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Dutch Strategic Culture

-A CASE STUDY-

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Abstract: *Strategic culture is a concept both promising and controversial. The idea that culture impacts security policy and why an actor favors certain policies over others has appealed to scholars and analysts since the concept was first introduced in 1977. However, some actors have received more attention than others. Most notably, smaller countries seem to attract less attention. This thesis will make use of this gap in the literature and focus on the Netherlands. Specifically, it seeks to illustrate in what way the Dutch strategic culture has manifested itself after the Second World War up to the present day. Using Alistair I. Johnston's conceptual framework, this thesis found that the Netherlands was highly influenced by the war, drastically altering its security policy. It has sought to highly integrate itself in the international community, seeking cooperation in an effort to prevent war. Its policies are formed with this goal in mind and is highly grounded in international law, seeking the diplomatic over military action. While promising, these results should only form the basis of future, more comprehensive, research. I argue that the concept of strategic culture is too restrictive and fails to paint the complete picture. With this in mind, the concept of security culture is very promising for future research.*

Keywords: strategic culture, discourse analysis, international relations, small states

''To all nations War is a great matter. Upon the army death or life depends: it is the means of the existence or destruction of the State''

-Sun Tzu

''As a nation, we are strongly connected with the rest of the world. The security of the Netherlands is thus also intertwined with security situations in other parts of the world.''

-Ministerie van Defensie (2018)

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Introduction

Despite its modest size on a world map, the Netherlands is one of the founding fathers of several important contemporary international organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and (what is now known as) the European Union (EU) (de Wijk, 2007). As such, it has helped shape the world we have today. This might be surprising considering the size of the country itself. Therefore, there is a tendency to classify the Netherlands as a 'Small Power', whose role in international relations is typically characterized by a lack of political influence and vulnerability. Before World War Two (WW2), the Netherlands definitely acted out of a sense of vulnerability, espousing a strict policy of neutrality. However, there is a considerable debate on whether or not the Netherlands can be classified as a Small Power[1], as not all small countries are uninfluential and weak actors (Harryvan, 2009). Some argue that the loss of the colony of Indonesia, and thus the loss of the status of empire in general, constitutes the moment that the country turned into a Small Power (Stikker, 1966). However, others still thought it was a very important country. Instead of looking at the size of the Netherlands, they argued that the country's history, and economic and political importance determines it influence on the international stage (Harryvan, 2009). As such, Small States' Politics alone might not explain Dutch foreign and defense policy. Culture, and therefore strategic culture theory, might offer a different take on explaining Dutch security policy. Furthermore, this debate provides ample ground to see in what way the country has developed a strategic culture, if and why it prefers certain policies over others.

I agree with those that argue that one has to look beyond geographic size. If one does that, you come to the conclusion that the Netherlands is connected to the world around it like few other countries are; socially, economically and politically. Its foreign policy can therefore be described as a strategic affair (Knapen, Arts, Kleistra, Klem, & Rem, 2011). Still, while the Netherlands seems like an interesting case, hovering between thinking it is the smallest of the European great powers and playing the role of the biggest Small Power (Lindley-French & Tjepkema, 2010), there is very little dedicated research on a Dutch strategic culture. For the most part, talk of a Dutch strategic culture is done as part of a bigger study

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[1] See for example, Kruizinga, S., *A Small State? The Size of the Netherlands as a Focal Point in Foreign Policy Debates, 1900-1940* (2016) and Voorhoeve, J.C.C., *Peace, Profits and Principles: A Study of Dutch Foreign Policy* (1979).

focusing on a possible EU strategic culture[2]. While this is no less important than a dedicated study, it does provide opportunity to do a case study focused on the Netherlands itself.

Strategic culture research dates back to the late 1970s, when the concept was first used. Since then, there have been many case studies looking at various countries and how their strategic culture has manifested itself. These studies have relied on a multitude of frameworks, based on the various 'generations' of strategic culture research. This thesis will use a framework created by the third-generation scholar, Alistair I. Johnston to answer its research question:

In what way has the Dutch strategic culture manifested itself in the post-Second World War (1945-2018) period?

To answer this question, this research is structured as follows. The first chapter will serve to provide a literature review on strategic culture research and provide a theoretical framework on which this research is built. Specifically, attention is paid to the concept's third-generation of research, which forms the core of the conceptual framework used in this thesis. The second chapter will elaborate on this framework, explaining the variables that will be looked at. Furthermore, it will provide a brief overview of the tool of analysis used in the case study itself; discourse analysis (DA). The final chapter consists of the case study on the Netherlands, wherein the variables will be applied to the objects of strategic culture used in this study.

This thesis aims to contribute to strategic culture literature in two ways; it provides a dedicated case study on the Netherlands in strategic culture research and it will help in furthering research into an EU strategic culture, whose member states highly contribute to and have an impact on its foreign and defense policy.

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[2] See for example, Angstrom, J. and Honig, J.W., *Regaining Strategy: Small Powers, Strategic Culture, and Escalation in Afghanistan* (2012) and Biehl, H., Giegerich, B. and Jonas, A., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies Across the Continent* (2013).

Chapter I: Theoretical framework and literature review

This chapter will provide both an overview of the theory used in this study and a review of strategic culture literature. Specifically, it will look at the evolution of strategic culture theory. While the scope of this paper does not allow an extensive overview of strategic culture theory, it is nevertheless important to trace how the theory has evolved over time, and what its main criticisms and shortcomings are. This chapter will do so as succinctly as possible[3].

1.1 – Strategic culture theory

While he was not the first to do so, it was Jack Snyder who, in 1977, brought the linkage between culture and politics to modern security studies. In an effort to interpret Soviet military strategy, particularly pertaining to limited nuclear operations, he created the concept of strategic culture. Arguing that 'neither Soviet nor American strategists are culture-free, preconception-free game theorists' (Snyder, 1977, p. V), there exists a unique Soviet strategic culture, since both doctrines 'have developed in different organizational, historical, and political contexts, and in response to different situational and technological constraints' (Snyder, 1977, p. V). In effect, the point of departure of the concept is that states have many strategic policy options to their disposal, but that they, more often than not, prefer a certain type of policy as a result of these unique factors (Rasmussen, 2005).

Following Snyder's seminal article, there has been a substantial amount of work dedicated to the concept of strategic culture. Due to this, there have been attempts to group the different works, based on their characteristics. Two of these attempts stand out[4]; Forrest E. Morgan's classification based on methodological approaches[5] (Morgan, 2003) and Alistair I. Johnston's classification based on the approach to the concept, which up until then consisted, according to him, of three 'generations' (Johnston, 1995a).

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[3] For a more detailed and comprehensive analyses on strategic culture theory, I refer to Johnston, A.I., *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995) and Zaman, R.U., *Strategic Culture: A 'Cultural' Understanding of War* (2009).

[4] It could also be argued that strategic culture theory is part of different 'waves', seen in Michael C. Desch's 'Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies (1998)'. However, these groupings were created for cultural theories in general, not strategic culture specifically.

[5] Morgan divided the literature according to two distinct approached; the 'broad descriptive' and the 'analytical school'. The first is seen in the early works of the '70s and '80s and 'approaches the subject by doing broad historical analyses of patterns in (…) strategic behavior, (…) attributing culturally derived causes to those patterns, then projecting them into the future'. The second emerged in the '90s and uses 'more narrow definitions of culture and more rigorous methods for testing its effects on specific classes of strategic behavior' (2003, p. 6).

Since then, one could denote the emergence of a fourth generation as well (Libel, 2016) (Haglund, 2014) (Schmidt & Zyla, 2013) (Toje, 2008). While most writers on strategic culture accept Johnston's classification, there is still some debate on the exact dates tied to these generations (Zaman, 2009). Still, even though Colin S. Gray argues that the generations overlap (Gray, 1999a), there is common acceptance as to when the various peaks of academic debate are (Zaman, 2009). As such, this paper will use Johnston's use of literature 'generations' to analyze and discuss strategic culture theory as it has evolved from its inception.

1.1.1 – First generation

Work attributed to this first generation was created in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with Snyder's 1977 report seen as the first piece of literature of this generation (Zaman, 2009). Snyder was critical of the United States' (US) assumption that Soviet and US strategic thinking was similar and instead argued that 'it is useful to look at the Soviet approach to strategic thinking as a unique ''strategic culture''' (Snyder, 1977, p. V). He defined this concept as, 'the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation' (Snyder, 1977, p. 8). Much of the work that followed Snyder's was heavily influenced by the postulations made in that report. Furthermore, it followed a similar research objective as it focused to explain the difference in strategic thinking in the nuclear age by both the Americans and Soviets (Zaman, 2009).

After Snyder, Colin S. Gray is often hailed as the champion of the first generation of strategic culture research, adding greater theoretical rigor to the concept. Still, there are others who picked up on Snyder's concept, such as Ken Booth, who shared his idea that a strategic culture has an influence on the policies and behavior of states. While a proponent of the idea of the concept, he did highlight the problem of ethnocentrism, saying that 'an observer cannot completely eradicate his own cultural conditioning' (Booth, 1979, p. 16), which leads to an inevitable biased conclusion. To work around this problem, he offered 'cultural relativism' as a solution to overcome this issue. He argued that this would help in reducing the ensuing methodological issues stemming from ethnocentrism (Booth, 1979, p. 140). Gray further developed the concept by applying it to the US. Like Snyder on the Soviets, he too came to the conclusion that the US has a unique strategic culture influencing its behavior in a distinct way (Gray, 1981). He provided his own definition of the (American) strategic culture as being 'modes of thought and action with respect to force, derives from perception of the national historical experience, aspiration for self-

characterization, and from all of the many distinctively American experiences that characterize an American citizen' (Gray, 1981, p. 22).

The primary objective of these 'founding fathers' is, arguably, to emphasize the importance of strategic and cultural relativism. Opposed to earlier works, which centered on a rational and technical approach to strategy, these early theorists put culture at the center of their research, using it to explain national nuclear strategy (Desch, 1998). Still, these early works also faced criticism. While it can be lauded that they moved away from the dominant rational approach, the actual operationalization of strategic culture was seen as subjective and problematic (Zaman, 2009). This lead to the argument that strategic culture research suffers from tautology, with the separation of dependent and independent variables being an almost impossible task. Furthermore, the concept was commonly believed to be a fairly static one, which in turn lead to difficulties in creating cross-national studies (Lantis, 2009). These set of criticisms were acknowledged by the early proponents of, with Snyder moving somewhat away from his own concept (Snyder, 1990) and Gray agreeing that there were problems in the field (Gray, 1988).

1.1.2 – Second generation

The second generation of strategic culture literature, characterized by using a Gramscian perspective (Zaman, 2009), followed an initial decline in the interest in the concept, which was revived as the Cold War came to a close (Desch, 1998). According to Johnston, it starts 'from the premise that there is a vast difference between what leaders think or say they are doing and the deeper motives for what in fact they do' (Johnston, 1995b, p. 39). He further postulates that it is a general attempt to bring the concept back into the mainstream after the decline in interest following the first generation. The work that represents this generation most is, arguably, Bradley S. Klein's 1988 article[6]. To him, there are two points to the concept of strategic culture. First, it is to 'historicize what has lain implicit in realist theories of hegemony' and secondly, it is to 'render palpable the political production of hegemony articulated at a theoretical level by the Gramscian conception of hegemony' (Klein, 1988, p. 136). Defining strategic culture as a set of cultural attitudes 'based upon the political ideologies of public discourse that help define occasions as worthy of military involvement' (Klein, 1988, p. 136), he sees the study of strategic culture as the study of cultural hegemony of organized state violence. His research is done through studying the rhetoric

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[6] Klein, B.S., *Hegemony and strategic culture: American power projection and alliance defence politics* (1988).

employed by the elites, which he sees as having the aim to legitimize states' military activities (Klein, 1988, p. 135).

Unlike the first generation, the second opts to focus on the relationship between military doctrine and contemporary societal norms and sees historic context as less important as a determinant factor. This created problems for this generations' works. Johnston argues that the key issue of this generation is the relationship between behavior and the symbolic discourse (Johnston, 1995b). Klein and his contemporaries assume that elites can rise above the constraints of strategic culture. However, there is literature that suggests that this is not the case and they, too, are affected by the strategic culture that they produce[7]. This leads to the question of whether or not there are cross-national differences in operational strategy. There are arguments for both cases, however, second generation literature could not decide on an answer to both the cross-national question and the one pertaining to the relationship between behavior and strategic culture.

In the end, the second generation's approach to strategic culture research has been somewhat neglected, perhaps due to the diversity present in the body of literature of this generation. However, as Edward Lock argues, this generation may aid scholars in moving past the debate present in strategic culture studies (Lock, 2010).

1.1.3 – Third generation

The second generation was fairly short-lived and by the 1990s, the third had already emerged. This was for a large part due to the rise of constructivism in the early '90s (Lantis, 2009). Like Gray was for the first and Klein for the second, Johnston is seen as the foremost contributor to the third generation of strategic culture studies. However, he was not alone, as Elizabeth Kier (Kier, 1995) and Jeffrey Legro (Legro, 1996) are also seen to have contributed greatly to this body of literature[8]. In her work, Kier argues that it is culture that can best explain the French military doctrine in the interwar period and attributes its change to the organizational culture of its military organizations. On the military's role and use of force, she states that it is the way that a military's organization culture responds to the beliefs of civilian elites is what determines doctrine (Kier, 1995, p. 68). In the end, she argues, military doctrine is the product of domestic

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[7] See, for example, Hollander, E. P. (1985). Leadership and Power. In G. Lindzey and E. Aronson, *Handbook of Social Psychology: Special fields and applications* (pp. 485-537). New York: Random House.

[8] For a more extensive list on bodies of work contributing to the third generation, see Michael C. Desch's 'Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies (1998)', p.142.

organizational and political factors (Kier, 1995, p. 67). Therefore, her view of strategic culture is that it is not just a product of historical factors but that it is also shaped by the feelings and thoughts of civilian elites. Legro's work is quite similar to that of Kier and the focus on organizational culture can be seen in his work as well (Zaman, 2009). However, he differed from Kier by arguing that organizational culture also affected decision outcomes, not just a state's strategic preferences (Legro, 1996).

Despite the academic contribution that both authors brought to the third generation, Johnston's 1995 book[9] is seen as the 'quintessential third generation work on strategic culture' (Zaman, 2009, p. 80). He offered a new definition of the concept in his case study on the Chinese strategic culture[10], aimed at evading some of the methodological issues that earlier studies faced (Zaman, 2009). He himself describes this generation as, 'both more rigorous and eclectic in its conceptualization of ideational independent variables, and more narrowly focused on particular strategic decisions as dependent variable' (Johnston, 1995b, p. 41). Still, while he believes that the third generation is superior to the first two generations, he acknowledges that there are several problems with this generation as well. He points to the fallacies of realism in studying some strategic choices, using organizational culture as an independent variable and the 'standard' definition of culture used by third generation authors (Johnston, 1995b, p. 42).

Compared to the first two generations, the third generation differentiates itself by its 'willingness to consider other aspects of state policy, not just those relating to military factors, which may be influenced by culture. This can involve an attempt both to widen the notion of security beyond military matters and to investigate how such concerns are influenced by culture' (Howlett & Glenn, 2005, p. 124). By extending the focus of the concept, it also, implicitly, did so for the definition of culture in the strategic context (Libel, 2016). This lead to a great schism in strategic culture studies named after the two authors standing on either side of the academic clash, the Gray-Johnston debate. As Desch argues, the debate essentially goes to the heart of the 'unresolved debate about whether there can be a science of culture' (Desch, 1998, p. 154).

As mentioned before, the emergence of the third generation of literature came at roughly the same time as the rise of constructivism in international relations, and the latter clearly influenced the former (Zaman,

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[9] Johnston, A.I., *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995).
[10] Johnston defined strategic culture as, 'an integrated system of symbols (…) that acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting grand strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious' (Johnston, 1995, p.36).

2009, p. 78). As such, it is important to provide a short analysis of the influence of constructivism in strategic culture research, as this study is based on the third generation of works and uses a framework developed by a third-generation scholar, Alistair Johnston.

Desch called this early period in the 1990s a 'renaissance of interest in culture in security studies' (Desch, 1998, p. 149). This lead to the increased focus on cultural interpretations as the cause for state behavior. In his article, Alexander Wendt argued that interests and state identities can be seen as socially constructed (Wendt, 1992). With this in mind, the constructivist view on strategic culture is one that, 'contrary to materialist analyses of international security, ideals in the form of norms like those that constitute strategic culture create and define interests' (Lauterbach, 2011, p. 63). Scholars who use a constructivist approach to international relations and security studies believe that 'ideational, rather than material factors, explain particular national security policies (Poore, 2004, p. 61). They believe that 'intersubjective structures that give the material world meaning' (Katzenstein, Keohane, & Krasner, 1998, p. 679), which include culture, identity, norms and ideas, have an impact on state behavior (Lantis, 2009). These are factors which constructivist see as neglected in interest-based analyses, such as the ones done by neorealists. As such, their placed importance on the role of ideas of strategic culture, which are expressed in norms, in national security outcomes is what sets it apart (Lauterbach, 2011). These new ideas, coupled with the rise of constructivism, led to a new generation of strategic culture research, of which Lantis says has 'promising avenues for further development' (Lantis, 2002, p. 97). The book that arguably defined this new wave is Peter Katzenstein's *The Culture of National Security* (1996), focusing on how institutions, norms and any other cultural factors affect policies and state interests.

This generation's work is, as Theo Farrell argued, a mix of constructivism and culturalism. As such, he argued, had the possibility to 'view actors and structure much differently than the rationalist approaches to international relations' (Farrell, 2002, p. 50).

1.1.4 – Gray-Johnston debate

Johnston, representing the third generation, believes that it has several key strengths over the first generation. Firstly, he argues that by using behavior as an independent variable, it avoids the 'determinism' that permeates through first generation literature. He also highlights the work of Klein and Legro as examples of how some scholars conceptualize culture in a way that allows for variation. Secondly, he argues that its competitive theory testing nature overcomes the methodological weakness of the first generation (Johnston, 1995b, pp. 41-42). He seeks a concept of strategic culture that is 'falsifiable, or at

least distinguishable from non-strategic cultural variables' (Johnston, 1995b, p. 45). He argues that the first generation is incapable of doing this, as it has an 'everything but the kitchen sink' treatment of strategic culture (Johnston, 1995a, p. 13). In his mind, the original generation is either unwilling or unable to use the concept in a testable form (Greathouse, 2010).

Gray, on the other hand, believes that this approach obscures the holistic nature of the concept. He argues that, unlike what Johnston believes, behavior is not an independent variable, and as such, he cannot measure what impact strategic culture has on strategic behavior (Gray, 1999a, pp. 132-133). Instead, he believes that culture is a broad concept that both influences the outcomes and inputs of any decision made by elites (Gray, 1999b). In short, as he put it, 'all strategic behavior is cultural behavior' (Gray, 1999a, p. 129).

Stuart Poore argues that more empirical research will not solve the epistemological and conceptual problem due to the different ways of approaching the use of the concept of culture (Poore, What is the context? A reply to the Gray-Johnston debate on strategic culture, 2003). The critiques that both scholars throw at each other all have merit, which leaves the question of how to study strategic culture unanswered (Rasmussen, 2005). However, that does not mean that no study can be attempted, just that there are shortcomings to any study that must be acknowledged. Rasmussen further argues that the debate on the distinction between culture and behavior does not help understanding strategic culture. To solve the deadlock, he argues, 'we should regard culture as practice' (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 71).

1.1.5 – Fourth generation

While the Gray-Johnston debate is still very much at the forefront in strategic culture studies, and arguably has not progressed much further, there have been some recent studies that have begun reformulating the concept as being an umbrella concept, consisting of multiple competing subcultures. Starting from the belief that the Gray-Johnston debate has done little to overcome the fallacies of the concept, it argues that these studies, by some called the fourth generation, represent 'prospects of progress' (Libel, 2016, p. 139). Even though some authors already speak of a 'fourth generation', it is noted by Haglund that there is as of yet no common agreement of the emergence of the next generation, like there is on the first three (Haglund, 2014, p. 9).

Unlike previous generations, which only touched lightly on the effect of change on a strategic culture, this fourth generation claims to explain change in strategic culture through hegemonic epistemic communities, a concept put forth by Mai'a Cross (Cross, 2013). Using the notion of subcultures that influence the dominant overarching strategic culture, the 'too-much-continuity problem', as Alan Bloomfield calls it, can be solved. He argues, '(a)ccepting that there are two or more subcultures within a strategic culture can not only retrospectively explain why strategic policy changed but, arguably, if we become familiar with a particular state's strategic debates we may be able to predict that a 'change is coming' – and possibly even determine which of the currently subordinate subcultures may become dominant for a time' (Bloomfield, 2012, p. 454). A similar argument is made by Tamir Libel, who argues that his fourth-generation framework enables him to 'accurately describe how strategic culture influences policy change' '(b)y identifying the exact contents of competing ideas as well as their creators and those that advocate for them' (Libel, 2016, p. 153).

While it presents itself as the solution of the core debate that has been raging in strategic culture studies for years now, it also has its problems. The view that subcultures exist in strategic culture is a fresh take on the concept. However, Antti Seppo argues that it does not tackle the problem of determinism sufficiently, since they might not be distinct subcultures to begin with, as the fourth generation argues (Libel, 2016). He also warns of instrumentalism, comparing it to the second generation's treatment of strategic culture as a resource for political actors (Seppo, 2017).

1.1.6 – Conclusion

As the overview above makes clear, the concept of strategic culture is one that is highly contested, or as Haglund put it, as the 'unintelligible in pursuit of the incomprehensible' (Haglund, 2004, p. 479). Still, I agree with Poore who said that, '(d)espite the many drawbacks and limitations associated with strategic cultural research that have been highlighted, I would argue that there is much value in pursuing such an approach' (Poore, What is the context? A reply to the Gray-Johnston debate on strategic culture, 2003, p. 284).

Reviewing the debate, there are two elements that become clear, and arguably, everyone agrees on; there are, so far, three generations of strategic culture research, all approaching the concept differently and there is no clarity on the definition of the concept. The latter was succinctly summarized by Lock, who said that 'scholars appear to have considerable confidence regarding what strategic culture does yet do not know what it is exactly' (Lock, 2017, p. 2). This case study will make use of the framework that Johnston created in his 1995 book. As such, it might be prudent to make use of the definition he argued for in the same book as well[11]. While I do not disagree with the definition itself, I find it too narrow and overly convoluted, unnecessarily so. Furthermore, I believe it is too much connected to his paradigm. In other words, he developed this definition to operationalize his framework and he created his framework with a definition that can only be applied to that framework. I agree with Lock who argued that a clear understanding of what strategic culture is will aid the concept's usability. Therefore, I will use his definition of the concept, which is both broad and precise, but also brief and clear. He defines it as referring 'to patterns of common ideas regarding strategy distributed across populations' and he further defines strategy as, 'matters pertaining to organized violence' (Lock, 2017, p. 3). He argues, and I agree, that this definition is both broader and narrower than most existing definitions. It is broader in the sense that it leaves out any reference to how the concept should be studied and where one might find sources of strategic culture. These questions can be answered through empirical research. It is narrower in the sense that it offers a very precise definition of culture (Lock, 2017).

With that being said, this in no way influences my thoughts on Johnston's approach to strategic culture research. I agree with his assessment that the first generation is overly deterministic, effectively rendering the concept moot in terms of usability, as having a definition that encompasses everything does not help explain what it seeks to study (Sondhaus, 2006, p. 9), a point that Gray underscored himself (Gray, 1999b).

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[11] See footnote 8

While Johnston's approach has shortcomings, I believe it strikes a good middle ground between the predicative first generation and more normative second generation. Analyzing the three generations of literature allowed him to develop a framework and definition that, in his mind, is 'observable and falsifiable' (Johnston, 1995b, p. 33) and thus 'meets (his) criteria for assessing the analytic value of strategic culture' (Johnston, 1995a, p. 39). His definition of strategic culture lies at the heart of the paradigm and revolves around a 'system of symbols' of which strategic preferences can be surmised.

Still, I will use his approach and look at Dutch 'symbols' which can be analyzed to ascertain which type of strategic preferences the country has. The choice of Johnston to limit his framework to looking at three clear variables make his framework very testable in strategic culture studies. As such, he accomplished one of the goals he set for creating a research framework. This makes the framework an excellent model to base this study on. Not only that, the framework is also suitable to use in studies on an almost endless array of actors, not merely nation states.

Chapter II: Research design

This chapter will provide an overview on the chosen research design of this study. Specifically, it will elaborate on the choice of using Iain Johnston's conceptual framework, explain the framework he created and closely look at the variables that the case study will look at to determine in what way the Dutch strategic culture has manifested itself. Furthermore, it will describe the tool of analysis that will be used in analyzing the primary sources used for this study. As such, this chapter will provide the background for the analysis that will follow in the next chapter.

2.1 – Conceptual framework

This study will apply the conceptual framework developed by Alistair Johnston[12]. As argued in the previous chapter, I opt to use Edward Lock's definition over Johnston's, which is a more broadly applicable definition, and can therefore be used in unison with other frameworks as well. The definition he used, he created in as the answer to the various issues he saw as limiting and detracting from the effectiveness of strategic culture studies. However, I do not believe changing to Lock's definition, and using it in combination with Johnston's framework, will result in those issues to resurface, as this definition can serve the same purpose as his.

The first chapter has shown that various methodological problems exist in the various generations of research. By limiting his analysis, and thus this one as well, to three variables, Johnston sought to resolve these issues. To him, these three broad interrelated questions 'form the central security paradigm of a particular strategic culture' (Johnston, 1995a, p. 61). In other words, the answers to these questions are essential to indicate and define a strategic culture, and thus to any study into a particular strategic culture. The three variables are; 'basic assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment, that is, about the role of war in human affairs (whether it is inevitable or an aberration), about the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses (zero-sum or variable sum), and about the efficacy of the use of force (about the ability to control outcomes and to eliminate threats, and the conditions under which applied force is useful)' (Johnston, 1995b, p. 46).

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[12] This framework is explained in his article *Thinking about Strategic Culture* (1995b) and applied in his study on a Chinese strategic culture in his book *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995a).

The first variable, 'basic assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment, that is, about the role of war in human affairs (…)', can be interpreted as the view of a particular actor on the nature of war in the international system. More specifically, answering this question will reveal whether the actor regards war as an inevitability or more as an anomaly. While war and conflict can be seen across the world throughout the ages, actors might have different outlooks on war itself. Furthermore, there are those that argue that the causes of war differ as the times change (Howard, 1984). This is important to recognize in strategic culture research, as views on war might similarly change. However, what matters most for this study is that depending on how an actor views war, it will have a certain view on a specific scenario and thus also on how it will respond. If a state sees war as a possibility, something which is started by choice and thus can be prevented, it will likely treat war as a disease that can be cured. Pursuing such an objective will likely lead to a state fostering a more multilateral and cooperative system, one that aims to prevents conflicts from occurring through diplomacy. On the other hand, if a state views war as something that is an inevitable result of interactions between states it will likely be more willing to go to war or see it as a viable tool to end disputes. As such, this variable has tremendous implications for an actor's strategic culture and how it perceives the contemporary international structure.

The second variable, 'the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses (…)', can be broadly interpreted as the view of a particular actor in international relations and more specifically as being either a zero-sum game or a variable-sum game. A part of game theory, central characteristics of a zero-sum game are that '(o)ne player's gain is necessarily the other player's loss' and '(n)one of the players can gain anything by cooperating with any other player and coordinating his strategic moves or countermoves with those of the latter' (Bandyopadhyaya, 1993, p. 169). On the other end, you have a variable-sum game, of which the central characteristics are, '(o)ne player's gain is not necessarily the loss of the other' and '(t)he motives, and hence, strategies of the players are mixed'. This means that, 'they have the choice of either competing or cooperating with the adversary' (Bandyopadhyaya, 1993, p. 169). As the characteristics suggest, the variable inevitably looks closely at the degree of cooperation is willing to enter into. Or in other words, the value that is placed on cooperation in the international system. This, in turn, will demonstrate if the actor adheres to a more classical realist power-maximizing perspective or if it sees value in cooperation. The opening up and restricting of policy options by either adhering to a zero-sum or variable-sum outlook, and anything in between, aids in the creation of a list of strategic preferences, one of core parts of Johnston's paradigm (Johnston, 1995b).

The third, and final, variable, 'the efficacy of the use of force', can be interpreted as the value assigned by foreign policy elites to the use of force as a viable tool of international diplomacy. Here, the focus lies on the relationship between the use of force and diplomacy. Behind this relationship lies the debate of which works better. Obviously, this topic will not be broached in this paper. However, actors have an opinion on the efficacy of the use of force, which is what is important for this study. In the end, states have a different answer to what Alexander L. George calls 'a central question in the theory and practice of foreign policy', which is, 'under what conditions and how can military force and threats of force be used effectively to accomplish different types of foreign policy objectives at an acceptable level of cost and risk?' (George, 1998). The answer to this question, again, aids in creating a state's list of strategic preferences. If the actor sees the use of force as something that is acceptable, and indeed, advantageous in certain scenarios, then it is very likely that the use of force is placed high on the list of preferred action. On the other hand, if deems the use of force as something being used only as a last resort, then it will be placed on the bottom of the list.

2.2 – Tool of analysis

The primary sources used in the study will be analyzed using discourse analysis. While the scope of this paper does not allow for an in-depth discussion on discourse analysis, it is important to provide a short overview.

Succinctly describing what DA is, cannot be done. This is mainly due to the fact that is an umbrella term. It refers to a range of different approaches in several theoretical traditions and disciplines. Still, one key starting point for DA is that it generally refers to an approach in which some sort of language material, like written texts or speech, is analyzed. In her book, Stefanie Taylor defined DA as, '(…) the close study of language and language use as evidence of aspects of society and social life' (Taylor, 2013, p. 4). The use of discourses and discourse studies in IR, comes from the belief that social and textual processes are linked. The goal then, is to illustrate how this connection shapes the people think and act in the contemporary world (Milliken, 1999). The linkage between discourses and culture is important for strategic culture studies. Indeed, the perception of the world depends on ideologies and the concept of power constrains the use of language (Scheu Lottgen & Sánchez, 2007). Therefore, looking at discourses through DA allows one to identify what is being said, while also looking at the context. For this study, the focus will lie on the variables mentioned above, using objects of strategic culture. This could include a variety of objects which 'could be overwhelming even when looking at a brief historical period' (Johnston,

1995a, p. 39). Furthermore, it is important that 'the content analysis of strategic-cultural objects begin at the earliest accessible point in history' (Johnston, 1995a, p. 40). This is done to see if, when moving forward in time, the strategic objects are derived from the 'formative strategic culture' (Greathouse, 2010). Arguably, this is a monumental task, as seen in Johnston's book, as the objects of analysis have to exist. For this case study, I will not follow Johnston's suggestion. Not because I deem it irrelevant, but because, first, the scope of this paper does not allow me to look at an extended period of time, and second, the time period chosen, post-Second World War to present day, is arguably the most relevant for contemporary studies. This will be illustrated further in the next chapter when briefly talking about Dutch foreign policy prior to WW2. The time period after the war will be further split into two periods, since the end of the Cold War denotes a significant shift in geopolitics. For this reason, and from a structural point of view, I have decided to divide the analysis, per variable, into one looking at the Cold War period and post-Cold War period.

This study will look at the various objects of strategic culture of which the variables looked at can be observed. Specifically, this will be done through the analysis of government defense white papers, which, like Johnston's chosen objects, can be reasonably assumed to contain information regarding the view of Dutch elites on the three variables. Particular interest will be paid to the indicators of each variable that help to determine in what way the variables apply to the Dutch. The case study will be based largely on government white papers released since the end of the Second World War[13]. Furthermore, the Dutch government published two papers on the Dutch 'defense doctrine'. While published in 2005 and updated in 2013, they serve as an excellent added source of information on military thinking and at the same time covering the 18-year gap between the 2000 and 2018 white papers. Where possible, the English version of the document will be used to ensure that as little as possible will be lost in translation. However, since some of the white papers are quite old, there is no English copy available and the original Dutch source will be used[14].

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[13] Specifically, the white papers of 1950, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1974, 1984, 1991, 2000 and 2018.
[14] The white papers in Dutch are those from 1950 to 2000. Unless stated otherwise, any translation is the author's own.

Chapter III: Case study – the Netherlands

This chapter serves as the case study of this research paper. In it, Johnston's framework will be applied to the country of the Netherlands in order to ascertain in what way the Dutch strategic culture has manifested itself. First, however, it will briefly elaborate on the decision to look only at the years following WW2 up to the present day. The paper's scope is only one justification for choosing this perhaps narrow time period of roughly 70 years. The pre-Second World War period is characterized by Dutch neutrality in conflict situations, something which failed to protect the country during WW2. I argue that this caused a fundamental shift in Dutch foreign policy and thus provides an excellent starting point for a case study on the Netherlands. This chapter will prove this point by first providing a short account of Dutch neutrality and how the war undid that policy. This will be followed by analyzing the various defense white papers, which will result in an overview of the Dutch position within the three variables.

3.1 – Foreign policy in the Netherlands pre-1945

Since the inception of the modern state of the Netherlands[15], neutrality has been the anchor of Dutch foreign policy. While it is not a homogeneous concept, as its meaning has changed over the centuries, the essence of what neutrality means is that it is the 'avoidance of war, namely, the avoidance of involvement in the wars of others' (Abbenhuis, 2006, p. 23). More specifically, in this period of time, neutrality was based on international law (Ørvik, 1953). Various international conventions over the following decades helped shape the obligations and rights of neutrals in times of war and peace.

Like neutrality as a concept did as well, the reasons for the Dutch to promote a policy based on neutrality changed over the years. At first, the policy was based purely on realist motivations. During the Dutch Golden Century[16], the country saw itself rise to one of the world's biggest economic and military powers, something which the Dutch historian Koenraad W. Swart called the 'Dutch Miracle' (Swart, 2012). Without a doubt, the Dutch were one of the Great Powers of the world at that time. However, Dutch sea power, which formed the essence of its military power, began to decline in the middle of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, the growth of Prussia's power in the east was also a cause of concern. For centuries, the various German states warred among themselves, ensuring that they did not pose much of a threat to the

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[15] The Kingdom of the Netherlands, as created after the Treaty of London in 1839, which resulted in the formal recognition of Belgian independence from the previous United Kingdom of the Netherlands.
[16] Roughly spanning the 17th century.

Dutch. However, a single unitary state would upset the balance in Europe. These developments made it that the Dutch, by 1839, were once again a Small Power, threatened to be encircled by the various European Great Powers. As such, in an effort to preserve the balance of power, the Dutch decided to adopt a policy of absolute neutrality; the avoidance of entering into any kind of agreement that could lead to them being drawn, forcibly or otherwise, into conflict (Schokking, 1947).

Their type of armed neutrality served them well for many decades, as they realized that their strategic position both ensured that there were heavy costs in invading the Netherlands and that the European powers could not face the Netherlands being invaded by another country. This enabled them to successfully uphold this type of policy. Still, this policy also had some drawbacks for the Dutch. Their position resulted in a sort of superiority complex, which led them to think that their way is best, looking down on the power politics employed by the Great Powers. It turned somewhat into an ideology at the end of the 19th century, seeing it their task to ensure the balance of power in Europe (van Diepen, 1999). Militarily, the policy of armed neutrality led to a further downgrade of Dutch military power, especially when compared to other European countries, as this period was marked by lower spending on defense (Vandenbosch, 1959). This led to a debate on what it seeks to do and what it can actually afford to do militarily. The answer was to look at what the Great Powers were doing but then on a much smaller scale (Lindley-French & Tjepkema, 2010).

The First World War was the first real test of the Dutch policy of neutrality, as it landed the country right in the center of a world war (Tames, 2012). The Dutch view of being the protector of European balance and standard bearer of international law manifested itself at the start of World War One. The Dutch Prime Minister at the time, Pieter Cort van der Linden, argued it remained neutral in an effort to protect international law in a time when the countries at war did nothing but follow their basic instincts (Colenbrander, 1920). However, the primary reason for remaining neutral during the war was to ensure the country's independence. While, through much effort, it managed to survive the war without entering into the conflict, it could have easily shared the fate of Belgium, another neutral state. The violation of Belgium's neutrality, which was guaranteed by international law, shaped the country's foreign policy after the war (Tames, 2012). Although the policy itself remained essentially the same, it changed the language of the policy from one based on neutrality, to one based on independence (Schokking, 1947). Similarly, while it joined the recently formed League of Nations, as they felt it might serve to prevent another war and thus protect their independence, the Netherlands still had a policy of eschewing any type of agreement that would see them having to choose sides (van Hamel, 1938). When the rise of Nazi Germany

came about, and war was once again looming, they felt that neutrality would protect them as it did before. History shows that this was not the case and the country was occupied for the majority of the war. The utter failure of neutrality during WW2 created a paradigm shift in Dutch foreign policy thinking after the war (Kruizinga, 2016).

3.2 – Cold War period

The Second World War showed that the neutrality policy that the Netherlands clung to was no longer tenable. While Germany and Japan were defeated, the international situation was not yet stable. The two emerged superpowers, the US and Soviet Union (USSR), would undoubtedly shape international relations in the years to come, but it was not yet clear in what way. The Netherlands itself was affected greatly by the war and rebuilding the country did not really start until 1950 (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018). Similarly, any thoughts on defense spending and capacity had to be revised frequently in the early years after the war, due to the uncertainty of financial capacities and the size of American help after the war (Ministerie van Oorlog en van de Marine, 1950). For this reason, it was not until 1950 that the first ever comprehensive defense white paper in Dutch history was released (Hoffenaar, 2009), in which the Dutch defense policy was set out for the following years, a trend that has continued to this day.

While a comprehensive defense policy was not created until that year, a lot had already happened in the years preceding 1950, especially in terms of foreign policy and cooperation. Most notably, the Netherlands was one of the founding fathers and greatest advocates of several international organizations created during that time. This list includes, but is not limited to, the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, the Western Union (WU) in 1948 and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949.

3.2.1 – The role of war

The issue of war is addressed almost immediately in the 1950 white paper. In it, Willem F. Schokking, Minister of War and the Navy, indicates that 'through improving international relations and increasing mutual trust between nations, war can be prevented'[17] (Ministerie van Oorlog en van de Marine, 1950, p. 1). This line of thinking clearly indicates two things; war is something that can be prevented, and thus is not a given, and cooperation is key in conflict prevention. Looking at the developments mentioned above, the latter had already become a focus in Dutch foreign policy. Still, immediately after, the white paper

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[17] '(…) verbetering der internationale verhoudingen en vergroting van het onderlinge vertrouwen er toe zullen leiden, dat een oorlog vermeden kan worden'

cautions that people should be aware of the risks that threaten the Western world. The risks that are spoken of should be seen in a Cold War context, meaning that the threat comes from communism and its guardian, the USSR. Furthermore, 'looking at the nature of this threat, it is of paramount importance to prevent the country from being occupied again in times of war'[18] (Ministerie van Oorlog en van de Marine, 1950, p. 2). This means that, although war can be prevented, there is still a high probability that it might erupt and that the means have to be there to protect the country. The justification for classifying the threat as such was that, 'communism simply has different principles than those of the Western world'[19] and that forgetting this fact might result in the Cold War one day turning hot without realizing it (Tweede Kamer, 1954, p. 3). Furthermore, the Dutch emphasize the need for an intensive defensive planning and military build-up by pointing to the 'military might of the communist bloc'[20] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1), denoting that this signifies a credible threat.

While war seems to be seen as a distinct possibility during the Cold War, especially when looking at what they see as the nature of communism, military action is seen by the Dutch as a defensive response to someone else's initiative. Meaning, the Dutch do not see themselves, or indeed the Western world, as the initiator of conflict. This, again, points to the idea that war is not a given and can be avoided through concerted effort. In fact, the military build-up by the Dutch and the Western world, and their alliance with the NATO countries is seen as a way to avoid and prevent war. They argue that, 'military might needs not just be used to wage war. It can, as the USSR already does, be used to exert political pressure'[21] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1). They see this collective defense as a vital counter-balance to the USSR and argue that the existence of NATO, as an opposing force to the communist bloc, is a guarantor of 'the freedom of peoples of the civilizations that are based on the foundations of democracy, personal freedom and legal order'[22] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1). Here, the concept of deterrence becomes visible in the white papers, a concept that is touched upon in every white paper since then, especially with the introduction of nuclear weapons on both sides. 'They will not unleash such a war as long as they know that the West

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[18] 'Gelet op de aard der mogelijke bedreiging is het van primordiaal belang te voorkomen dat ons land in geval van oorlog opnieuw zou worden bezet'

[19] 'Het communisme leeft nu eenmaal van uit andere principes dan de Westerse wereld'

[20] '(…) de formidabele militaire macht van het blok der communistische landen'

[21] 'Militaire macht behoeft echter niet alleen voor het voeren van een oorlog te worden aangewend. Zij kan ook worden gebruikt, en wordt inderdaad door de Sovjet-Unie gehanteerd als een middel tot het uitoefenen van politieke druk'

[22] '(…) de vrijheid, het gemeenschappelijk erfdeel en de beschaving van hun volken, welke zijn gegrondvest op beginselen van democratie, persoonlijke vrijheid en rechtsorde (…)'

is capable and willing to meet any nuclear attack'[23] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964, p. 9), is the general line of thinking that would keep the superpowers from going to war. While the white papers obviously primarily speak of military matters, they also emphasize the importance of diplomacy, economics and ideology in war and argue that they too must be used in an effort to prevent war (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964).

When looking at the white papers that were published from the late 1960s on, one can denote a slight change in language used when it comes to war. While there is no significant change on the view of war, one can see that the white papers start to speak from a perspective of peace, as opposed to war. The years after WW2 were obviously still characterized by the memory of conflict. However, 20 years later, the preceding years were, for the Dutch, peaceful. Therefore, the white papers find themselves, once again, having to justify a focus on a strong military and partnership with NATO in times of peace, as 'the question of war and peace is being discussed intensely by various groups', calling it one of the 'striking phenomena of our time'[24] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1968). Furthermore, the white papers are shown to less frequently emphasize that war is still a possibility, as they did after WW2. In the late 1980s, the notion of war started to be replaced by other hazards to society such as poverty and famine, saying that 'peace is more than the absence of war'[25] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1984, p. 7). However, what permeates through all white papers, despite these changes, is that war is something that can and should be prevented.

3.2.2 – The name of the game

The foreign policy choices that the Netherlands chose to make in the years following WW2 already paints a fairly clear picture on whether or not the Dutch view international relations as a zero-sum or variable-sum game. Since the war, they have chosen to put a very strong emphasis on cooperation and diplomacy, while viewing a strong military alliance as a tool to keep the balance.

The 1950 white paper emphasizes the need for (Western) cooperation on the grounds that this is mutually beneficial for all parties. Mentioning the communist threat again, it argues that this threat poses a risk 'for all other Western-European countries, while for the other Atlantic powers, both in terms of their own

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[23] 'Een dusdanige oorlog zullen zij niet ontketenen zolang zij weten dat het Westen in staat en ook bereid is een dergelijke aanval met kernwapens te beantwoorden'
[24] '(…) één van de opvallende verschijnselen van deze tijd, dat in talloze over het gehele land verspreide groeperingen intens wordt gediscussieerd over het fundamentele vraagstuk van oorlog en vrede (…)'
[25] 'Vrede is zeker meer dan de afwezigheid van oorlog'

security, as well as their own economic interests, it is of vital importance that Western-Europe is not overrun'[26]. It further argues that joint defense preparations 'creates the possibility to come to a joint defense and recovery plan for Western-Europe and to start building and training the necessary armed forces'[27] (Ministerie van Oorlog en van de Marine, 1950, p. 2). It is clear, and understandable, that these early white papers focus on rebuilding the armed forces as well as forming an opposition against communist forces, as Western-Europe and its armed forces laid, for the most part, in shambles. Having a threat like the USSR basically at their border necessitated the need for cooperation. This is very clear in the language used in the white papers, as a lot of attention is paid to international organizations. Also, it is specifically stated that the answer to the limited military capabilities of the Netherlands 'can only be found in international cooperation'[28] (Ministerie van Oorlog en van de Marine, 1950, p. 3) Furthermore, it is specified that military action and planning will be done in the framework of the WU and, most of all, NATO.

Cooperation in the framework of NATO is repeatedly emphasized as being vital in ensuring the continued existence of freedom in the Western countries. This mutual defense is 'based on the fundamental conception that a ''shield'' of sea, land and air forces will maintain the integrity of NATO territory, while a ''sword'' of offensive capabilities is maintained that is able to pierce the attacker's vital resources and thus destroy its will and means of waging war'[29] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1). It is also further emphasized that 'no single country is able to maintain its security on its own' and that 'this guarantee can only be found in cooperation with others'[30] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964, p. 9). Therefore, the Dutch see the cooperation between Europe and North-America as the cornerstone of its foreign policy (Ministerie van Defensie, 1968). This Atlantic alliance remained strong throughout the Cold War, as even decades after the end of the Second World War, the 'idea that the security of Europa can only be ensured through

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[26] 'Hetzelfde geldt voor de andere West-Europese landen, terwijl het voor de overige landen, behorende tot de kring der Atlantische mogendheden, zowel uit een oogpunt van eigen veiligheid, als van eigen economisch belang, van de grootste betekenis is, dat West-Europa niet onder de voet wordt gelopen'

[27] 'Alleen deze samenwerking schept de mogelijkheid om te komen tot een gezamenlijk verdedigings- en instandhoudingsplan voor West-Europa en om te geraken tot de opbouw, uitrusting en oefening van de daartoe benodigde strijdkrachten'

[28] 'Een bevredigende oplossing van dit vraagstuk kan alleen ten volle in internationale samenwerking gezocht en gevonden worden'

[29] 'De gezamenlijke verdediging is gebouwd op de fundamentele conceptie dat door een 'schild' van zee-, land- en luchtstrijdkrachten de integriteit van de zeegebieden en het NAVO-landgebied dient te worden gehandhaafd, terwijl een 'zwaard' van offensieve strijdmiddelen gereed wordt gehouden om de aanvallende vijand in zijn levensbronnen te kunnen treffen en zo zijn oorlogswil en zijn oorlogsmiddelen te vernietigen'

[30] '(…) geen enkel land in staat is zijn eigen veiligheid te waarborgen, en dat een waarborg slechts kan worden gevonden in samenwerking met anderen (…)'

an alliance between North-America and Europe is still as valid today as in 1949'[31] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1974).

The issue of peace is also addressed when it comes to this variable. As the years went on, the need for military security increasingly got linked to prosperity, specifically the prosperity of the Western civilization. The 1964 white paper states, 'any further development in economic, cultural or social areas is only possible when a society is secure'[32]. It further states that this type of security can only come about in a larger context, through cooperation with other countries (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964, p. 3). The entire Atlantic alliance is placed in a context of one which is beneficial for all members and not just in terms of security, as it 'has laid the foundation for closer political, economic and cultural cooperation between member states'[33] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1968, p. 15).

European cooperation specifically was not mentioned until the publication of the 1974 white paper. Here it was first recognized that there is a growing attention for European cooperation. While the Dutch recognize that attention to foreign policy and defense on a European level comes with the ambition of further European integration, the white paper states that 'European cooperation must affect the essence of the cooperation in the Atlantic context'[34] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1974, p. 13). It further argues that a completely independent European defense (policy) would be counterproductive, when looking at the Atlantic alliance that is already in place. While cautious, the Dutch were also in favor of increased cooperation, if only as a way to reduce costs of buying and maintaining equipment (Ministerie van Defensie, 1974). When it came to exploring possibilities of how this cooperation could take shape, the Dutch opted for a pragmatic approach, being of the opinion that a single European voice on defense and foreign policy would be beneficial for all parties, the US included. However, they did continue to stress the importance of making sure that increased cooperation would not result in going 'against the US but as a partner of the US play a larger role in the world'[35] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1984, p. 32).

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[31] 'De gedachte dat de veiligheid van Europa slechts in samenwerking tussen Noord-Amerika en Europa kan worden verzekerd is echter nog evenzeer van kracht als toen zij in 1949 in het Noordatlantische verdrag werd neergelegd'

[32] 'Elke verdere ontplooiing op economisch, cultureel of sociaal gebied is pas mogelijk als de samenleving beveiligd is'

[33] '(…) de grondslag hebben gelegd voor een nauwere politieke, economische en culturele samenwerking tussen de leden-landen'

[34] '(…) dat Europese samenwerking het wezen van de samenwerking in Atlantisch verband (…) niet mag aantasten'

[35] 'Tegelijkertijd moet duidelijk zijn dat naarmate de Westeuropese landen voor de veiligheid nauwer gaan samenwerken, zij zich niet tegen de Verenigde Staten richten, maar als partner van de Verenigde Staten een grotere rol in de wereld gaan spelen'

The white papers clearly show a determination of the Dutch to put cooperation high on the agenda, painting a picture that alliance-building helps in not only maintaining Dutch security, but that of the Western world. As such, this implicitly means that the Netherlands views international relations as a variable-sum game, as it views cooperation as mutually beneficial. It shows a willingness to both use military might (as part of an alliance) as a show of force, as well as diplomatically.

3.2.3 – The efficacy of force

The use of force, or the threat thereof, was an important diplomatic tool used in international relations during the Cold War. As stated earlier in the analysis[36], the USSR used their military might and threat of using force as a way to exert political pressure. The 1960 white paper indicated that, 'if this political resource is not neutralized, the West, with the current military disparities, may be pressured into accepting demands issued under threat of force'[37]. The answer to this, the Dutch argue, is a similar tactic, whereby a robust military apparatus is used to counterbalance the Soviet military might and exert political pressure of their own (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1). As shown before, the Dutch view this tactic as one done multilaterally, in unison with other (Western) countries, most notably in the framework of NATO. This shows that the threat of using force is not only a viable tool in international diplomacy, it is considered the most important tool when it comes to keeping the USSR at bay.

While this is the case, the Dutch repeatedly state that this tool is defensive in nature, as are all military developments and planning. The threat of retaliation is the core in their strategy of deterrence, with the 'sword' of NATO meant to show the retaliatory capabilities of the West and meant to scare off any potential attacker. However, the Dutch put emphasis on the importance of the 'shield'. They argue it is more than just 'barbed wire' and if it has a certain 'resistance' to it, it is 'strong enough to meet an attack in its first phase and stop it, forcing the enemy to come to their senses before things get out of hand'[38]. The Dutch act under this mindset and attribute their forces to strengthen the 'shield' (Ministerie van Defensie, 1960, p. 1 and 2). This type of language makes it clear that the use of force should only be used as part of defensive action, not offensive. This is explicitly stated in the 1984 white paper, where they

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[36] See footnote 15

[37] 'Wordt en blijft dit middel niet geneutraliseerd, dan zou het Westen in de bestaande grote tegenstellingen gedwongen kunnen worden tot het toegeven aan eisen welke onder de dreiging van overmachtig geweld worden gesteld'

[38] 'Zijn de schildstrijdkrachten méér dan een schrikdraad, zijn zij sterk genoeg om een aanval in zijn eerste ontwikkelingsfase op te vangen en tot stilstand te brengen, dan kan de vijand tot bezinning worden gedwongen voordat hij zo ver is gegaan, dat er geen weg terug meer is'

indicate that 'every idea of an offensive, aggressive policy is strange to us'[39] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1984, p. 7). Furthermore, the white papers continuously hint at the disastrous and unpredictable consequences of total war, arguing that the moral responsibility of these consequences have to be assumed by the attacker. This only increased as both blocs increased their nuclear arsenal.

On this, the Dutch encountered a dilemma. In the 1964 white paper, they admit that, on the one hand, reinforcing the conventional armed forces with tactical nuclear weapons increases their deterrent effect. However, on the other hand, it might increase the danger of a greater use of nuclear means. On this, the paper concludes that, 'reinforcing the conventional armed forces does not automatically lead to reducing the danger of a nuclear war'[40] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964, p. 10). This leads to questions of disarmament, to which the Dutch government wants to make a positive contribution. They indicate, 'the growing realization of the terrible consequences of a nuclear war and the current state of equilibrium between both blocs, make it possible, more than ever, to reflect on the problems related to arms control, mutual reduction of arms or general disarmament'[41] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1964, p. 11). The rhetoric used after the 1964 white paper, is mixed between, on the one hand, ensuring a balance between the two blocs, maintaining the equilibrium so that the threat of using force remains viable and, on the other hand, efforts to reduce arms on both sides and an increased emphasis on an international legal order.

As mentioned before, the Dutch consider the Atlantic alliance as the cornerstone of their foreign policy. However, they later clarify that while this is true, 'the main goal of the government's foreign policy is to establish an international order rooted in international law'[42] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1968, p. 9). To them, the relations in such an international legal order would have to be dominated by a 'comprehensive system of legal rules, wherein the common government has adequate resources to force parties to comply to these rules if necessary'[43]. As such, the 'unauthorized use of violence between the constituent parts of

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[39] 'Ieder denkbeeld aan een offensieve, agressieve politiek is ons vreemd'
[40] 'Versterking van de conventionele strijdkrachten leidt dus niet zonder meer tot vermindering van het gevaar van een nucleaire oorlog'
[41] 'Het groeiende besef van de verschrikkingen van een nucleaire oorlog en de tussen beide blokken ingetreden evenwichtstoestand, maken het mogelijk, meer dan voorheen, te bezinnen op de problemen die betrekking hebben op wapenbeheersing, wederzijdse vermindering der bewapening of algemene ontwapening'
[42] '(…) het uiteindelijke hoofddoel van het buitenlands beleid der Regering de vorming van een geheel in het recht gegrondveste internationale orde is'
[43] '(…) door een sluitend stelsel van rechtsregels worden beheerst, waarbij de gemeenschappelijke overheid over afdoende middelen beschikt om naleving van deze rechtsrelgels zo nodig te kunnen afdwingen'

the global community will not be lawful, worthwhile or even possible'[44] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1968, p. 9).

It is clear here that the Dutch favor a diplomatic approach, even when it comes to military matters. They reinforce this idea by saying that they consider foreign policy and defense policy to be closely connected to each other. The use of force is primarily a viable option against the USSR, since they are considered to use it as a political tool and are seen to be a real threat. Outside this, however, they favor establishing an international legal order, letting diplomacy take the front stage, especially during the second half of the Cold War.

3.3 – Post-Cold War period

The end of the Cold War, which arguably started in 1989 with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and truly came to an end in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, ushered in a new age. No longer was the world split into two camps. It was initially believed that world peace would be at hand, with the UN being the broker of peace. However, the new security situation in Europe did not extend to the rest of the world. These two periods are very distinct from each other, making the previous white paper from 1984 outdated. As the 1991 white paper argued, 'the changed political-military situation leads to greater insecurity on where future armed conflicts might break out, both inside and outside of Europe, and in which situations military action is needed, under which circumstances and with which allies'[45] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 5).

3.3.1 – The role of war

The new white paper starts out by stating that the Cold War has ended. However, it immediately cautions that, 'even though the Cold War is now a thing of the past and the security of Europe has increased considerably, this does not mean that peace and security in our part of the world is now a given'[46]. It points both to political instability in Eastern Europe and worrisome developments outside of Europe, specifically the Middle East (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 9). War, such as it is, was previously talked

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[44] 'Eigenmachtig gebruik van geweld in het verkeer tussen de samenstellende delen van de wereldgemeenschap zal niet geoorloofd, en ook niet lonend of zelfs maar mogelijk behoren te zijn'

[45] 'De veranderde politiek-militaire situatie leidt tot grotere onzekerheid waar zich in de toekomst gewapende conflicten in en buiten Europa kunnen voordoen en waar zo nodig militair moet worden opgetreden, onder welke omstandigheden en met welke bondgenoten'

[46] 'Het feit dat de Koude Oorlog tot het verleden behoort en de veiligheid van Europa aanzienlijk is verbeterd, betekent niet dat vrede en veiligheid in ons werelddeel nu zonder meer verzekerd zijn'

about as total war, one that would engulf the world and for a large part take place in Europe, along the Iron Curtain. However, the end of this bipolar world saw an increased attention to regional conflicts, of which was said that they have become more threatening and, therefore, should concern the entire global community. While the 1991 white paper still points to instability within Eastern Europe and, what was then still, the USSR as causes for concern for Europe, it increasingly points to the Third World as sources of conflicts and starts to talk about the 'security outside the NATO treaty area' (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 28). On the threat of war for Western-Europe, the Dutch vehemently state that 'one can no longer speak of a direct threat to Western-Europe'[47] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 30). Although recent developments have caused to admit that, 'the vulnerability of the Netherlands (…) has increased' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018, p. 9).

This change in the international security situation is succinctly summarized in the 2000 white paper. It states: 'Before all the attention was focused on the Soviet Union. For the Dutch armed forces, the defense against a massive attack on the North-German lower plains was a central theme. This threat has disappeared. In the past, the size of the threat was the problem. Now, the diversity and unpredictability of the risks are the problem'[48] (Ministerie van Defensie, 2000, p. 22).

These developments have resulted in some noteworthy changes in the post-Cold War white papers. Firstly, one can denote an interesting development on the use of the word 'war' (*oorlog* in Dutch) in the documents. While the word was used regularly in the Cold War documents, often combined with efforts to avoid it, it increasingly got used less, up to a point where the word is not used a single time in the 2018 white paper (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018). This seems to confirm the belief that war in (Western) Europe is a thing of the past, while the opposite was still being regarded as realistic during the Cold War. Secondly, what is also striking, is that the word 'war' seems to have gotten replaced by the word 'conflict', which goes hand in hand with both the possible shift in thinking about war in Europe and the belief that most sources of conflict now lie outside of Europe.

Despite the fact that 'war' is increasingly omitted from the white papers, a clear picture on whether or not it is inevitable or preventable is still visible. The belief that war, or conflict, is preventable is still very much present. While the language has shifted from preventing war primarily in (Western) Europe to

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[47] 'Van een rechtstreekse bedreiging van West-Europa is niet langer sprake'
[48] 'Vroeger was alle aandacht gericht op de Sovjet-Unie. Voor de Nederlandse krijgsmacht stond het scenario van de verdediging tegen een massale aanval op de Noord-Duitse laagvlakte centraal. Deze dreiging is inmiddels verdwenen. Was vroeger de massaliteit van de dreiging het probleem, nu zijn dat de diversiteit en onvoorspelbaarheid van de risico's'

preventing conflict outside of, what is classically seen as, the Western world, there is no indication that war is seen as inevitable.

3.3.2 – The name of the game

The Dutch trend of increased cooperation and alliance-building that ensued after WW2 continued after the end of the Cold War and the dissipation of the foremost threat of the time, albeit with more emphasis on other organizations and institutions.

In terms of defense, the Dutch cautioned for the danger of re-nationalization, 'a return to a purely national defense, where every country determines its own course without taking into account what happens to its allies'[49] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 6). Since NATO was created as a military alliance with the aim of preventing war and counterbalancing the military might of the USSR, its dissolution created questions on its future. However, the Dutch strongly stressed the continued importance of cooperation and NATO in general. Dedicating an entire chapter to discussing the questions surrounding NATO, it is clear that they view this transatlantic alliance as highly important to the country. They further specify, 'to our country, alliance-based cooperation is particularly important. The Netherlands can only guarantee its security within the framework of strong international structures'[50] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 21) and argue that NATO 'secures our territorial integrity'[51] (Ministerie van Defensie, 2000, p. 5). As such, and based on the alliance's achievements so far, they argue that NATO should remain in place. Still, the Dutch agreed that the events in the late 1980s and early 1990s greatly impact the alliance. To them, NATO, 'even more than in the past, will become a political alliance'[52] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 20).

While NATO still takes center stage when it comes to Western (European) security, the Dutch increasingly started to look outwards and advocate a policy of prevention abroad, a policy that looks both at Europe and beyond. Looking at ways to improve the situation in Eastern Europe and beyond, it advocated the importance of other organizations, as 'closer connections to the European Communities, Western economic and financial support, and more intensive cooperation within the framework of the Conference

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[49] '(…) een terugkeer naar een zuiver nationale verdediging, waarbij ieder land zijn eigen koers bepaalt, zonder acht te slaan op wat bij bondgenoten gebeurt'
[50] 'Voor ons land is de samenwerking in bondgenootschappelijk verband van bijzonder belang. Nederland kan zijn veiligheid immers alleen verzekeren in het kader van sterke internationale structuren'
[51] 'De Navo waarborgt onze territoriale integriteit'
[52] '(…) en zij zal, meer nog dan in het verleden, een politiek gericht bondgenootschap worden'

on Security and Co-operation in Europe can reduce security risks'[53] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 18). This shows that other organizations play a larger role in this new policy. In Europe, the Dutch assign an important role to, what is now known as, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), as 'it does not just focus on security in a more limited military sense, but also on human rights, minorities and economic cooperation'[54] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 23). When it comes to military engagement outside of the NATO treaty area, the Dutch indicate that they would like to see this done 'through other international frameworks, preferably within the framework of the United Nations'[55] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 65). On the UN, they argue that the organization is now capable of playing a more active role than it did during the Cold War. Further clarifying that, 'the world organization is indispensable, now more than ever. The UN is able to stimulate attention given to important topics such as overpopulation, pollution and poverty'[56] (Ministerie van Defensie, 2000, p. 29).

On European cooperation on defense matters, the Dutch agree that this will and should grow relative to the recall of American forces in Europe. However, as before, they continue to emphasize both the importance of NATO and of the transatlantic alliance in general. To summarize, the rhetoric used by the Dutch is shown to be NATO first, and Europe second, with regards to defense matters. It is supportive of intensifying cooperation with European partners, even going so far as advocating 'a common foreign policy, with a defense component'[57] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 260) and progress continues to be made in this area, when looking at the recently Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) pact (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018). However, it sees European cooperation as complementing the existing NATO framework. Still, it is noteworthy that when it comes to contributing to stability and order, the EU is more frequently mentioned alongside NATO.

The 2000 white paper summarizes the focus on international cooperation quite clearly by saying that, 'politically and militarily the Netherlands is strongly oriented towards bilateral and multilateral cooperation, especially within the frameworks of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and

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[53] 'Nauwere banden met de EG, Westerse economische en financiële steun en het intensiveren van de samenwerking in het verband van de CVSE kunnen de veiligheidsrisico's verkleinen'

[54] '(…) zij richt zich niet alleen op veiligheid in de beperkte militaire zin, maar ook op mensenrechten, minderheden en economische samenwerking'

[55] '(…) in andere internationale verbanden, bij voorkeur in het kader van de Verenigde Naties'

[56] 'De wereldorganisatie is meer dan ooit onmisbaar. De VN kunnen de aanpak van grote vraagstukken als overbevolking, milieuvervuiling en armoede stimuleren'

[57] '(…) met als einddoel een gemeenschappelijk buitenlands beleid, met inbegrip van een defensiecomponent'

Co-operation in Europe, NATO and the European Union'[58] (Ministerie van Defensie, 2000, p. 21). Overall, one can state that the focus on cooperation has increased, or more specifically, broadened, since the end of the Cold War.

3.3.3 – The efficacy of force

The 1991 white paper was written before the dissolution of the Soviet Union and therefore still took into account its military power. On this, it says that, 'from a purely military viewpoint, the Soviet Union will remain capable of executing attacks on NATO soil'[59] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 16). Therefore, it still emphasizes the need for adequate defensive capabilities to counter this. However, one can see a continuation of the trend to focus on security outside of the NATO treaty area, guided by the government's principle that 'security does not only benefit from a credible defense, arms control and political dialogue, but also by promoting democracy, respect for human rights and a balanced economic development'[60] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 10). In the eyes of the Dutch, conflicts that threaten world or regional security should be dealt with by those who champion these fundamental characteristics of the international legal order. They emphasize the importance of 'non-military measures in preventing, controlling and solving conflicts outside of NATO soil'[61], meaning that preferably political and economic means should be used. However, they also stress the willingness to, if necessary, 'use military measures to uphold the international legal order and protect essential economic interests'[62] (Ministerie van Defensie, 1991, p. 28). Here, there is an increasing reference to so-called peacekeeping operations and humanitarian interventions.

The white papers show that, in principle, the Dutch are willing to go quite far to protect basic human rights if necessary. They argue that, 'the government is strongly committed to a solid international legal basis

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[58] 'Politiek en militair is Nederland sterk georiënteerd op bilaterale en multilaterale samenwerking, vooral in de Verenigde Naties, de Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OVSE), de Navo en de Europese Unie'

[59] 'Strikt militair-technisch gezien zal de Sovjet-Unie in staat blijven aanvallen tegen het grondgebied van de Navo uit te voeren'

[60] '(…) veiligheid niet alleen gebaat is bij een geloofwaardige defensie-inspanning, wapenbeheersing en politieke dialoog, maar ook bij het bevorderen van democratie, respect voor de rechten van de mens en evenwichtige economische ontwikkeling'

[61] '(…) het belang van niet-militaire middelen bij het voorkomen, beheersen en oplossen van conflicten ook buiten het Navo-gebied'

[62] '(..) maar zo nodig is Nederland bereid ook militaire middelen te gebruiken om de internationale rechtsorde te handhaven en wezenlijke economische belangen te behartigen'

for military intervention, but ultimately places humanity over sovereignty'[63] (Ministerie van Defensie, 2000, p. 5). It further elaborates that, 'the Netherlands subscribes to the view that intervention to prevent or alleviate widespread human suffering must be possible under certain conditions (humanitarian intervention), even if it is blocked by the decision making in the Security Council' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2005, p. 33). This shows a willingness to, in theory, bypass international institutions in intervening in conflicts that threaten human rights, even military.

In 2005 the Netherlands published a report on the 'Netherlands Defence Doctrine', wherein the 'fundamental principles which armed forces use to direct their actions' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2005, p. 1) are laid out. This doctrine was revised, which led to an updated report being published in 2013. In both reports, and also in the new 2018 white paper, there is a continued reference to the international laws concerning the use of force. Among other laws and treaties, it refers to Article 2, paragraph 4, of the UN Charter, which 'prohibits the threat or use of force in international relations' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018, p. 23). The great emphasis placed on using international law as guiding principles in determining the actions of armed forces stems from the importance given to the international legal order, which is often mentioned in the Dutch foreign policy and defense objectives. However, while this enables the use of force, there is belief that this should only be used as a last resort and that prevention is preferred. They elaborate that, '(b)y taking preventive action, in which there is usually no question of the use of force or intervention in an impending conflict, a state's political leaders preserve the greatest freedom of choice for the deployment of its means of power' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2013, p. 24). Furthermore, even when military power is shown, it does not guarantee the use of force. This is highlighted by the Dutch defense doctrine, which argues that '(t)he emphasis lies on the presence of military might; the actual use of force is not usually relevant here' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2013, p. 24).

The Dutch view on the use of force has not changed in the period of time that this analysis looks at. However, there is clear change in language. During the Cold War, use of force was much more connected to NATO and European defense. Now, it is connected to upholding the international legal order and in conflicts that threaten fundamental human rights. This continues the trend that '(f)oreign policy, development cooperation and (defense) issues are increasingly becoming extensions of each other' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2005, p. 36).

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[63] 'De regering hecht sterk aan een goede volkenrechtelijke grondslag voor militair optreden, maar stelt uiteindelijk humaniteit boven soevereiniteit'

Conclusion

The Second World War changed a lot for the Netherlands, as it did for the entire world. Its strict policy of neutrality was no longer tenable, especially since the new world that emerged was one of two camps. This had a profound effect on the Dutch strategic culture and I argue that this forms the basis for the current strategic culture that is prevalent and directs the country's actions and decisions. By using Johnston's framework, the analysis has shown several clear characteristics that guide and permeate through the strategic culture.

On the role of war in human affairs, the Dutch clearly view the notion of war as being an aberration, something which can be avoided through concerted effort. When comparing the two periods of time in the analysis however, war is seen as being mentioned more infrequent as time goes on. The earliest white papers are very clear on war, which in those times, considering the standoff between the two ideological blocs, is still a real possibility. However, as the Cold War draws to an end, security for the Netherlands and the 'West' is seen as more of a given. 'War' starts to give way to 'conflicts', specifically regional ones, and no real mention to war is given in the latest white paper. Still, considering the opposite has never been mentioned in any of the later white papers, war continues to be seen as preventable.

On international relations being either a zero-sum game or a variable-sum game, the Dutch very clearly hold the view that this is a variable-sum game. When looking at the degree of cooperation that the country is willing to enter into, it shows early on that this is very high. Being one of the founding fathers of many contemporary international organizations since the end of WW2, it is clear that, unlike before, it puts international cooperation very high on the agenda. While the pre-Second World War period showed an unwillingness to enter into any kind of agreement that could draw them into conflict, the Dutch are now of the opinion that these kinds of bilateral and multilateral agreements maintain security for, not just the Netherlands, but also the world. The creation of different forums has elevated the position of diplomacy, meaning that agreements can be reached where one's loss is not necessarily the other's win.

On the efficacy of the use of force, the Dutch view military force as a necessity in strategies of coercion and deterrence. However, the use of force itself, and the clear distinction is made between show of force and use of force, is not advocated. Instead, it is relegated to an option of last resort. While this is the case, they are also clear that they are willing to use military measures to further their goals if necessary. As with the first variable, there is a clear distinction on where the focus lies when looking at both time periods. The Cold War period clearly focused on the use of force in respect to any attack on NATO territory.

However, afterwards the focus started to lay on maintaining the international legal order, such as it stands, and preventing any human rights catastrophes. Written in a time where the focus lays on the latter, the 'Dutch Defense Doctrine' clearly emphasizes international law as being the guiding force in using armed force and use of military power in general. This also shows a favor to diplomacy and the view that use of force is only an option of last resort.

Keeping the results of the analysis in mind, the Dutch strategic culture can be described as one that is anchored to and influenced by international law. Furthermore, its strategic culture does not deal only in military matters, as it is clearly stated it increasingly sees foreign and defense policy as tethered to each other. This means that, at the very least, diplomacy is on equal footing with military measures. However, the white papers suggest that diplomacy trumps military options, while still showing determination to use such options should the need arise.

This analysis, however, is only a starting point. As Johnston argued in his own work, there is the need to go back in time as far as possible. This case study only took into account the most recent decades in Dutch history and while I believe the reasons for doing so are valid, future research could go back further to establish the degree of congruence, however limited, between the post-Second World War strategic culture and the pre-Second World War period. Furthermore, strategic culture is about more than just a focus on military aspects. The Dutch themselves anchor defense policy to foreign policy, and even development cooperation. Therefore, this is only a piece of the puzzle of 'security culture'[64], which encompasses a broader set of instruments that are available to a state. While this case study has proven to be most informative, I believe that strategic culture alone is much too restrictive and limited in scope. Therefore, I suggest that future research should be done within the concept of security culture, using strategic culture as a starting point.

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[64] For more information on security culture, see Kirchner, E. J. & Sperling, J., *National Security Cultures: Patterns of Global Governance* (2010).

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