

“A European Army” – influences and integration of the common security and defence policy

This thesis investigates European integration in the area of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), how it has developed in between 2014 and 2018. Furthermore, it considers to what degree American and Russian agency has influenced the European Union to seek this integration. The purpose of this thesis is to answer the research question by utilising chosen theories inside the subject matter.

The overall approach to the thesis is to utilise two theories. The first critical integration theory by Simon Bulmer and Jonathan Joseph will surround the matter of integration, while the second neo-classical realism theory by Steven Lobell, Jeffrey Taliaferro and Norrin Ripsman, will look into whether the foreign policy of the European Union has been subject to change due to the agency of the United States and Russia within the last five years. Furthermore, the analysis will consider if their agency has influenced the European Union too seek further integration in the area of defence. The study of the thesis is constructed using multiple-case studies.

The analysis consists of two parts where the two theories will be approached individually. The countries which will be investigated through the theory of critical integration is France and Germany. Here the analysis will try to utilize the theory on the chosen sources and materials and hereby investigate the development of CSDP, military integration, as a hegemonic project. The second part of the analysis will look to analyse the cases of United States of America as well as Russia through neo-classical realism. In the cases concerning Russia and USA it is investigated if they have a measurable development of the CSDP.

The theory of critical integration was not applicable to the specific cases, but it was discussed how the theory might have been more applicable if the sources had included interviews or questionnaires. This, however, did not affect the second part of the analysis where the usage of neo-classical realism was able to enlighten the understanding and answer the posed research question.

Abstract

In the end the critical integration theory did not provide the study with an answer to the research question, due to insufficient evidence available for the analysis. The neoclassical realist approach indicated Russia very likely influenced the development of the CSDP due to its agency, while that is not the case for the United States.

Table of contents

Chapter 1 – Setting the stage	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Research question	3
1.3 Literature review	3
Chapter 2 – Methodology	7
2.1 Thesis design	7
2.2 Case studies	8
2.3 Qualitative data analysis and source critique	10
2.4 Data Collection.....	11
2.5 Dismissing interviews and why	12
Chapter 3 – Theory	13
3.1 Critical integration theory.....	13
3.2 Neoclassical realist theory	15
3.2.1 Independent variables	16
3.2.2 Intervening variables	19
3.2.3 Dependent variables.....	21
Chapter 4 – Analysis	23
4.1 Analysis introduction	23
4.2 Critical integration theory.....	24
4.2.1 The case of France	24
4.2.2 The case of Germany	26
4.3 Neoclassical realist theory	28
4.3.1 The case of Russia	28
4.3.2 The case of the United States	31
4.4 Discussion	34
Chapter 5 – Conclusion	36
5.1 Conclusion.....	36
Bibliography.....	37

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Chapter 1 – Setting the stage

1.1 Introduction

This master’s thesis will study European integration in the area of the Common Security and Defence policy, how it has developed within the last five years since 2014, and to what degree American and Russian agency has influenced the European Union to seek such integration in a time where a major member state is negotiating its departure from the Union.

The Ukrainian crisis unfolded at Europe’s eastern border where a resurgent Russia instigated a military intervention in the country’s southern part, managing to occupy and annex the Crimean Peninsula (Birnbaum 2015). While the majority of member states of the European Union have utilized their membership in NATO as a guarantee for their national safety, the recent government in the United States has been doubting the continued sustainability of the alliance as long as their European allies haven’t reached the famous “2 per cent” of national defence spending (Rathke 2017). As a response to this, European policy makers have raised their concerns on the matter and argued for increased defence spending as well as more effective “burden-sharing” commitments (BBC news 2016), with President Juncker arguing Europe must take the matter of its own security into its own hands (European Commission 2018a).

European integration has arguably been a story of success depending on how the topic is perceived. However, Stanley Hoffman would argue that the reason for its success lies with the fact that the integration had only taken place on matters of low politics, with high politics¹ still firmly placed in the hands of the sovereign member states (Hoffmann 1966, 881–85). Recently, however, German Chancellor Merkel and French President Macron has argued the need for an “European army” to complement NATO and be an entirely European entity (McGuinness 2020). This might suggest that the European Union – or at least its key member states – are ready to take steps of

¹ High and low politics are referencing to whether politics are related to the immediate survival of the state, or rather to more “menial” areas such as culture and economics (Jackson and Sørensen 2013, 107).

integration on matters of security and defence that had previously been reserved for the sovereign member states of the European Union.

1.2 Research question

Which leads to the research question of this thesis:

How has the aspect of defence integration materialised within the common security and defence policy during the 2014-2018 timeframe, and how has Russian and American agency during this period influenced the European Union to support this notion?

To approach this research question, the thesis will utilise two theories, one for each part of the question. The first part concerns itself with the matter of integration and as such will incorporate critical integration theory by Simon Bulmer and Jonathan Joseph. For the second part of the question, neo-classical realism by Steven Lobell, Jeffrey Taliaferro and Norrin Ripsman will be applied to study whether the foreign policy of the European Union has been subject to change due to the agency of the United States and Russia within the last five years. Furthermore, it is necessary to study whether their agency has influenced the European Union to seek further integration in the area of defence.

1.3 Literature review

Critical integration theory is not yet a widespread theory among scholars, but it has been utilised to study the undermining of fundamental rights within the European Union (Pye 2018), where Robert Pye argue the dominant neoliberal hegemonic project has influenced the institutional framework of the European Union. More specifically the Euro Zone. This is for instance visible through the freedoms of the single market and the European Court of Justice and its shaping of the fundamental rights through its rulings (Pye 2018, 583–84). Christian Lequesne argues Brexit will mean a transition for the European Union into something else, and as such the theories of integration should be renamed into EU theory, which includes rethinking theories to allow for the social cleavage that is currently present where populations are not merely divided into the traditional left/right axis, but also to an “open/closed” society corresponding to whether they

embrace globalization or a more isolationistic attitude (Lequesene 2018, 295). Furthermore, he argues critical integration theory could very well be what is required, as it incorporates a domestic level of analysis that previous integration theories did not have (Christian Lequesene 2018, 296). Douglas Webber argues that there is a possibility for the European Union to experience disintegration, as national-populist hegemonic projects can increase in size and influence due to backlash towards further integration (Webber 2014, 352).

The utilisation of neoclassical realism to study European Union foreign policy choices is not as extensive in the literature as its counterparts of structural and classical realism, though some scholars have so far tried to apply the theory. Nicholas Smith argues the even though the European Union is not a state, it does possess international reach through its economy and international trade, the European External Actions Service (EEAS) and subsequently its foreign policy, thereby allowing for testing the theory on the free trade agreement negotiated between the European Union and Ukraine shortly after the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis (N. R. Smith 2016, 30–31). Michael Baun and Dan Marek utilised neoclassical realist theory to try and answer why the recent developments on matters of defence within the European Union were happening *now*, by studying the PESCO agreement and the France's European Intervention Initiative (Baun and Marek 2019, 27–28). Furthermore, they argue the increased interest among European Union member states for the common defence and security policy came from systemic stimuli of the international system, and not based on internal initiatives (Baun and Marek 2019, 40–41). The Athena review which finances the common costs of the common security and defence policy military operations, is studied by Niklas Nováky through neoclassical realisms notion of relative distribution of power (N. I. M. Nováky 2016, 220–21). He argues that the few, large funding member states dictate the policy, and that a tug-of-war of political negotiation between those who which for increases and those who desire the opposite exists. Furthermore, Nováky examines how the foreign policy executives are influenced through their expectations and ideologies, and how the strategic culture of both France and the United Kingdom influences their stances towards common funding (N. I. M. Nováky 2016, 232). Lee Turpin applies neoclassical theory on the United Kingdom and its approach to the common foreign and security policy as a member of the European Union, and argues the United Kingdom had through the intervening variables, specifically domestic security culture, developed a scepticism towards general European

supranationalisation, including on matters of defence even though the United Kingdom previously was a major proponent for increased integration of the common foreign and security policy (Turpin 2018, 6–8).

Studying the developments of the common foreign and security policy, in particular the defence related policy, has been extensive, varying from the how the lack of civil-military relations within the European Union institutional framework would impede the development of a coherent defence policy (Reinhardt 2010, 51–52), to how the military bureaucracy within the institutional framework experience difficulties in handling international contexts and interactions despite statements of the contrary (Boncourt 2017, 256). The European Union Military Committee acts as an epistemic community, as argued by Mai'a David Cross, which through its competences and expertise on matters of defence have a strong influence on shaping the military dimension of security policy (Cross 2013, 62–63). Tomas Kucera has studied the possibility of European defence integration through various theoretical approaches to international relations, as he argues traditional integration theories are lacking on areas such as security and defence (Kucera 2019, 2). Specifically, he examines the concepts of alliance and security community as they have the possibility of projecting a strong and antithetical prospect of integration. Kucera applies these to the European Defence Fund as its conception is funding European military research and development (Kucera 2019, 15). While technically not part of the institutional security framework, the French European Intervention Initiative (EI2) is an intergovernmental military co-operation designed to insert European military capabilities, circumventing NATO structures and the United States should the need arise (Hristov 2018, 692). Nováky argues, that even though EI2 may develop a common strategic culture, and allow non-CSDP members to join such as the soon-to-leave United Kingdom and Denmark due to its opt-outs, it faces several difficulties that overshadow the benefits (N. Nováky 2018, 21). The EI2s aim for strategic culture is only aspirational, it is exclusive as only Western European member states have joined, and among those there are concerns regarding military capabilities of some members such as Germany. With France being engaged in operations in the Sahel region of Africa, they have been advancing the notion for combined interventions in the vicinity, as well as Sub-Sahara regions, despite the European Union having given significant attention to these geographical territories (N. Nováky 2018, 21–22).

With the introduction and literature review taken care of, this thesis will continue with a clarification of the methodology of the thesis.

Chapter 2 – Methodology

2.1 Thesis design

To adequately answer the research question, it is necessary to structure the thesis in order to get the best results. The first chapter acts as introduction to the subject and determines the area of study as well as presenting the research question and the thought-process behind it. Afterwards the methodology behind the thesis will be presented, wherein the structure of the thesis is explained, information of data collection, source critique, and delimitations involved with the analysis, as well as the presentation of case studies and how they are treated in the thesis. The third chapter will cast light on the two theories chosen for the analysis, and what they can bring to the analysis which theories used by previous authors of both international relations and integration could not. As neoclassical realist theory and critical integration theory are both interesting additions to their respective fields, it would only be appropriate to thoroughly illuminate the various pro et contra. The fourth chapter will focus on the analysis, where both theories will be utilised on the empirical data available. The analysis itself is divided into two parts with each focusing on the respective theory, firstly with critical integration theory and secondly with the neoclassical realist theory. At the end of the analysis the results will be discussed, and any findings will be highlighted and held against chosen literature. The fifth chapter will act as conclusion and give the final remarks based on the whether the hypothesis has been answered or not, as well as airing any thoughts from the author on evaluating the process and potential weaknesses linked to the analysis. This also includes putting the thesis into a broader perspective and visualising whether it had been fruitful with this specific approach.

While the theory for the integration part of the analysis is a valid choice as it was developed with the European Union in mind, it is necessary to address the elephant in the room in regards to neoclassical realist theory. Realism as a school of thought is squarely centred in the camp of statism, where states are the primary actors in the international system (Baylis, Smith, and Owens 2017, 104–5). The European Union as a polity, however, is not a state yet is something more than an international organisation in the traditional sense, as it is able to adopt and implement policies that affect all of its member states (Wallace, Pollack, and Young 2015, 4). It functions as a forum where its member states can engage in international relations, while at the same be an actor in the international system. The European Union does not engage in tasks such as tax collection,

border control, or have a standing army that has traditionally been the duties of states, yet it wields international power through its soft power policies and the debated “Brussels effect” (Bradford 2012), and it has currently within the last decade seen developments within its common security and defence policy. By wielding such power on the international stage, this thesis argues that in conjunction with the premise of neoclassical realist theory, the European Union can be treated as similar to a state actor in terms of being a somewhat coherent package of foreign and security policies.

As mentioned previously, the common security and defence policy has seen developments in the last decade, to which this thesis is going to study these. Specifically, it will be delimited to a time frame from early 2014 to the election for the European Parliament in May 2019. 2014 was specifically chosen as it was a time of contestation on the international scene, as a militarily resurgent Russia initiated military action in neighbouring Ukraine, and the NATO summit in Wales in 2014 the United States called for increased military spending of its European allies. While the United Kingdom held a referendum and subsequently voted to leave the European Union, it will not be a matter of interest for this specific study other than in general terms. The referendum, the voting patterns et cetera and anything related to the socio-economic state of the United Kingdom will not be a focus of this thesis. The aspect of defence and cooperation between the United Kingdom and the European Union might have an impact, but it would be mentioned in broad terms only, and not be a specific object of study, as it requires its own, separate research. However, the United Kingdom has always been a major proponent of Atlanticism (Dunne 2004, 894–99) and as such has been historically hesitant if not outright in opposition to further European integration in defence outside of the established transatlantic NATO structures.

2.2 Case studies

For this thesis I have chosen to utilise case studies as a way of identifying the extent of European defence integration and whether external actors have influenced this process. Specifically, I will be using a descriptive multiple-case study, where I divide my research question into two, separate parts in the analysis and then dividing these two into four smaller units of analyses, where two of

these are studied using international relations theory, with the remaining two being studied through integration theory.

Definition of case studies as a research method is two-fold, according to Robert Yin, with the case study being the empirical method that allows the user to investigate phenomenon within the real-world context, especially if the boundaries of the phenomenon and context aren't entirely evident (Yin 2018, 45). Furthermore, the case study deals with more variables of interest than data points, and as a result benefits from prior theoretical developments guide to the design, the data collection, and the analysis, while relying on multiple sources of evidence that converge in a triangulating fashion (Yin 2018, 46).

Case studies share certain commonalities with a history as they share some of the same samples of empirical data such as written sources in the form of primary and secondary sources, as well as cultural and physical artefacts as the main source of evidence (Yin 2018, 42). However, case studies also relies heavily on two sources of evidence that is not commonly available to historians: direct observations of the ongoing, contemporary events taking place and interviews with the people already partaking in them, which marks the strength of case studies compared to histories as they engage in a larger variety of evidence (Yin 2018, 43).

In order to ensure the quality of the thesis and its research design, it becomes necessary to establish a few checks and balances (Yin 2018, 78–82). The first is constructing validity of the thesis which include identifying the correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. The tactic is mainly to use a multitude of sources as evidence which will help the series of inquiries to near each other and move in the same direction. This is very relevant during the author's data collection when the process of gathering of the necessary information has begun in order to answer the posed questions (Yin 2018, 80).

The second revolves around the concept of external validity which determines whether and how a case study's findings can be generalised. As the case study deals with the research question: **“How has the aspect of defence integration materialised within the common security and defence policy during the 2014-2019 timeframe, and how has Russian and American agency during this period influenced the European Union to support this notion?”**, the study enters the sphere of descriptive case studies. As this is the case, it will be easier to come to an analytic generalization as

the form of the research question has influence on the approaches used in the search for external validity (Yin 2018, 81–82). External validity is important in any study. This test concerns the extent of which and whether the findings of this study will be applicable beyond the present study. It is the question that concern whether the results will be general and will be descriptive of other studies as well (Yin 2018, 81). It has to do with analytical generalizations and how the findings are relevant and “able to implicate new situations” (Yin 2018, 74)

And finally, the matter of reliability, which ensures that the thesis can be reproduced with the same results. The research design itself will use multiple descriptive case studies (Yin 2018, 90–91). This will allow the thesis to paint a broad yet accurate picture of the common issues with the integrated common defence policy of the European Union in respect of American and Russian agency.

2.3 Qualitative data analysis and source critique

The analysis of the thesis will be based on empirical data of a qualitative nature gathered from the relevant countries related to the case studies, which are Russia, United States, Germany, France, and the European Union itself. The data consist of a mix of various types of evidence ranging from official state documents to surveys gathered from the European Union on defence-related matters. The term official state documents correspond to national white papers, strategic reports on defence-related topics, speeches from key cabinet members, ministers, and other government officials of influence, and institutional writings on matters of defence and security.

While documents released from official channels must be subjected to the same critical criteria of review as private documents from individual persons. Such documents are released with a purpose in mind, and therefore it is necessary to ask five questions to determine its proper context- what type of document is it, who is the author, when was it written, where was it written, and why was it written which refers to what context was it written for (Kristensen 2007, 82). Some documents, even those published through official channels of states, can suffer from bias either un-intentionally or intentionally as a political tool to further a specific agenda or as part of a larger propaganda campaign, or they can explain shifts in public opinion on specific issues and the political leadership adapts to such situations (Tosh 2015, 107–8). While the empirical data

primarily consist of documents gathered from online databanks either affiliated or controlled by the subjects in the chosen cases, the lack of other types of evidence can decrease the amount of “depth” case studies otherwise present (Flyvbjerg 2004, 139).

The analytic procedure of data analysis includes finding, the selection, and the synthesising of data the documents may yield, such as excerpts, quotations and organised into themes, categories, or case examples through content analysis (Bowen 2009, 28). It is required to have at the very least two data points of evidence in order to ensure corroboration and convergence between the statements, in an effort to validate said statements and enhance their credibility (Bowen 2009, 28).

2.4 Data Collection

This thesis utilises a qualitative approach to the analysis and therefore requires qualitative evidence to properly conduct the study.

The European Union has several institutions which store large amounts of information in online databases, easily accessible. The first choice was to visit the European Commission archives online, and do searches using relevant key words such as “Russia”, “defence”, “security”, “strategy”, “United States” or in conjunction with each other to optimise the search results. Eventually several types of evidence turned up, varying from state of the union speeches to policy briefs detailing EU – Russia relations.

Afterwards the author repeated the same procedure after accessing the European Council webpage. Since the European Union prides itself on transparency, a lot of information was available. However, it was time consuming to shift through all the documents, even with key words.

When the European Union had been covered, the next step was to access white papers on strategy, security and defence published by the individual countries. While some, like the National Security Strategy of the United States aren’t published annually but rather occasionally, it could be difficult to acquire the necessary evidence.

While the analysis is based on qualitative data, the author deemed it necessary to find statistical data on military spending of the individual countries, and the European Union, from SIPRI, as well as the European Union itself.

2.5 Dismissing interviews and why

Interviews are more often than not a solid contribution to a case study's empirical evidence as the questions for the interviewee can be drafted to aptly suit the subject of study, and the interview itself will be more akin to a guided conversation than a series enquiries (Yin 2018, 161). These allow for the interviewee to express their thoughts on specific, case-related questions and can bring insights, explanations and personal views that would not otherwise have appeared compared to doing a survey. However, interviews do bring their own set of probable fallacies as they are dealing with humans who by nature are fallible, and as such their reporting can be compromised due to, for instance, faulty memories, hidden agendas, poor articulation, and opinions (Yin 2018, 163–64). Another, more present issue with interviews, is the matter of approaching persons of interest and conducting interviews at an available time that suit both them and the interviewer. As this study has cases which range geographically from Russia to Europe to the United States, the task alone of both pinpointing and approaching suitable persons of interest can become quite a logistical feat. The author would have, if possible, conducted interviews with members of the FPE or associated members of the FPE bureaucratic structures from the states, and institutions concerned. However, as this thesis deals with themes such as contemporary national security, as opposed to historical policy analysis, it was not possible to make any on record interviews. Thus, publicly available documentation was the preferred method of data collection. While the author acknowledge the vast amount of pro's connected with the conducting of interviews of relevant bureaucrats and national leadership, as well as the lack thereof can significantly alter the results of the study due to a lack of diversity in types of sources, they were simply not feasible for this study under the current constraints.

Chapter 3 – Theory

Studying integration and interaction on the international stage with the European Union at the centre requires the utilization of theories of both integration and international relations. First off, I will explain critical integration theory and afterwards neoclassical realist theory. Although the two theories are from different schools of thought, the author has chosen to use both theories separately and in sequence to complement each other. Realist theories have been criticised as being unable to adequately understand the functioning of the European Union as a non-state, that has no adequate parallel in history, within the global context of states (Rynning 2005, 10–11). By first examining the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy using critical integration theory, the author will afterwards apply neoclassical realism to gain an understanding of whether Russian and American agency has made an impact of the development of European Union security policy (McKernan 2014).

3.1 Critical integration theory

Following the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014 and the American calls for increased European military spending at the 2014 NATO summit in Wales, the Common Foreign and Security Policy saw increased levels of interest with the 2017 adoption of the PESCO agreement on defence matters, as well as the developments of the European Defence fund. Critical integration theory can be utilised to study the developments of the Common Security and Defence Policy, the militarily focused sub policy of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, within the delimited timeframe of this thesis.

The authors of critical integration theory, Simon Bulmer and Jonathan Joseph, devised the theory to be a fresh take on the disciplines of integration theory. They argue European integration is contestation between rival hegemonic projects, and that these are themselves mediating points between macrostructures, institutional structures and active agency (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 726). Furthermore, they are proponents to Webber's (Webber 2014, 342–43) notion of flipping integration theories and test whether they can be utilised for studying disintegration (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 726). Although the current major integration theories have been extensively utilised in arguing for integration within the European Union, they are inherently distinct and as such each

offer different insights as well as carry significant flaws in illuminating integration (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 726).

Critical integration theory incorporates features from various schools of thought, such as structure, agency, and hegemony, with the former two being derived from international relations theory as it connects the international level with its domestic counterpart, and the latter being inspired from Gramsci's work on hegemony (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 726–27). Their reasoning being that current integration theories have less focus on domestic bottom-up social and political movements and rather employ an elitist preference, be it either political, political or societal (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 731-32). As such Bulmer and Joseph wish to incorporate social relations alongside the currently studied political and economic contestation of integration, which also allows the theory to be as detailed as possible (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 726). By applying structure and agency, the theory allows for peeking into the relationship between agents and their environment in which they operate. While structures predate agents, they have different properties and constraints that shape the agency of actors, agents themselves have distinct features such as reflexivity and consciousness that allows them an ability to influence structures, and through their agency possibly even change them (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 730–31). Not only domestic actors' possess agency but also transnational actors as well as the European Commission, however agency is more strongly embedded in the domestic domain as they react to the features of macro-structures (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 732).

Structures themselves can be divided into two categories as macro-structures and institutional structures. Macro-structures are omnipresent as they constantly shape the agency of actors, such as the global economy, demographical changes, geopolitical and geostrategic contexts, financial crises et cetera, meanwhile institutional structures are the institutional framework of the European Union, such as its institutional architecture, the *acquis communautaire*² and policy competences that shape the negotiation strategy of actors (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 731–32). The institutional framework is characterized as multi-level governance, as it operates differently compared to national governments, though it is not a fully realized sphere of governance (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 731–32).

² The *acquis communautaire* are the combined legal framework of the European Union, being the treaties, regulations and directives, judicial rulings.

Bulmer and Joseph define a hegemonic project as the action of mobilising support in favour of a far reaching programme of action, and where social agents attempt to construct political projects (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 733–34). As hegemony represents a set of complex structures – either political, cultural, or economic – thereby providing the context for social agents to develop or pursue their own limited interests. While Gramsci is rooted in Marxist school of thought, he rejects the thought that political projects aren't simply rooted in socio-economic conditions or capitalist production, but instead arguing that it is based on groups and their social conditions (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 733). In short, Bulmer and Joseph argue that distinct social, political, and economic interests need to reconcile in order to achieve hegemony (Bulmer and Joseph 2016, 733–34).

As previously mentioned, Bulmer and Joseph argue integration is the outcome of contestation between hegemonic projects, and that hegemonic projects themselves are the mediating point of macrostructures, institutional structure and actors' agency, which combined allows for increasingly detailed analyses of European integration.

3.2 Neoclassical realist theory

This thesis will apply neoclassical realism to illuminate the foreign policy of the European Union, and how it is shaped within the Union institutions. Furthermore, the theory will also be immensely helpful in determining the actions of the EU in the area of security policy and its implementation.

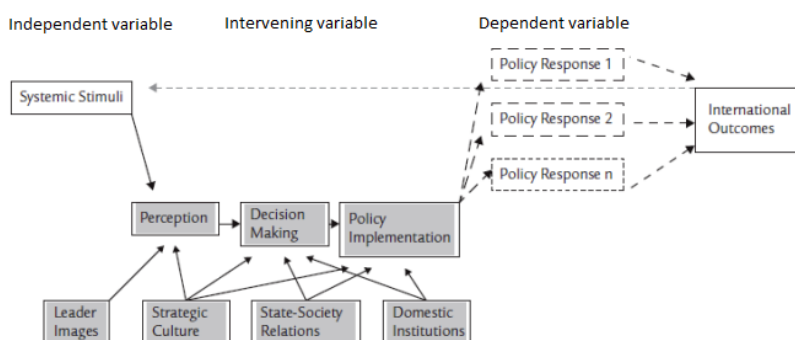


Figure 1. Model of neoclassical realist theory showcasing the three variables.
Ripsman et al. "Neoclassical realist theory of international relations", 2015. P. 59

Neoclassical realism was first coined by Gideon Rose in 1998 (Rose 1998, 146), but the theory has since been somewhat struggling to develop a comprehensive research programme that binds the

theory together. The following authors Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, and Steven E. Lobell have attempted to redress this with their seminal work *Neoclassical realist theory of international relations* (2015). Their theory differs from the previous iterations of realism which focused on the international level, the interactions between states, while neoclassical realism has two levels of analysis divided into an international level and a domestic one. The latter is the notable addition to the theory and what makes it unique as it incorporates the governing and social structures of a given society and their impact on how foreign policy is shaped.

The theory uses three distinct variables with the first two being independent and intervening variables which both have already been briefly summarized. The third, the dependent variable, focuses on the decision-making outcomes from the domestic level and from systemic stimuli from the international society, that is the intervening and independent variables respectively. First, I will elaborate on the independent variables and afterwards continue with both intervening and dependent variables respectively.

3.2.1 Independent variables

The independent variable focuses on the international structure that is the international system which developed after the Westphalian Peace following the conclusion of the thirty years war³ in Europe, and which became the point of creation of modern states. Known as the peace of Westphalia, the Westphalian system dictated that states have sole control of the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious space within their defined territorial borders. This was the genesis of the phenomenon of the global system of states (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 35–36). Neoclassical realist theory is built on the foundation of Kenneth Waltz's structural realism and therefore shares similar characteristics. States are the primary actors within this structure, as no entity outside of states themselves have the ability to wield and exert their influence onto others as consistently as states (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 35). Within the structure of the international system states must conform to two fundamental structural features: First off the structure is deeply hierarchical in nature as the states are striving to secure their own survival

³ Military conflict from 1618 to 1648 that emerged in central Europe over matters of religion between Protestant and Catholic princes within the Holy Roman Empire, and soon involved nearly every major European power through shifting alliances.

(Waltz 1979, 81–82). Secondly, the system is characterised by anarchy and therefore generates pervasive uncertainty to which the states has to react (Waltz 1979, 88–99). In extension of the states, international politics is a continuous struggle for power and influence as the world's resources in finite and the uncertainty among states about their intentions and capabilities, another characteristic they have in common (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 43).

The executive leadership which develops and implement foreign policy for states are referred to as the foreign policy executive (or FPE for short), and consists primarily of presidents, prime ministers, key cabinet members, defence and foreign ministers, as well as advisors who are charged with the conduct of foreign and defence policies (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 61–62). While the FPE are considered part of the intervening variables on the domestic level, it is important to emphasise this early as I will continuously refer to the foreign policy executives throughout the thesis when mentioning the leadership of states.

Within the boundaries of the international structure is systemic variables or “stimuli” that affect states and how they perceive their surroundings. One of these consists of structural modifiers which are material non-structural variables such as geography, the offense-defence balance of military technology, and technological diffusion in general – in short any factor that can alter the distribution of power between states and their behaviour (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 40).

While the concept of power is hotly contested among realist theorists, Ripsman et al argue for the “elements of national power approach” where influence and power is separated, with power being a means to an end, and not the end goal (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 44).

Following said approach includes various measurements and indicators of a state's material capabilities, such as various GDP measurements, the size and composition of military forces, military research and development, demographics, natural resources, and the size of the state's territory, as well as less quantifiable measures such as morale and the quality of the leadership (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 44).

A system of polarity between states is utilised in order to denote the amount of great powers at any given time based on a criteria of material power as either uni-, bi-, or multipolarity, though it

is not always perceivable whether it is one or the other (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 45–46).

Another key systemic variable is the clarity of information the states receives by the international system, which can be broken down into three components: (1) the degree to how discernable a threat or opportunity offers itself, (2) whether the system provides ample information on time horizons of these, and (3) whether an optimal policy options are readily available or not (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 46). Ripsman et al defines a clear threat as primarily a state, though also to a lesser degree a quasi-state, which have three attributes; the expressed desire to carry out hostilities towards another state's territory or its interests; the economic or military means to do so; a sense of imminence due to expectations of an agent will execute said hostilities (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 46). Opportunities on the other hand could for instance develop following a rapid increase of a state's economic or military capabilities, through a collapse or deterioration of capabilities of regional adversaries, or any other factor that favours one state's relative capabilities over others (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 46–47). At the same time, the opposing state must lack the necessary political resolve to actively counter the movements, especially since these advantages do not last indefinitely and require swift action to properly exploit (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 47). Which brings us to the component of time horizons as these are difficult to assess due to an often lack of accurate intelligence on adversary capabilities and intentions, however, it can ease the strategic dilemmas of states since it reduces the options of response for the political leadership (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 48). At the same time the clarity of options can be hard to determine due to the nature of the constraining structure of the international system, and therefore limit the amount of optimal policy responses available to states (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 48). According to Ripsman et al clarity as a systemic variable is perhaps one of the most critical for neoclassical realist analysis, as the amount of clarity establishes the level of response states have, with less leading to more unique policy responses as the lesser clarity leads to a lesser degree of perceived threat, and therefore allowing the political leadership to solutions based on for instance strategic culture, or other specific preferences (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 49–50). This also applies vice versa when the amount of clarity being clearer, thereby limiting the policy options available to the state's foreign policy executives.

The last systemic variable to be introduced are the concept of strategic environment and content of the information it receives, and whether it is of a permissive or restrictive nature. The latter two relates to the imminence and the magnitude of threats and opportunities states face (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 52). The more imminent and valid a threat or opportunity is, the more restricted the strategic environment become and vice versa, thereby allowing for a greater range of policy options for the foreign policy executives to pursue.

With the structure of the international system, the systemic stimuli of the independent variable being summed up, I will now proceed to elaborate on the second variable, namely the intervening one which revolves around the domestic layer of the theory (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 60).

3.2.2 Intervening variables

The probably most defining feature that makes neoclassical realist theory stand out compared to its realist contemporaries is the addition of the intervening variables which deals with states' development of foreign policy responses at the domestic level (Rose 1998, 146–47). While neoclassical realism has previously been criticised for choosing intervening variables that would suit the approach the most, Ripsman et al have specifically chosen these based on their respective pathways to political significance, as outlined in figure 1 (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 60). I will now describe the four individual variables in conjunction with the three processes which constitute the domestic level of the theory.

The first variable concerns the state foreign policy executives' beliefs and images, as they as primary decision-makers sit at the helm of the state (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 61). Leader image as a variable is important as it affects the perception of incoming systemic stimuli, and is based on the core set of ideas, values, beliefs, and images which affect how they interaction with their surroundings. Their "images" are shaped from their previous experiences and choices, and as such act as cognitive filters. When processing information they either leave out or focuses on specific information, signals, and events, which both bias and personalise leader's perception of external stimuli. As these are distinct for each individual leader, the outcome of how leaders react to international challenges and opportunities will vary (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 62).

Other personality traits such as being either risk-prone or averse, as well as age, can also affect how leaders process external stimuli. As such, when the foreign policy executives receive incoming information from systemic stimuli the individual “images” ends up distorting their perception of the information, thereby influencing the policy response. (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 63).

The second, strategic culture, applies to the influences a state can perceive and adapts to systemic stimuli and structural shifts in material capabilities (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 67–68). Furthermore, it include a set of norms, assumptions, and beliefs which along with collective expectations shape the strategic understanding of political leaders, societal elites, and the general public (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 66–67). These collective assumptions and expectations become deeply entrenched and constrain the state’s behaviour by defining acceptable and non-acceptable strategic decisions. The decision-making, the second of three intervening processes, can thereby be severely hampered for the foreign policy executives due to the strategic culture of a given state, reducing their ability to adequately initiate strategic adjustments to systemic changes (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 69–70). Strategic culture can also affect democratic states across national borders as they have a set of norms and ideals of internal conflict resolution common for democracies, and when they have a dispute they tend to return to these and apply them in an international setting (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 68).

The third variable is the state-society relations, which Ripsman et al defines as the interactions between the institutions of the state, and various economic and societal groupings (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 70–71). Depending on how these groupings relationships are with the foreign policy executives, it can affect their ability to mobilise the state in case of severe threats if the societal groups deem it against their interests, thereby discourage far-reaching initiatives within the state from taking place. Conversely, the healthier the relationship the easier it can be for the FPE to enact the necessary policy, especially if key groupings have sole control over specific resources within the state (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 71). As such the FPE can never refrain from ignoring this relationship, thereby affecting the decision-making, as well as the third process of policy implementation.

At the end lies the domestic political institutions of the state, the fourth variable, where formal institutions of a state, its bureaucracy, organisational processes and routines with specific rules and regulations define and guide domestic competition for policy (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 75). As such it determines who and which group can contribute to the formation of domestic policy, as well enforce provisions and veto rights. Therefore, one state apparatus differing from another can have important impacts on how they respond to systemic pressure (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 75). Democracies, for instance, can be affected by whether it is a two-party system or multiparty, executive-judicial relations, voting system et cetera. For non-democratic states, domestic political institutions tend to be measured in the authority of the leader, and to the degree it must consult or respect societal groupings or interests (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 77). To sum up the constitution of states' domestic political institutions affects how the decision-making process of the FPE, as to if and how their response must correlate with the state apparatus' institutional bureaucracy. Furthermore, the same applies for when policy must be implemented within a state, as it can both enable and constrain the ability of the foreign policy executives to effectively accomplish their policy goal.

Now having outlined the intervening variables of the theory, the dependent variable will now be explained.

3.2.3 Dependent variables

Lastly, the dependent variables constitute not only the foreign policy choices of states, but also international outcomes as these sometime occur due to the influence of the enacted policy. The dependent variables are divided into time frames ranging from mere days to decades, depending on how extensive the chosen foreign policy is (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 81–82). As such, the foreign policy can affect the grand strategy of a state and with time even affect international politics to a degree, as well as the systemic structure of the international system (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 81).

In the short term, which Ripsman et al defines as days, weeks and months, corresponds to crises-related decision-making where the states must respond to sudden changes in the international system or unexpected events (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 83). It is not possible to

augment for states to augment and expand their own capabilities within such a short time frame, nor is it possible to establish full-scale alliances as these require extensive planning, therefore leaving states to only navigate internationally with what is currently available to them in terms of power.

For the short-to-medium term which Ripsman et al define as months and years, policy making is more forward looking, as the foreign policy executives engage with strategic planning and possibly even the construction of a national grand strategy to help anticipate future crises, power shifts, and opportunities for the state (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 83–84).

Extending the time frame to the medium-to-longer term, and is defined as years and decades, enables the strategic policies of various great powers to interact and impact the international systemic outcomes, which is political phenomena that emerge due to the interaction of two or more strategic policies (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 85). These conflicting strategic policies can thereby risk initiating hostilities or ensure peace between two or more states, whereas these were previously thought to be due to differences in relative material capabilities and distribution of power in the international system.

At the end exists the longer term, which is defined as decades, and it is here where grand strategies and international outcomes and policies can affect and reshape the international structure. War, for instance, or any other contestation that require a significant amount of resources from great powers to compete can exhaust great powers and they have a risk of collapsing, while other states can be empowered by it (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 86). Therefore, if states' strategic choice can influence systemic outcomes, they can also alter or contribute to structural changes of the system (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 86).

With the theory having been presented, it is important to note that while I have specifically chosen these two for this thesis there were other options available. The next part will establish these preceding theories that came into the limelight before the current iteration, and why neoclassical realism is preferred in this thesis compared to classical and structural realism.

Chapter 4 – Analysis

4.1 Analysis introduction

The concept of a unified military force under a supranational political entity is not new to European politics as the idea was previously brought forward by then defence minister of France, René Pleven, who came up with a plan of European military integration overseen by a supranational institution similar to the idea of the contemporaneous European Coal and Steel Community (James 2003, 233–34). While the proposal was passed in the Benelux, Italian and German assemblies, the French narrowly failed to ratify it and it never came to be (Chalmers, Davies, and Monti 2014, 12–13). Afterwards, the United States pushed for allowing West German rearmament to counter growing Soviet hegemonic power, as well as West German accession into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (James 2003, 234–35). With European security being guaranteed by the United States through NATO, the notion of a separate and autonomous European military institution faded and didn't re-emerge until after the fall of the Berlin Wall with the Maastricht treaty coming into effect in 1993 (Wallace, Pollack, and Young 2015, 440). Specifically, the treaty includes the notion of implementing a "common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence" (Council of the European Communities and Commission of the European Communities 1992, 4). This planted seeds for future defence cooperation within the European Union. In the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, culminating in the Kosovo War of the late 1990's, the British political leadership under then Prime Minister Tony Blair saw the need for increased military spending and development of capabilities among the European states, as these were lacking during the conflicts in the Balkans. As such, he and his French counterpart, Jacques Chirac, saw the need to move forward and establish military units available for peacekeeping missions to be deployed at short notice in within the European Union's neighbouring countries, without being dependent on American logistical support, should the need arise (Wallace, Pollack, and Young 2015, 443). Through the years, since the treaty of Maastricht in 1992 to the implementation of the Lisbon treaty 2009, the areas of security and military integration underwent institutional transformations, much akin to the rest of the European Union framework, however, by Lisbon the European Union had become a global player (Larivé 2014, 1–3).

4.2 Critical integration theory

In the following two sections the author will study the developments of the integration within the common security and defence policy of the European Union through the utility of critical integration theory.

4.2.1 The case of France

France has, since the adoption of the Maastricht treaty, been a big proponent in shaping European foreign policy, as was the case when the British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac held the Saint Malo-meeting, discussing the future of European defence and the establishment of what have since become the European Battlegroups, units capable of rapid insertion within a short duration of time. At the same time, France's foreign policy in Africa focusing on its former colonial states, resembling the previously colonial *francafrique*, has meant French troops fighting insurgents and militant islamists in support of the fledgling African states to ensure stability (S. W. Smith 2013, 163). In 2013, French forces were deployed in Mali at the request of the Malian government. Only French troops were deployed despite the efforts of the French diplomatic corps to find European partners for a multilateral intervention, so as to minimise French casualties and material *expense* (Henke 2017, 313–14). As such, France continued its legacy of military interventions despite earlier reassurances from President Hollande that it would not be the case.

In the Autumn of 2014, Eurobarometer held a survey where they asked respondents their opinion on a common security and defence policy which the vast majority were positive about, with French respondents being 78% positive towards it (European Commission, Directorate-General Communication, and TNS Opinion & Social 2014, 189). By 2018, the overall positivity had fallen though the majority of respondents in every member state was more positive than negative, with Ireland having 61% as the least amount. While support in France was 77%, one percent down from 2014 (European Commission 2018b, 17).

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015, President Hollande held a speech before the joint session at the French parliament addressing the attack and its repercussions. Hollande saw the necessity to withdraw troops to ensure the internal security of France, however, in doing so would leave French military overstretched (Hollande 2015, 2). Therefore, he had conferred with his minister of defence to activate the solidarity clause of the European Union, article 42.7, “[...]which states that when one State is attacked, all the Member States shall have the obligation to provide aid and assistance[...]” (Hollande 2015, 2). Hollande’s hopes of receiving support to continue French commitments against Daesh⁴ in the Middle East were answered, as British assets on Cyprus allowed for French aircraft to continue their sorties. Furthermore, the responses from the member states could be grouped into different categories, ranging from offering logistical support for aerial bombardments, akin to what the United Kingdom did, to support for UN peacekeeping missions and EU missions (European Council 2016a, 3).

When the new President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, entered European politics, he came with a vision for a unified Europe, which also included the concept of a common defence force paid for by a common budget dedicated to matters of defence (Macron 2016, 1). Furthermore, he argued for the advancement of defence and security integration through the PESCO arrangement of the European Union, while supplementing it with the French European Intervention Initiative, “as quickly as possible” (Macron 2016, 1–2). According to the authors of critical integration theory, Bulmer and Joseph, the agency of actors within the institutional structure of the European Union is limited, but not non-existent. In the case of France, which has been leading an interventionist foreign policy for decades, has been probing the institutional structure of the European Union through the activation article 42.7, and being a proponent for the permanent structured cooperation in regard to defence and security. While the integration on these areas weren’t proceeding according to French plans, they initiated their own intergovernmental military project, European states, whether members of the European Union or not, are allowed to participate provided they have the military capabilities and the political will to deploy them, should the need arise (Macron 2017, 4–6). However, while France as

⁴ Refers to Islamic State

an actor was able to influence its surroundings and the institutional system by augmenting it through its own military project, and furthering the common security and defence policy by addressing its necessity, it cannot be classified as a hegemonic project, as the evidence does not support a far-reaching programme across social differences, political thresholds, and national borders, as the theory proscribes. Therefore, as the evidence does not support the theory on French aspirations of European military integration of the common security and defence policy, the theory must be deemed inadequate at answering the research question. However, this is not the fault of the theory, but rather a question of adequate evidence on which the theory must be applied, therefore this section is inconclusive.

4.2.2 The case of Germany

Germany have since the late 1990's been actively pursuing a greater role in international security, as the amount of personnel deployed in international missions has risen year after year (Bulmer, Jeffery, and Padgett 2010, 151). At the same time, German legislators continuously lower the budgets for the Bundeswehr, and allowing insufficient investments into military research and development. While budget for the armed forces were slated to increase from 1.16 per cent in 2015 to 1.18 per cent in 2016, by 2019 the number would have fallen to 1.07 per cent, reaching an all-time low (German Bundestag 2016, 17). This coincided with the lack of political will to deploy troops in NATO-missions in Afghanistan, leading to the mentality of a "culture of restraint" which still exists. It is, however, not as present when regarding European Union missions as German contributions fall in between France and United Kingdom (Bulmer, Jeffery, and Padgett 2010, 152). "We Europeans truly have to take our fate into our own hands — naturally in friendship with the United States of America, in friendship with Great Britain, as good neighbors with whoever, also with Russia and other countries" German Chancellor Angela Merkel argued the need for Europe to step up and take the reins of their own defence, as the prospects of losing the security guarantee of the United States in the near future due to the mixed signals of President Trump (Paravicini 2017). "But we have to know that we Europeans must fight for our own future and destiny," signifying the need for further integration with European allies, as Germany's fondness for multilateralism is evident through its international participation in conjunction with the European Union (Bulmer, Jeffery, and Padgett 2010, 204)

While Germany has been a frequent participant in European mission to various conflict hotspots, and supporter of multilateralism through either the UN or the European Union to achieve collective results, German legislators would rather pursue powerful institutions, and, if possible, even try to strengthen them (Bulmer, Jeffery, and Padgett 2010, 137–38). This comes to light when examining the Federal Government's Strategy Paper for the defence industry in 2015, as points of focus include SMEs⁵, further integration to ensure its security, and funding for research, development and innovation through its embeddedness with Transatlantic and European structures (Federal Government 2015, 1–4). When France activated then solidarity clause within the Lisbon treaty in 2015, Germany answered by deploying a frigate as an escort for the French carrier *De Gaulle*, refuelling tankers, maintenance crews as well as reconnaissance planes, and continuing with the ongoing mission of training Kurdish peshmerga fighters in Iraq (European Council 2016a, 6).

By 2018, many of the trends permeating the Bundeswehr, primarily funding, has been halted. By 2025 the German armed forces would receive 1.5 per cent of the federal expenditure, enabling the Bundeswehr to commit to training exercises, increasing the size in terms of personnel, and acquiring new military hardware (Bartels 2018, 7–9).

The theory of critical integration theory was not adaptable in this specific case, since the issue of insufficient evidence plagued the study, just like the case with France.

⁵ Small and medium enterprises

4.3 Neoclassical realist theory

In the next two sections the author will apply the neoclassical realist theory in order to study the agency of the Russian Federation, and the United States, and whether they had an impact on the development of the common security and defence policy.

4.3.1 The case of Russia

In late February 2014 troops belonging to the Russian Federation occupied the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea as a reaction to the removal of sitting Ukrainian pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich, reaching the climax of a series of events dating back to November 2013 when Ukraine after some indecision decided not to sign an association agreement with the European Union, and instead join the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (Auer 2015, 964). This led major demonstrations among the pro-European population in Kiev, with the Ukrainian government trying to suppress these under brutal circumstances. However, it only figuratively managed to add gasoline to the fire, emblazing the demonstrators to fortify themselves on the Maidan square. Unable to suppress the uprising, Yanukovich fled Ukraine in late February 2014 to Russia, after which Russian military forces penetrated and occupied Ukrainian territory, with a referendum soon leading to Crimea seceding from Ukraine and joining the Russian Federation (Zank 2017, 84). The Russian military had since its conflict with Georgia in 2007, where it experienced severe shortfalls compared to the comparable weaker Georgian military, initiated a series of reforms to increase the lethality of the Russian military, as well as the professionalism and overall quality (Defense Intelligence Agency 2017, 12–13). The result was seen in Ukraine, where Russia utilised “hybrid warfare”⁶ and managed to seize all of its key objectives on Crimea personnel losses. Equally, in supporting an insurgency in the eastern Donbas region, Russia destabilised the Ukrainian regime and state, limiting its ability to respond effectively (Galeotti 2016, 285–87). The European Union response was mixed, but eventually was able to authorise sanctions against Russia over a period of time, with each sanction targeting Russian and Ukrainian nationals as well as companies (European Council 2014). Simultaneously, on the home front of Europe, the

⁶ Russian forces were deployed without insignia of any kind, thereby initially making it difficult to determine their place of origin or nationality, leading some to believe they acted autonomously without orders from Moscow foreign policy executives.

Commission released a report in 2014 detailing the intended improvements to the European defence and security sector in the near future (European Commission 2014). Most of the intended improvements described within are, while argued to improve the defence and security sectors of Europe, economic in nature and have multiple functions other than entirely defence-related, such as securing the supply chains within Europe, and promoting SMEs (European Commission 2014, 4–8).

About a year later, in September 2015, the Russian parliament approved of the deployment and use of military power in Syria, allowing Russian military assets to support the crumbling Assad regime, eventually turning the entire dynamic of the war in Assad's favour through effective use of air and naval assets (Defense Intelligence Agency 2017, 43).

From 2016 onwards there has been shift within the European Union, as European leaders start to address the need for increased defence spending, the sharing of capabilities and ensuring a sovereign Europe, as exemplified by President Juncker's State of the Union speech: "Europe needs to toughen up. [...] Europe can no longer afford to piggyback on the military might of others [...] We have to take responsibility for protecting our interests and the European way of life." (Jean-Claude Juncker 2016, 19). Compared to his 2015 State of the Union speech where matters of defence were only briefly mentioned in relation to how the European arms industries are "being better organised" (Juncker 2015, 43), it appears the notion of defence and strategic thinking has become a major talking point within the European Union in a very short time period. Furthermore, in his July 2016 speech Juncker argues for the development of a European Defence Fund to boost military-related research and development, and capability sharing through the Permanent Structured Cooperation clause within the Lisbon treaty (Juncker 2016, 19). One month prior, the European Commission released their security white paper, Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, which was a new and much needed addition to European strategic thinking, as the last security strategy dated back to 2003. Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the EU, cemented the need for Europe to "[...] play a major role, including as a global security provider" (Mogherini 2016, 3–4) in the forewords, foreshadowing the essence of the Global Strategy – that Europe is under "threat" (Mogherini 2016, 7) and it must be able to defend itself. Especially as the threat seem to be perceived as being an eastern neighbour: "To the east, the European security order has been violated [...]", although the paper doesn't outright

state which country specifically, it does mention Russia has destabilized Ukraine and violated international law (Mogherini 2016, 33).

It is rather clear that Russia's agency in Ukraine and Syria has ruffled some feathers internationally, and it hasn't gone unnoticed as exemplified above. The foreign policy executives of the European Union, in this case Juncker and Mogherini, as well as the heads of states at the Council of Ministers as they define the overall strategy of the Union, reacts to Russia's agency and perceived military capabilities. The FPEs as a consequence began to take Russia seriously, as evident from the statements in the Global Strategy, and Juncker's demand for increased European military security⁷. The FPEs perceived Russia to be threat, and to counter it required increased funding for national armed forces and cooperation on a European level. However, strategic culture in matters of defence are relatively modern and ill-defined for the European Union as a unit, as it had relied on its soft power capabilities (Mogherini 2016, 4). Thus, it was necessary for the FPEs to establish and articulate the notion of strategic culture on matters of defence and security. As Russia borders several of the Union's member states as well as peripheral areas of interest for the European Union, such as the Black Sea and the Caucasus, it could with its large population and military might become a severe threat, especially if Russia manages to penetrate the "Suwalki Corridor" and cut off the Baltic members states in case of hostilities (Veebel and Sliwa 2019, 115). FPEs decision-making process could be hampered by the state-society relations as increasing budgets for defence spending can negatively affect public opinion, but as exemplified through Juncker's previous speeches and the Global Strategy paper it is being articulated and linked to economic growth. According to a survey done by Eurobarometer in autumn 2016, when asked whether respondents thought negatively or positively when mentioning "security", at least 75% thought positively in 21 countries (European Commission, Directorate-General Communication, and TNS Opinion & Social 2017, 145), which is 3% lower than the survey done in Autumn 2014 where respondents were given the same question (European Commission, Directorate-General Communication, and TNS Opinion & Social 2014, 165). However, the lower percentage can be explained through recent events occurring in Europe and internationally, which could have affected the result.

⁷ See "the case of Russia", page 24-25

In later 2016 were a European Council meeting, where the heads of states were discussing the common security and defence policy, and they affirmed their responsibility to provide security to the European Union, and to “make better use of options available[...] in regards to capabilities” (European Council 2016b, 5). These talks led to the Council meeting in June 2017 where the heads of state agreed to launch the permanent structured cooperation on matters of defence (European Council 2017, 2), enabling the institutions to draft the necessary paperwork. In November 2017 a council of ministers meeting occurred and the draft for PESCO was signed, essentially initiating the activation of the clause (Council of the European Union 2017, 1–2).

The FPEs of the European Union likely initiated the permanent structured cooperation to ensure the development of member states’ military assets and capabilities. Based on the threat that Russia could be perceived to be, due to its agency within Ukraine and Syria, effectively projecting military force into the domain of Europe, could have led to the FPEs adopting a military measure to ensure the security of the European Union by equalising the distribution of relative power between Russia and the Union.

4.3.2 The case of the United States

Throughout the early 2010’s American diplomatic and military leadership began questioning European defence capabilities and implored their allies to increase spending to 2 per cent of GDP. This came at a time when America was pivoting away from continental Europe, and instead focusing on the Pacific theatre (Ulrich 2013, 3). China, which had been increasingly assertive towards its surrounding neighbours concurrently with its expanding economic might, had begun building and fortifying small islands in the Pacific, claiming them to be historically and uniquely Chinese and thereby having the right to proceed with the constructions (Department of Defense 2019, 8). As a consequence of the American military removing assets from Europe, their demands for the Europeans to provide a larger proportion of their own defence. With Russian military action taking place on Ukrainian soil in early 2014, a new geopolitical reality for Europe and the United States emerged with Russia again becoming an adversary.

At the 2014 NATO summit in Wales, the European members pledged to reverse the decline in defence budgets, and work towards 2 per cent spending as a minimum, and 20 per cent of budget on new acquisitions to ensure a modern military (NATO 2014, 3).

By 2016 President Obama had to reiterate the 2014 Wales pledge, and raised his concern regarding European allies “free-riding”, as they demanded American presence in North Africa while not committing any assets themselves (Holehouse 2016). On average, they spend 1.4 per cent of GDP of their defence budgets, compared to the 3.6 per cent for the American counterparts. However, Obama was a strong proponent for multilateralism and embraced international cooperation, partially due to the financial woes of the United States at the time (Lasher and Sixta Rinehart 2016, 871). A major power is to a certain degree perceived and judged in the same light as the person at the helm, and a superpower which is both internationally reliable and understandable can lead to better sustainable relations over time (Lasher and Sixta Rinehart 2016, 879).

However, by early 2017 President Obama was on his way out of the White House as his second term as President was almost over. By November 2016, Donald Trump would go on to win the election as the Republican candidate, defeating democratic candidate and former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.

President Trump had early in his presidency aired his concerns over NATO’s usefulness, as it hadn’t managed to “take care of terror”, and creating confusion as to whether the United States would honour article five of the NATO treaty (Zurcher 2017). His statements regarding the European Union and its subsequent trade war have led to low poll numbers among European respondents, as well as a general dislike among the member states’ populations and their governments towards the American President. However, the relationship between Europe and the United States can be summed up as “[...] Europe relies on America for its security and America does not rely on Europe.” (Shapiro and Pardijs 2017, 2). During the opening of Juncker’s state of the Union speech in 2018, he was opposed to unilateralism that defies hope, without naming any individuals where such as statement would fit (Juncker 2018, 7). Furthermore, he argued for the continued support to make Europe an autonomous, global player through its security and defence policy.

The FPE of the European Union perceived the actions of two Presidents differently, while both possessed the same job as President of the United States. The systemic stimuli during Obama’s

term as President were considered permissive as the United States and the European Union were – overall – on good terms, and while there were no doubt the United States was the dominant partner in that relationship, it was perceived as benevolent, and the European Union could focus on developing the institutions. That changed with President Trump's term, as he was much less of an multilateralist compared to the previous President, and Trump's doubts about NATO as an institution was not perceived well by the FPE of the European Union. Suddenly, there were a risk of both losing American military support in Europe, and there was the slight possibility of the United States becoming an adversary. With a military expenditure of approximately US\$ 630 billion, nearly 4 times the combined European military expenditure, the distribution of power was heavily in the United States' favour (SIPRI 2018). However, while the European FPE were concerned about Trump's statements and actions⁸, the FPE had already adopted a policy of increased military integration, as talks on the permanent structured cooperation and the European Defence Fund were already established or close to implementation, and talks of further integration had not begun.

⁸ See Juncker's State of the Union-speech, s. 32

4.4 Discussion

The first section of the analysis is where the critical integration theory was applied in order to study the common security and defence policy, and more specifically the defence aspect. The section was divided into two cases with one focusing on France, and the other on Germany. The case with France showed the limitations of the chosen theory. Despite the limited evidence available, the analysis shows that the French see an advantage in EU security coordination and a place for the European Union, even discouraging the military presence of member states within its former colonial territories, where previously it was more protective of its unique role there. Thus, France, in this instance at least, shows a willingness to share its foreign policy goals with the EU as a whole. This may show the level of commitment to an EU security structure's solution to security issues. Especially considering France's reluctance to rely on NATO. Equally in Germany, a lack of sufficient evidence means it is difficult to view a contestation between hegemonic projects. It, however, can be argued that both case studies show the formation of a European hegemonic project. The same is also true for the case regarding Germany, as it was not possible to determine whether the developments of the defence policy were due to contestation between hegemonic projects. It is not possible to determine whether the theory would be adequate to study the research question, since the lack of proper evidence. Surveys and interviews could have been a good substitute compared to official documents, as they allow for the interviewer to interact with the interviewees on a more personal level where the interviewer is able to acquire opinions, feelings and ideas compared to document analysis (Yin 2018, 121–24). Of course, this is entirely dependent on both the questions asked, as well as the contents of the documents themselves. Triangulation of evidence would also have been an option, as it would have allowed the author to apply several types of evidence in conjunction to reach a deeper level of depth, as every type of evidence has both strengths and weaknesses.

The second section of the analysis revolved around neoclassical realist theory and its application on Russian and American agency. Like the first section, the second was divided into two cases. The case with Russia's agency indicated, that Russian agency could very well have had an impact on the development of the common security and defence policy. As High Representative Federica Mogherini wrote in the Global Strategy for the European Union: "To the east, the European security order has been violated [...]", while this quotation does not name Russia as the

perpetrator, Ukraine was the only state to which its sovereignty was violated by a third party, which was the Russian Federation as it annexed the Crimean peninsula. Based on the gathered evidence, it was not possible to determine to what degree the Russian Federation was having an impact on the defence policy, however, the author would deem it highly probable. The second case involved the United States and whether their agency had an impact on the defence policy. While the European Union and FPE were less than thrilled about Trump's antics and statements following his inauguration as President of the United States, it was probably not a major influence of the developments of the defence policy, primarily because by the time he became President, the policy was already in the final stages of being initiated.

To support the author's use of the neoclassical realist approach to Baun and Marek wrote (*Making Europe defend again*, 2019), an article on the same subject. In this they utilise the same approach and in their case the theory was applicable as well. They too chose Germany and France as their cases (Baun and Marek 2019, 28); however, they chose neoclassical realist theory to answer their research questions while the author utilised critical integration theory.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The goal was to answer and research how the aspect of defence integration materialised within the common security and defence policy during the 2014-2019 timeframe, and how has Russian and American agency during this period influenced the European Union to support this notion.

The findings of this thesis showcased two different approaches due to the selection of two different theories - the critical integration theory by Simon Bulmer and Jonathan Joseph and the neo-classical realism theory by Steven Lobell, Jeffrey Taliaferro and Norrin Ripsman. The results of the analysis were affected by the choice of evidence, because the critical integration theory most likely would have been more applicable if the sources had included questionnaires and interviews.

The results of the neoclassical realism theory came to express how Russian agency likely did have an impact on why the European Union chose to pursue further military and security integration. However, in the case of the United States where Donald Trump's statements might have had an influence on the policy, is considered unlikely due to the policy had more or less already been initiated by the time Trump became President. In the case of both Germany and France, the study did not lead to fruition because of insufficient evidence, and as such the theory could not be properly utilised.

Baun and Marek's article applies neoclassical realist theory to study why the policy is initiated now, and why it took the institutional form that it did. They concluded, that the divergent strategic cultures of France and Germany led to both E12 and PESCO, where E12 is more capability oriented and not part of the EU institutional framework, and PESCO is.

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