highly influential role within Prime
Although public statements from Foreign Minister Carl Bildt do not indicate that he explicitly called for Sweden to adopt an AVF, his statements clearly reveal his belief that the government needed to increase its levels of support for multilateral security operations and improve the SAF’s ability to make effective contributions to these operations. In his 2007 Annual Foreign Policy Statement in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Foreign Minister Carl Bildt described Sweden’s “proactive role” in supporting the European Union’s peace and security initiatives as the top priority of Swedish foreign policy (Bildt 2007). Acknowledging the interconnectedness of Sweden’s security with that of its European and transatlantic partners, Bildt made repeated calls to improve the SAF’s capacity to conduct military operations abroad as well its ability to “plug-and-play” with UN and NATO forces (see for example Bildt 2010).

Echoing calls from the MINDEF and the Defence Commission to develop a more “useful and accessible force,” Bildt suggested that the SAF should be “among the first units on the scene in an area of operations” and should have the ability to make “greater and more coherent” contributions to multilateral operations (Government Comm. 2007/8: 51, 7). Through “greater and more coordinated responsibility in peace-support and security-building operations,” Bildt suggested that Sweden’s influence among its international partners would increase as Sweden was afforded opportunities to serve in “more high-level positions in high-level commands and organisations [sic]” (Government Comm. 2007/8: 51, 18).

The 2007 Budget Bill called for a gradual increase in resources for international military

---

Minister Persson’s government (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).

77 Bildt argued that the SAF should maintain the ability to participate in two battalion-sized operations and three smaller operations simultaneously (Government Comm. 2007/8: 51, 18).
operations in 2007, 2008 and 2009 (Government Communication 2007/8: 51, 3). But despite hopes that the Alliance would reverse the massive reductions in military spending under the previous government, increased funding for international operations proved the exception to the Alliance’s defense spending policies. In the aftermath of the 2008 global recession, Sweden entered a period of its weakest economic growth since WWII (Borg 2009). By late 2008, analysts expected Sweden’s economy to grow by just 1.5 percent for the year and 1.3 percent the following year (Borg 2008). The government responded to these bleak economic forecasts by reducing military spending by over 12 percent between 2007 and 2009.

As a close friend of the Prime Minister, Anders Borg served as a “particularly dominant finance minister” throughout his eight years in office (“Skandalen kan betyda slutet för Anders Borgs miljonrullning [“The Scandal Can Mean the End of Anders Borg’s High Rolling]” 2017). A 2017 biography in the daily, Expressen, claims that no other politician or cabinet member “would dare to test his fury,” as Defence Minister Odenberg’s 2007 departure following a public dispute with Borg over financing the SAF suggests (“Skandalen kan betyda slutet för Anders Borgs miljonrullning [“The Scandal Can Mean the End of Anders Borg’s High Rolling]” 2017). But just as the public statements by Foreign Minister Bildt do not provide direct evidence of the minister’s influence on Sweden’s MMS debates, Borg did not publicly comment on Sweden’s MMS policies. Nevertheless, the projected savings from the AVF align perfectly

---

78 A portion of the funds freed from a three to four billion Swedish krona (352 to 470 million U.S. dollars) reduction in defence expenditures were, in fact, utilized to increase the ability of the SAF to participate in multilateral peace-support operations.

79 Military expenditures fell from $5.38 billion in 2006 to $4.82 billion in 2009 (SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 1949 to 2016).

80 According to the Swedish daily, Expressen, “the minister of defence was again outmaneuvered by a minister of finance who announced in mid-2007 that he intended to reduce defense spending by 10 percent until 2010 – new cuts that came on top of previously agreed ones. When still further cuts were requested, Defense Minister Mikael Odenberg resigned in protest and accused the government of reducing defense spending without having defined the Armed Forces’ mission” (Andrén 2007).
with Borg’s desire to reduce spending and increase efficiency in the defense and public sectors.

With a projected savings as high as SEK 4 billion ($470 million) and a strong belief among SAF and government officials that the AVF would better support the armed forces’ ability to participate in international operations, neither Bildt nor Borg would have likely opposed any move to replace conscription with an AVF.

_Swedish Defence Industry (SDI)_

Like the U.S. “Military Industrial Complex,” the Swedish Defence Industry (SDI) has maintained “incredible influence in the Swedish [defence] system” since the end of the Second World War.\(^{81}\) As part of Sweden’s policy of neutrality and military self-reliance, the SDI produced virtually all of Sweden’s military equipment throughout the Cold War.\(^{82}\) Despite diminished defense budgets and moves towards purchasing much of Sweden’s military equipment from abroad in recent years (Angstrom and Noreen 2017, 33), the SDI remains one of Sweden’s largest employers, employing over 30,000 people (Ikegami 2013, 449).

The Saab Group represents a particularly influential company within the SDI. Saab controlled roughly 80 percent of all Swedish arms production and ranked 31\(^{st}\) in total sales among the world’s top arms-producing companies in 2009 (Ikegami 2013, 441). In part because Sweden places few restrictions on the ability of its retired military officers to work for defense contractors, Saab’s board of directors includes heavy-hitters such as the former Supreme

---

81 Robert Egnell, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018. See also Ikegami (2013).
82 By the end of WWII, the SDI had the capability of producing most of its heavy equipment by itself (Gyldén 1992, 99). The SDI provided almost all of Sweden’s armament needs during the Cold War, but Masako Ikegami suggests that it “has become irrelevant to Sweden’s defense needs” in post-Cold War Sweden as the SDI has increasingly focused on arms exports (2013, 437).
Commander of the SAF (the most senior official in the SAF) as well as some state secretaries.\textsuperscript{83} As the main supplier of arms to the SAF and an employer of influential former defense and government officials, Saab maintains a powerful influence over Sweden’s defence procurement policies. Helicopters remain one of the few pieces of military equipment that Sweden does not produce domestically, leading to the popular maxim: “if Saab made helicopters, the SAF would have many more helicopters.”\textsuperscript{84}

But although the SDI (and Saab, in particular) remains highly influential and the industry could likely have expected to profit from the SAF’s movement to a small, professional force,\textsuperscript{85} there is no evidence to suggest that the industry lobbied for any changes to Sweden’s MMS policies. Neither former Defense Ministers Tolgfors nor Odenberg deny that the SDI exerts influence in Sweden’s defense policymaking process, but both ministers suggest that MMS reform is not something that would necessarily attract the attention of the SDI. Instead, they suggest that during the 2007-2010 defense review, the SDI would more likely have concerned itself with debates over defense spending.\textsuperscript{86} Since money added to the defense budget “tends to turn into material rather than personnel,” calls for reduced spending, not MMS reform, would

\textsuperscript{83} Robert Egnell, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018. Egnell compares Sweden’s policies to those of the United States, which places few meaningful restrictions on the ability of its retired officers to work for defense contractors, leading to a “revolving door” between the Department of Defense and the Military Industrial Complex (Wright 2013).

\textsuperscript{84} Frederick Thisner, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018. However, Thisner cautions against over estimating the influence of Saab, noting that the government did not award Saab the contract because it did not feel that the domestic production of helicopters was in Sweden’s best interest.

\textsuperscript{85} Poutvaara and Wagener (2007) argue that conscripted militaries may use less advanced technology than AVFs because teaching short-term recruits highly technical skills might be inefficient or infeasible. Therefore, the SDI may have viewed the adoption of an AVF as an opportunity to sell more advanced equipment to the SAF.

\textsuperscript{86} Former Defense Ministers Sten Tolgfors and Mikael Odenberg, interviews with the author conducted in Stockholm Sweden on 20 and 22 March, respectively. Odenberg, in particular, is candid about the influence of the SDI on defence procurement; however, he insists that the SDI does not lobby to affect the SAF’s personnel policies.
more likely have affected the interests of the SDI.\textsuperscript{87}

\textit{The Swedish Public and Media}

Since the early 1950s, successive Swedish governments have conducted extensive annual surveys designed to assess public support for the country’s defense policies and its willingness to defend the nation in the event of an attack on Swedish soil (Opinioner 2014, 4).\textsuperscript{88} Although the questions presented in these surveys and the collection methods have modified slightly over time, the content of these surveys have remained fairly consistent, facilitating the assessment of general trends in the public’s attitudes towards issues related to social protection, preparedness, and defense and security policies.\textsuperscript{89}

Beginning in 2003, the surveys included a question designed to gauge public support for MMS reform, which asked what kind of defense respondents preferred: a professional, standing force (a system with short-term conscripts and long-term volunteers), a defense based on military service (the \textit{värnplikt}), or an AVF. Although these surveys suggest that most Swedes under 30 supported the replacement of conscription with an AVF, the AVF remained highly unpopular among the broader population (see Table 5.2 below). In fact, the percentages of respondents

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{87} Robert Egnell, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm Sweden on 20 and 22 March.
\item \textsuperscript{88} From 1952 to 2009, the Psychological Defense Board (SPF) conducted these surveys on behalf the government. Since 2011, the Civil Protection and Emergency Agency, \textit{Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap} (MSB), has conducted the annual surveys. No survey was conducted in 2010 as the responsibility for the survey transitioned from the SPF to the MSB.
\item \textsuperscript{89} Still, inconsistencies in the collection methods used and low response rates for these surveys suggest interpreting these survey results with a degree of caution. The collection methods for these surveys have changed three times since 1992: 1992 to 2002 surveys were based on telephone interviews, surveys from 2003 to 2009 were sent to respondents via mail, and since 2011 the MSB has conducted web-based surveys (Opinioner 2014, 12). As the MSB itself notes, “the method of collection can affect not only the response rate—both external (non-participation) as well as internal (non-responses on particular questions)—but also the way that respondents answer certain questions” (Opinioner 2014, 12).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
expressing a belief that Sweden should adopt an AVF never exceeded 27 percent and comprised just 15 percent in 2008. But while, the värnplikt remained the most popular MMS, notably it only received support from a majority of respondents 2008 (51 percent).

Table 5.2 – Public MMS Preferences, 2003-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Professional Defense (standing military)</th>
<th>A Defense Based on Military Service (värnplikt)</th>
<th>An AVF</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SPF and MSB Opinioner

But although the Swedish public never supported the AVF, Sweden’s MMS reforms did not produce a broad public debate. As Defence Minister Odenberg notes, public discussions of MMS reform occurred “only on a very low level” and generally “only those directly affected [by Sweden’s MMS policies] cared.”90 Likewise, low response rates to defense surveys and a high proportion of “No opinion” responses on items related to Sweden’s military manpower policies question the validity of these surveys and suggest that matters of defense, and perhaps MMS in particular, weighed little on the minds of the Swedish public. Recognizing a significant information gap, the Alliance’s commission on implementing the AVF encouraged the government to launch an information campaign to inform the public about its new MMS (SOU 2009: 68; 110; 304-307).91

---

90 Mikael Odenberg, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018.
91 The SAF did, in fact, conduct several advertising campaigns (Egnell et al. 2014, 120); however, these appear to have occurred after the implementation of the AVF and were designed to attract recruits rather than inform the broader public about the SAF or its new organizational structure. In fact, many of these advertisements drew broad criticism for “portraying an action-oriented stereotype of military service” that “did not reflect the actual work of Swedish units” (Egnell et al. 2014, 120).
Swedish media provided little coverage of the MMS debate before the Riksdag passed the AVF law (Nordenmen 2010). Likewise, reports on Sweden’s military manpower policies by think tanks and other independent research organizations such as Sweden’s Total Defence Research Institute (FOI) were published after the AVF had become law, and therefore did not influence the debate. In contrast, reports of unrest in the Middle East, Sweden’s contributions to and role in a common military defense within the EU, climate change, the global recession, and the 2008 Russo-Georgian War received extensive coverage in the mainstream media (Opinioner 2008, 14-16).

Although the lack of extensive media coverage surrounding the MMS debate suggests that the media did not likely directly affect public perceptions regarding the AVF, coverage of Russia’s invasion of Georgia in 2008 may have indirectly influenced the public’s MMS preferences. The 2008 Opinioner (annual public opinion report) does not offer any analysis on the sharp decline of public support for the AVF between 2007 and 2008; however, the report explicitly connects Russia’s invasion of Georgia with growing concerns about war in Europe and Sweden’s local area (Opinioner 2008, 43) and suggests that most Swedes viewed conscription as a more credible means of defense than an AVF. Thus, while these survey results do not offer definitive proof that extensive media coverage of Russia’s invasion of Georgia altered the

92 Nordenmen notes that Swedish newspapers ran numerous editorials, both for and against, conscription only after the AVF had gone into effect.
93 Since resigning from government, former Minister Odenberg has served as the president of one of the most prominent security think tanks in Sweden— the Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences. Although he admits that the organization has influenced official policy positions in the past, he suggests that the Academy took no institutional position regarding the MMS debates (interview with the author on 22 March). Works such as Academy member Claes Bergström’s 2011 review of the volontärr system and the Total Defense Research Institute’s 2010 report (Jonsson and Nordland 2010) on the AVF widely criticized Sweden’s new MMS; however, both reports were published after the implementation of the AVF.
94 Sixty-one percent of Swedes surveyed viewed conscription as an “important condition…for [Sweden’s] defense to be credible” compared to just 27 percent who perceived the AVF as important for a credible defense (2008 Opinioner, 76).
public’s views regarding the appropriate form of MMS for Sweden, the timing of Russia’s invasion and the sharp decline in support for the AVF suggest that the media may have indirectly influenced the public’s MMS preferences.

WHY SWEDEN ABANDONED THE VÄRNPLIKT

Professor Robert Egnell of the Swedish National Defence University describes Sweden’s decision to suspend conscription and adopt an AVF as the logical conclusion to a “perfect storm” of conditions that rendered the värnplikt obsolete.\(^95\) As the size of the SAF and the yearly intake of conscripts precipitously declined in the post-Cold War era, a system once based on universal conscription now required less than 15 percent of the country’s young men to serve (Dalsjö 2017, 13). Moreover, conscription provided an increasingly inefficient means of providing military manpower as participation in international operations became the SAF’s “main and only event” (Dalsjö 2017, 13). But while these changes in Sweden’s military manpower requirements may be have served as necessary catalysts for reform, these factors alone did not produce changes to Sweden’s military manpower policies. Instead, Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF followed the formation of a government that was willing to address these challenges by suspending conscription.

The Alliance for Sweden did not enter office seeking to reform the state’s military manpower policies nor did the public demand that it do so; however, significant problems with the värnplikt caused the new government to view conscription as an outmoded means of meeting Sweden’s military manpower needs. The Alliance viewed conscription as a highly inefficient means of recruiting personnel to support the changing roles and missions of the SAF. As attacks on the Swedish homeland by a foreign power became increasingly unlikely and Sweden’s

\(^95\) Robert Egnell, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018.
participation in military operations abroad increased, the Alliance saw conscripting large numbers of Swedish youth as a means of identifying and recruiting volunteers for international operations as an increasingly inefficient means of meeting the SAF’s manpower needs. Additionally, the shrinking proportion of youth conscripted annually challenged the legitimacy of the värnplikt as an egalitarian institution, and the Alliance grew concerned with the system’s inability to “anchor” national defense in Swedish society (SOU 2009: 63, 304-308). Finally, the Alliance viewed the värnplikt as both economically costly and an obstacle to gender integration within the SAF.

The problems with conscription identified by the Alliance were not new, and in fact, Defence Commission reports and Defence Bills produced under the Social Democrats acknowledge similar challenges. However, the Social Democrats expressly avoided exploring options for implementing an AVF and instead sought to address these challenges by working within Sweden’s existing MMS. In contrast, the Alliance had no ideological commitments to conscription and sought to reduce the economic costs and inefficiencies of the värnplikt by overturning the system.96

The SAF’s Director of Personnel from 2006 to 2008 claims that “politics was the only reason [Sweden] changed the system [the värnplikt].”97 While this claim ignores the challenges associated with the värnplikt that caused the Alliance to replace it with an AVF, its basic premise is correct. As the preceding analysis suggests, the change in political leadership served as the

96 If anything, Odenberg suggests that the Liberal party was ideologically opposed to an MMS that required Swedish males to serve in the SAF against their will (interview with the author conducted on 22 March 2018). In contrast, both former Defence Ministers Odenberg and Tolgfors describe the Moderate Party’s preference for an AVF as a “rational” choice that sought to produce a more practical and efficient means of generating military manpower for Sweden’s changing defense needs (interviews with the author conducted on 22 and 20 March 2018, respectively).
97 Brigadier General Bengt Axelsson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
proximate cause of Sweden’s MMS reform. I do not suggest that changes in Sweden’s security environment and the roles and missions of its armed forces did not matter; rather, I argue that these factors, as well as the Alliance’s desire to increase the proportion of women in the SAF and reduce defense spending, led the new government to implement MMS reform. However, I suggest that these factors alone were insufficient to alter Sweden’s military manpower policies. Only when combined with a government willing to suspend conscription could the most radical changes to Sweden’s military manpower policies in 109 years occur.

Alternative Arguments

As I argue above, numerous problems associated with the värnplikt convinced the Alliance to suspend conscription and adopt an AVF. But did this radical change in Sweden’s military manpower policies also require a change in political leadership? In other words, would the changes to Sweden’s military manpower requirements and the resulting inefficiencies of the värnplikt have required Sweden to adopt an AVF regardless of which political part(ies) controlled the Riksdag? In this section, I explore six alternative arguments to assess whether the Social Democrats would likely have replaced conscription with an AVF had they remained in power beyond 2006 as well as other considerations that may better account for Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF. As I illustrate below, none of these arguments provide a convincing explanation for Sweden’s MMS reform.

Changes in Sweden’s Security Environment

The Alliance viewed conscription as a Cold War relic that had little use in Sweden’s current security environment (Prop. 2009/10: 160, 72). Although Defence Commission reports produced under the Alliance took a more “hard-nosed” view of Sweden’s security environment (Dalsjö 2017, 14), the Alliance (and the 2007-2008 Defence Commission) viewed an armed
attack against Sweden as “unlikely for the foreseeable future” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 29). Defence Commission reports and defense bills produced under the Social Democrats viewed Sweden’s security environment with equal levels of optimism (see for example Prop. 2004/05:05, 12); however, there is little reason to believe that this optimistic outlook would have eventually led the Social Democrats to replace the old, conscription-based system with an AVF. Whereas the Alliance saw the reduced threat of an armed attack against Sweden as justification for MMS reform, the Social Democrats saw the favorable changes in Sweden’s security environment as cause for drastically downsizing the SAF and reducing military spending.98

Given its ideological commitment to conscription and its unwillingness to explore an AVF when Sweden’s security environment more clearly favored a small, professional force, a Social Democratic government would have been even less likely to explore an AVF following the Russo-Georgia War in 2008. Although Swedish leaders continued to view the possibility of an armed attacked directly against Sweden as unlikely, Sweden’s 2009 security strategy put national defense “back on par” with expeditionary operations (Gotkowska 2013, 15). Citing longer training and service times that would allow volunteers to hone their tactical and technical skills and the need to field “available” and “accessible” units (Ds 2008:48, 12; 30), the Alliance viewed the growing threat from Russia as further justification for defense reforms.99 In contrast,

---

98 As the government declared in its 2004 Defence Bill, “the favourable [sic] development in the world around us means that we can reduce the size of our total defence, which in turn means we can decrease the number of [military] units, schools and centres [sic]. (English Summary of Prop. 2004/05:5, 11).  
99 The 2009 Defence Bill devoted an entire section of the legislative proposal to a discussion of the growing threat from Russia (see Prop. 2008/09: 140, 23-26). Although it continued to view participation in international operations as the primary role of the SAF, the Alliance acknowledged that “the military threat of attack could never be ruled out” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 29). The Alliance saw the AVF as both necessary to field its expeditionary units and better able to respond to adverse developments “at a short notice” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 29). Noting that the war in Georgia was settled in just two days, the Alliance called for “immediately available units that can be deployed inside of Sweden, in the vicinity, and outside the vicinity [of Sweden]” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 31). As SAF Supreme Commander, General Sverker Goranson exclaimed in 2009, the SAF “is not an expeditionary armed force; it's an armed force that includes expeditionary capabilities” (“Pushing the Boundaries” 2009).
the Social Democrats’ had long feared that adopting an AVF would lower military effectiveness (Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 144-145) and withdrew their support from the 2009 Defence Bill because they opposed abolishing conscription (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 22). As the discussion of military effectiveness in Chapter 1 illustrates, there exists no clear relationship between MMS-type and military effectiveness.

Finally, it is unlikely that the Social Democrats would have seen the need to adopt an AVF as Sweden’s small, conscripted Army had already grown increasingly professional (Cronberg 2006, 317). Declining conscription rates allowed the SAF be very selective when deciding whom to conscript. As historian Frederick Ericksson notes, the SAF was no longer forced to conscript men “that couldn’t tie their own shoe laces.”\(^{100}\) And while the SAF’s problems with operational readiness were undeniable, the Social Democrats could presumably have addressed these challenges by simply adjusting its conscription policies, which included a relatively short service obligation and infrequent drill for its reserve units.\(^{101}\) Given the party’s ideological commitment to conscription and public opposition (albeit weak) to an AVF, a Social Democratic-government would have been unlikely to respond to a changing security environment with a policy that it opposed and whose contributions to Sweden’s security were subject to debate.

**Changes in the SAF’s roles and missions**

Ola Hedin describes the SAF’s increasing participation in international operations as “the most important driver of change” in Sweden’s defense policies (2011, 6). Viewing “Sweden’s security [as] intimately connected to global developments” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 29), the

---

\(^{100}\) Personal communication, 9 April 2018.

\(^{101}\) Under the *värnplikt*, conscripts served for an average of 11 months (Simon and Abel-Moneim 2011), and those who volunteered could serve no longer than two years (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 79).
Alliance sought to more than double the number of SAF personnel participating in international operations (Government Comm. 2007/8: 51, 7). By eliminating the SAF’s “two-tiered system,” in which short-term conscripts filled units responsible for maintaining national defense and those willing to serve abroad filled its expeditionary units (Prop. 2009/10: 160, 77), the AVF provided a flexible force structure whose personnel supported both the SAF’s territorial defense and expeditionary missions.¹⁰²

The Social Democrats also recognized the need to increase recruitment of volunteers for international operations and explored changes to the SAF’s training system in an effort to encourage volunteerism.¹⁰³ But, despite the challenges of maintaining an expeditionary force within a conscript-system, a Social Democratic government would not likely have adopted an AVF to solve its recruiting problems. Rather than eliminate conscription, the SAF could have expanded the pool of potential recruits by extending the obligation to conduct screening for military service to women, and, in fact, the Social Democrats proposed such a policy in 2009 (“Make Conscription Mandatory for Women’: Social Democrats” 2009).¹⁰⁴ Because women tended to volunteer for international operations at higher rates than their male counterparts, doubling the size of the recruitment pool would likely have more than doubled the number of volunteers.¹⁰⁵ And while extending military service obligations to women would probably have

¹⁰² Under the värnplikt, the SAF’s expeditionary units consisted only of officers and conscripts willing to undergo additional training and volunteer to conduct service abroad (Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 140; Egnell et al. 2014, 47). Under the AVF, volunteers could be required to serve in both national defense and expeditionary units.

¹⁰³ See the 2004 Defence Bill, specifically Prop. 2004/05:05, 15 and page 11 of the English Summary.

¹⁰⁴ The Total Recruitment Authority of Sweden screened all males for military service and then selected those best suited for military for service (Thisner, personal communication, 9 April 2018). In contrast, women did not participate in military screening and served only on a voluntary basis (Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 145).

¹⁰⁵ A committee investigating the potential impact of the AVF found that women were more likely than their male counterparts to volunteer for international operations. Between 2002 and 2005, about 10 to 15 percent of male conscripts volunteered to participate in international operations compared with 14.5 to 20.5 percent of female soldiers (SOU 2009: 63, 351). While the committee report does not speculate as to
met opposition from conservative sectors within the SAF and Swedish society, extending the obligation to merely conduct screening for potential military service would have offered a much less controversial means of expanding the pool of recruits by promoting military service among women. The fact that Sweden’s current MMS includes compulsory service for women suggests that any opposition to expanding the obligation to conduct military screening to women would not have been insurmountable.

Furthermore, even if the SAF could not have fielded its expeditionary units under the värnplikt, a Social Democratic government would not necessarily have concluded that it needed to suspend conscription altogether. Denmark, Norway, and Finland do not maintain AVFs, yet each of these Nordic states’ militaries meet their dual defense roles with conscription-based manpower systems. Given its ideological commitment to conscription, a Social Democratic government would more likely have modeled its military manpower policies off of its Nordic neighbors rather than eliminate conscription altogether.

why women volunteered for international operations at higher rates than their male counterparts, “selection effects” may account for this trend. Unlike all young men who were by default screened for military service, women had to individually contact the conscription agency, register for mental, physical, and psychological evaluations, and then “go through 15 months of military service, most often as one of few women, and [expose themselves] to a culture and unit cohesion based on male heterosexuality and homosociality” (Egnell et al. 2014, 118). As Robert Egnell and his coauthors suggest, women who elected to serve in the värnplikt exhibited a “a level of initiative that is remarkable for an 18-year-old thinking about what to do in her life” (2014, 119).

In fact, Leander suggests that the SAF leadership favored the incorporation of women because it would grow the recruiting pool and help to fill the ranks of the SAF’s expeditionary units (Leander 2004b, 132). Chapter 6 discusses Sweden’s current MMS policies in detail.

For a review of these states’ military manpower policies, see chapters by Joenniemi, Laitinen, and Friss, in Pertti Joenniemi’s anthology, The Changing Face of Conscription (2004).

In fact, the special committee tasked by Tolgfors to examine the long-term staffing of the AVF conducted in-depth analyses of Norway and Denmark’s military manpower policies and drew frequent comparisons to Finland’s MMS (see SOU 2016: 63, specifically pages 93-107).
Loss of Legitimacy

Once viewed as a means of *folkförankring*, or “anchoring” defense duties in the population (Leander 2004b, 119-121) and a “rite of passage” for all Swedish male youth (Egnell et al. 2014, 45), approximately 15 percent of all eligible recruits were conscripted in 2009.110 Fearing a loss of *folkförankring* and sensing a need to address the increasing inequities of the *värnplikt*, the Social Democrats sought to “redefine the link between the armed forces and the state,” by extending civil defense duties to all Swedes.111 But despite the party’s concern for a weakening of the links between the armed forces, society, and the state, there existed little public pressure to reform Sweden’s military manpower policies. Trends that might otherwise have called into question the egalitarian nature of the *värnplikt* or its questionable role in “anchoring” defense in the population failed to rouse strong public opposition to conscription (Leander 2004b, 132-133; Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 139).112 Questions of “who serves when not all serve” and about the *värnplikt*’s role as an instrument of social integration and advancement generated little public debate in Sweden, and despite any perceived injustice in requiring just a small fraction of Sweden’s male youth to serve in the SAF, the majority of the population never supported the adoption of an AVF.

110 The 2009 IISS’s *The Military Balance* reports that just 7,400 Swedes were conscripted in 2009. The government agency responsible for producing official statistics, Statistics Sweden (SCB), reports that Swedish males aged 15-19 totaled 638,533 that same year. Assuming that those entering the conscription pool (e.g. all 18 year-old males) accounted for a fifth of this demographic, the size of the annual recruiting class was roughly 130,000 in 2009.

111 Under the Total Service Defense Act of 1994 (*totalförskvarspunkt*), all Swedish citizens between the ages of 16 and 70, to include women and foreigners residing in Sweden, became liable for service in Sweden’s civil defence (Leander 2004a, 589).

112 The Alliance believed that the AVF would *increase* “anchoring,” or *folkförankring*. By requiring unwilling youth to serve, the Alliance argued that the *värnplikt* provided a negative experience of the military to the conscripts charged with anchoring the military in Swedish society; (SOU 2009: 63, 162; see also 304-308).
Given the party’s strong preference for conscription and the lack of public pressure to replace the värnplikt with a more equitable means of sharing the state’s defense burden, the Social Democrats would not likely have suspended conscription had they remained in power beyond 2006. If anything, the Alliance’s lack of an ideological commitment to the värnplikt made the adoption of the AVF possible. As former Defence Ministers Tolgfors and Odenberg suggest, the Alliance approached MMS through a rational, rather than an ideological, lens.\textsuperscript{113} As strong public support for conscription today suggests, the roots of Sweden’s ideological commitment run deep.

**Economic Considerations**

The Alliance adopted the AVF, in part, to support its efforts to reduce military spending. Given the Social Democrats’ prioritization of non-defense over defense spending and its willingness to dramatically reduce funding for the SAF, it is possible that a Social Democratic government would also have eliminated conscription as a means to further reduce military expenditures. An economic crisis in the early 1990s led the Social Democrats to dramatically reduce military expenditures, and the 2008-2009 global recession would likely have produced similar pressures to reduce military spending.\textsuperscript{114} With projected savings as high as SEK 4 billion ($470 million), Social Democrats may have viewed adopting an AVF as a logical, or even necessary, means to reduce military spending to off-set increasing public expenditures.

Still, there are strong reasons to believe that SDs would not have adopted an AVF in an effort to reduce military expenditures. First, any savings from transitioning to an AVF would not have materialized immediately. Although it projected long-term savings from adopting an AVF,

\textsuperscript{113} Interviews with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 and 22 March, respectively.
\textsuperscript{114} See Irwin (2011) for a discussion of the economic crisis and Sweden’s response.
a 2013 Defence Committee Report recognized that the government would need to free up funds to pay for unanticipated recruiting expenses (2013/2014:FöU1, 10). Consequently, implementing smaller changes to personnel policies that provided short-term savings would have offered the Social Democrats a better means to reduce military expenditures in the wake of the global recession.

Finally, a Social Democratic government would have had strong reasons to doubt whether an AVF could, in fact, produce long-term defense savings. Because AVFs tend to be smaller than conscript forces, AVFs often have smaller personnel costs.\textsuperscript{115} However, the already small size of the SAF provided little room for further manpower reductions. Instead, the cost savings from an AVF were projected to come primarily from eliminating administrative costs of conscription such as screening annual cohorts for potential recruits.\textsuperscript{116} As an independent assessment conducted by the Total Defense Research Institute suggests, the Alliance based its estimates of the economic impact of the AVF on questionable assumptions.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{115} AVFs present greater financial costs than do conscription-based MMS-types for any given size of armed forces because states with AVFs must pay their volunteer service-members higher wages to attract volunteers. However, AVFs tend to be much smaller than conscripted forces, which may produce overall cost-savings (See the Gates Commission Report 1970; Van Doorn 1975; Ross 1994).

\textsuperscript{116} The government also expected cost-savings to result from the ability to increase the number of “part-time” or “contracted” soldiers (See Prop. 2008/09:140, 11; 47-49).

\textsuperscript{117} The Total Defense Research Institute predicted that implementing the AVF would, in fact, result in increased defense expenditures of one to one and half billion Swedish Krona ($114 million to $173 million) per year and that these costs would prevent the SAF from reaching its recruiting targets (Jonsson and Nordland 2010, 7).
Gender Considerations

Sweden is one of the world’s most gender progressive societies.\textsuperscript{118} Walking down a Stockholm street, it is common to see a construction site with more women than men or to pass a park filled with fathers out on a play-date with their children. Nevertheless, the SAF has long stood out as one of the “final bastions of male organizational culture in Sweden” (Egnell et al. 2014, 50; see also Kronsell and Svedberg 2004, 144).

The Alliance sought to address gender equality in the SAF, in part, by increasing the proportion of women.\textsuperscript{119} Only men were subject to conscription, and women accounted for just four and half percent of active-duty officers and just three and half percent of enlisted recruits in 2007.\textsuperscript{120} In one of its first actions as the governing coalition, the Alliance developed a national action plan (NAP) to implement UNSC 1325, which, in part, called for addressing gender issues within the SAF (Egnell et al. 2014, 150-153).\textsuperscript{121} The Alliance saw the värnplikt as an impediment to attracting women for military service and viewed the AVF as a means to increase the proportion women in the SAF (SOU 2009:63, 173-175).\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{118} The 2011 United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Human Development Report ranked Sweden as the most gender-equal country in the world (2011, 139). In its 2016 Statement of Fiscal Policy, Sweden describes itself as a “feminist government.”
\textsuperscript{119} See Egnell et al. (2014, esp. Chapter 3) for a detailed analysis of Sweden’s efforts to promote gender equality in the SAF.
\textsuperscript{120} Three hundred and sixty-five women completed basic military training in 2007 (SOU 2009:63, 73-74) compared with 10,150 men who were conscripted (IISS’s The Military Balance).
\textsuperscript{121} Although the 2006 NAP did not discuss adopting the AVF as means to resolve the gender imbalance of the SAF, the plan specifically mentioned exploring efforts to increase participation among women.
\textsuperscript{122} Still, it is easy to overstate the role that the Alliance’s concerns for gender equality may have played in its decision to replace the värnplikt with the AVF. Ericksson suggests that the issue of gender integration was just “ideological hot air” and was not seriously considered during the debate for MMS reform (personal communication, 8 May 2018). Thisner expresses even greater skepticism that the Alliance heavily weighed considerations for gender equality and instead suggests that the government likely invoked concerns for gender equality as a “way of making the [MMS] reform look a bit more ‘sexy’” (personal communication, 8 May 2018). Notably, when discussing the factors that drove the Alliance to implement the AVF, neither former Defence Ministers Odenberg nor Tolgfors mentioned concerns for gender integration or any similar considerations (interviews with the author conducted on 22 and 20 March, respectively).
The Social Democrats also sought to increase recruitment among women, but would they have felt similarly inclined to replace the *värnplikt* with an AVF had they remained in power beyond 2006? The Social Democrats had acknowledged the underrepresentation of women in the SAF since at least 1999 and addressed the need to incentivize the recruitment of women in the 2004 Defence Bill (Prop. 2004/05: 05, 13). However, rather than support the Alliance’s proposal for a gender-neutral AVF, in 2009 the Social Democrats proposed expanding conscription to include women (“‘Make Conscription Mandatory for Women’: Social Democrats” 2009). As I discuss in the next chapter, the Social Democrats did, in fact, extend conscription duties to women after they returned to power in 2014.

**Regional Pressures**

In 1996, the Economist reported that conscription had “had its day.” The removal of the Soviet threat of invasion, shrinking defense budgets amidst fiscal pressures, and a belief that large conscript forces “were militarily worthless” in the age of modern warfare led to the abolishment of conscription throughout much of Europe during the 1990s (Sheehan 2011, 115; see also King 2011, 32-40). Given Sweden’s increasing integration with Europe throughout the 1990s and 2000s and the MINDEF’s deliberate efforts to analyze and draw lessons from the manpower policies of its military partners, could regional influences best explain Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF?

---

123 Conscripting women would likely have met resistance from conservative sectors within the SAF and the Swedish public; however, a universal conscription policy would likely have received support from senior military leaders who liked the idea of incorporating more women into the SAF to ease its recruitment challenges (Leander 2004b, 131-132).

124 “Conscription: It’s had its Day” 1996, 84.
Sweden’s MMS reforms occurred in the context of similar debates in Germany, Norway, and Denmark. Additionally, Sweden’s increasing ties with NATO, which encourages its members to adopt AVFs so that they can dedicate financial resources to advanced technology rather than personnel expenditures as well as generate greater expeditionary capabilities (Williams 2004, 80), may also have persuaded Sweden to adopt an AVF. In fact, in 2009 former SAF Supreme Commander General Sverker Goranson described the need to transform Sweden’s defense structure to make it more expeditionary and interoperable with its regional partners (cited in “Pushing the Boundaries” 2009).

Despite Sweden’s increasing integration with Europe, several considerations suggest Sweden based its MMS reforms on domestic considerations rather than regional influences. First, the Economist’s claim that “conscription ha[d] seen its day” have proven inaccurate, or at best premature. By 2002, just eight of 28 European states had adopted AVFs (Jehn and Selden 2002), and in 2010 conscription continued to provide military manpower for several European states to include Switzerland, Austria, Greece, and all of Sweden’s Scandinavian neighbors. And although Europe’s most advanced militaries (e.g., Great Britain, France, and since 2011, Germany) maintain AVFs, Sweden maintains a proud narrative of exceptionalism, which often makes it unwilling to look outwards when developing its own policies. Moreover, the states

125 Germany adopted an AVF in 2011 while Norway and Denmark retained conscription (CIA Factbook 2018).

126 Likewise, the Final Report of the Comprehensive Defense Investigation tasked with exploring means to recruit volunteers described the AVF as a way to increase Sweden’s interoperability with its European and transatlantic partners (SOU 2009:63, 160).

127 CIA Factbook (2016).

128 Thisner and Erickson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018. Similarly, Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Ring of SNDU suggests that there is “a tendency [among Swedish government leaders] to suggest that Sweden should not look to what others are doing (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018). For other views of “Swedish exceptionalism,” see Rothstein (2014) and Pierre (2016).
most likely to influence Sweden’s MMS policies—Denmark, Norway, and Finland—all maintain some form of conscription.129

Finally, Sweden’s status as a NATO partner, rather than a full member, casts doubt on the security community’s ability to influence its MMS choices. Despite its active involvement in NATO operations and the Partnership for Peace (PiP), Sweden has deliberately chosen to remain outside of the organization.130 While Sweden’s desire to increase its partnership with NATO and its 2009 declaration of solidarity suggests that Sweden’s desire to be viewed as a reliable partner may, in fact, offer NATO a degree of influence over its security and foreign policies, NATO likely holds less influence over the military manpower policies of “ally number 29” (Dahl 2012) than those of its 28 formal members.131

**Assessing the Model**

The preceding analysis suggests that the replacement of the värnplikt required a government that was willing to take a hard look at Sweden’s military manpower policies and reform them to meet its broader goals of increased efficiency and reduced government spending. Changes in Sweden’s security environment, the shrinking size of the SAF, and the inefficiencies of conscripting thousands of Swedes to identify volunteers for its international operations undoubtedly drove the Alliance to suspend conscription and replace the värnplikt with an AVF.

---

129 For a review of these states’ military manpower policies, see chapters by Joenniemi, Laitinen, and Friss, in Pertti Joenniemi’s anthology, *The Changing Face of Conscription* (2004).
130 Had the Social Democrats remained in government, Sweden’s increasing partnership with NATO would likely have continued. The Social Democrats and the Alliance both saw participation in international operations as a means to promote Sweden’s national security and sought greater integration with NATO. See Chapter 6 for a more thorough discussion of Sweden’s relationship with NATO.
131 In 2009, Sweden signaled a radical shift in its foreign policy by pledging “solidarity” with its NATO and EU partners; however, as I discuss in Chapter 6, the implications of this “solidarity doctrine” remain ambiguous; See Christiansson (2010, 34-38).
However, the fact that these factors had existed under a previous government opposed to an AVF suggests that MMS reform was far from inevitable.

Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF in 2010 followed the second pathway to MMS reform: change in leader preferences. The Alliance did not enter government with strong MMS preferences (or for that matter a strong emphasis on defense matters); however, it quickly concluded that Sweden’s century-old MMS policy no longer met the state’s defense needs and did not align with its economic and foreign policy priorities. Lacking popular support and opposed by all opposition parties, the adoption of the AVF reflected the willingness of the Alliance to pursue its favored MMS policies and break with Sweden’s strong tradition of achieving consensus on matters of defense.\footnote{Petersson argues that the lack of consensus for the 2009 Defence Bill reflects a larger trend rather than an anomaly. Noting that Swedish parliamentary politics has become more polarized in recent years, he suggests that “the old type of broad agreements based on elite compromise belong to Swedish political history” (Petersson 2016, 660).}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure5_2.png}
\caption{Pathway to Sweden’s 2010 MMS Reform}
\end{figure}

As Table 5.3 below indicates, Sweden’s adoption of an AVF supports all of the model’s predictions. No evidence suggests that the Alliance believed pursuing MMS reform would
threaten its likelihood of winning the 2010 general election (H2).\textsuperscript{133} The public never favored eliminating conscription, and what little public support existed for the AVF declined sharply in the years preceding its adoption. Nevertheless, Sweden’s defence reforms generated little debate outside of defense and security policy circles, and the public remained largely disinterested in the MMS debate (H2b). With an absolute majority in the Riksdag and a parliamentary system that imposes few constraints on the ability of the governing part(ies) to enact their preferred legislation, the Alliance implemented its preferred MMS without the support of a single member of an opposition party (H2c).\textsuperscript{134} And although former Minister of Defence Odenberg suggests that his successor could have done more to gain the support of other parties, the consensual and deliberative nature of the defense policymaking process in Sweden ensures that the Alliance sought to achieve consensus.\textsuperscript{135} For example, efforts by the Ministry of Defense to find a solution that could appease both the SAF and labor unions allowed the government to retain the support of both groups (H2d).\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{133} As former Defence Minister Tolgfors notes, the decision to adopt the AVF was “highly controversial” and mired with “political obstacles to reform.” However, he concedes that the political opposition was not interested in MMS reform. Had the Alliance truly been concerned with a political fallout from MMS reform, the government would not likely have implemented the unpopular policy during an election year.

\textsuperscript{134} See Michael Caldwell and Terry Moe (1994) for a comparison of executive power in the U.S. presidential and British parliamentary systems. Caldwell and Moe argue that as the leader of the legislature, “what the executive wants, it gets” (1994, 178).

\textsuperscript{135} As Tolgfors notes, the Defence Commission did, in fact, achieve the support of the representative member of the Social Democrats, who later withdrew his support from the 2009 Defence Bill in its final stages (interview with the author).

\textsuperscript{136} Tolgfors, personal communication, 25 April 2018.
Table 5.3 — Support for Empirical Predictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H2: Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2c: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2d: Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.</td>
<td>Moderately Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, Sweden’s 2010 MMS reforms followed the replacement of a party strongly committed to the värnplikt with a government open to reforming Sweden’s longstanding MMS (H3). Overturning the värnplikt required a new government with no ideological commitment to conscription and a strong desire to increase efficiency in the public and defense sectors. This “dramatic” regime change allowed Sweden to reform a “sticky” institution that had served as a “rite of passage” for millions of Swedish male youth and supplied Sweden’s military manpower for 109 years (H3a).

CONCLUSION

The decision to adopt an AVF followed the changing MMS preferences of a new government, which viewed Sweden’s existing MMS policies as expensive, unjust, and ill-suited to respond to the new demands of its security environment. But despite the Alliance’s belief that an AVF could best address the problems of the värnplikt, critics of the AVF soon leveled similar charges against Sweden’s nascent MMS policies. In the next chapter, I discuss how further changes in Sweden’s security environment, difficulties with recruiting sufficient volunteers, and
higher-than-projected costs of the AVF caused a new government to reinstate conscription in Sweden.
CHAPTER 6
REINSTATING CONSCRIPTION: THE END OF SWEDEN’S BRIEF EXPERIMENT WITH AN ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

On March 29, 2011, Sweden deployed eight JAS 39 Gripen fighter aircraft and over 200 military service members to Libya in support of NATO’s Operation Unified Protector (OUP) (Dahl 2012, 3). Out of approximately 240 aircraft involved in the entire operation, Sweden’s fighters conducted roughly one quarter of the total surveillance operations and provided 37 percent of the operation’s total surveillance reporting (Dahl 2012, 4). While relatively small in scope and size, this operation earned the SAF high praise from its NATO partners who hoped that Sweden would formally join the alliance (Dahl 2012, 4).¹

Sweden’s participation in OUP represented just one of many expeditionary missions conducted by the SAF since the 1990s and appeared to represent Sweden’s transformation to a “flexible, useable defense” staffed by volunteers.² However, by 2012, serious recruiting shortfalls and an alarmingly low level of readiness began to raise concerns about the AVF. A 2013 report produced by the Defence Committee found that the SAF had fallen well short of its recruiting targets since implementing the AVF (2012/13: FöU7), and Sweden’s highest ranking military official (the Chief of Defense, or CHOD) made headlines when he suggested that Sweden would be unable to defend the country for more than a week if it were attacked.

¹ This chapter benefited from multiple interviews with Swedish military and government leaders and faculty at the Swedish National Defence University conducted in March 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden. Christer Bohlin assisted with the translation of all Swedish language sources cited in this chapter.

² Notably, Swedish aircraft did not engage in a combat role; however, many government leaders called for “a more muscular Swedish contribution which could also engage in actual combat if needed and bomb targets on the ground” (Dahl 2012, 4).

² Sweden has participated in every NATO operation in the post-Cold War era with the exception of Operations Allied Force in Kosovo and Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean (Dahl 2012, 2). In addition to providing one of the largest troop contributions to the NATO-led operations in Afghanistan, Sweden has consistently supported UN peacekeeping operations around the globe (Ruffa 2013, 345), fielded units for the EU-Battle Group, and more recently deployed forces in Iraq and Mali (Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 190-191).
Concerns for the AVF’s ability to provide for Sweden’s national defense only heightened after Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine. For a non-aligned state with a small, volunteer force, the parallels to Ukraine raised considerable alarm among many government officials and security policy experts.\(^3\)

Despite its concerns with the SAF’s recruitment and retention shortfalls and the growing threat of a resurgent Russia, the Alliance for Sweden sought to improve, rather than reform, the AVF. However, once the Social Democrats returned to power in 2014, they initiated several reviews of Sweden’s MMS and broader defense policies and concluded that the AVF could not meet Sweden’s security demands. On March 2, 2017, Sweden ended its brief experiment with the AVF and adopted a new, “hybrid” MMS that employs both volunteers and short-term conscripts.

Questions surrounding the AVF’s ability to provide for Sweden’s defense and the perception of a deteriorating security environment produced broad public and political support for the reinstatement of conscription, but was the reversal of Sweden’s MMS policies inevitable?\(^5\) In other words, could the new government have retained the AVF and addressed its shortfalls in recruiting and retention? Similarly, had the Alliance for Sweden retained control of

---

\(^3\) In a separate interview, the CHOD noted that instead of planning for the defense of the entire state, the SAF could only realistically defend the five most important areas of Sweden, and it could only protect one of these areas at a time (Winnerstig 2014b, 169).

\(^4\) Swedish National Defense University historians Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018. See also, Angstrom and Noreen (2017, 49) and Winnerstig (2014a, 36). Notably, Ukraine reintroduced conscription in May 2014, just weeks after the invasion of Crimea (“Ukraine Reintroduces Conscription to Counter Threat of Pro-Russia Separatists” 2014).

\(^5\) In many ways, the reactivation of conscription marked a reversal of Sweden’s military manpower policies; however, Sweden did not return to the värnplikt. Unlike the värnplikt which used conscription as the basis of the state’s military manpower, Sweden’s new MMS relies primarily on volunteers and uses conscripts to fill shortfalls in the SAF’s recruiting.
the Riksdag beyond 2014, would it have likely reached the same conclusions regarding the ability of the AVF to meet Sweden’s security demands? Finally, if a small, professional force could not, in fact, have defended Sweden from an armed attack, why would any government not simply join NATO and obtain a security guarantee?

In this chapter, I seek to understand Sweden’s reversal of its 2010 MMS reforms by examining the MMS preferences of the domestic and government actors with the greatest ability to affect change in the state’s military manpower policies. I argue that a change in leadership once again proved decisive. Certainly shortfalls in recruiting and adverse developments in Sweden’s security environment cast doubt on the ability of the AVF to meet Sweden’s changing security needs, but the government could have addressed these shortcomings without reinstating Sweden’s dormant conscription policy. Had the Alliance for Sweden remained in power beyond 2014, they would not likely have concluded that the AVF was a failure. Instead, I suggest that Sweden’s decision to implement its second MMS reform in just seven years required the support of a new government that had opposed the AVF from the outset.

In the sections that follow, I describe the short history of the AVF in Sweden and address the changes in Sweden’s security environment that made the maintenance of a small, professional force untenable in the eyes of its new government. Next, I discuss the policy preferences of the actors best positioned to influence Sweden’s MMS reform: the parliamentary Defense Commission (Försvarsberedningen); the Alliance for Sweden; the Social Democrat-led minority government; the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Finance; the SAF; the Swedish Defense Industry; and the Swedish public and media. Then I present my argument that Sweden’s change in MMS policy followed a change in leader MMS preferences and evaluate this argument alongside other plausible explanations for Sweden’s MMS reforms. Finally, I
analyze these arguments using the pathways to MMS reform model and offer some concluding thoughts about the “stickiness” of military manpower policies.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF A SHORT-LIVED POLICY**

On July 1, 2010, Sweden implemented an AVF to eliminate the inefficiencies of maintaining a parallel system of recruitment and to provide a “ready and useable” defense that could better meet the dual territorial defense and mission-based roles of the SAF. However, the “hurried” nature of the reforms that included no real of study of how to implement the AVF produced a situation described by the SAF’s Head of Development and Military Programs as “building the track in front of a moving train.” By 2012, both the SAF and the government recognized that the AVF suffered from serious recruitment and retention challenges. A report by the Defence Committee assessed that over 10,000 positions within the SAF remained unfilled and that approximately 20 percent of recruits left the service before the completion of their six-year tours of duty (2012:13:FöU 7, 7).

A series of scathing independent audits provided even bleaker assessments of the AVF. Published just three months after the implementation of the 2010 MMS reform, a report by the Total Defense Research Institute warned that the transition to an AVF would likely present greater costs and attract far fewer recruits than those anticipated by the government (Jonsson and Nordland 2010, 7-8). Within just two years, these warnings appeared prescient as audits from the

---

6 Former Defence Mikael Minister Odenberg, who left government in 2007, claims that the Alliance was “in too much of hurry” to reform Sweden’s MMS (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018). Whether or not the Alliance did, in fact, rush the AVF’s implementation, its investigation failed to examine Sweden’s troubled history of recruiting volunteers (see Bergström 2011) and the government suspended conscription before the legal basis to recruit volunteers was even established (Gyllensporre, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018).

7 In an effort to attract volunteers, the AVF law allowed volunteers to leave the SAF before the completion of their full terms of service (Prop. 2009/10: 160, 98).
Royal Academy of Swedish War Sciences (cited in Gotkowska 2013, 20) and independent reviews by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and the National Audit Office revealed significant personnel shortages and skill gaps within the SAF.\(^8\) The OAG concluded that “neither today nor in the future would the [AVF] be able to meet the requirements and initiatives decided by the Riksdag” (RiR 2014: 8, 48).

And despite the Alliance’s expectation that adopting an AVF would create efficiencies and lower personnel expenditures, the AVF proved costlier than the system it had replaced. The Total Defense Research Institute predicted that the AVF would exceed the Alliance’s estimated costs by SEK 1.5 billion ($1.72 million) (Jonsson and Nordland 2010, 8-9), and, by 2012 the Defence Committee expressed strong concerns about the costs of the new system (2012:13:FöU 7, 7). Worse, the committee predicted that personnel costs would continue to rise as an improving job market made recruiting volunteers with “the right skills” more difficult (2012:13:FöU 7, 8).\(^9\)

Recruitment shortfalls and rising defense costs raised concerns about the SAF’s ability to not only support Sweden’s growing commitment to multilateral operations abroad but also its ability to defend the Swedish homeland (Kunz 2015, 17; Angstrom and Noreen 2017, 49). A series of Russian provocations and the invasion of Ukraine in 2014 resulted in “undeniable” changes in Sweden’s assessment of its security environment (Kunz 2015, 17). Sweden’s decades-old distrust of Russia reduced somewhat in the initial years following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but Sweden increasingly viewed Russia as its greatest security threat after its

---

\(^8\) See Government Communication 2013/14: 185 for a review of these audit reports.

\(^9\) With employment levels near 100 percent and a competitive commercial sector, the SAF attracted an annual average of 2,500 of the 4,000 required (Jones 2017).
2008 invasion of Georgia. Brazen violations of Swedish air space by Russian fighter jets and sightings of Russian submarines off the coast of Sweden only heightened fears of a Russian attack in the Baltics or even Sweden itself and compelled the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence to publicly address Russia’s provocations (See Kunz 2015, 7; Winnerstig 2014b, 169-170; and Dalsjö 2017, 20). Comments by the CHOD suggesting that Sweden could not defend itself from an armed attack for more than a week and the publication of two influential reports discussing the vulnerabilities of Sweden’s defense only heightened concerns among the Swedish public and its elected officials (See Bertlemen 2014 and Wilhelm Agrell 2010, cited in Britz and Westberg 2015).

The perceived inadequacies of Sweden’s national defense amidst the growing threat from a resurgent Russia cast doubts on the AVF’s ability to provide for Sweden’s defense and led to serious discussions of joining NATO. Sweden had long “[stood] out as [one of NATO’s] trusted security providers, rather than consumers” (Nurick and Nordenman 2011, 16), and since 2009 had pledged to come to the aid of any attacked member state. Still, Sweden’s history and ideological attachment to neutrality prevented successive governments from seriously exploring NATO membership (see Stern 1991, 69 and Dalsjö 2017, 6; 10). However, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine led to concerns among many government officials that despite its status as “NATO

10 Despite 200 years of neutrality, Sweden has long viewed Russia as its greatest threat. In 1838, King Karl XIV Johan (the former French Marshall Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte) declared that he “never saw a situation between the major powers as a totally symmetric one” (quoted in Gyldén 1994, 9). Throughout the Cold War, Sweden continued to remain non-aligned, but an investigation in the early 1990s revealed that Sweden had secretly cooperated with NATO (Tersman and Zettermark, 1994). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Sweden remained suspicious of Russia and saw both “opportunities” and “potential problems” with its historic rival (Gyldén 1994, 66-67).

11 In 2009, Sweden signaled a radical shift in its foreign policy by pledging solidarity with its NATO and EU partners (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 9). However, as Tomas Bertlemen notes, there is distinct difference between a pledge of solidarity and Article 5 commitment. Both are legally binding, but a pledge of solidarity lacks the credibility of an Article 5 commitment (Bertlemen 2014, 67).
partner number one” or “member 29” (Dahl 2012), Sweden’s position outside of the alliance provided it with no guarantees that NATO would come to its defense if attacked.²²

But despite strong calls for NATO membership among some sectors in Sweden, the 2016 Defence Bill called for the movement from an “operational defense to one clearly focused on the national defense dimension” (Prop. 2014/15: 109, 50) and the reinstatement of conscription.³³ On March 2, 2017, Sweden’s brief experiment with an AVF officially ended with the reinstatement of conscription.³⁴ While the reinstatement of compulsory military service marked a sharp reversal from the AVF, which exclusively relied on those willing to serve, the new MMS did not constitute a return to the värnplikt.³⁵ First, Sweden’s new MMS continues to rely primarily on volunteers and assesses both the ability of recruits to meet the needs of the SAF and their willingness to serve when deciding whom to conscript. In fact, Sweden’s new MMS calls for the selection of conscripts to “be based on free will as far as the SAF’s recruitment needs allow” and considers “motivation as an important factor when determining who is best suited for military service” (SOU 2016: 63, 15). Additionally, the new law extends the obligation of conscription to women. But despite the significant differences between Sweden’s new military manpower policies and the värnplikt, Sweden’s new MMS ended the reliance on a total volunteer force and marked Sweden’s second radical MMS change in less than seven years.

---

²² NATO has 28 member states. In a 2012 interview, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated that Sweden could not expect protection from NATO if it were attacked. Noting that “Sweden [was] more than qualified to become a member,” he drew a clear distinction between members and partners not protected under NATO’s Article 5 collective defense clause (Forsberg 2012).

³³ Recognizing important changes in Sweden’s security environment, the bill sought to “move towards national defense and operations closer to Sweden…while not excluding Sweden’s engagement in international operations” (Gyllensporre 2016).


³⁵ See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the värnplikt, which remained effective from 1901 to 2010.
ACTORS AND MMS PREFERENCES

Like the previous chapter, I discuss the MMS preferences of the domestic and government actors with the greatest ability to influence Sweden’s military manpower policies as well as their efforts to retain or replace the AVF. Because NATO membership offered an alternative response to adverse changes in Sweden’s security environment, I also explore actors’ preferences for joining the security alliance. In the sections that follow, I examine the MMS preferences and influence of the Parliamentary Defense Commission (*Försvarsberedningen*); the governments under the Moderate-led Alliance for Sweden (2006 to 2014), the Social Democrat-Green Party coalition government (2014 to present); the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Finance; the SAF; the Swedish Defense Industry (SDI); and the Swedish public and media.

I begin my analysis with a discussion of the MMS preferences of the parliamentary Defence Commission (2012-2014).\(^{16}\) While the Commission’s assessment of the AVF largely reflects that of the governing Alliance for Sweden and therefore casts doubt on the Commission’s status as an independent actor, the Commission’s reports both provide an insight into the Alliance’s MMS preferences and highlight the significant challenges with this MMS that later served as justifications for reform by the succeeding government.

*The Defence Commission (Försvarsberedningen)*

Although both the 2013 security report, “Choices in a Globalized World” (Ds 2013:33), and the accompanying 2014 defense policy report, “Stronger Defense for an Uncertain Time” (Ds 2014:20) acknowledged the SAF’s recruitment shortfalls and subsequent effects on readiness, both reports explicitly called for retaining the AVF. However, the 2014 report marked

---

\(^{16}\) See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the role of the *Försvarsberedningen* in Sweden’s defense policy making process.
the return to a more traditional security focus from previous reports that took a more expansive view of Sweden’s security. While retaining an emphasis on the linkage between Sweden’s security and “developments abroad,” the new report identified “territorial defense as essential to [the state’s] security” (Ds 2014: 20, 23-24).

The 2014 defence policy report also reserved much stronger language for the threat posed by Russia. Unlike the 2013 security report, which drew distinctions between the threat posed by Russia to Sweden and its Baltic neighbors and expressed optimism that relations between Sweden and Russia might improve, the 2014 report described Russia’s actions in Ukraine as the “greatest challenge to the European security system since its establishment a quarter of a century earlier” (Ds 2014, 20, 16). But rather than question the ability of the AVF to defend Sweden from “global challenges and threats” such as Russia’s actions in Ukraine, the report called for a renewed emphasis to pursue the reforms outlined in the 2009 Defence Bill. Claiming that a “useful and accessible” force offered “the best insurance to handle the deteriorating security situation in [Sweden’s] part of the world,” the Commission report argued that the AVF created...
more “flexible military units, which allow[ed] greater freedom of action” (Ds. 2014: 120, 67).

And while acknowledging the AVF’s personnel shortfalls and recruiting challenges, the report noted that the full implementation of “an [MMS] based on volunteerism [would] take time” (Ds. 2014: 120, 72).

In addition to offering its continued support to the AVF, the Defence Commission argued for continued “active involvement in...UN, EU, and OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation) [operations]” and increased cooperation with NATO and Finland (Ds 2014: 20, 13).21 Yet despite calls for increased cooperation and the Commission’s acknowledgment that Ukraine’s position outside of NATO had left it without a security guarantee, the report did not call for Sweden to pursue NATO membership (Ds 2014: 20, 20; 27).22 Instead, the report continued to describe solidarity with Europe as the basis of its security policy and called for increased cooperation with NATO “to develop a relevant, modern, flexible, interoperable and useful” force that could both meet Sweden’s national defense needs and maintain the “ability to participate in operations in and outside [Sweden’s] local area” (Ds 2014: 20, 43).

The Alliance for Sweden

The Alliance for Sweden supported the AVF as a means to create “a more useful, accessible, and flexible defense” (Prop. 2008/09: 140, 3); however, by 2012 serious recruiting shortfalls and a resulting loss of military readiness threatened to undermine the very basis of the

---

21 The Commission encouraged the SAF to gradually expand its volume of regular training exercises in strategic areas (Ds 2014: 20, 54) and recommended efforts to expand Sweden’s cooperation with NATO through participation in the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) (Ds 2014: 20, 98-99). Additionally, the Commission encouraged increased cooperation with its Nordic neighbors through the establishment of integrating agencies, the creation of joint units, cross-border air defense training (CBT), and authorizing the use of one another’s military bases as necessary (Ds 2014: 20, 91-93).

22 In a dissenting statement, the representative from the Alliances’ Liberal Party, Alan Widman, described the need for Sweden to both maintain “strong, independent capabilities” and pursue NATO membership (Ds 2014: 20, 121).
government’s MMS reforms. While asserting that the SAF would likely be able to meet its operational demands after the full-implementation of the 2009-2010 defense reforms, it expressed concerns with the high turnover of recruits that exited the military before completing their full terms of service and noted limitations in the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden in the event that it faced multiple threats or events in Sweden’s surrounding environment (2012:13:FöU 7, 9-10). Moreover, the Committee found that that the costs of the AVF exceeded those projected by the 2009 Defence Bill (2012:13:FöU 7, 7; 22) and acknowledged the risk of “explosive personnel costs” as the SAF sought to attract Sweden’s in an improved economic environment (2012:13:FöU 7, 8).

A series of scathing audits from the OAG and other independent agencies exposed further problems with the AVF. A 2013 OAG audit charged that the SAF lacked “sufficient staff and skill” to accomplish its dual requirements of territorial defense and international operations. Specifically, the report expressed concern for the AVF’s ability to attract high-skilled support staff such as healthcare professionals and technicians needed to sustain and support the SAF’s operational battalions. A report by the National Audit Office the following year offered an even

23 The Defence Committee found that volunteers completed an average of two to three years of military service rather than the six to eight prescribed by their service contracts (see Defence Committee Reports 2012/13:FöU 7, 13-15 and 2013/14:FöU 1, 10; see also Prop. 2014/15: 109, 18). A special investigator tasked to “propose a long-term and sustainable military defense” offered three reasons for the higher-than-expected personnel turnover in the SAF: (1) a highly competitive labor market, (2) a desire for full-time employment rather than temporary employment contracts offered to most new recruits, and (3) the unattractive nature of fixed-term employment in the SAF (SOU 2014: 73, see Sections 9.2.1 to 9.2.4). Changing demographics led to increased competition for youth labor, which made it difficult for the SAF to compete with the high wages offered by the private sector (SOU 2014: 73, 261). And although the Total Defence Recruitment Authority attracted sufficient numbers of recruits for permanent employment in the SAF (e.g. active duty, or GSS/K positions), it had difficulty attracting volunteers for part-time employment (e.g. reserves, or GSS/T). And because the government limited service for most volunteers to six to eight years, the report suggests that the “somewhat insecure nature” of SAF employment encouraged many recruits to exit the service early to secure “stable occupational career[s]” in fields that offered permanent employment (SOU 2014: 73, 262).

harsher criticism of the AVF. Citing an inability of the SAF to meet either of its dual defense requirements, the office assessed that “the Armed Forces, neither today nor in the next few years, can meet the totality of the demands on its operations, made by the Riksdag and the Government” (RiR 2014: 8, 48).

In response to these scathing reports, the government insisted that its defense reforms would take time to fully implement and asserted that the SAF was on track to meet the goals of 2009 Defence Bill by 2019.25 The government commissioned several inquiries to investigate the progress of the military reforms but notably directed these commissions to propose recommendations within the framework of the AVF.26 Concluding that “interest in basic military education [was] great” and that over 33,000 young Swedes had applied for military service in 2013 alone (SOU 2014: 73, 477), the special committee tasked with submitting proposals for a “long-term, sustainable personnel supply within the defence” saw little need to replace the AVF.27 Instead, it recommended that the government expose more young Swedes to the opportunities of military service, offer increased salaries and education incentives to recruits, and

---

25 Addressing scathing audit reviews by the OAG National Audit Office, the government noted that the 2009 defense reforms were not scheduled to be fully implemented before 2019 (Government Comm. 2013/14: 185, 6). To speed this transition, the government suggested that the Riksdag free up additional funds for the AVF and encouraged the SAF to “develop a comprehensive strategy for how to attract staff in the right number and with the right skills” and to expand its recruitment efforts (Government Comm. 2013/14: 185, 4).

26 In 2013, the government commissioned the Total Defense Research Institute (FOI) to map and describe the deployment of the SAF’s system for recruiting military personnel on a voluntary basis, analyze the system based on previous research and the authorities’ experiences, and assess potential opportunities for further development or need for further investigation or analysis (Fö2013 / 50 / MFI, No. 1). Likewise, the government tasked a special parliamentary commission to “propose measures to specifically strengthen recruitment from its part-time staff (GSS/T), draw comparisons with AVFs in other countries, consider the need for and propose additional measures to ensure a broad recruitment base for the military staff, analyze within the framework of the new staffing system, and propose how the defense’s “anchorage [could] be ensured…” (SOU 2014: 73, 41-42).

27 However, the committee acknowledged that the SAF was struggling to meet its recruitment goals in the reserves, specifically its GSS/T (part-time) servicemembers (SOU 2014: 73, 202).
extend the maximum length of employment from eight to 15 years to make military service more attractive to volunteers who desired “stable occupational career[s]” (SOU 2014: 73, 22-30; 262).

But although it acknowledged the SAF’s challenges with recruitment and retention, the government did little to address these problems and remained focused on other aspects of its domestic agenda. In its 2012 and 2013 Statements of Government Policy, the Alliance made no mention of the 2009-2010 military reforms, and, in fact, did not reference Sweden’s broader defense policies nor the SAF’s role in supporting the government’s stated objectives to “promote democracy and respect for human rights” abroad (Swedish Government 2012, 13-14). Instead, the government addressed the need to continue investing in economic reforms and policies to promote “social cohesion and welfare” (Swedish Government 2012, 15).”

As Stefan Ring of the Swedish National Defense University quips, addressing the challenges to the AVF “probably ranked somewhere around 15th [in the Alliance’s] political platform.”

While the government remained focused on policies to promote economic growth and social welfare, the burden of addressing the SAF’s readiness and recruitment challenges fell largely on the SAF itself. To address its recruiting shortfalls, the Alliance encouraged the SAF to “develop a comprehensive strategy for how to attract staff in the right number and with the right skills” and to expand its recruitment efforts (Government Comm. 2013/14: 185, 4). And although

---

28 The prelude to Sweden’s 2013 Statement of Government Policy discusses the crisis in Syria; however, it invokes the image of violence in the Middle East to juxtapose this turbulent region with “the opportunities of growing up in a country that enjoys peace, a well-developed democracy and a good level of welfare” rather than to cite the need to improve Sweden’s defenses or to use military force to bring peace to the region (Bildt 2013, 1). This 17-page statement devotes just two paragraphs to discussing military considerations or matters of defense and instead focuses on Sweden’s economic and welfare policies.

29 The statement claims that Sweden is “investing in the conditions for growth: infrastructure, research and innovation, enterprise, education, and housing” as well as “social cohesion and welfare: in health care and social services, additional support to people in tight financial situations, integration and gender equality, and safety from crime” (Bildt 2012, 15).

30 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018.
the Alliance largely viewed recruitment shortfalls as a problem for the SAF itself to resolve, it
did little to help the SAF meet its goals.\textsuperscript{31} The government encouraged the Riksdag free up
additional funds for the AVF (Government Comm. 2013/14: 185, 4); however, it continued to
reduce defense spending, and salaries for SAF personnel remained incredibly low (SOU 2014:
73, 267).\textsuperscript{32} In response to the calls from the SAF to increase funding, Prime Minister Frederik
Reinfeldt suggested that the SAF was just one of many domestic groups vying for state resources
and pointed out that his job as prime minister was to prioritize among these competing
perspectives (Holmberg 2015, 246).\textsuperscript{33} Ultimately, Reinfeldt “refused to consider increasing
defence spending at the expense of other objectives (such as welfare)” (Gotkowska 2013, 24; see
also Hurt 2015, 5).

Although the government preferred to focus on other aspects of its domestic agenda and
allow the SAF to work through issues with its recruiting and retention, Russia’s 2014 invasion of
Ukraine placed the problems with the SAF in the national spotlight and led the Alliance to
increase military spending by nearly $200 million from the previous year.\textsuperscript{34} But rather than cause

\textsuperscript{31} When asked about government efforts to support SAF recruiting, former Defence Minister Sten
Tolgfors notes that “in Sweden, all government authorities are fully responsible for their own [personnel],
recruitment of [personnel] and negotiation of wages and other incentives. This is not, in any case, done by
the government or the ministries. Therefore, incentives are the responsibility of the Armed Forces”
(personal communication, 25 April 2018). However, he notes that “representatives of the political level
on several occasions [had] called for incentives of various sorts to be introduced by the Armed Forces”
and suggests that new incentives would have been an important change to support the success of the
manning system (personal communication, 25 April 2018).
\textsuperscript{32} At only SEK 18,000 ($2,000) per month, a lower enlisted service member made less than a grocery
store clerk (“Sweden’s Costly Military Ads Fail to Attract Volunteers” 2016). Tolgfors notes that Sweden
does not “spend much on military personnel in general, even though they are the core of the Armed
Forces, and even less on soldiers” (personal communication, 25 April 2018).
\textsuperscript{33} Reinfeldt reportedly dismissed the CHOD’s comments that Sweden could only defend its territory for a
week, suggesting that “there existed no full territorial defence because no threat of invasion was foreseen”
(Holmberg 2015, 246).
\textsuperscript{34} Military spending increased from $5.031 billion in 2013 to $5.330 billion in 2014 (SIPRI Military
Expenditure Data, 1949 to 2016). Nevertheless, Thisner and Ericksson of the Swedish National Defence
University (SNDU) suggest that this increased expenditure went towards the purchase new military
the Alliance to question the ability to the AVF to provide for Sweden’s defense in a changed security environment, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine served to strengthen the Alliance’s resolve to complete the full implementation of its defense reforms. In a May 2014 speech, Minister of Defense Karin Enström asserted: the “developments [in Ukraine] stress the importance of the ongoing defence reform in Sweden and other countries. It is important to remember where we came from and why the reform was launched in the first place in 2009.”\textsuperscript{35} She went on to suggest that this event “highlight[ed] the need to have available and usable military forces that can be deployed and used” to protect Sweden’s security interests. Claiming that personnel and equipment were properly “allocated” for the first time in years, the minister of defence (MINDEF) suggested that the “fundamental elements” of Sweden’s defense reforms were in place while calling for a faster implementation of reforms and a “review of additional adjustments” (Enström 2014).

The deterioration of Sweden’s security environment also led to increased calls for Sweden to explore NATO membership. But although the Alliance’s foreign and military policies had moved Sweden closer NATO membership and the government had privately expressed interest in joining the collective defense organization, it remained cool to the idea of joining NATO while in power.\textsuperscript{36} In December 2013, the Alliance appointed former Swedish Ambassador to Russia, Tomas Bertlemen, as Special Advisor to “describe the current status of Sweden’s international defence cooperation in the Nordic region, in the EU, with NATO and hardware rather than personnel expenses (interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).

\textsuperscript{35} Karin Enström replaced Sten Tolgfors as Minister of Defence on 29 March 2012.

\textsuperscript{36} In 2012 a spokesman for the Moderate Party claimed that the government intended to strengthen Sweden’s relationship with NATO to the point that the Social Democrats would be forced to accept NATO membership (Stefan Ring of SNDU, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018). Still the parties within the Alliance remained strongly divided on the issue, with only the Liberal Party and elements of the Moderate Party in favor of joining NATO (Michel 2011, 14).
other relevant forums” and to propose ways in which it could increase defense cooperation (Fö 2013:B). The “Bertlemen Report” strongly recommended that the government explore NATO membership; however, Reinfeldt made clear that “NATO membership was not on the agenda” (Dahl 2012, 11). Nevertheless, after the 2014 elections removed the Alliance from power, the Alliance strongly advocated for what it viewed as “the logical consequence of the [2009] Solidarity Doctrine” and made its support for the 2016-2020 Defence Bill conditional on the new government’s pledge to explore NATO membership (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 22).

Neither the Alliance nor the opposition parties made Sweden’s military manpower policies or its NATO status significant campaign issues in the 2014 election, but all parties jockeyed to position themselves as strong on defense. As former Minister of Defence Odenberg reportedly expressed to Prime Minister Reinfeldt before his resignation in 2007, “you can’t win an election on defense issues, but you can certainly lose one.” In 2014, the center-right parties once viewed as “strong on defense,” suddenly found themselves defending charges of neglecting Sweden’s defenses. After the Alliance’s narrow defeat in the 2014 general election ushered in a new minority government, the coalition voted in support of the 2016-2020 Defence Bill,

---

37 In his examination of Sweden’s defense requirements, former Swedish Ambassador to Russia, Tomas Bertlemen, concludes “that no part of [Sweden’s] international defense cooperation can, under the present conditions, offer the kind of increases in effectiveness or capability-raising effects that would have a decisive impact on Sweden’s defence economy or defence capability.” Therefore, he suggested that only through full NATO membership could Sweden meet its growing security demands (See Bertlemen 2014, 9).
38 Stefan Ring argues that although the Alliance desired NATO membership, Prime Minister Reinfeldt “did not see how [pursuing NATO membership] could help him win an election and, in fact, could be bad [for his election prospects]” (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018).
39 Mikael Odenberg, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018.
40 Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018.
41 As reported by Stefan Ring, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018.
42 Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author.
authorizing the reinstatement of conscription. Still, the coalition sought to retain the benefits of the AVF and stressed that they did not want Sweden to return to the värnplikt where “tens of thousands were called to carry out military service.” Ultimately, the Social Democrat-Green Government adopted an MMS that met these demands. The Alliance’s MMS reforms were short lived; however, the new MMS retained what former Defense Minister Tolgfors describes as the most important aspect of the MMS reform—the recruitment of full-time, professional servicemembers.

Social Democrat-Green Party Government

After eight years as Sweden’s largest opposition party, the Social Democrats returned to power in 2014 in a minority government that included the environmentally-focused Green Party. Although neither party had sought to make defense issues a campaign priority, adverse developments in Sweden’s security environment and a perceived lack of readiness in the SAF forced the new coalition government to address these deficiencies and to increase defense spending to levels not seen since 2007. Long opposed to the AVF, the Social Democrats pledged to launch an investigation into MMS reform if elected. As the problems with the AVF

---

43 See Motion 2016/17: 1090 (Widman 2016). Separately, a joint statement from the Moderate Party members in the 2017 Defense Committee Report states: “Volunteering is the basis of Swedish military manpower. It enables us to have well-trained and competent soldiers and sailors that have trained together over time, which can be used both for the defense of Sweden and in international missions. The SAF will continue to build on volunteering.” (2016/17 FöU4, 23).

44 Under the värnplikt, only servicemembers who volunteered to participate in international operations could extend the duration of their service beyond their conscript duties. The AVF created two categories of long-serving volunteers that served full-time (GSS/K) or as part-time reserves (GSS/T).

45 Sweden spent $5.52 billion on defense in 2007, but annual defense expenditures averaged just $4.98 billion from 2008 to 2013. The government increased spending from SEK 44.2 billion ($5.03 billion) to SEK 46.9 billion ($5.33 billion) from 2013 to 2014 and by another SEK 500 million ($56 million) in 2015 (SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 1949 to 2016). The latest Defence Commission Report calls for even further spending increases of SEK 2.7 billion ($310 million) per year for a total spending increase of SEK 8.1 billion ($920 million) from 2018 to 2020 (Ds. 2017: 66, 43).

46 Brigadier General Bengt Axelsson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
became undeniable, the Social Democrat-Green government reinstated conscription and developed a new MMS that it saw as better suited to meet the new demands of Sweden’s security environment.

Concerned for Sweden’s ability to defend itself from an armed attack, the new government recalled previously trained conscripts to conduct refresher training while it continued to assess the changes in Sweden’s security environment and the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden from an armed attack (FO No I: 15 discussed in Britz and Westberg 2015, 429).

A report produced by the Defence Committee in the spring of 2015 cited serious concerns with military recruiting, noting that “extensive staff shortages” impacted the SAF’s ability to train and reduced its “accessibility and usability”—qualities that the AVF was supposed to have delivered (2014/15: FöU4, 19; 26). Moreover, the report charged the previous government with failing to fully calculate the costs of implementing the AVF and expressed concerns with the OAG’s assessment that the 2009 defense reforms lacked “both clarity and transparency” (2014/15: FöU4, 11-12).

Seeking to avoid the challenges of the AVF that followed an incomplete analysis and arguably unrealistic plan for implementation, the government appointed a special investigator to “propose a long-term and sustainable military defense” comprised primarily of volunteers but that incorporated conscripts “when the [SAF’s] needs [could] not be met solely through volunteer recruitment” (Dir. 2015: 98, 1). After an 11-month evaluation of Sweden’s security needs and comparative analysis of Denmark and Norway’s military manpower policies, the

---

47 Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist appointed the Green Party’s Annika Nordgren Christensen to lead the special commission. Although the Green Party is not typically associated with a pro-defense stance (and, in fact, is often derided as a “pacifist” party), Christensen maintains an active defense blog that conveys strong support of the “Hultqvist Doctrine,” which calls for “boosting national defence capabilities while seeking broader and deeper international defense cooperation short of collective defense” (Kunz 2015, 5; see Christensen’s defense blog at https://annikanc.com/).
investigator concluded that Sweden could not return to the värnplikt if it hoped to meet its dual security requirements of territorial and mission-based defense (SOU 2016: 63, 17). Consequently, the Social Democrat-Green government adopted an MMS designed to retain the benefits of a professional, volunteer force while ensuring an adequate supply of military manpower through conscription.

Although concerns for adverse changes in Sweden’s security environment led the Social Democrat-Green government to thoroughly investigate the state’s military manpower policies, the government did not consider joining NATO as a means to provide for Sweden’s security. After the 2014 elections, the new government shelved the recently published Bertlemen Report, which called for the government to investigate the costs and benefits of NATO membership (Dalsjö 2017, 20). In its governmental platform, the Social Democrat-Green Party coalition changed the wording from the “agreed-across-the-aisles formula that military non-alignment has served us well” (past tense) to ‘military non-alignment continues to serve us well’ (present tense)” (Dalsjö 2017, 20). And despite agreement with other parties to explore NATO membership as a precondition for supporting the 2016-2020 Defence Bill, the Social Democrats unequivocally stated that Sweden should not apply for NATO membership and accused the opposition of attempting to deflect attention away from the need to increase the SAF’s capabilities (Dalsjö 2017: 20-21).

The government’s opposition to NATO appears strange given its desire to increase cooperation with Sweden’s EU and NATO partners and its support for the 2009 Solidarity Doctrine, which pledged Sweden to come to the aid of any attacked state. Sweden’s 2016

---

48 Similarly, the government disregarded the separate “Bringéus Report,” which also called for Sweden to explore NATO membership (Dalsjö 2017: 22).
49 See Christiansson (2010) and Bertlemen (2014, 75-77) for a discussion of the (seeming) contradictions in Sweden’s relationship with NATO.
Statement of Foreign Policy highlights this seeming contradiction: “Threats to peace and to [Sweden’s] security are best averted collectively and in cooperation with other countries. Sweden does not participate in any military alliance” (Wallström 2016, my emphasis). Nevertheless, recognizing that collective security can provide for Sweden’s defense while simultaneously rejecting entangling alliances that remove Sweden’s ability to make its own policy choices and that might draw the state into a conflict it would otherwise avoid is not inherently contradictory. Like much of the Swedish public that draws strong connections between Sweden’s history of neutrality and over 200 years of uninterrupted peace (Tiilikainen 2006, 54), the Social Democrats maintain the belief that “non-participation in military alliances serves [Sweden] well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe” (2017 Statement of Foreign Policy). And although practical considerations may partially explain the party’s opposition to NATO membership, the Social Democrats maintain a strong ideological attachment to “self-sufficient neutrality” that combines defense duty with non-alignment (Dalsjö 2017, 10). According to former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg, “staying out of NATO is almost in [the Social Democrats’] genes.”

50 Prime Minister Löfven made similar remarks in a 2015 speech (cited in Hurt 2015, 5).
51 Interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm Sweden on 22 March 2018.
Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Finance

The decision to reinstate conscription while continuing to rely primarily on professional volunteers supported the objectives of the government ministries most affected by Sweden’s defense policies: the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Finance. As Minister of Defence, Peter Hultqvist strongly advocated for the reinstatement of conscription and became the government’s spokesman for its new MMS policy in the debates leading up to MMS reform. The “no-nonsense Defence Minister” (Dalsjö 2017, 21) had long advocated for stronger defense while serving as the Social Democrat’s representative on the Defence Commission, and as MINDEF, Hultqvist identified “getting [the SAF] into shape” as his principle task.\(^{52}\) Citing Russia’s increasingly provocative actions since 2007 as examples of Sweden’s deteriorating security environment, Hultqvist charged the previous government of committing “many mistakes” that left the SAF unprepared to deal with the challenges now facing Sweden.\(^{53}\)

Hultqvist’s views of the severity of the security threats facing Sweden and the inability of the SAF to meet these security demands led to the two-pronged “Hultqvist doctrine” that sought to increase Sweden’s national defence capabilities while at the same time broadening Sweden’s cooperation with others (Kunz 2015, 5). Citing an inability to meet the SAF’s personnel requirements, low levels of military readiness, and Russian aggression in Ukraine as justifications for MMS reform, Hultqvist stated: “our volunteer army has failed” (Turula 2017). By “prioritizing a stronger national defence” and reinstating conscription, Hultqvist sought to develop a force structure better suited to meet the requirements of Sweden’s changing security

\(^{52}\) Notably, he had given support to the 2008 Defence Commission report (Ds 2008: 48), which called for Sweden to suspend conscription and adopt the AVF.

\(^{53}\) In a 2017 media interview, Hultqvist claimed that previous officials’ hope that “the future would be more sunny than reality” led them to underestimate the security threats facing Sweden (Sorensen 2017).
Although Sweden’s security focus under the Social Democratic-Green government undeniably turned towards national defence, the government remained strongly committed to the belief that Sweden’s own security is closely interconnected with that of Europe. While continuing to argue that “[Sweden’s] non-participation in military alliances serve[d] [the state]well,” (Wallström 2017) the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström, argued that threats to Sweden’s own peace and security could be “best averted collectively and in cooperation with other countries and organizations” (Wallström 2016). Therefore, she called for increasing “cooperation on a broad front” with the EU, the Baltic and Nordic States, the UN, OSCE, and NATO (Wallström 2016). Moreover, Wallström reaffirmed Sweden’s commitment to the 2009 Solidarity Doctrine, and argued that Sweden must be positioned to provide support to its NATO and Nordic partners following an armed attack if it “expect[ed] those countries to act in the same way” to an attack against Sweden (Wallström 2016; see also Wallström 2017). By addressing the SAF’s personnel shortfalls and readiness challenges, the reinstatement of conscription directly supported the government’s broader foreign policy objectives.

Finally, because the costs of the AVF far exceeded those projected by the previous government and were expected to rise further in the coming years, MMS reform also supported the Social Democratic-Green government’s economic priorities. Like her counterpart in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance Magdalena Andersson did not directly express support for MMS reform; however, adopting a less costly MMS aligned closely with her goal of reducing the state’s growing fiscal deficits.54 The annual Budget Bills from 2015 to 2017 focused

---

54 While it is true that defense spending has increased significantly under the Social Democrat-Green Government, changes in Sweden’s security environment required the government to place defense
on reducing deficits through increased taxes and by promoting long-term growth through investment in initiatives designed to further reduce unemployment and improve education.\textsuperscript{55} Although military expenditures grew significantly from 2014 to 2017, the Ministry of Finance expressed the need to “keep [Sweden’s] finances in good order” and to “nurture the upturn [in economic growth] while having a high level of preparedness for a rapid change for the worse” (Government of Sweden 2016).\textsuperscript{56} Thus, while changes in Sweden’s security environment compelled the government to increase defense spending, reducing the costs of Sweden’s military manpower policies supported its economic priorities.

\textit{The SAF}

The AVF formed the core of a larger series of defense reforms designed to increase the SAF’s operational readiness and better support its dual national defense and expeditionary roles and missions. However, recruiting challenges, particularly in the reserves, and a failure to retain many volunteers for a full six years of service, let alone beyond their initial service commitments, left the SAF struggling to man many of its operational units (2012/13: FöU7, 9; 13-15).\textsuperscript{57} Moreover, a continuation of the cuts to military spending initiated under the Social Democrats’ in the mid-1990s and the cancellation of numerous training events arguably left the SAF less “ready and available” than it had been before these reforms.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{55} See for example the 2016 Budget Bill, which called for reducing deficit spending by SEK 24 billion ($2.7 billion) on top of the SEK 20 billion ($2.25 billion) called for in the previous bill (Government Offices of Sweden 2016).

\textsuperscript{56} The government charged the Alliance with implementing unfunded tax cuts that led to “unsustainable” deficit spending and the deterioration of Sweden’s public finances (Government of Sweden 2016).

\textsuperscript{57} In 2012, the Defence Committee reported that as many as 20 percent of volunteers left the SAF before completing their six-year terms of service (2012/13: FöU7, 9).

\textsuperscript{58} The Alliance continued the cuts in defense spending initiated by the Social Democrats in the 1990s, and in fact, military spending under the Alliance remained at lower levels than at any time since the early 1970s (SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 1949 to 2016).
Part of the challenges with Sweden’s transition to an AVF arguably stemmed from the “hurried” review process, which failed to fully investigate the challenges of implementing the MMS reform, but also from the limited time the government gave the SAF to transition from 109 years of conscription to an all-volunteer system. A review of transitions to AVFs in other militaries suggests that MMS reforms such as Sweden’s take many years to implement, and in fact, Sweden did not anticipate that its reforms would be fully implemented until 2019. But despite the SAF’s argument for a two to three year transition period, Sweden completely suspended conscription just 15 months after the 2009 Defence Bill was proposed. As the SAF Chief of Defence Staff, Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre notes, Sweden did not even have a legal basis for voluntary recruitment in place when the AVF was implemented. Moreover, the SAF’s transition to an AVF occurred in conjunction with the decision to build a non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps, which had been

59 Former Minister of Defence Mikael Odenberg claims that the Alliance “was in too much of a hurry” to replace the värnplikt with an AVF and argues that the government should have worked harder to gain consensus from all political parties (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018). Likewise, the former Chief of Staff of Joint Education, Brigadier General Bengt Axelsson, charges that the government did not adequately investigate other models such as the Danish International Brigade, and Claes Bergström argues that the government did not heed the warnings of Sweden’s unsuccessful attempt at recruiting volunteers in the first half of the 20th Century (interviews with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 and 23 March 2018, respectively). On the other hand, Tolgfors insists that the government followed “a step-by-step approach, initiated by the Armed Forces, and carried out by the work of government investigation committees and gradual political decisions” (personal communication, 25 April 2018). Noting that there is “no manual of reform for century old manning systems or defence structures,” he suggests that “you can’t put your armed forces on hold for some years while redoing the organization” (personal communication, 25 April 2018).

60 The SAF’s former Director of Personnel notes that the military planned to have a ten-year transition period to implement the AVF but that the change happened much more abruptly (Brigadier General Bengt Axelsson, interview with the author). Likewise, the current SAF Chief of Defense Staff, Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, claims that the SAF told the government that it would meet its recruiting goals, but that the transition was too fast (interview with the author).

61 Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
eliminated in the 1980s. Undoubtedly, the turbulence caused by these reforms placed strains in the SAF, and officer morale and retention suffered further as a result.\(^{62}\)

Despite the serious challenges with the AVF’s implementation, the SAF’s senior leadership believed that the AVF produced higher quality servicemembers than those of the old, conscripted force and remained loathe to return to an MMS that had failed to provide sufficient numbers of volunteers to fill the ranks of the SAF’s expeditionary units.\(^{63}\) However, the move to a hybrid system of volunteers and conscripts likely pleased many leaders in the SAF.\(^{64}\) As former Defence Minister Tolgfors notes, the 2017 MMS reforms retained arguably the most important provision of the 2009 Defence Bill—the ability to recruit professional volunteers as the basis of the SAF.\(^{65}\) Thus the new system provided the best of both worlds: an answer to the SAF’s recruiting challenges and the ability to retain a highly skilled, professional force. When combined with increased military spending and an expansion of the size and capability of the SAF’s land and air forces, the 2016-2020 Defence Bill did not likely meet any opposition from the SAF.\(^{66}\)

---

62 Ibid. Gyllensporre claims that the abrupt nature of the transition strained SAF personnel and “led to repercussions on officers and equipment.” See also Hurt (2015, 4) for a discussion of low morale in the SAF in the years following Sweden’s defense reforms.

63 The SAF is not a homogenous organization, and elements within it both supported and opposed Sweden’s defense reforms (Hedin 2011, 6). However, Lieutenant General Gyllensporre suggests that outside of a “few conservative pockets,” the AVF had broad support among the SAF leadership (interview with the author).

64 In fact, a 2017 Defence Committee Report claims that the SAF viewed a volunteer recruiting base as “insufficient” to meet its recruiting needs (2016/17: FöU4, 10).

65 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.

66 The 2016-2020 Defense Bill called for increased spending of SEK 10.2 billion ($1.15 billion), expanding the number of operational units, and improved levels of readiness (Prop. 2014/15: 109, 60-81). Although Robert Egnell suggests that the SAF “liked the quality of volunteers” and that “those [in the SAF] who had pushed for reforms were not particularly in favor of going back [to a conscription-based system],” he argues that the SAF “got behind a ‘hybrid’ system” that continued to recruit volunteers (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).
**Swedish Defence Industries (SDI)**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Swedish Defense Industry (SDI) constitutes a highly influential actor in Sweden’s defense policymaking process. However, as with Sweden’s transition to the AVF, little evidence suggests that the SDI sought to influence the government’s decision to reinstate conscription. While acknowledging the influence that the SDI exerts in Sweden’s defense and procurement policies, former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg suggests that the SDI maintains little interest in the SAF’s personnel policies. Instead, he asserts that the SDI closely follows and lobbies for changes in Sweden’s material and procurement policies that more directly affect its economic interests.

Given the tendency for AVFs to rely more heavily on advanced technology and equipment than do forces that rely on short-term conscripts, the SDI could arguably expect to profit from Sweden’s maintenance of an AVF. However, because Sweden continues to rely primarily on volunteers in its current system, the SDI would not likely have viewed these reforms as affecting its bottom line. More importantly, large increases in military spending and plans to invest heavily in defence equipment over the next 12 years would likely be of far greater interest to the SDI than the reintroduction of conscription. Thus, while it is likely that the SDI sought to influence Sweden’s 2016-2020 Defence Bill, its lobbying efforts likely concerned Sweden’s decisions to purchase jets and other military hardware rather than its choice of MMS.

---

67 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018.
68 Ibid.
69 A recent government report proposes additional defense spending of SEK 168 billion ($21 billion) from 2021 to 2030, largely towards purchases of material (Fiorenza 2018).
70 Although he acknowledges that the SDI forms a powerful lobbying group, former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg argues that it would not likely have “thought about [Sweden’s MMS policies] much” (interview with the author). Likewise Egnell insists that the SDI would likely have focused on other issues such the allocation of funding between the various service branches and the integration of technologies to support “network warfare” (interview with the author).
The Public/Media

In the 2014 MSB survey, the percentage of respondents who claimed to have a “keen interest in questions concerning Sweden’s defense” rose to 20 percent compared with just 10 and 15 percent in previous years (2014 Opinioner, 22).\textsuperscript{71} This increasing interest in defense affairs coincided with rising concerns about Russia and its perceived threat to Europe and Sweden’s own national defense. Between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of Swedes who viewed Russia as a “serious problem for peace and security” increased from 26 to 56 percent, and those who reported that they were “very” or “quite worried” about security threats from Russia climbed from 45 to nearly 75 percent (2014 Opinioner 2014, 45; 47). While the public’s concern for Russia grew, its confidence in the ability of the SAF to defend Sweden declined. The 2015 survey found that 83% of all respondents viewed the SAF as incapable of defending Sweden against a military attack (2017 Opinioner, 119). Notably, the percentage of Swedes expressing confidence in the SAF’s ability to defend the state from an armed attack has always been low since SPF and MSB surveys began asking this question in 2007.\textsuperscript{72} However, as an attack against

\textsuperscript{71} Since the early 1950s, successive Swedish governments have conducted extensive annual surveys designed to assess public support for the country’s defense policies and its willingness to defend the nation in the event of an attack on Swedish soil (Opinioner 2014, 4). From 1952 to 2009, the Psychological Defense Board (SPF) conducted these surveys on behalf the government. Since 2011, the Civil Protection and Emergency Agency, Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB), has conducted the annual surveys.

\textsuperscript{72} Prior to 2007, surveys asked respondents how confident they were in the SAF’s ability to protect Sweden from a terrorist attack rather than a conventional one, so it is difficult to draw comparisons with earlier reports. And while the results of the 2015 survey suggest extremely low levels of confidence in the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden in the event of an armed attack, surveys from 2007 to 2017 found that an average of 76.3 percent of respondents expressed a lack of confidence in Sweden’s defense preparedness (2017 Opinioner, 119). It is difficult to assess why the Swedish public has consistently reported low levels of confidence in the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden; however, this lack of confidence likely stems from the fact that troop sizes and military spending have declined rapidly since the 1990s. As Sander (2015) notes, Sweden maintains the smallest defense forces of all Nordic states, and “it is not exactly a secret that its military may be too small to defend its own territory.” Additionally, Swedes may have unrealistic expectations of what the SAF should be able to achieve in terms of its territorial defense mission. When discussing the public’s reaction to the CHOD’s 2012 statement that the SAF could likely defend Sweden for just two weeks, Egnell suggests that the ability of any small state to defend its territory
Sweden moved from a remote possibility to a plausible consideration (Gotkowska 2013, 27; Winnerstig 2014b, 169-170), concerns about the SAF’s ability to provide for Sweden’s national defense became increasingly relevant.73

Changes in the public’s perception of Sweden’s threat environment and the ability of the SAF to protect the country from an armed attack aligned closely with changes in public support for conscription. Never popular with the Swedish public, support for the AVF fell sharply as the public increasingly believed that a small, volunteer force could not provide a credible defense and began to overwhelmingly favor conscription (2014 Opinioner, 80). As Table 6.1 below indicates, in 2014 public support for conscription reached its highest levels since the MSB and SPF surveys began asking questions about MMS preferences in 2003.74 And although the AVF remained popular with those between the ages of 18 and 29, most Swedes who supported the use of volunteers favored a “professional defense” that included both long-serving volunteers and short-term conscripts (2017 Opinioner, 100).

in the face of a regional power like Russia for two weeks should be a point of pride rather than one of concern (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).

73 Sander (2015) argues that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine led to a “significant…shift in the public’s thinking” about Sweden’s defense. He notes that support for NATO membership has risen sharply and suggests that the idea of “Swedish exceptionalism, or Swedish mentality,” which believes that Sweden could always remain outside of war, may be weakening.

74 These results are consistent with a separate national survey, which reported that four out of ten Swedes favored reintroducing conscription (2014 SOM survey cited in SOU 2016: 63, 177).
# Table 6.1 – Public MMS Preferences, 2003-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Professional Defense (standing military)</th>
<th>A Defense Based on Military Service (värnplikten)</th>
<th>An AVF</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SPF and MSB Opinioner

While strong majorities supported the reinstatement of conscription, the public’s views about NATO membership remain less clear. Despite its declining attachment to non-alignment since the end of the Cold War (Miles 2006, 80) and the SAF’s increasing partnership with NATO, the Swedish public remained strongly opposed to NATO membership until 2013 (Winnerstig 2014b, 167).\(^75\) A successful “track record” (Miles 2006, 90) and “nostalgic and exaggerated views of the value of non-alignment and neutrality” (Herolf 2016, 71) served to mute public support for collective security agreements that might remove Sweden’s defense policy autonomy and possibly drag Sweden into a war against its will (Miles 2006, 91; 2008, 91).

\(^{75}\) Mike Winnerstig argues that the issue of NATO membership was a “moot point” until 2013. He suggests that the CHOD’s public comments about the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden against an armed attack, increasingly provocative actions by Russia, and a growing recognition of the personnel challenges in the AVF “had profound and probably lasting effects on both parliamentary and public opinion (2014b, 167-170).
Nevertheless, support for NATO grew in the years following Russia’s forceful annexation of Crimea as the public no longer viewed an attack on Swedish soil as a remote possibility (Gotkowska 2013, 27; Winnerstig 2014b, 169-170). In 2014, the percentage of Swedes expressing support for NATO membership (48 percent) exceeded the proportion that wished to remain outside of NATO (35 percent) for the first time. But as the results in Table 6.2 indicate, support for NATO has never achieved an absolute majority and appears to have reduced somewhat in recent years.

### Table 6.2 – Public NATO Preferences, 1997-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SPF and MSB Opinioner*

Likewise, Binnendijk et al. (2014, 68) suggest that fears of Russia withholding energy supplies to shape the public debate have led Sweden’s leaders to proceed cautiously with NATO membership, and Dalsjö (2017, 5) notes that many of Sweden’s leaders fear that any moves by Sweden to join NATO “might be vulnerable to Russian interference.” Russian President Vladimir Putin’s threats of “consequences” if Sweden were to join NATO (Kunz 2015, 18) suggest that Swedes’ concerns are not without merit. However, a 2015 Gothenburg University Poll found significantly less support for NATO membership (cited in Britz 2016, 3). The poll suggests that 60 percent of Swedes believe that “Sweden should in peacetime be military-non-aligned, with the intent to be neutral in war” (Britz 2016, 3).
As with the 2010 MMS reforms, the media does not appear to have directly influenced Swedes’ opinion of the state’s MMS policies; however, broad coverage of Russian aggression and other threats to Sweden’s security likely influenced the public’s MMS preferences indirectly.\textsuperscript{78} Outside of a few popular columnists, the debates preceding the 2017 MMS reforms received little coverage in the Swedish media.\textsuperscript{79} Instead, most of the reporting on Sweden’s MMS reforms occurred after the passage of the legislation authorizing the reforms.\textsuperscript{80} In contrast, security issues became salient and widely reported in the Swedish media following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (2014 Opinioner 10-11). Given the likely connection between questions surrounding the AVF’s ability to provide a credible defense and the public’s growing concern with Russia’s increasingly aggressive behavior, widespread media coverage of threats to Sweden’s security likely influenced Swede’s opinions of the state’s military manpower policies.

\textbf{WHY SWEDEN REINSTATED CONSCRIPTION}

Like Sweden’s decision to adopt an AVF seven years earlier, Sweden’s 2017 MMS reforms required a change in political leadership. Recruiting shortfalls, adverse changes in Sweden’s security environment, and questions about the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden from the threat of an armed attack provided the necessary conditions for the new government to end Sweden’s short experiment with an AVF. However, these factors alone were insufficient to alter

\textsuperscript{78} The 2014 report notes that the continued civil war and Islamic State offensive in Syria, the ongoing debate surrounding the CHOD’s “one-week defense” comment, Russia’s provocative actions in Swedish air and maritime space, and the ongoing events in Ukraine likely shaped public opinion regarding defense issues (2014 Opinioner, 10-11).

\textsuperscript{79} Robert Egnell notes that the Swedish media was “not particularly heavy on this issue [MMS],” and suggests that outside of a few opinion columnists, the MMS debate received very little coverage until the policy had been decided (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).

\textsuperscript{80} International media outlets such as \textit{The New York Times} (Sorensen 2017), \textit{Nordic Business Insider} (Turula 2017), (U.S.) \textit{National Public Radio} (Dwyer 2017), and \textit{The Atlantic} (Chandler 2017) all published articles on the day Sweden officially reinstated conscription (March 2, 2017).
Sweden’s military manpower policies. Instead, Sweden’s decision to reform its MMS required
the replacement of the AVF’s sole political supporters with a government willing to reactivate its
dormant conscription laws.

The 2016-2020 Defence Bill and the official government statement on MMS reform cite
Sweden’s deteriorating security environment and questions of the AVF’s ability to provide for
the country’s defense as reasons for reform. But while these considerations certainly
contributed to MMS reforms, adverse developments in Sweden’s security environment and
questions of the AVF’s ability to meet Sweden’s changing defense needs existed under the
previous government that did not seek MMS reform. The Alliance for Sweden recognized
significant challenges with its MMS policies by at least 2012 yet remained committed to the
AVF. Even after Russia’s annexation of Crimea and the CHOD’s statements about the inability
of the SAF to defend Sweden from an armed attack intensified scrutiny of its military manpower
policies, the Alliance sought to strengthen the SAF’s capabilities without reactivating
conscription. In contrast, the Social Democratic-Green Party government saw conscription as the
only feasible means to address the SAF’s personnel shortfalls and support the SAF’s shift from
an internationally-oriented force to one increasingly focused on national defense. Thus, while
the government’s explanation describes the factors used to justify its decision to reinstate
conscription, it ignores the underlying politics of the MMS reform.

---

release published the day Sweden reinstated conscription states that “the security environment in Europe
and in Sweden's vicinity has deteriorated and the all-volunteer recruitment hasn't provided the Armed
Forces with enough trained personnel. The re-activating of the conscription is needed for military
readiness” (Government of Sweden 2017).
Brigadier General Bengt Axelsson, describes Sweden’s 2017 MMS reform as “a political decision grounded in evidence.” Long opposed to a policy that had passed through the Riksdag without the support of any opposition parties, the Social Democrat-Green Party government saw a need to build a solid case against the AVF and generate “strong majorities [before] going forward” with its desired MMS reforms (Ds 2014:20, 118). As Axelsson suggests, the government “needed evidence to put on the table.” Well-documented problems with recruitment and retention in the SAF, concern over Russia’s aggression in Ukraine and Sweden’s local area, and the CHOD’s candid remarks about the state of readiness in the SAF provided the “evidence” needed to support the government’s position.

But while the Social Democratic-Green Party government built its case for abandoning the AVF, it did little to rectify the problems of the AVF or explore other options such as NATO membership that arguably could have better met Sweden’s changing defense needs. Former Minister of Defence Tolgfors argues that the government’s focus on conscription prevented it from finding ways of making the AVF work. Levels of military spending climbed significantly under the Social Democrat-Green Party government; however, little of this spending went to personnel expenses. In fact, the salaries of SAF personnel improved little while the new government conducted its assessment of the AVF. At only SEK 18,000 ($2,000) per month, a

---

83 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
84 Ibid.
85 As Lieutenant General Gyllensporre suggests, Social Democrats “never really accepted the idea of an AVF” and these events gave the government “a new justification for [its MMS] preference” (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018).
86 Interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
87 Tolgfors notes that just five percent of the military budget actually went towards “soldiers and salaries” and suggests that salaries could have risen to levels comparable to other public sector jobs (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018).
lower enlisted service member made less than a grocery store clerk (“Sweden’s Costly Military Ads Fail to Attract Volunteers” 2016).

With the support of opposition parties and a clear public preference for reinstating conscription, “reopening the draft [provided] an easy fix” for the recruiting and readiness challenges plaguing the SAF.\(^88\) And because the SAF leadership desired to maintain a system comprised of volunteer, professional soldiers, the military supported a policy that allowed it to retain the benefits of recruiting volunteer professionals while simultaneously providing a quick solution to its recruiting woes. Additionally, because the 2010 AVF law suspended rather than eliminated the use of conscripts, reinstating conscription entailed few legal hurdles.\(^89\)

Although the Social Democratic-Green Party government believed that the AVF could not meet the changing demands of Sweden’s security environment, the government did not desire to return to the old värnplikt system. The 2016-2020 Defence Bill placed a strong emphasis on the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden from an armed attack (Prop. 2014/15: 109, 9; 21; 50); however, it retained the idea that “the defense of Sweden begins outside of Sweden” (SOU 2016: 63, 17) and stressed the need to maintain the SAF’s expeditionary capability.\(^90\) To meet the SAF’s dual requirements of participation in multilateral operations abroad and defense of the Swedish homeland, the government concluded that the SAF should continue to rely

\(88\) Interview with former Minister of Defense Mikael Odenberg, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018. See also Britz (2016, 2).
\(89\) Because the legal basis of Sweden’s new MMS rests on existing legislation pertaining to military service obligations, Sweden’s 2017 MMS reform did not require any new legislation and simply extended these service requirements to women (see Dir. 2015: 98).
\(90\) The 2016-2020 Defence Bill highlights a shift from “low-risk” expeditionary conflicts to national defense (Prop 2014/15: 109, 43-45). Nevertheless, the bill recognized that “attacks in [Sweden’s] local area would affect everyone” and stressed the need for continued cooperation with Sweden’s security partners (Prop 2014/15: 109, 46). Noting the challenges of meeting the SAF’s territorial and expeditionary missions, Lieutenant General Gyllensporre suggests that this “balancing act may become increasingly difficult for politicians and the military to pursue” (cited in Holmberg and Hallenberg 2017, 7).
primarily on professional volunteers and strengthen efforts to recruit and retain them (SOU 2016: 63, 17). Thus, although the Social Democrat-Green Party government ultimately abandoned an MMS that they had long opposed, they adopted a new MMS that, in many ways, closely resembled it.91

Alternative Arguments

Sweden’s experiment with an AVF ended after a new government that had opposed the MMS from the outset assessed that Sweden’s military manpower policies could not meet the state’s changing defense needs. Personnel shortages due to recruitment challenges and shorter-than-expected average service lengths led to low levels of military readiness in a system that had promised to deliver a more “useful and accessible defense” (Prop. 2008/09: 140). Given the significant shortcomings of the AVF and its questionable ability to defend Sweden from an armed attack, was the reactivation of conscription inevitable? In other words, would the failures of the AVF have led to the reinstatement of conscription regardless of which part(ies) controlled the Riksdag? In this section, I consider the counterfactual argument that personnel shortfalls and adverse changes in Sweden’s security environment would have required the Alliance for Sweden to abandon the AVF had it continued to govern beyond 2014. Additionally, I explore whether decreasing public support for the AVF or the Social Democrat’s ideological commitment to conscription better explain Sweden’s decision to abandon the AVF. As I discuss below, none of these alterative arguments offer a compelling explanation of Sweden’s 2017 MMS reforms.

91 Although the government had opposed the Alliance’s decision to replace the värnplikt with an AVF, it recognized that its participation in multilateral, expeditionary operations benefited from the recruitment of volunteers and therefore sought to “find the right balance between conscription and volunteers based on [Sweden’s] war time requirements” (2016/17:FöU4, 10; see also SOU 2016: 63, 17). However, even if the Social Democrat-Green Party government had not seen the value of employing long-serving volunteers, its position as a minority government would likely have caused it to make such a concession to convince other parties to support the reinstatement of conscription.
Instead, I argue that the change in Sweden’s military manpower polices required a change in political leadership.

**Personnel Shortfalls**

With the exception of its Liberal Party members, the Alliance for Sweden supported 2016-2020 Defence Bill, which called for the reinstatement of conscription. But although the Alliance parties voted in support of the government’s MMS reforms, would they have proposed abandoning the AVF had they remained in control of the Riksdag? In other words, would the problems with the AVF used to justify its replacement in 2017 have eventually led the Alliance to reach a similar conclusion about the viability of its embattled military manpower policies?

The Social Democrat-Green Party government’s official statement following the replacement of the AVF cites the deterioration of Sweden’s security environment and lack of readiness in the SAF as the reasons for MMS reform. Lackluster recruiting and a high volume of volunteers exiting the SAF before completing their service obligations led to significant military manning problems, which in turn produced low-levels of military readiness and prevented the SAF from “building military capability” (Government Offices of Sweden 2017). By 2016, the SAF could not fill 1,000 of its active duty positions and 7,000 positions in the reserves (Government Offices of Sweden 2017).

The SAF’s personnel challenges had no easy solutions. A strong economy with near 100 percent employment levels made it difficult to attract and retain military personnel (Jones 2017; see also SOU 2014: 73, 261-262 and SOU 2016: 63, 13). Similarly, Sweden’s generous social welfare policies that include free healthcare and free college left the government with few of the

---

92 In the end, only the Liberal Party left the negotiations, citing its disapproval of the government’s budget proposal (Drent and Meijnders 2015, 22). Notably, the Liberal Party representative on the Defence Committee supported the reinstatement of conscription (see for example Widman 2016).
“carrots” other governments with AVFs use to meet their military recruiting needs. As SDNU professors Thisner, Egnell, and Erickson note, Sweden’s generous social welfare policies may have undermined recruitment in other ways too. Because military service often attracts those from lower socio-economic classes, Sweden’s low level of income inequality likely limited the size of the demographic group most apt to join the military. As a British general reportedly expressed to his Swedish counterpart when discussing Sweden’s proposal to implement an AVF, “Sweden does not have enough white trash to field a professional army.”

Sweden’s history of recruiting volunteers during the first half of the 20th Century offers little hope that it could have resolved the personnel challenges with the AVF (See Bergström 2011 and SOU 2016: 63). From 1901 to 1952, the SAF contained a small number of professional volunteers. This volontärer system within the värnplikt continually struggled to meet its recruitment goals, and by 1925, the SAF could only fill about 60 percent of the positions within these volunteer units (Bergström 2011, 23). The strength of the post-WWI economy may, in part, account the recruitment challenges of the volontärer; however, the SAF’s volunteer units could not meet their recruitment goals during much of the Great Depression either. Throughout the history of the volontärer system, the SAF recruited an average of just two-tenths of a percent of the total population, a figure comparable to other Western states with AVFs. Extrapolating these averages to Sweden’s current population of 10,135,300 suggests that the SAF should only

93 See Burström (2015) for a review of Sweden’s generous social welfare policies.
94 Frederick Thisner and Frederick Ericksson, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018.
95 Bergström argues that the SAF could only meet its recruitment goals during economic downturns (2011, 27); however, Thisner notes that the SAF could not even meet these goals during several years of the Great Depression (interview with the author).
96 Claes Bergström, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 23 March 2018.
expect to recruit about 2,300 recruits per year, a number far less than the 3,500 to 4,000 demanded by the SAF.97

But while these considerations suggest that the SAF’s recruiting challenges would eventually have required the Alliance reinstate conscription, there are also reasons to believe that an Alliance government would have sought to improve the AVF rather than replace it. The Alliance’s directives to special inquiries and the 2013-2014 Defence Commission prohibited investigators from exploring options for reinstating conscription and instead directed these bodies to propose solutions that might increase the recruitment and retention of volunteers.98 By 2014, the Alliance had moved beyond its view that the implementation of the AVF should occur at “the pace the economy allows” and proposed a plan to increase military spending that greatly exceeded the spending levels suggested by the Defence Committee and that focused largely on efforts to bolster recruitment and increase readiness.99 And while low unemployment and the “lack carrots to throw out” would likely have limited the ability of these spending increases to solve the SAF’s recruitment woes, the Alliance would likely have explored other options to improve recruitment. For example, in 2014 its special commission tasked with developing “a long-term sustainable military” within the framework of the 2009 Defence Bill recommended that the government remove limits on the number of full-time SAF personnel as means to make

97 The final report of the comprehensive defense investigation states that while the SAF needed to recruit 4,000 volunteers each year to maintain readiness, it only recruited an average of 2,500 volunteers each year (SOU 2016: 63, 12-13). A Study by the Total Defense Research Institute (Jonsson and Nordland 2010) cites similar findings.
98 See for example Fö2013 / 50 / MFI, No. 1 and SOU 2014: 73, 45.
99 To address the challenges with the AVF, the Defense Committee proposed increased funding for recruiting, training, and retaining service members of SEK 200 million ($22.7 million) in 2014 and additional spending increases of SEK 100 million ($11.4 million) annually through 2017 (2013/14: FöU1, 10).
military service more attractive (SOU 2014: 73, 261-262). Similarly, the Alliance could have explored ways to lower the SAF’s onerous recruitment standards that left only six percent of its recruiting classes eligible for officer commissions.101

Finally, rising levels of public support for the SAF and increasing fears of an armed attack against Sweden would likely have benefited the SAF’s recruitment efforts regardless of any government measures designed to make military service more attractive. As former Defence Minister Tolgfors notes, between 2006 and 2009 the SAF had to turn away nearly ten volunteers for every position in units deploying in support of ISAF (NATO’s International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan). Given the increasing interest in the SAF following Russia’s actions in Ukraine and its growing threat to the Baltics and Sweden itself, Tolgfors suggests that the SAF would likely have experienced a similar increase in interest among potential recruits.102 Coupled with other incentives such as larger salaries and increased opportunities for full-time employment, the SAF could possibly have met, or even exceeded, its recruitment goals and reduced pressure on the Alliance to abandon the military manpower policies it had established just a few years before.

Adverse Changes in Sweden’s Security Environment

The Alliance implemented the AVF to provide a more “available” and “flexible” force better suited to conduct the expeditionary operations that had increasingly become the SAF’s

100 Former Defense Minister Tolgfors suggests that the Alliance had increased the number of part-time (or reserve) service members (GSS/T) for “political reasons” (interview with the author). By allowing more recruits to serve as full-time employees (GSS/K), the Alliance hoped to attract greater numbers of volunteers who might be reticent to forgo other employment or educational opportunities to pursue part-time employment in the SAF (SOU 2014: 73, 261-262).

101 Lieutenant Colonel Claes Bergström, head of the SAF’s Development and Military Programs, argues that overly stringent educational, physical, and age requirements unnecessarily limit the pool of potential officer candidates (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 23 March 2018).

102 Interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 20 March 2018.
primary mission.103 But as Russian aggression in Ukraine, the Baltics, and Sweden’s own airspace and territorial waters moved the focus of Sweden’s security back to a more traditional national defense, politicians, the public, and even the SAF’s leadership began to question the ability of a small, professional force to defend Sweden from an armed attack.104 Given the increasing importance placed on the SAF’s territorial defense role following adverse shifts in Sweden’s security environment, would an Alliance government have been forced to reinstate conscription as a means to strengthen the SAF’s ability to protect the state from an armed attack?

Although growing concerns with the SAF’s ability to conduct its territorial defense role provided strong support to advocates of conscription, it is not clear how a small, albeit fully-manned, conscripted military could realistically defend Sweden from an armed attack against a regional power like Russia. Once one of the world’s largest militaries with over 850,000 service members, today the SAF is a shell of its former self.105 In contrast, the Russian military boasts an estimated 831,000 active-duty and two million reserve service-members.106

The 2016-2020 Defence Bill called for a standing force of just three battalions (Prop. 2014/15:109, 69; 73), and unlike the Cold War when Sweden conscripted tens of thousands of young men each year, today

104 As Martin Gelin of the Swedish daily, Dagens Nyheter, noted after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the idea that Sweden needed a strong military moved from a “fringe notion” to “the mainstream” (quoted in Sander 2015).
105 It is difficult to determine the total number of SAF personnel with a degree of certainty. IISS’s The Military Balance provides figures for the total size of the SAF until 2012, but after 2012 the journal series no longer lists the size of the reserve component. Colonel Mats Geijer of the SAF’s Human Resources Staff suggests that any discussion of the SAF’s reserve component should include its part-time service members (GSS/T) and those in the Home Guard; however, he is unable to provide these figures, presumably because they are sensitive in nature (personal communication, 4 April 2018). Although the SAF’s Annual Reports provide the total numbers of GSS/T and Home Guard personnel entering the force structure in a given year, they do not list figures of the total number of personnel in these components. Therefore, IISS’s 2012 figure (200,000 reserve personnel) remains the best estimate.
annual recruiting classes total less than 4,000. Consequently, the SAF can no longer rely on a massive pool of trained military personnel to fill large numbers of reserve and Home Guard units. Thus, even if a small, conscripted force could repel an armed attack while the state mobilized its remaining defense forces, Sweden’s total military manpower would consist of far fewer soldiers than the 850,000 that once formed the basis of Sweden’s credible military deterrent.

Given the questionable ability of the SAF to defend Sweden from an armed attack, regardless of its MMS-type, the Alliance would not likely have viewed conscription as necessary to maintain Sweden’s defense. Instead, concerns for Sweden’s security would more likely have led the Alliance to pursue NATO membership. Despite Prime Minister Reinfeldt’s public statements that he did not desire for Sweden to join NATO, the Alliance viewed NATO membership as the “logical consequence” of its increasing ties with NATO. The Social Democrats remained suspicious that the Alliance would attempt to “sneak Sweden into NATO” (Dahl 2012, 11), and in fact, in 2012 a spokesman for the Moderate Party suggested that his party

---

107 The latest defense bill calls for the SAF to maintain two mechanized battalions and one motorized battalion as standing forces.
108 Despite concerns that NATO membership might drag Sweden into a conflict (Miles 2006, 91; Winnerstig 2014a, 46) or antagonize Russia (Binnendijk et al. 2014, 68; Kunz 2015, 18), the benefits of Article 5 protection for a small state presumably outweigh the negative aspects of NATO membership. With the distinction between members and non-members growing more apparent and meaningful, the “Bertlemen Report” argues that the “blessing of ambiguity [of Sweden’s relationship with NATO]” may be over (2014, 8).
109 Stefan Ring argues that although the Alliance desired NATO membership, Prime Minister Reinfeldt “did not see how [pursuing NATO membership] could help him win an election and, in fact, could be bad [for his election prospects]” (interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018).
110 Mikael Odenberg, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018. Odenberg also claims that the Alliance was at one point prepared to charge the Defence Commission with exploring NATO membership.
intended to strengthen Sweden’s relationship with the security alliance to the point that the Social Democrats would be forced to accept NATO membership.\textsuperscript{111}

Undoubtedly, public and political opposition to NATO would have presented challenges to any government seeking NATO membership (Miles 2006, 89); however, the public’s attachment to neutrality and non-alignment has decreased in recent years. Likewise, government officials have increasingly begun to question the value of serving as one of NATO’s strongest supporters and largest troop contributors without the benefit of an Article 5 commitment to defend Sweden from an armed attack.\textsuperscript{112} As the distinction between members and non-members grows more apparent (Bertlemen 2014, 8), NATO membership will likely become more attractive to any Swedish government.\textsuperscript{113}

**Public Opposition to the AVF**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Swedish public never favored the AVF. In fact, annual surveys conducted by the MSB/SPF indicate that support for an AVF reached an all-time high of just 27 percent in 2006 and declined sharply thereafter.\textsuperscript{114} By 2015, MSB/SPF surveys indicated that support for the AVF had fallen to just seven percent (2017 Opinioner, 99-100). In contrast, support for a system based on compulsory service grew to 55 percent in 2014, its

\textsuperscript{111} Stefan Ring, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 19 March 2018.\textsuperscript{112} As Binnendijk et al. suggest, Sweden’s close cooperation with NATO means that it is currently accepting the inherent risks of NATO membership without any of the rewards (2014, 68). The NATO Secretary General, Supreme Allied Commander of European Forces, and the U.S. Ambassador to Sweden have “unequivocally insisted that Article 5 is for members only” and have compared the idea of remaining outside of the Alliance and expecting military support to “getting insurance when the house is already burning” (Kunz 2015, 36; see also Dalsjö 2017, 17).\textsuperscript{113} In fact, Britz (2016, 3) notes that the Alliance plans to make NATO membership a campaign issue in 2018.\textsuperscript{114} By 2014, MSB/SPF surveys indicated that nearly 80 percent of all respondents viewed the SAF as “inadequate” to defend Sweden against an armed attack (2014 Opinioner, 6-7). At the same time, the survey results suggested that support for conscription had fallen to just nine percent (2014 Opinioner, 86-87).
highest level since the MSB/SPF began to include questions about MMS in its annual survey in 2003 (2017 Opinioner, 99-100). The government closely followed these trends, and in fact, both the 2016-2020 Defence Bill and the report of the special investigation tasked with recommending solutions for a “sustainable defense” included entire sections that discussed declining public support for the AVF. Given the public’s increasing concern for Sweden’s national defense and the near-total loss of public support for the AVF, could changes in domestic MMS preferences better account for Sweden’s decision to reactivate conscription?

Despite strong public disapproval of the AVF, a change in leader MMS preferences offers a more compelling explanation for Sweden’s MMS reforms for several reasons. First, public support for conscription grew as the public became increasingly concerned about the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden from an armed attack; however, support for conscription was far from overwhelming. Second, despite rising levels of support for conscription, the government adopted an MMS policy that was far less popular—a standing, professional force, albeit with the use of conscription to meet recruitment shortfalls. In fact, in 2017, just 22 percent of all Swedes surveyed favored a professional force over the AVF or a purely conscripted force. Thus, despite any consideration of public opinion, the government ultimately implemented a policy that enjoyed little public support.

Finally, MMS was not a salient issue among a Swedish public that is largely apathetic concerning matters of defense policy. Interest in defense certainly grew in the years proceeding MMS reform, but most of the media attention during this time period focused on broader questions of Sweden’s defense related to the growing threat of Russia and the SAF’s ability to defend Sweden from an armed attack. While MMS was certainly connected to these issues, the

---

115 Chapter 13 of the special investigation report (SOU 2016: 63) deals entirely with the public’s views of Sweden’s military manpower and broader defense policies.
debate over MMS did not receive similar treatment in the media nor did it ever become an issue of great concern to much of the Swedish public.

Socio-Cultural Explanations

Rather than changes in leader MMS preferences, could socio-cultural considerations better explain Sweden’s MMS reforms? Robert Egnell suggests that conscription is “built into the very fabric of Swedish society” (Egnell 2014 et al., 45; see also Leander 2004b, 120-121). The duty to serve not only constituted an essential element of citizenship, but also served as a “school of the nation” that instilled nationalism, promoted social integration, and “furthered recruits’ love of the fatherland” (Lars Tingsten cited in Leander 2004b, 122).

Moreover, parties on the left such as the Social Democrats and Greens have long viewed conscription as a means of promoting “social rights, equality, [and] social mobility…” and as a means to “…impose the control of politics over the military” (Leander 20014b, 123). And through folkförankring, or the anchoring of defense in the population, conscription supported the concept of “total defense” by reinforcing connections between the SAF and society (Leander 2004a, 589-590; Egnell 2014, 45).

The AVF ran counter to Sweden’s aversion to maintaining a standing, professional force and eliminated an important “rite of passage” for Swedish males (Egnell et al. 2014, 45).

Additionally, the Social Democrat-Green Party government (and even the Alliance) expressed concerns that folkförankring had decreased under the AVF. And although Leander claimed in

---

116 See Leander (2004a, 576-578) and the discussion below for a critique of this view.
117 See Leander (2004a, 590 and 2004b, 121-122) for a discussion of the role of conscription in “anchoring” Sweden’s defense in the population.
118 When implementing its MMS reforms, the government tasked a special committee with investigating the impact of Sweden’s military manpower policies on folkförankring (Dir. 2015: 98). Likewise, a perceived loss of “anchorage” concerned the Alliance, and a 2013 Defence Committee Report looked at ways to address the issue (see 2012/13: FöU7).
2004 that Sweden’s leaders did not view social integration as a problem (2004, 586-487), this likely changed after 2013 when immigration rates began to explode. In 2012, immigrants, or “new Swedes,” comprised just over 667,000 of Sweden’s total population of 8,888,000. By 2018, the number of foreign citizens had grown to nearly 900,000 (Statistics Sweden 2018). As a result, support for nationalist parties has grown in recent years, and a YouGov poll taken after the 2015 immigration crisis found more support for the far-right Sweden Democrats than any other party (Orange 2015). As the Sweden Democrats’ official website indicates, the party believes that immigration represents not only a threat to Sweden’s values and traditions but also its strategic culture in which the nation’s defense remains anchored in a relatively homogenous population.\(^{119}\)

But despite any perceived threats to Sweden’s strategic culture and the Social Democrat-Green Party government’s ideological attachment to conscription, socio-cultural considerations do not appear to have driven the 2017 MMS reforms.\(^{120}\) Instead, well-documented problems of the AVF provided the justification for the reactivation of conscription. Although the government expressed concerns about the decline in *folkförranking*, its concern stemmed largely from questions regarding the “long-term sustainability of [Sweden’s] military defense” if the SAF became divorced from society (Dir. 2015: 98).\(^{121}\) But regardless of why the government concerned itself with anchorage, it remained doubtful that an MMS that conscripted very few

---

\(^{119}\) The Sweden Democrats’ official website claims that “there are no examples of individuals who have positively adapted and contributed to Swedish society recently” and argues that “immigration must be kept at such a level and be such that it does not pose a threat to [Sweden’s] national identity or to the welfare and security of [the] country” (see https://sd.se/var-politik/invandringspolitik/; accessed on 16 May 2016).

\(^{120}\) Former Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg suggests that despite the Social Democrats’ ideological attachment to conscription, practical considerations led them to reinstate conscription (interview with the author).

\(^{121}\) As the 2017-2018 Defence Commission security report suggests, “the will to defend [Sweden] and people’s anchorage are necessary to raise a credible defense” (Ds. 2017: 66, 62).
Swedes annually could “anchor” Sweden’s defense in the population (SOU 2016: 63, 179). The report of the special inquiry commission for the implementation of the 2017 reforms recognized that conscription did not necessarily promote anchoring and identified “self-motivation” and “perception of service” as more important factors (SOU 2016: 63, 19-20).

Likewise, the notion that conscription could serve as a “school of the nation rings hollow” in a society where other social institutions are more likely to influence Swedes’ “political attitudes and understandings of the nation” and where the state’s MMS policies directly affect just a few thousand Swedes annually (Leander 2004a, 378). Moreover, the process of selecting conscripts, which seeks to identify and ultimately select those with desirable attributes and the willingness to serve, undermines any suggestions that the government’s conscription policies seek primarily to integrate and instill nationalism in its citizenry. By selecting those who express a willingness to serve, the government quite likely selects those whose “love of the fatherland” is already quite strong. Furthermore, support for nationalist parties appears be waning, and any aversion to maintaining a standing, professional force did not manifest itself in Sweden’s new MMS. By primarily recruiting volunteers and conscripting Swedish youth to make up for any recruiting shortfalls, Sweden’s new MMS is essentially the same standing, professional force that existed under the AVF.

---

122 Still, Egnell suggests that the notion that conscription could help to integrate or assimilate new Swedes remains a widely-held perception despite any empirical evidence to support it (interview with the author, conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 21 March 2018).
123 By December 2017, support for the Sweden Democrats had fallen to its lowest level since 2015. However, the party’s decline in support appears to have largely resulted from Sweden’s stricter immigration policies, which have led to reduced levels of concern for immigration. Moreover, unless support for the Sweden Democrats declines further, the party will likely gain enough seats to block either the center-left or center-right blocs from forming a majority government (“Support for Anti-Immigration Sweden Democrats Tumbles: Poll” 2017).
If anything, socio-cultural considerations appear to strongly influence Sweden’s decision to remain outside of NATO. As former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen explains, “Sweden is more than qualified to become a member...,” but “NATO resistance in Sweden has historical reasons” (quoted in Forsberg 2012).\textsuperscript{124} Despite its honorary status as NATO’s “29th member,” an “ideological attachment to the old paradigm of self-sufficient neutrality remains a powerful factor in the body politic and is one of the main reasons why Sweden … has not yet joined NATO” (Dalsjö 2017, 10). Sweden has made a notable shift from neutrality to non-alignment in the post-Cold War era (Britz 2016, 1), but NATO membership remains elusive. As Dalsjö suggests, “this more ideological and value-laden strain in Sweden’s international position has proved to be highly resistant to change” (2017, 10).

\textit{Assessing the Model}

The reactivation of conscription followed changes in leader MMS preferences after the Social Democrat-Green Party coalition replaced the AVF’s political sponsors. Although personnel shortfalls, low readiness levels, and an increasingly hostile security environment provided the justification for abandoning the AVF, MMS reform required a change in government. Had the Alliance for Sweden remained in power beyond 2014, it would not likely have concluded that the AVF was a failure and instead would have addressed the AVF’s deficiencies and joined NATO if it deemed that the SAF could no longer meet the demands of Sweden’s changing security environment. Therefore, I suggest that Sweden’s decision to implement its second MMS reform in seven years required the support of a new government that had opposed the AVF from the outset.

\textsuperscript{124} Likewise, Finish scholar Teija Tiilikainen argues that the “Swedish form of neutrality appears to be more ideological and deep-rooted in society” than even that of Finland (2016, 54).
Despite broad domestic support for eliminating the AVF, Sweden’s 2017 reforms followed a change in leader rather than domestic MMS preferences. Polls suggest that less than 10 percent of Swedes supported the AVF; however, the majority of Swedes supported a return to a system like the *värnplikt* rather than a professional force supplemented with conscription. Thus, even if public opinion influenced the government’s decision to abandon the AVF, it did not determine the final outcome of its MMS policies.

As *Table 6.3* below illustrates, Sweden’s 2017 MMS reforms align closely with the model’s predictions. The AVF was extremely unpopular among the Swedish public and elite alike, so abandoning conscription will likely help, rather than hinder, the Social Democrat-Green Party coalition’s prospects in the 2018 elections (H2). And despite a preference for retaining the AVF among much of the SAF leadership, the SAF got behind a policy that provided a quick solution to its recruiting woes while retaining the benefits of a professional force. With the military and public’s support, “reopening the draft [provided] an easy fix” for the recruiting and
readiness challenges plaguing the SAF and eliminated an MMS that the new government had long opposed (H2b).125

Table 6.3 — Support for Empirical Predictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>H2: Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.</strong></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2c: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2d: Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.</td>
<td>Moderately Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H3: Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.</strong></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Social Democrat-Green Party government does not claim a majority of the seats in the Riksdag and therefore had to rely on support from opposition parties to replace the AVF (H2d).126 Nevertheless, the consensual and deliberative nature of the Defence Commission (Försvarsberedningen) and Sweden’s broader defense policymaking process ensured that the government achieved support for its MMS proposals as it built its case against the AVF (H2c).127 Finally, Sweden’s 2017 MMS reforms occurred only after a government that remained wedded

---

125 Mikael Odenberg, interview with the author conducted in Stockholm, Sweden on 22 March 2018. See also Britz (2016, 2). Additionally, because the 2010 AVF law suspended rather than eliminated the use of conscripts, reinstating conscription entailed few legal hurdles.

126 See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the consensual and deliberative nature of Sweden’s defence policymaking process.

127 Unlike the previous defense bill, which narrowly passed in a party-line vote, the 2016-2020 Defence Bill (Prop. 2014/15: 109) received broad support from all political parties except the Left Party and far-right Sweden Democrats (for a breakdown of voting by party, see “Defense Policy Focus” available at http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/arende/betankande/forsvarspolitisk-inriktning---sveriges-forsvar_H201F%C3%B6U11; accessed 18 May 2018).
to an MMS policy it had unilaterally moved through the Riksdag just seven years earlier was replaced by a government that desired to reactivate conscription (H3). This “dramatic” change in leadership created an opportunity for policy change by allowing a reform-minded government to gather the political consensus necessary to overturn the AVF.

CONCLUSION

As the government noted in its official statement following the reactivation of conscription, adverse changes in Sweden’s security environment and unacceptably low levels of military readiness resulting from personnel shortfalls led Sweden to abandon its brief experiment with an AVF (Government Offices of Sweden 2017). But while the AVF’s shortcomings certainly called into question its ability to provide for Sweden’s changing defense needs, these shortcomings alone were insufficient to lead to Sweden’s second major MMS reform in seven years. Only when a government who had opposed the AVF from the outset controlled the Riksdag did Sweden replace its embattled MMS with a new policy that sought to maintain the benefits of the AVF while reactivating the state’s dormant conscription laws. Like the MMS change that preceded it, replacing the AVF required a change in elite MMS preferences following a political transition.

But although Sweden’s experiment with an AVF was short-lived, Sweden’s new military manpower policies retain two of the 2009 Defence Bill’s key provisions—the introduction of a standing, professional force and gender-neutral recruitment. With an emphasis on recruiting volunteers and “willing” conscripts of both genders, Sweden’s new MMS more closely resembles the AVF than the värnplikt. Thus, while the challenges of the AVF allowed the new government to easily overturn a presumably “sticky” institution, important aspects of the 2010 MMS change endure.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

Why do states reform their military manpower policies? Changing MMS-types entails economic, social, and political costs that often prevent states from reforming their military manpower policies even when doing so would better serve the interests of the state.\(^1\) Nevertheless, MMS reforms occur relatively frequently, challenging the idea of institutions as “enduring entities” that are difficult to transform or destroy (Mahoney 2000, 512). If institutions such as MMS are “sticky,” why do states reform their military manpower policies, and under what conditions do these reforms occur?

Existing studies have attempted to answer this puzzle through two broad categories of explanations: security-based accounts and ‘non-security’ explanations. Security-based accounts suggest that states change their military manpower policies to emulate the MMS-types of powerful regional or international actors or do so in response to changes in the nature of their geostrategic environments. In contrast, non-security explanations link changes in states’ military manpower policies to variables such as demographics, socio-cultural and economic factors, and political changes. But while existing studies have offered convincing explanations for MMS reform in specific states under specific sets of conditions, few have offered a general theory of MMS change or even broad generalizations that might apply to MMS reforms in a variety of cases under variable conditions.

\(^1\) Economic disincentives of altering a state’s MMS policies include the sunk costs of established institutions and the fixed costs of establishing new organizational structures. The social costs of altering states’ MMS policies include social disruption resulting from changes in institutionalized patterns and practices. The romanticism of the *levée en masse* made conscription difficult to overturn in France (McKenna 1997; Leander 2004), and the long tradition of obligatory military service and resulting “peacetime military socialization of the citizen” in Germany helped to sustain conscription well into the post-Cold War era (Frevert 2004, 3).
The few studies that have examined MMS reforms using statistical analyses have largely ignored domestic political factors that cannot be easily operationalized as predictors in large-N studies. While these studies offer support for arguments that connect security and economic variables with MMS reform, they do not demonstrate that these factors influence states’ MMS policies directly rather than through their effects on domestic political processes. On the other hand, studies that have connected MMS reform to political factors have limited their analyses to one or two cases (e.g. Cohen 1985; Chambers 1987; Kier 1997; Avant 2000; Rynning 2001; Broad 2006; Rostker 2006) and have not fully examined how, or under what conditions, domestic politics prove more determinate than other factors that might influence states’ MMS choices.

This dissertation contributes to this body of literature and improves upon existing studies by offering a theoretical model that connects domestic political changes with changes in states’ military manpower policies. While acknowledging the influence of security, economic, and socio-cultural factors in shaping the domestic political landscapes in which MMS changes occur, the model claims that these reforms are best explained by the politics of states’ MMS choices. The model outlines two distinct pathways to MMS reform: changes in domestic and elite MMS preferences.

*Figure 7.1* below illustrates how changes in domestic and leader MMS preferences may lead to MMS reform. Because leaders have incentives to support policies that align most closely with the preferences of their winning coalitions, changes in domestic MMS preferences should be expected to produce MMS reforms so long as leaders connect changes in domestic MMS preferences to their prospects for political survival. With an imperfect understanding of their own

---

political security, the degree to which leaders connect changes in domestic MMS preferences with their odds of retaining political office depends largely on the strength of their winning coalitions’ MMS preferences. Strong support for MMS reform among the winning coalition compels leaders to implement reforms lest they risk losing the support of their key political supporters. In contrast, “decisions of opportunity,” or acting on low-salient or non-salient issues, may galvanize leaders’ political opponents by inadvertently creating potentially damaging, high-salience issues (Van Belle 1993, 175). Consequently, the model predicts that leaders enact MMS reforms only if MMS issues are salient with the members of their winning coalitions. As Argentina’s decision to adopt an AVF illustrates, strong domestic opposition to the state’s military manpower policies provides a powerful incentive for leaders to implement MMS reforms.

![Figure 7.1 — Pathways to MMS Reform](image)

Because office-seeking motivations coexist with other concerns such as power and security, prestige and legitimacy, and leaders’ legacies (Schultz 2013, 480), MMS reforms may also follow changes in leader MMS preferences that are independent of those of the members of their winning coalitions. Still, the willingness of leaders to promote their preferred military manpower policies depends on whether or not they believe that implementing MMS reforms is likely to jeopardize their political futures and whether or not they have the ability enact their
preferred policies. If the members of leaders’ winning coalitions do not strongly oppose MMS reform and the nature of their states’ institutional arrangements allows leaders to implement their preferred policies, changes in leader MMS preferences will produce MMS reforms. In contrast, in cases where members of the winning coalition strongly oppose MMS reform and/or institutional constraints prevent leaders from enacting their preferred policies, MMS reform requires the leader to lower barriers to reform by creating domestic support for proposed MMS changes.

Although political transitions, or leader changes, do not constitute a distinct pathway of MMS reform, the model acknowledges that MMS reforms often occur in the context of political transitions that accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to reform. Because the actors who form the winning coalition may change with new political leadership, leader changes may result in new domestic MMS preferences. For example, the transition to democracy in Argentina marginalized the Fuerzas Armadas that favored compulsory military service (CMS) and had provided political support to the Proceso government. Human rights groups and the Argentine public had much greater political influence after Argentina’s return to democracy, and their calls for MMS reform following the death of Carrasco led to the end of CMS. In contrast, political transitions in Qatar and Sweden did not change the make-up of the winning coalition but instead produced new political leadership with new MMS preferences. Qatar’s decision to implement national service in 2014 followed from the MMS preferences of the new emir, and Sweden’s 2010 and 2017 MMS reforms resulted from changes in the MMS preferences of the center-right and left governments.

To assess the model, this research examined four cases of MMS reform in three states. By selecting cases with different political systems, histories, geostrategic contexts, and
experiences with various MMS-types. I attempted to control for potentially confounding variables and assess the generalizability of the model. As I discuss below, the results of these investigations offer strong support for the model and suggest that changing MMS preferences offer a useful framework for understanding how, and under what conditions, states reform their military manpower policies.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In Chapter 3, I examined Argentina’s decision to replace CMS with an AVF in 1994. The murder of an Argentine conscript, Omar Carrasco, by his military trainers led to nation-wide protests calling for the end of CMS and thus provide a likely case for the first pathway to reform (change in domestic MMS preferences). As the Argentine daily Clarín noted, “[eliminating CMS] was not a planned policy nor the result of long parliamentary debates. What ended obligatory military service in Argentina was a fierce beating.”

Still, other conscripts had died at the hands of military cadre, and human rights groups had called for a repeal of CMS since at least the early 1980s. Moreover, the Argentine public opposed CMS well before Carrasco’s death, and leaders of the two main political parties had drafted multiple bills to modify or replace conscription since the end of military rule in 1983. Likewise, President Carlos Menem (1989-1999) favored an all-volunteer force well before he ended CMS through presidential decree (Huser 2002: 151; Pion-Berlin 1997: 133). However, an examination of Argentina’s decision to replace CMS with the AVF reveals that MMS reform

---

3 “*Caso Carrasco: El crimen que cambió la vida de los argentines,*” Clarín, August 29, 1999 (my translation).
4 See Garaño 2010 for a summary of the deaths of other conscripts and a history of efforts by the Frente Opositor del Servicio Militar Voluntario (FOSMO) and other human rights organizations to abolish CMS.
5 Soprano claims that members of Congress proposed as many as 40 pieces of legislation that sought to reform, eliminate, or suspend conscription, but as he notes, none of these bills were even debated (see Soprano 2016: footnote 14 and Garaño 2010: 185).
only occurred once the calls for reform by the public and human rights groups became so loud that the government could no longer ignore them.

Argentina neatly follows the model’s first pathway to MMS reform. President Menem and the Argentine National Congress closely connected MMS reform with their political survival and acknowledged the political consequences of failing to respond to the public’s demand to eliminate CMS. Recognizing the political imperative to respond to the public outcry against compulsory service, Menem subordinated his other policy priorities to the need to reform the state’s MMS policies and issued a presidential decree ending CMS less than five months after Carrasco’s death. And although both Congress and Menem weakly favored replacing CMS, they did not do so until public calls for reform forced them to respond.

Chapter 4 examined Qatar’s decision to institute compulsory national service in 2014. As arguably the world’s “rentiest” state, the emir’s decision to demand military service from Qatari citizens represented a profound and stunning change to Qatar’s military manpower policies. However, when understood as part of the emir’s larger vision to reduce Qataris’ reliance on the state and “qualif[y] [them] for useful and productive work” (Al Thani 2013a), Qatar’s MMS reforms represent a rational policy action by its “inwardly-focused” emir. With a small winning coalition that supported these reforms and near-absolute authority, a change in leader MMS preferences accurately explains Qatar’s pathway to MMS reforms.

Chapters 5 and 6 examined Sweden’s 2010 and 2017 MMS changes, and also represent the second pathway to MMS reform (change in leader MMS preferences). Although the public did not support either MMS reform, neither did they not strongly oppose them. With the support

---

6 Decreto Nacional 1.537/1994 promulgated in August 1994 suspended compulsory service and outlined the eligibility requirements for volunteer service members.

7 The percentages of respondents expressing a belief that Sweden should adopt an AVF never exceeded 27 percent and comprised just 15 percent in 2008. Likewise, the majority of Swedes favored returning to

285
of the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) and an absolute majority in the Riksdag, the Alliance for Sweden implemented its preferred MMS policy in 2010 without the support of any opposition members of parliament. And although the Social Democrat-Green Party government also did not face strong domestic opposition to its proposed MMS reforms in 2017, its weak position in the Riksdag required it to “make the case” for MMS reform and gather sufficient political support to replace the AVF.

Each of these examined cases provide strong support for the model’s predictions. As Table 7.1 below illustrates, Argentina’s reforms strongly supported all of the empirical predictions for the first pathway to reform, and the reforms in Qatar and Sweden supported all of second pathways’ predictions. Although Tamim does not appear (at least publicly) to have attempted to lower any potential opposition to Qatar’s MMS reform (H2d), his “somewhat unique position of being able to turn personal conviction into policy” eliminated any need to do so (Roberts 2011b). Likewise, although the absence of support from any opposition parties contrasts with the “consensual nature” that typically characterizes Sweden’s policymaking process, Sweden certainly attempted to create, and temporarily achieved, political support for its preferred military manpower polices.8

8 The värnplikt in 2017 rather than adopting a “hybrid” system that included both volunteers and conscripts. Still, the public remained largely disinterested in the issue of MMS, and no strong public debate preceded either reform.

8 As former Defence Minister Tolgfors notes, the Social Democrats’ representative on the 2007-2008 Defence Commission had supported the 2008 report (Ds 2008: 48), which called for Sweden to suspend conscription and adopt the AVF.
Table 7.1 — Summary of Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>H1:</strong> Changes in domestic MMS preferences will produce MMS reforms if policymakers connect these changes with their prospects of political survival.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1a: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not produce MMS reforms unless these domestic actors are a part policymakers’ winning coalitions.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b: Changes in domestic MMS preferences will not result in MMS reforms unless military manpower issues are salient with members of policymakers’ winning coalitions.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1c: Changes in the public’s MMS preferences are more likely to result in MMS reforms in democratic states than in nondemocratic ones.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H2:</strong> Changes in leader MMS preferences will result in MMS reforms only if leaders believe that implementing these reforms will not threaten their likelihood of retaining political office.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a: Changes in elite MMS preferences will not likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition maintains strong, opposing MMS preferences.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely result in MMS reforms if the winning coalition does not maintain strong, opposing MMS preferences.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2c: Changes in elite MMS preferences will more likely produce MMS changes in states with institutional designs that favor the executive.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2d: Leaders with strong MMS preferences will attempt to create support for (or lower opposition) to their preferred military manpower policies to enable opportunities for MMS reform.</td>
<td>Weakly Supported</td>
<td>Moderately Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H3:</strong> Leader changes will result in MMS reforms if these changes accompany changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences and/or lower barriers to MMS reform.</td>
<td>Mixed Support</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: If leader changes represent “dramatic” regime changes such as revolutionary transformations or the replacement of leaders from contending political factions, MMS changes are more likely to occur.</td>
<td>Mixed Support</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b: If leader changes represent “mild” regime changes such as the replacement of leaders from the same political groups, MMS changes are less likely to occur.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, the model’s predictions of leader change received mixed support from the examined cases. The end of the Proceso and the restoration of a functioning democracy resulted in a “radical” leadership change in which the new Argentine president (Alfonsín) opposed CMS. Nevertheless, the replacement of CMS did not occur until years after Alfonsín had left office and
public backlash to conscription following Carrasco’s murder left President Menem with little choice but to implement an AVF. Likewise, Qatar’s MMS reform following the “mild” regime change in which Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani transferred power to his son, Tamim, contrasts with the model’s prediction that MMS reforms more often follow “radical” regime changes. However, it is important to note that predictions about the relationship between leader change and changes in MMS preferences are probabilistic rather than deterministic. The study does not predict that MMS reforms only follow radical regime changes; rather, it suggests that these types of regime changes more likely precede MMS changes. Thus, while the study predicts that MMS changes following political transitions such as Qatar’s are perhaps unlikely to occur, it acknowledges that changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences can occur for a multitude of reasons other than changes in political leadership.

Each case study analysis also tested several alternative arguments and found none of them convincing. These additional tests examined a range of variables posited to influence MMS change and varied slightly in each case study to account for different regional, geostrategic, economic, and political contexts. Nevertheless, each case study included an examination of a three common alternative arguments. First, each case assessed whether statist approaches, which assume that decision makers formulate policy autonomously from societal influences, might better explain the observed MMS reforms; however, the study found no evidence to suggest that MMS changes are “immune” from domestic politics.9 Even in Qatar where the emir’s power is near-absolute, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani linked MMS reform to a broader set of policies that sought to address the perceived loss of values and discipline in Qatar’s youth—an issue that “strikes a deeply resonant chord” in a society that fears for the corruption of its youth

---

9 See Skidmore and Hudson (1993) and Risse-Kappan (1994) for comprehensive discussions of statist approaches.
(Roberts 2017, 160)—and the public’s desire to focus on challenges at home rather than those abroad.\textsuperscript{10}

Additionally, each case study explored whether changes in the economic and sociocultural implications of the state’s military manpower policies led directly to MMS changes rather than indirectly through their effects on the domestic political environment. Nevertheless, each case study analysis determined that changes in domestic and leader MMS preferences served as the proximate causes of MMS reform. Finally, each case study examined whether states reform their military manpower policies in response to changes in their security rather than domestic political environments and found that changes in domestic and leader MMS preferences better accounted for the observed MMS reforms. While changes in Sweden’s security environment certainly influenced its decision to replace the \textit{värnplikt} with an AVF and to later reactivate conscription, these changes alone were insufficient to produce MMS reforms. Only after political transitions led to changes in Sweden’s domestic political environment did Sweden reform its military manpower policies to better meet its changing security needs.

\textsuperscript{10} Roberts describes national service as a “token policy” that “pander[ed] to wider public opinion” (2017, 165); however, he provides no evidence to suggest that the Qatari public demanded national service, much less that this sentiment translated into MMS reform. Nevertheless, Tamim’s decision to reform the state’s MMS policies appeared to be in keeping with the public’s desire to focus on challenges at home rather than those abroad.
LIMITATIONS OF THE MODEL AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is chiefly limited in its use of a general model that explains the pathways to MMS reform but, with the exception of leader changes, does not explain the changes in domestic or leader MMS preferences that ultimately drive changes in states’ military manpower policies. In other words, the model answers the puzzle of how MMS changes happen without fully addressing why they occur. Like most other policy issue areas, a multitude of factors and conditions influence states’ MMS choices. Unlike existing studies that have attempted to explain MMS reform in specific cases or through statistical models that exclude causally significant factors, this study has attempted to provide a general model for MMS reform that can describe the universe of cases. However, the effort to create a general model that can describe all cases of MMS reform has perhaps created a model that can fully explain none. Still, the model’s inability to explain why MMS preferences change does not suggest that it offers little insights beyond the simple acknowledgement that ‘politics matters.’ By identifying the conditions under which changes in MMS preferences lead to MMS reform, the model offers important insights that increase our understanding of the larger causal sequences that produce these policy changes. Thus, even without an understanding of how or why domestic or leader MMS preferences change, understanding how these preferences translate into MMS reform allows us to understand many important steps in the overall process of MMS reform. To paraphrase Philip Tetlock, failing to learn everything about MMS reform is not tantamount to learning nothing.

Additionally, the study is limited by the nature of its research design. Although the study offers a general model of MMS reform, the limited number of cases used to assess the model’s predictions calls into question the generalizability of the study’s findings. A quantitative analysis that examines the universe of cases of MMS reform would produce generalizable findings;
however, the burden of coding domestic and leader MMS preference changes makes such an approach extremely time consuming. Existing data sets include variables such as MMS reform, leader changes, and proxies for many factors thought to influence states’ MMS choices; however, identifying domestic and leader MMS preferences requires extensive research and is therefore impractical for a large-N study.

Similarly, the inclusion of a single case study that follows the first pathway to MMS reform (changes in domestic MMS preferences) limits the study’s generalizability. Although Argentina’s MMS reform provides strong support for the model’s predictions, claims that the model describes all, or even most, cases of MMS reform demand the evaluation of other cases in a variety of regional, geostrategic, economic, and political contexts that also follow the first pathway to reform. Additional investigations such as Ethiopia’s transition to an AVF in 1991, which followed years of public opposition to conscription and its transition to a weakly democratic state (Ayele 2014), could likely illuminate some of the conditions under which changes in states’ domestic MMS preferences are apt to produce MMS reform. Furthermore, ongoing calls for a return to mandatory ROTC (reserve officer training course) and even general conscription by many Filipinos suggest that the Philippines may also provide a useful case to examine the first pathway to MMS reform. Even if public support for conscription does not result in changes to the Philippines’ military manpower policies, understanding why these domestic preferences do not translate into MMS reform might help to uncover antecedent conditions present in Argentina yet absent in the Philippines that help to explain how, and under what conditions, changes in domestic MMS preferences lead to MMS reforms.

Furthermore, the nature of the cases themselves limits the ability to generalize this study’s findings. The study deliberately selected each case to control for variance in potentially causal factors such as national wealth, regional or cultural influences, regime-type, and geostrategic environments. However, this broad survey design limits the researcher’s ability to isolate potentially causal mechanisms by conducting cross-case comparisons among similar cases that did not experience MMS reforms. Although lengthy periods of examination in each empirical chapter allowed for multiple observations that included both instances of MMS reform and ‘non-reform,’ a comparative analysis of multiple states in a particular region could perhaps better illuminate why some cases experience MMS reforms while other similar states do not.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite limitations of the scope of the study and the ability of the model to explain how and why changes in MMS preferences occur, this study makes several notable theoretical contributions. First, the study contributes to existing literature examining issues of MMS by offering a general model that explains the conditions under which states reform their military manpower policies. By identifying and describing the two pathways to MMS reform, the model accounts for MMS reforms in a variety of cases and under variable conditions. Unlike existing studies of MMS reform that have recognized the connective logic between domestic politics and states’ MMS choices, this study does not view domestic politics as a mediating variable but rather as the driver of MMS reforms. Additionally, by examining multiple cases with varying

---

12 See George and Bennett for a discussion of the benefits of using cross-case comparisons.
13 Deborah Avant provides a notable exception. She argues that the adoption of new MMS-types requires external shocks such as military defeats or revolutions that challenge state leaders’ conceptions of the appropriate forms of MMS and create focal points around which political consensus and support among dominant coalitions may emerge (2000, 48). However, the pathways to MMS reform model does not suggest that changes in leader or domestic MMS preferences require “shocks” and acknowledges that these changes may occur slowly over time.
cultures, levels of national wealth and economic goals, political institutions, and geostrategic environments, this study moves beyond previous accounts that have described particular reforms in one or two cases.

And although this study focused specifically on MMS change, it contributes to multiple bodies of literature that examine the relationship between domestic political changes and policy changes more broadly. For example, this study adds to works that have examined the “sticky” nature of institutions and have attempted to explain how, and under what conditions, they evolve. By explaining how states reform their military manpower policies, the model may offer insight into how other types of institutional changes occur and the impact of domestic and leader preferences on other types of policy reforms. Likewise, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that examines the relationship between leader beliefs and political outcomes. By explaining how leaders’ beliefs affect their MMS preferences, this study adds to works that have shown a causal connection between leader beliefs and intervention strategies (Saunders 2009), decisions to wage war (Horowitz and Stam 2014) or pursue nuclear weapons (Fuhrmann and Horowitz 2015), and decision making more broadly (George 1969 and Walker 1990). To the extent that leaders’ beliefs shape their policy preferences about a broad array of policy issues, the pathways to reform model could potentially connect changes in leader beliefs to other types of domestic policy reforms.

Finally, this study contributes to literature that has shown connections between leader changes and foreign policy outcomes. Previous studies have drawn connections between leader changes and decisions to wage (Mansfield and Snyder 1995) and end wars (Stanley 2009; Croco

---

2015; Quiroz Flores 2012) and provide foreign assistance (Milner and Tingley 2013). MMS is a domestic policy that affects virtually all citizens who must finance and fill the ranks of the armed forces, but it also has important security policy implications. Thus by illustrating the connection between leader changes and MMS reform, this study suggests that the same mechanisms that produce changes in military manpower policy following political transitions may also explain changes in a broad range of foreign policy outcomes.¹⁵

The pathways to reform model treats MMS as a dependent variable that changes based on political inputs; however, MMS may be equally important as an independent variable that affects economic, socio-cultural, political, and military outcomes. The demands on the state to provide security from external and internal threats, ensure economic growth and well-being, and promote social stability often conflict, making it difficult for leaders to do the things that they should do (Schultz 2013, 480; Schweller 2005; Nincic 1992, Chp.1). This study expressly avoided making political judgements of states’ MMS choices; however, future studies should examine the implications of states’ MMS choices. Specifically, future studies should examine the undertheorized effects of states’ MMS choices on the effectiveness of their armed forces.¹⁶

What affect, if any, do states’ MMS choices have on the performance of their armed forces? Undoubtedly, part of the challenge of investigating the outcomes of state’s MMS choices stems from the poorly identified relationship between MMS and military effectiveness. Although multiple studies have claimed that AVFs provide more skilled (Bandow 1991; Bandow 2000; Falk 1969; Poutvaara and Wagener 2007; Horowitz et al. 2011) and cohesive units (Cohen 1984,

¹⁵ The fact that other foreign policy issues such as trade (Rogowski 1987) and economic policy coordination (Putnam 1988), nuclear weapons programs (Hyman 2011), and the use of military force (Levy 1988) may also elicit strong domestic responses suggests the mechanisms that lead to MMS reform may also explain reforms in these issue areas.

¹⁶ See Chapter 1 for a review of literature examining the relationship between MMS and military effectiveness.
172; Gate’s Commission Report 1970), others suggest that conscription produces more effective militaries (see Moskos 1983, Marlowe 1986, Bloch 2000, and Brower 2004 among others). The weak relationship between MMS-type and war and battle outcomes only adds to the uncertainty surrounding the relationship between state’s MMS choices and the effectiveness of their armed forces.17

To assess the impact of state’s MMS choices on the effectiveness of their armed forces, future studies should move beyond studies that focus on single aspects of military effectiveness such as skill or readiness or that problematically equate military effectiveness with military outcomes. As Allen Millet and his coauthors note, “if victory were the sole criterion of effectiveness…one would conclude that the Russians were more effective than the Finns in the ‘Winter War’ of 1939-1940 or than the Germans in 1941-1945” (1986, 37). A better approach would provide a comprehensive analysis of a broad range of attributes of military effectiveness such as Brooks and Stanley’s (2007) study, which assesses military effectiveness by examining four key attributes—integration, skill, quality, and responsiveness. Because MMS-types have strengths and weaknesses that may, for example, lead to highly skilled but poorly integrated forces, the MMS-type(s) best suited to meet states’ military needs likely depends on the unique demands of their security environments. As Eliot Cohen (1985) suggests, MMS-types have strengths and weakness that make them better suited for some types of military operations than others. Therefore, any judgement of states’ MMS choices should examine the degree to which

17 See Boeka (2014). In an unpublished study, “Do All-Volunteer Forces Make Superior Militaries? An Empirical Analysis of the Relationship between Military Manpower Systems and Military Effectiveness,” I examine the relationship between MMS and war and battle outcomes using statistical analyses of 232 country-war observations and 405 battles from 1900 to 2003 and find weak evidence for a relationship between MMS-type and war or battle outcomes. The results of these analyses indicate a positive relationship between AVFs and battlefield effectiveness; however, these results are highly sensitive to modeling specifications, and factors such as regime-type, threat levels, and preponderance of military power appear to be better predictors of military effectiveness than MMS-type.
states’ military manpower policies align with their politico-military objectives and whether or not these MMS-types prove effective in accomplishing these specific goals.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

This study offers a number of implications for policymakers. For leaders seeking to change their states’ military manpower policies, the model suggests that the pathways to MMS reform depend strongly on factors outside of leaders’ direct control such as the MMS preferences of their winning coalitions and the nature of their institutional arrangements that either constrain or enable them to enact their preferred policies. Short of creating domestic support for their MMS preferences through strategies such as targeted information campaigns or leveraging key domestic actors to ease the passage of their preferred MMS policies, the model suggests that weak executives with winning coalitions that oppose MMS reform will likely be unable to implement their preferred MMS policies or risk losing political office in doing so. Therefore, leaders with weak institutional powers that desire politically unpopular MMS reforms should dedicate considerable energy and resources to generate support for their preferred policies and only pursue their desired reforms when, and if, there exists sufficient levels of domestic support.

This study focused on how states generate military manpower while ignoring who they allow (or compel) to serve. Because the same pathways to reform this narrow aspect of states’ broader military manpower policies likely apply to other aspects of MMS such as the assignment of women to combat roles or the integration of minorities in the militaries of ethnically diverse societies, understanding how and under what conditions leaders may implement these or similar reforms could help them to navigate the process of politically sensitive MMS reforms. Therefore, the pathways to MMS reform model suggests that leaders who desire to change these aspects of their states’ military manpower policies should do so only if the members of their winning
coalitions support such reforms, leaders can generate sufficient political support for their policy preferences, or the nature of their political institutions enable, rather than constrain, their ability to enact their preferred policies.

This study also has several implications that may apply to specifically to U.S. policymakers. Recent changes to U.S. military policies regarding women in combat roles and the service of transgender individuals suggest that these aspects of MMS reform may serve as more relevant, if not more important, aspects of the United States’ military manpower policies than debates over retaining the AVF or instituting some type of national service requirement.\footnote{For more on this debate, see Dionne and Drogosz (2002) and Sawhill (2017).} Therefore, acknowledging the conditions under which MMS reforms are apt to occur could help to guide policymakers as they seek to navigate these politically contentious issues.

Likewise, understanding how states reform their MMS policies is also important for U.S. efforts to influence the MMS policies of other states. The United States strongly influenced the MMS policies of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the U.S. Army frequently advises partnered governments as they rebuild (or establish) state security forces. To its credit, the latest U.S. Army manual on security force assistance (ATP 3-96.1), advises its security force assistance elements to “pay particular attention to the unique cultural factors and sensitives of the region” when advising and assisting U.S. partners as they organize their security forces (ATP 3-96.1, pg. 7-1). But while the manual stresses the importance of establishing recruitment programs that “assimilate local ethnic, family, and cultural themes that are appropriate for the environment and achieving the end state” (ATP 3-96.1, pg. 7-2), it views appropriate military manpower policies from only cultural and military lenses. Given the highly political nature of states’ MMS choices, a better approach would start with leader and domestic MMS preferences and find suitable
MMS-types that meet the states’ security demands while satisfying the demands of domestic and political actors whose support these policies require. Because “few topics are more political…than that of systems of military service” (Cohen 1985, 20), any effort to install a functioning MMS must strongly consider the levels of domestic support for the state’s military manpower policies and the institutional arrangements that either constrain or enable domestic leaders to implement the MMS-types that best support their (and the United States’) security needs.

Gregory Foster argues that military manpower makes an “irreplaceable and unique” contribution to the development and implementation of military strategy (1987, 14). Military manpower affects logistical requirements, makes decisions on the battlefield, consumes and employs resources, and physically interacts with battlefield environments to shape military outcomes in ways that advanced weapons systems and technology cannot (Foster 1987, 14-15). However, Robert Prie notes that policymakers more often view MMS as a “residual” rather than an input of strategy formulation (1987, 55). As militaries grow increasingly reliant on advanced technology and developments in unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and other autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons lead to further reductions in military manpower requirements, policymakers will likely be tempted to treat military manpower with even less consideration than other aspects of their defense policies. But as U.S. Army Chief of Staff Mark Milley notes, militaries will always “need boots on the ground.” Thus, notwithstanding the potential for large reductions in military manpower requirements, policymakers will likely be tempted to treat military manpower with even less consideration than other aspects of their defense policies. But as U.S. Army Chief of Staff Mark Milley notes, militaries will always “need boots on the ground.”

---

19 Prie offers multiple reasons why military manpower may not serve as “an input into the strategic calculus” (1987, 55). First, he suggests that discussions of comparative military power are conducted in terms of force structures (e.g. divisions, tactical air wings, navy ships and battle groups) rather than troop sizes. Second, he suggests that “dollars, not people, [serve as] the binding constraint (1987, 57). Finally, he argues that the “fuzzy nature of strategy development” and “ambiguities” and “imprecision” in the use of the term strategy means that MMS may be overlooked or simply rendered irrelevant (1987, 58-60).

decreases in the size of future militaries, decisions about the appropriate forms of MMS will likely remain highly relevant.

Additionally, as technological advances lead to declining force structures, questions of “who serves when not all serve” are likely to grow increasingly salient in AVFs and conscripted militaries alike. Even in states with well-established AVFs, placing the defense burden on an increasingly small portion of the population may create (or exacerbate existing) civil-military gaps with important societal and national security implications. For example, although the U.S. military and many of its public officials view the AVF as an essential element of the professionalism and quality of its armed forces, a supposed civil-military gap has led many influential public figures to advocate for universal service to restore the links between the state, armed forces, and society.

Writing in 1987, Sam Sarkesian argued that “successful [military manpower] policy [must] satisfy a military requirement for tough, intelligent combat troops in sufficient numbers to prevail in combat, the political need for a punch of sufficient credibility to deter aggression, the fiscal need to hold down standing forces that contribute nothing to the gross national product, and social concerns about the just use of force in the modern world” (1987, 72). Just as it was then, developing military manpower policies that satisfy all of these requirements is difficult, if not impossible. Acknowledging the inherently political nature of their states’ MMS choices,

---

21 For example, every Quadrennial Defense Review since 2006 has listed preserving the All-Volunteer Force as a strategic priority, and the Association of the United States Army describes the AVF as a “national treasure.”

22 For example, former ISAF commander General Stanley McChrystal has long advocated for a national service program (see McChrystal 2014 and 2017), and U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel has issued repeated calls for reinstating the draft. In an off-the-record conversation a with a Unified Combatant Commander responsible for all U.S. military forces in one of six areas of responsibility (AOR), the general conveyed strong feelings about the need to reinstate the draft to mend what he perceived as a civil-military divide.
policymakers may be best served by selecting military manpower policies that align with
domestic and/or leader MMS preferences and then work within these systems to best meet their
states’ economic, socio-cultural, and security needs. As Robert Prie suggests, “once a strategy is
decided upon, it’s up to the [military] manpower to support it” (1987, 57).
## APPENDIX A
### QATAR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

| Intro (5 minutes) | • Affiliation (U.S. military and Georgetown)  
• Purpose: As a doctoral candidate at Georgetown, I am working on a dissertation project that focuses on the way in which states generate and retain military manpower (e.g., conscription, all-volunteer force structure, etc.) and the factors that influence states to implement changes to these policies  
• My research design includes multiple case study analyses to include a controlled cross-case comparison of Oman and Qatar. Answering my research questions will require me to interview government and national security elites in Qatar to better understand how the country formulates its MMS policies  
• What I learn from today’s discussion will help to inform my dissertation project  
• With your permission, I would like to record our conversation today – afterwards, I am more than happy to share my notes with you to make sure that I have accurately captured everything that we have discussed here today  
• I will cite any information from today’s discussion as information obtained from you unless of course you prefer your remarks to be non-attributional  
• Do you have any questions about the purpose or plan for the interview? |
| --- | --- |
| Bio data | Before we begin, I would like to ask you for some biographical data. Please state your:  
• Full name / title  
• Affiliation to include time in service/present position |
| Grand Tour Qs (1-5 minutes) | • Tell me, what do you know about Qatar’s military manpower policies, specifically, WRT its implementation of conscription in 2014?  
• PROBE: What do you believe was the justification for Qatar’s decision to implement conscription in 2014?  
• PROBE: Why did Qatar implement this policy change in 2014 and not sooner?  
• Do you know if Qatar has relied on conscription in any form since its independence in 1971?  
• Who was conscripted (e.g. Qataris or foreign nationals)?  
• What were the terms of service?  
• Why did Qatar rely on conscription?  
• Why did Qatar eventually implement an AVF? |
| Military Force Structure (15-20 minutes) | I now want to ask you a few questions about the structure of Qatar armed forces and the roles of each service component.  
• What is the basic structure of the Qatar Armed Forces? In other words, what are the basic service components and how do they relate to civilian leadership? (i.e. Ministry of State for Defense Affairs)  
• PROBE: Does the Ministry of State for Defense of Affairs oversee the military? If so, what specific role does it play?  
• PROBE: What are the reporting chains within the services and between the services and the Qatari leadership?  
• Who can be recruited for military service?  
• PROBE: What are the eligibility requirements for service in the Qatar Armed Forces? Do these requirements vary by service component?  
• PROBE: What is the role of foreign nationals in the Qatar Armed Forces?  
• PROBE: Approximately how many expats serve in the Qatar Armed Forces?  
• PROBE: How are they recruited?  
• PROBE: Have any of these eligibility requirements changed since Qatar implemented conscription?  
• Is Qatar able to meet its recruitment and retention goals?  
• PROBE: Does the fact that Qatar provides generous subsidies to its citizens and numerous opportunities for employment in the public sector affect its ability to meet its recruiting/retention goals?  
• PROBE: Was Qatar able to meet these goals before implementing conscription?  
• PROBE: Did the need to meet recruiting/retention goals factor into Qatar’s decision to implement conscription?  
• How are soldiers compensated for military service (e.g. pay, entitlements, etc.)?  
• PROBE: How does this compare with compensation/benefits from other sources of employment? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors (25-30 minutes)</th>
<th>I now want to ask you a few questions about how Qatar formulates its MMS policies, and who is involved in this policy formulation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                        | How does Qatar formulate its military policies?  
|                        | PROBE: Is this process the same for all military policies, or do these processes differ for policies that affect Qatar’s military manpower?  
|                        | Who has the ability to influence military policies in Qatar?  
|                        | PROBE: Why do you suggest that these actor(s) have the ability to influence Qatar’s MMS policies?  
|                        | PROBE: Which of these actors have the most influence?  
|                        | PROBE: Do these actors merely recommend policies and/or advise the Emir, or do they have an ability exert independent influence or pressure on the Emir?  
|                        | PROBE: To the best of your knowledge, did these actors strongly support the Qatar’s decision to implement conscription? Did they play a role in the implementation of this policy?  
|                        | PROBE: Does the Majili Al-Shura or Advisory Council hold any influence over the state’s MMS policies?  
|                        | Does the military (MSDA) have an ability to influence these policies?  
|                        | PROBE: Did the military (MSDA) play a role in Qatar’s decision to implement conscription? If so, how?  
|                        | Do members of the Qatar Armed Forces (MSDA) feel that conscription better supports the defense needs of Qatar than say a system based on military conscription?  
|                        | PROBE: Did the military (MSDA) hold these beliefs before Qatar implemented conscription?  
|                        | What is the relationship between the Qatari public and the military?  
|                        | PROBE: Does the public identify positively with military service?  
|                        | PROBE: What is the public’s attitude towards military veterans?  
|                        | PROBE: Does the public support conscription? If not, which sectors oppose these policies?  
|                        | PROBE: Did the Qatari government face any resistance from the public when it implemented conscription?  
|                        | How is the military portrayed in the media?  
|                        | PROBE: Do you believe that this coverage has any effect on the public’s attitudes towards the military? If so, how? Why do you believe this to be the case?  
|                        | PROBE: How was the decision to implement conscription reported in the media?  
|                        | Are there any signs of that members of the Al-Thani family hold different preferences regarding Qatar’s military manpower policies?  
|                        | PROBE: Is there any reason to believe that Tamim’s policy preferences diverged from his father’s? If so, why?  
|                        | PROBE: Did Hamad or Tamim provide any indication that they would implement conscription prior to when this decision was first reported in 2013?  
| Security (10-15 minutes) | Now, I would like to discuss Qatar’s security environment and the relationship between the country’s security needs/goals and its military manpower policies. |
|                        | What (or who) do you see as the biggest threat to Qatar’s security? Why?  
|                        | PROBE: Has the nature of this threat changed over time?  
|                        | PROBE: What is the military’s role in responding to this threat(s)?  
|                        | PROBE: Did the Qatari government feel that the implementation of conscription was necessary to address this threat(s)?  
|                        | Are there other external or internal threats that pose significant challenges to Qatar’s security?  
|                        | PROBE: Have the nature of these threats changed over time?  
|                        | PROBE: Did the Qatari feel government feel that the implementation of conscription was necessary to address this threat(s)?  

- Do service members continue to receive benefits after serving in the military (e.g. retirement benefits, educational allowance like GI Bill)?  
- PROBE: How does this compare with compensation/benefits from other sources of employment?  
- PROBE: Does the government advertise these benefits to recruit service members?  
- PROBE: In your opinion, is this advertising effective? Why or why not?

- How does Qatar formulate its military policies?  
- PROBE: Is this process the same for all military policies, or do these processes differ for policies that affect Qatar’s military manpower?  

- Who has the ability to influence military policies in Qatar?  
- PROBE: Why do you suggest that these actor(s) have the ability to influence Qatar’s MMS policies?  
- PROBE: Which of these actors have the most influence?  
- PROBE: Do these actors merely recommend policies and/or advise the Emir, or do they have an ability exert independent influence or pressure on the Emir?  
- PROBE: To the best of your knowledge, did these actors strongly support the Qatar’s decision to implement conscription? Did they play a role in the implementation of this policy?  
- PROBE: Does the Majili Al-Shura or Advisory Council hold any influence over the state’s MMS policies?  

- Does the military (MSDA) have an ability to influence these policies?  
- PROBE: Did the military (MSDA) play a role in Qatar’s decision to implement conscription? If so, how?  

- Do members of the Qatar Armed Forces (MSDA) feel that conscription better supports the defense needs of Qatar than say a system based on military conscription?  
- PROBE: Did the military (MSDA) hold these beliefs before Qatar implemented conscription?  

- What is the relationship between the Qatari public and the military?  
- PROBE: Does the public identify positively with military service?  
- PROBE: What is the public’s attitude towards military veterans?  
- PROBE: Does the public support conscription? If not, which sectors oppose these policies?  
- PROBE: Did the Qatari government face any resistance from the public when it implemented conscription?  

- How is the military portrayed in the media?  
- PROBE: Do you believe that this coverage has any effect on the public’s attitudes towards the military? If so, how? Why do you believe this to be the case?  
- PROBE: How was the decision to implement conscription reported in the media?  

- Are there any signs of that members of the Al-Thani family hold different preferences regarding Qatar’s military manpower policies?  
- PROBE: Is there any reason to believe that Tamim’s policy preferences diverged from his father’s? If so, why?  
- PROBE: Did Hamad or Tamim provide any indication that they would implement conscription prior to when this decision was first reported in 2013?

- What (or who) do you see as the biggest threat to Qatar’s security? Why?  
- PROBE: Has the nature of this threat changed over time?  
- PROBE: What is the military’s role in responding to this threat(s)?  
- PROBE: Did the Qatari government feel that the implementation of conscription was necessary to address this threat(s)?  

- Are there other external or internal threats that pose significant challenges to Qatar’s security?  
- PROBE: Have the nature of these threats changed over time?  
- PROBE: Did the Qatari feel government feel that the implementation of conscription was necessary to address this threat(s)?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Misc Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **What is Qatar’s relationship with other countries in the region?**  
- PROBE: Do these relationships in any way influence Qatar’s military manpower policies? If so, how?  
**How would you describe Qatar’s foreign policy?**  
- PROBE: Has Qatar’s foreign policy changed significantly since Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani become the emir? If so, how?  
- PROBE: Does Qatar feel that it can better support its foreign policy with conscripted forces? If so, how?  
- PROBE: Do you see any relationship between Qatar’s foreign policy and its military manpower policies?  |
| **Conclusion** | **Misc Questions** |
| Are there any sources that you recommend I review?  
- Public opinion/polling data?  
- Consolidated place for data on speeches and legalization decrees?  
- Do you have any additional thoughts about Qatar or its military manpower policies that you would like to share? |
## APPENDIX B

### SWEDEN INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

| Intro (5 minutes) | • **Affiliation** (U.S. military and Georgetown)  
• **Purpose:** As a doctoral candidate at Georgetown, I am working on a dissertation project that focuses on the way in which states generate and retain military manpower (e.g., conscription, all-volunteer force structure, etc.) and the factors that influence states to implement changes to these policies.  
• My research design consists of analyses of multiple case studies to include Sweden’s 2010 and 2017 military manpower policy reforms. Answering my research questions will require me to interview government and national security elites in Sweden to better understand how the country formulates its MMS policies.  
• **What I learn from today’s discussion will help to inform my dissertation project.**  
• With your permission, I would like to record our conversation today. I will cite any information from today’s discussion as information obtained from you unless of course you prefer your remarks to be non-attributional.  
• **Do you have any questions about the purpose or plan for the interview?** |
| --- | --- |
| Bio data | Before we begin, I would like to ask you for some biographical data. Please state your:  
• **Full name / title**  
• **Affiliation** to include time in service, present position, or other relevant information such as service on Defense Commission or special inquiries  
• (How are officers in these commissions selected?) |
| Grand Tour Question (1-5 minutes) | • **Tell me, what do you know about Sweden’s military manpower policies, specifically, WRT its decision to replace conscription with an AVF in 2010 and then reinstate conscription in 2017?**  
• **PROBE:** What factors do you believe influenced Swedish leaders’ decisions to implement these policy reforms?  
• **PROBE:** Why did Sweden implement an AVF in 2010 and not sooner?  
• **PROBE:** What, if any, changes in Sweden’s security or domestic political environments led its leaders to reinstate conscription in 2017?  
• Was conscription deemed unsuitable in 2010? If so, why?  
• If conscription was deemed unsuitable in 2010, why did Sweden’s leaders elect to reinstate a similar military manpower policy just seven years later? |
| Defence Policy Making Process (15-20 Minutes) | **Can you please explain the defense policy making process in Sweden—from Defence Commission (Försvarsberedningen) to Defence Bill to government propositions to policy?**  
 o **On the Parliamentary Defence Commission (Försvarsberedningen)**  
  o **PROBE:** How are members of the Försvarsberedningen selected?  
  ▪ Does the MINDEF or government have any influence over who is selected?  
  o **PROBE:** What is the political significance of the Försvarsberedningen’s reports? Is the government in any way (formally or informally) bound by the Commission’s findings?  
  o **PROBE:** To what extent is the government bound by the recommendations of these reports?  
  ▪ Did the reports leading up to the 2009 and 2015 defense bills in any way tie the Alliance or Social Democrats hands? Put differently, were these reforms inevitable?  
  o **PROBE:** Is the defense review process apolitical, or do the reports tend to reflect the interests of certain political parties or domestic groups? **In other words, how independent is the Commission?**  
  ▪ Does the MINDEF or government have any influence over the Commission’s findings?  
  o **PROBE:** Could you please explain the review process for the Defense Commission’s reports?  
  ▪ Who reviews the reports?  
  ▪ How do referral bodies influence the process? (e.g., Defense Education and Training, the Military Council, Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, etc.)  
  ▪ Whose approval is required to publish the reports? |
|  | • **What role do the standing Defense Committee, other committees (e.g. Finance and Foreign Affairs), and special inquiries serve in the development of Sweden's defense policies?**  
 o **PROBE:** Do these reports carry more or less weight than reports/inquiries from the Defense Commission?  
 o **PROBE:** How are members appointed? Do opposition members sit on these Committees?  
 o **PROBE:** Are the (standing) Defence Committee’s views a reflection of the government’s views, or is it possible for variance to exist between the committee and the governing coalition policy preferences?  
 o **PROBE:** Do opposition members sit on these Committees?  
 o **Do other actors (outside of the Riksdag) have the ability to influence military policies in Sweden?** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politics of Reform</th>
<th>I now want to ask you a few questions about the political aspects of Sweden’s military manpower policy reforms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• PROBE: Were there any other organizations or groups calling for the repeal of conscription?</td>
<td>• Both reforms occurred shortly after changes in the governing coalitions. What, if any, relation do these political changes have to military manpower changes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o If so, what influence did they have?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Many of the factors that the Moderate-led Alliance cited as justifications for MMS reforms were present during the Social Democrat-led government. Why did the Social Democrats not also consider replacing conscription with an AVF (or did they)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o If so, why were they able to influence Sweden’s military manpower policies in 2009 and not sooner?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Not all parties within the Alliance supported the replacement of conscription (most notably the Liberals). Why was the Moderate-led coalition willing/able to implement MMS reforms without consensus, even within their own coalition?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What influence, if any, does Sweden’s Defense Industry hold in the defence policy making process?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Factors that are commonly associated with the 2017 reforms (namely a worsening security environment) were apparent under the Moderates. Some members of the coalition supported a return to conscription but did the Moderate Party? If so, why did this support not translate into MMS reform?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has this changed over time?</td>
<td>o What role does the desire to reach political consensus play in the development of Sweden’s defense policies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PROBE: To the best of your knowledge, what role, if any, did these actors play in Sweden’s 2010 and 2017 MMS reforms?</td>
<td>o PROBE: How would you describe the defence policy making process? Consensual vs. partisan? Politicized vs. rationalistic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What importance would you say that political parties place(d) on MMS reform? In other words, how do concerns for MMS policies compare with political parties’ concerns for other domestic political or defense issues?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Why did the Moderates pass a defense bill that lacked political consensus (153-150 votes)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: To your knowledge did the Alliance or Social Democrats run on a platform that included revisions to the state’s MMS policies in either the 2006 or 2014 elections?</td>
<td>o Who opposed this defense bill and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: Did the Defence Commission or special commission reports in any way alter the Moderates beliefs about the value of conscription, or did they enter office desiring an AVF?</td>
<td>o What was the level of participation by the Social Democrats and other parties in the formulation of the 2009 Defence Bill?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were there any political organizations or other groups calling for the repeal/reinstatement of conscription?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Is conscription viewed as having a value in and of itself or in any way related to Swedish identity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: If so, what influence did they have and how did they exert this influence?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Have views about the social value of conscription changed over time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: Why were they able to influence Sweden's military manpower policies in 2009 and not sooner?</td>
<td>o PROBE: Has the recent influx of immigrants (or New Swedes) altered the debate? In other words, is conscription seen as a way to integrate new Swedes into Swedish society?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To what extent did socio-cultural aspects of conscription influence the debates surrounding Sweden's military manpower reforms?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of the MINDEF/Military in policymaking</td>
<td>I would now like to ask you some questions about the structure of Sweden’s defence organizations and their relation to Sweden’s defence policymaking process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o I understand that Sweden’s defence structure is perhaps somewhat unique in that it’s ministries do not have ministerial control over their agencies. How does the relationship between the MINDEF and the SAF influence the MINDEF’s ability influence policy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: The 2014 Audit Report called for “systematizing the communications between the SAF and Government Offices IOT provide the Government with comprehensible accounts of the status and development of the military forces.” In your experience, would you say that there is a need to improve communication between the SAF and the Ministry of Defence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What is the Minister of Defense’s role in the defence policy making process?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PROBE: How is the MINDEF appointed? By party/governing coalition? By the Prime Minister?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What role does ideology play in the selection of the MINDEF? To your knowledge, did Reinfeldt/Tolgfors generally agree on defence policies? Do Löfven and Hultquist?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is it reasonable that MINDEF has divergent opinions from the current government (and can stay on….)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PROBE: Are there informal means that the Minister of Defence can use to influence defense policies such as MMS?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For example, what is the MINDEF’s role in the appointment of the members of the Försvarsmakten and the formulation of the Defence Bill?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do other cabinet members play a prominent role in the defence policymaking process? If so, how?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Many senior SAF leaders were quite vocal about the SAF’s state of readiness in 2012 and beyond (e.g. the CHOD), and the SAF had communicated a lack of resources since 2009 for fulfilling its assigned roles/missions. Do you believe that these comments/sentiments had any effect on the military manpower debate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: Was there a feeling that the military could have accomplished its mission-based role with sufficient manning/resources or was there a preference for returning to its original territorial defence mission?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PROBE: What steps did the SAF take to increase recruitment once readiness/recruitment was identified as an issue?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were these measures directed by the MINDEF or government?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Did (does) the SAF have a preference (stated or unstated) regarding whether Sweden should maintain conscription or move to an AVF?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: Did these MMS preferences vary by service component?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o PROBE: Did the SAF in any way influence or attempt to influence the defence policy making process? How so?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Are there informal means that the Försvarsmakten can use to influence defense policies such as MMS?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Opinion and the Media</td>
<td>I now want to ask you a few questions about how Sweden formulates its MMS policies, and who is involved in this policy formulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                               | • **What is the relationship between the Swedish public and the Försvarsmakten?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: How salient were the 2006-2008 and 2014-2017 defence debates among the Swedish public?  
|                               | • **Polling suggests that the public supports conscription, but are there sectors of the population that do not? If so, which sectors oppose these policies?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: Did the Swedish government face any resistance from the public when it implemented the MMS reforms in 2009 or 2017?  
|                               | • **What explains the Swedish public's opposition to NATO membership?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: How do Swedes' reconcile their support for participation in NATO operations with their lack of support for NATO membership?  
|                               | • **What role does the media play in the formulation of defence policies?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: How do Swede's tend to get their information about defence policies/security issues?  
|                               |   • PROBE: Were the 2006-2008 and 2014-2017 debates frequently discussed in the media?  
|                               |   • PROBE: How is increasing aggression by Russia reported in the Swedish media?  
|                               |   • PROBE: Do you believe that this coverage has any effect on the public's attitudes towards the military? If so, how? Why do you believe this to be the case?  
|                               |   • PROBE: How was the decision to implement conscription reported in the media?  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Now I want to ask you a few questions about changes in Sweden’s security environment and any possible connections to changes in Sweden’s military manpower policies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                               | • **What, if any, relation is there between Sweden's decision to adopt an AVF in 2009 and an increasingly favorable security environment in the post-CW era?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: Why did Sweden not adopt an AVF sooner?  
|                               |   • PROBE: (How) Did Russian aggression in Georgia influence the debate?  
|                               | • **What, if any, relation is there between Sweden's decision to adopt an AVF in 2009 and its growing participation in international operations?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: Why not simply have conscripts deploy overseas? (This seems to work fine in Denmark.)  
|                               |   • PROBE: Why not simply adopt a dual system like today?  
|                               | • **The Social Democrats have cited an increasingly threatening security environment as justification for re-instating conscription. How is a return to conscription expected to improve defense?**  
|                               |   • PROBE: Did the Social democrats simply believe that the AVF could not provide sufficient manpower to fill SAF units **OR** did they also question the military effectiveness of units manned with volunteers?  
|                               |   • PROBE: Why did the 2009 law allow volunteers to leave the service early?  
|                               |   • PROBE: The Social Democrats new defence doctrine calls for a return to a more traditional national defence focus yet still values support for international operations? How is the return to conscription supposed to manage the “accessibility” problems were used to justify the 2009 reforms?  
|                               |   • PROBE: In your opinion, had the Moderates remained in power, would they have been forced to reinstate conscription?  |
Why not just join NATO? This seems like a reasonable way to promote Sweden's defense and assure solidarity with its European allies?

- PROBE: Why have Social Democrats refused to launch an inquiry into joining NATO?
- PROBE: Why do Moderates now publically support NATO when their support was tepid at best while they were in power?
- PROBE: Where do other political parties stand on the NATO issue?
- PROBE: What influence does the lack of strong public support for NATO membership have in the Social Democrats position on NATO membership?

MMS Policy (Questions for Chief of Defence Staff’s Staff)

- How are soldiers now recruited (both conscripts and volunteers)?
  - PROBE: How does the “web-based patterning” work?
  - PROBE: Approximately how many eligible recruits are required to serve?
  - PROBE: Are there exemptions? If so, who is exempted from mandatory military service?
- How are soldiers compensated for military service (e.g. pay, entitlements, etc.)?
  - PROBE: How does this compare with compensation/benefits from other sources of employment?
- Do service members continue to receive benefits after serving in the military (e.g. retirement benefits, educational allowance like GI Bill)?
  - PROBE: How does this compare with compensation/benefits available to non-service members?
- Why did AVF cost more than advertised/anticipated?
  - PROBE: What is breakdown between spending for PAX vs. equipment, etc.?
- What steps did the SAF take to increase recruitment once readiness/recruitment was identified as an issue?
  - PROBE: Were these measures directed by the MINDEF or government?
- How are conscripts selected for military service?
- Did the SAF explore having an int’l brigade of conscripts (like Denmark)?
- Moderates cited poor readiness and the expense of conscription as justification for reform—(how) does the government plan to address these concerns under the new system?

Conclusion

- Are there other sources with whom you recommend I discuss Sweden’s MMS polices?
- Do you have any additional thoughts about Sweden or its military manpower policies that you would like to share?

Misc Questions
BIBLIOGRAPHY


309


Britz, Malena and Jacob Westberg. 2015. “Sveriges återtåg till närområdet [Sweden’s Retreat to the Local Area].” Internasjonal Politikk 73, no. 3: 423-431.


Ehteshami, Anoushiravan, and Steven Wright. 2007. “Political Change in the Arab Oil Monarchies: from Liberalization to Enfranchisement.” International Affairs 83, no. 5: 913-932.


King, Anthony. 2011. The Transformation of Europe’s Armed Forces: From the Rhine to


*International Organization* 42, no. 3 (Summer): 427-460.


rivalries.


_____. 2013. “Qatar’s Foreign Policy Adventurism: The Emir’s Plans to Win Over Uncle Sam.” *Foreign Affairs*, June 25.


Conscription” *Armed Forces & Society* 49, no. 6 (November): 1-22.


into the United Nations Convention Against Torture.” *International Organization* 62, no.1

11, no. 2 (June): 403-418.


_____. 1996. “Investigate Journalism and Political Accountability in South American

*Political Communication* 11: 19-33.

Behavioral Scientist* 47, no. 8 (April): 1072-1098.

https://www.government.se/speeches/2016/02/statement-of-government-policy-in-the-
parliamentary-debate-on-foreign-affairs-2016/.

Military in the United States.” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 15, no. 2 (Spring):
169-192.


