DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE FRENCH SECURITY AND DEFENCE ISSUE

How does strategic culture help explain French views on common security and defence cooperation's?

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Abstract

This thesis aims to explore how the theory of strategic culture could provide a better understanding of France's views on common security and defence cooperation, as well as gain better insight as to how it might explain the specific actions of France, with a focus on PeSCo and EI2. Previous research shows that the French had shifted their views on military cooperation in the last decade and simultaneously the types of threats against Europe had also changed during that time. A discourse analysis has been used to examine the material that consist of the French security and defence government reports. The analysis is using the theory of strategic culture, the idea that you can only understand a state's defence and security by looking at its mindset. It sees that each state has a very internal uniqueness that has been formed by its specific history. Based on the theory three concepts of French strategic culture were identified and analysed. The results showed the importance of French sovereignty, the strengthening of the EU autonomy and cooperation with other military motivated countries and that these were some of the reasons behind the actions and views regarding common security and defence cooperation's. It also helped to explain that the French interest in the EI2 had to do with the fact that the EU decided to go on a more inclusive line with PeSCo, something France did not have an interest in. Instead, they created the EI2 where they could take the lead.

Abbreviations

CSDP – Common Security and Defence Policy's

EI2 – European Intervention Initiative

EDF – European Defence Fund

EU – European Union

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PeSCo – Permanent Structured Cooperation

SC – Strategic culture

UN – United Nations

The UK – The United Kingdom

The US – The United States of America

WP – White Papers

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1. Research problem

On the 26th of September 2017 the French president Macron expressed his defence ambitions for the European Union, calling it the European Intervention Initiative (EI2); a way for France to showcase their visions for a flexible European defence cooperation, where countries who can be seen as "motivated" are targeted as possible members. One reason for the idea of EI2 was how the French felt that there was a lacking common strategic European culture and with this defence cooperation Macron saw the possibility of encouraging one (FOI, 2020).

One reason behind the idea of a European defence cooperation was for France to not be as dependent on NATO and the US for support, especially after former president Trump expressed how the US was less interested in helping European countries with their defence. Furthermore, despite the pending exit of the UK from the European Union it would also make it possible for the UK to participate, due to the fact that the EI2 is a European defence cooperation, unlike the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy's (CSDP) Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo) which exists for EU-countries only (UI, 2021).

Some would say that the creation of EI2 was a reaction to the new focus of PeSCo, which is a permanent and structured defence cooperation within the EU. France wanted strict requirements on which countries that should be allowed to participate, but other counties like Germany, wanted PeSCo to be more open and including within the EU. When PeSCo launched it aligned more with Germany's ambitions and ideas. The French has since expressed how PeSCo has no use and will not help the defence of Europe in its current form. The initial French ideas of a European defence can instead be found in the EI2 (FOI, 2020).

In these times of transatlantic turbulence and extremist movements it might not come as a surprise that France had started to explore different ways of defence and intervention since they weren't getting the signals they wanted from the EU and NATO. With this new European defence initiative France now has had the possibilities of mapping out an organisation combining the original ideas for PeSCo, but research on the French interests in how the EI2 is constructed and used is still limited. The theory of strategic culture is the idea that you can only understand a state's defence and security by looking at its particular mindset. This thesis will

explore if these behaviours shown by the French state, in relation to security and defence policy, can be explained by using the theory of strategic culture.

1.1 Research gap and relevance

It is of importance to study these questions and this problem since it is a new problem at hand for the French, since the EI2 was only established in 2018 and research is limited. Moreover, it is highly relevant since questions regarding PeSCo and what this would mean for the organisation is currently being discussed. With the use of the theory of strategic culture, one can seek to explain and invite new perspectives to be explored so the problem may be approached from different angles. With a changing globalized world, it is beneficial to understand national interest in defence, security, and foreign policy and how these intervene and act in the development of the global world.

It is also interesting since France has traditionally been very pro-European Union (Lequesne, 2016) and supranational cooperation. Therefore, research on how the theory of strategic culture could help explain why a country like France would rather put its interest in a European cooperation, rather than a European Union based cooperation is at interest. This is a big research gap since there is currently limited amount of research overall on the French interest in the EI2 and PeSCo with a focus on the theory of strategic culture. This is partly because both the EI2 and PeSCo are relatively newly established, and therefore it has not had the opportunity to be researched as much in relation to the theory of strategic culture.

In other words, the research puzzle that is being examined is that there are these challenging external environments that seem to demand a close European defence and security cooperation. The big question is why France, instead of pushing for a EU-lead cooperation, is pushing for the EI2. It is also of interest why the French are so sceptical of the PeSCo, even though they are a supporter of it, and why they have not been putting all their efforts in building EU's capability instead of putting efforts in the EI2. It seems as if the French are pushing for a distinctive approach, but why? This thesis aims to answer these questions by using the theory of strategic culture and specifically examining the French strategic culture.

1.2 Purpose and research question

The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is to investigate if the theory of strategic culture can help explain the French security and defence interests but more specifically why the French and the way these play out in policy making and acts in the European context. It is seeking to help explain as to why the French launched the EI2 and why the EI2 is more central to the French idea of defence and security. It also intends to help explain French defence and security interests in relation to the EU.

The research questions are:

1. *How does the theory of strategic culture help explain France's actions and views regarding common security and defence cooperation's?*
2. *How can the theory of strategic culture help explain the specific actions of France, with a focus on PeSCo and EI2, particularly in relation to the European Union?*

2. Previous research

The existing scientific literature concerning the EI2 is currently limited since it is still a relatively new project and in its developmental stages; although academic literature on French security and defence, Gaullism and the European defence is widely available both in regard to the independent issues but also how they stand in relation to each other.

2.1 French defence, security, and Gaullism

In 1966 General Charles de Gaulle expressed his vision of France as an international yet independent actor in the world meaning that independency and isolationism (or narrow nationalism) should not be related in this matter. Therefore, a country could be a part of an alliance while it simultaneously continues to be independent. To De Gaulle, independency meant that a country was not under the influence of another foreign power. This way of thinking was something that stayed within the French mindset regarding alliances and independency, also called Gaullism. The Gaullist ethos stressed how the French need to assure that the French national independency is not affected to the extent where they would be required to rely upon allies who do not share the same interest as France. Considering this, it also gives an insight as to why the French decided to develop an independent nuclear capability, ensuring that France was not entirely dependent on potential allies with separate interests (Hofmann, 2017).

After World War II, led by De Gaulle, the French were determined to avoid being under the influence of the two superpowers at that time: the United States of America and the Soviet Union. As a result, France was adamant to prevent being too reliant on the US for alliances and aid. One of the important steps to distance themselves was to leave the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) military operations, although still remaining a NATO member. The economic power of the US was also something that De Gaulle and so France subsequently established diplomatic relations to China; being one of the first European countries to do so (Berstein, 2001:307ff).

In the 1980s the Mitterrand led France would see a small change in the defence policy that had been previously established by De Gaulle. During this time France was still prioritising their own nuclear development and therefore kept themselves outside of NATO's integrated military command. It was also during this time that the French idea of a European dimension grew

stronger. One of the main purposes of the French wanting a more unified Europe and distancing themselves from NATO was the persisting fear of being affected by external US conflicts because of their military alliance. Even though France was optimistic to the concept of a "European defence" it was still during the time unclear in what shape or form this would or could exist in (George & Marcus, 1984).

A lot has changed since then; a decreasing trust toward the EU after the French rejection of the EU Constitutional Treaty in 2005 and the Paris terror attacks in 2015 have brought on an even greater mistrust. The main reason for this was how the French saw the EU as a liberal political force that promoted free movement and the removal of boarders. The aftermath also pointed to the France's distrust in the EU process when invoking Article 42(7) instead of Article 222 where a decision from the European institutions would be needed. During this time the trust towards the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to solve security issues was not very high. In addition, the Article 42(7) also helped the French government make other EU countries act more directly in other military operations, something that France felt EU lacked in the Middle East and Africa (Lequesne, 2016).

Both the territorial war and the lack of action from other EU countries in the Middle East and Africa has resulted in modern-day France having closer ties to the US than during De Gaulle's time. France sees closer cooperation with the US, not only as a way to defeat the wave of terrorism that has affected the country, but also a way to take further active action in Syria and against the Islamic State. The old De Gaulle concept of how France, in terms of foreign and security policy, must be independent from the US has with time been of lesser importance, and after 2009 France re-joined NATO's Military Command. With time the common opinion within French politics and diplomats is that France needs a stronger relationship to the US when it comes to security issues. This development has also led to the French viewing the EU defence and security policy as a complement to NATO (Lequesne, 2016).

2.2 Europe as a Global Actor and Strategic Player

After the Brexit referendum 2016 three different defence-structured initiatives were announced: The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo), the European Defence Fund (EDF) and the French lead European Intervention Initiative (EI2). Sweeney and Winn (2020) consider the

development of these three defence initiatives as a reaction to the United Kingdom leaving the EU, the election of US-president Trump and the threat of Russia. It was already an ambition of the EU during this time to have strategic autonomy, expressed by the then EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini. The Brexit referendum could be seen as a threat to that autonomy, but also to the European ambition to be an international actor.

The development of PeSCo was a way for EU member states to be able to have some sort of a decision-making power in how the European defence should be handled, made in a way to make it possible for a combination of state sovereignty and intergovernmental processes. Even with the development of PeSCo the EU Global Strategy expressed how NATO is still seen as the dominant structure for the European common defence, additionally it is also never mentioned of a definition for an EU defence identity. The ambition of PeSCo seems to be one of the steps taken by the EU to ensure that the European defence would be able to function independently, with the additional help from NATO, the US, and therefore forcing them into a secondary role in the work of European defence (Sweeney & Winn, 2020).

Sweeney and Winn (2020) argue that the announcement of EI2, that came three months before the announcement of PeSCo, could be a seen as a sign that France that they might have lost interest and belief in the idea of the CSDP becoming a joint military cooperation with contribution to the European defence. The issue at hand for France, in regard to the EI2, is how it has expressed the desire of EU-levelled autonomous decision-making based in Brussels, but this EU-levelled perspective is never mentioned in the French Defence and Security Livre Blanc (also called White Paper or Strategic Review) from 2017, it instead expresses a more selective and exclusive membership for certain EU-states that have high military cooperation ambitions. The EI2 also does not have an EU grand strategy, but rather the strategy for the cooperation is more defined with the member-states national interest in the EU foreign policy.

Two of the biggest external factors that could explain the raise of PeSCo, EDF and EI2 is Brexit and the election of US-president Donald Trump. With Brexit, did not only one of the biggest contributors to the EU budget but also the strongest and largest military power state leave the union. With then-President Trump it was estimated that the White House would become increasingly nationalist and therefore less committed to Europe, but also more liberal toward

Russia. Other problems that the EU faced was the migration crisis after the Arab Spring in 2011 and in 2015 from the war in Syria, for which the member states never managed to reach an agreement on any long-term solution (Sweeney & Winn, 2020).

Most scholars agree that the external environment is much more challenging now than what it was before. Overall, there are many new threats that did not previously exist in the same sense as they do now. One central event which all European states would consider a complete shift, or "game-changer", was the Russian aggression towards the Ukraine and Crimea. With Russia, the big threat, was the fact that they were willing to use military power, war and non-diplomatic ways to ensure their own victory, which resulted in a further destabilized security environment. With the conflict on Crimea, it became clear that imminent threats could be much more imminent than what the EU and European countries had previously thought (Samokhvalov, 2018:37-38). With the Obama-administration there was a "trust" in Americans to cooperate in situation like these, but with the Trump-administration this was no longer the case. Additionally, Brexit meant that one of the two largest military powers were lost, weakening the EU in relation to military power along with it, but this also assured that the EU would no longer be prevented by the UK and could therefore implement more changes.

3. Theoretical framework

The theory that will be used, in this thesis, is the theory of strategic culture. In this chapter the theory is explained and the concept of strategy, in this context, is explained. This is done to define the meaning of strategic culture, the basic ideas of the theory and how it is related to security and defence policy and national interests.

3.1 Strategic culture

Strategic culture is the idea that you can only understand a state's defence and security by looking at its particular mindset. The theory can be used to explain the different strategic behaviours states have. Strategic culture could be put as the sum of a country's military strategic experiences. One could put the concept of strategic culture in relation to the one of political culture, where the later focuses on how it affects political behaviour in general. Strategic culture, on the other hand, focuses on attitudes and assumptions on military force in relation to a country's security and defence policy. Understanding a state's strategic culture is of importance since it gives the possibility of making predictions of different actors sustained strategic behaviour, since this theory points to that these states, or actors, are more likely to act within their culture (Johnston, 1995).

The ideas of strategic culture developed even further by Carl von Clausewitz, who saw how war and war-fighting strategy was a way to test the moral and physical abilities in military forces. The big picture was more than just winning a war and to defeat the enemy, but to eliminate the morale of that said enemy (Lantis, 2009). Before the 1970s the concept of culture had had a very small place when studying security, but the term of strategic culture really gained attention after Jack Snyder introduced it in 1977. Even though the idea of strategic culture could be traced back in time, it was first introduced as a concept by Jack Snyder as a part of an AIR FORCE report prepared for the United States Air Force. In the report, Snyder used his concept of strategic culture and applied this framework to understand the nuclear doctrines of the US and Soviet. The upcoming for strategic culture was that the popular Cold War-era theory, Neorealism, could not explain the behaviour of the Soviet Union during that specific time. The way Snyder applied this was to see the results of the nuclear doctrines as a product of a lot of different aspect, like historical and political context each country has had. This way of

examining the countries and their context was a way to better understand what types of aspect could affect decision-making in a crisis for the Soviets (Snyder, 1977).

Snyder (1977) pointed out that the Americans made the mistake of looking at the situation from the same perspective as themselves and not from the perspective of the Soviets, not understanding that not all countries have the same view and motivations as the US. The big problem was that the US and Soviet were not the same country, they were very different in a lot of key elements like, general history, geography, military conflicts etc. Therefore, these two countries would not think behave the same way. Snyder's conclusion was that Soviet decision-making was a result of their own military-historical experiences.

Snyder (1977) explained that the specific states behaviour, the Soviet Union in this situation, could come from the unique culture that could be found in that state. In the Cold War-era example the US made the mistake of overlooking the cultural aspects that could be found within the Soviet policy making. Other aspects that Snyder talked about as central aspects of strategic culture was the uniqueness of each situation, the historical heritage of a state, the specific military culture but also the role that the military fill in the states policy-making processes. All these examples where different cultural aspects that had to be considered in the analysis when trying to use strategic culture to understand a states behaviour.

There are different ways to pin-point the strategic culture of a state, like reading military doctrines, different governmental reports regarding the military or defence but also the speeches by the state's leader or leading figures in the military. Snyder (1977) also writes about how, in the specific case of the Soviet Union, where these types of documents or speeches could be looked at as a potential source of propaganda, but Snyder objected to it since that was not a main objective to the case. The main objective was that there is always a strategic value that will show a reflection on a state's goals which can be examined though the written documents or speeches.

Snyder's way of explaining strategic culture can be related to the Cold War-era and nuclear situation that was at hand. Iain Johnston (1995) explains how this was the basis of the first generation of strategic culture, where the ideas, emotional responses, and those patterns of

behaviour of a state where related to the nuclear issues of the world at that particular time. The second wave of strategic culture was established in 1991 by Yitzhak Klein where it was stated that to be able to understand a states strategy's it would not be enough to look at that specific state's national policies, but it was also needed to look at that same country's strategic cultural factors. By this Klein (1991) defined the concept of strategic culture as something that focuses on establishing the military power of a state, where that military power is used to achieve political goals in war and there was a continuation of a state's politics. Klein's perception can be understood as that the beliefs and attitude that has developed in a state's military can play an important role in how the same states strategic culture will format in the future. Just like Jack Snyder, Klein (1991) also sees that each state has a very internal uniqueness that has been formed by history, geography, cultural aspects, national politics, economics, military and war etc. From Klein's definition one can understand that the main focus of the strategic culture is closely related to different military issues and how militaries in different sates uses this power to uphold political goals through and in war.

The third wave of strategic culture-development is in some ways more rigorous and eclectic in how it conceptualises independent variables, and more focuses on specific strategic decisions as dependent variables. Johnston (1995) explains that there are two different methods that one can use to analyse a state's strategic culture: cognitive mapping or symbol analysis. Symbols becomes an important part of the third way of theorising strategic culture.

It can be understood that there are different understandings of the concept of strategic culture by the three different "waves". The first wave was more focuses on the nuclear situation in the word where the strategic decisions of a country (in that case; the Soviet Union) are based on cultural thinking (Snyder, 1977). The second wave is described by Klein (1991) as situations faced by this wave is related to military where strategic decisions are based on the attitude and beliefs that develops within the military institutions. The third and last wave, explained by Johnston (1995) tends to draw parallels with strategic decision-making with the system of symbols that has been developed in a state.

3.2 Potential problems with the concept of strategic culture

One problem with strategic culture that has been observed is that the theory is based on that the historical circumstances and experiences are unique for every state that lives though them. This has been criticized since a lot of historical experiences has been shared, major events like wars where they have been fought by alliances or intellectual movements. To make sure that the experience is unique the concept of culture comes in, but the problem at hand is that many cultures around, especially those of close geographical proximity to each other, have interactions, overlapping in many ways. Therefore, some scholars point to it being hard to find cultural differences that are that distinctively different from one and other to be able to use that information in a useful way (Echevarria, 2011).

With these problems in mind, one also needs to think about what makes this theory suitable for this thesis. Unlike many other theories, strategic culture does not just interpret behaviour imposed by the material settings. The theory of strategic culture tries to argue the importance of cultural and ideational influences on the motivations of states.

The theory tries to understand and interpret state and military action, both in a wider historical context but also how to better predict a states behaviour. Strategic culture should not be seen as a certain belief, or a restrictive perspective used to investigate the past or the future. It is a useful tool to grasp how and what the circumstances are under which a state defines the appropriate means and ends to attain its security objectives. Strategic culture thus includes both what one could call the emotionality of states (i.e., national pride and prestige) and the egoism of states (i.e., the pursuit of national interests). The theory is also a reflection of a country's narration of its culture and history, at times critical to its state-building narratives (Snyder, 1977).

Strategic culture is regarded by some of its researchers as somewhat of a supplement to realism, neo-liberalism, and constructivism. The difference in why one would instead use strategic culture, rather than say Realism lies in the fact that Realism assumes that each state actor has a rational behaviour, whereas strategic culture argues that rational behaviour is culturally dependent (Lantis, 2009).

This gives an interesting approach to the problem that is being researched, rather than seeing France as having a rational behaviour, one can with strategic culture point out that rational behaviour is culturally depended. This also gives a different perspective to the more traditional foreign policy theories. Biava et al (2011:1228) also explains that strategic culture is a kind of an aid to understanding curtain motivations, self-images and behaviour patterns of states and their decision-makers. It does help to "shape" how different actors intervenes with others in the field of defence and security, instead of trying to determine this.

3.3 Operationalization of strategic culture

Another aspect of the theory of strategic culture is that there are different variables when using the concept: strategic culture as an intervening variable or strategic culture as an independent variable. Johnston (1995) argued that it was of importance to define strategic culture as, either an independent or an intervening variable, that has an impact on the outcome of different decision-making. What this means, in this case, is that the French strategic culture, with the history and the mindset, affects how the French, in current time, seeks to build European defence and security cooperation's.

In this thesis strategic culture will be used as an intervening variable to help explain France's actions and views regarding common security and defence cooperation and in relation to the EU. This would also mean that the dependent variable, in this specific case, is the French security policies and the independent variable would be the changing external environment. This is done since one can argue that there are many variables that could influence the outcome. Since this is a bachelor's thesis one does not have unlimited time or space, it made more sense to use strategic culture as an intervening variable.

3.4 French strategic culture

With the theory of strategic culture in mind as an intervening factor it can now be explored what this means in a French context. Strategic culture can help explain how past historical experiences regarding the French defence and security now shapes how France acts to external threats. From the previous literature on France and the theory chapter it can be argued that French strategic culture consists of certain key concepts.

France understood from past experiences, of being in a humiliated position, that one important factor for the country was that it should always be capable to act autonomously. The belief that France is still a great power in the world and must therefore have a prominent position in world politics and the international sphere is something that is at core of the French identity. To hold some relative power France usually work through multilateral organisations like the United Nations or the EU (Kirchner & Sperling, 2010:24).

The French mindset, and in how they have discussed the EI2 cooperation, also shows that the French are willing to work with other countries, but much rather on a smaller scale, with counties that the French regard as "more serious" when it comes to military, defence and security. In other words, the French wants to have a close cooperation with other countries, but only if they have the same visions as France when it comes to military actions. One can then argue that the French strategic culture principally consist of three main key concepts; "French sovereignty" (the importance of having the freedom to rule over ones territory), "EU-strategic autonomy" (making sure EU can act in an autonomous way to insure protection) and "willingness to use military force (to shape external factors) (in order to make sure that one's military interest are protected one needs to ally themselves with common thinkers).

4. Research design

The thesis is a theory testing empirical study that will be constructed in a qualitative research design and the method used is a discourse analysis. This method was chosen based on the research questions, the type or material that will be examined. In this thesis the discourse analysis is going to be used as a tool to examine a set of selected French government reports regarding French Security and defence policy.

4.1 Method

Discourse analysis is in some ways similar to qualitative content analysis, but the big difference is that discourse analysis highlights what one does when one says something. This method analysis how different texts and speeches shapes the views of reality and how it is involved in producing and reproducing a certain social order. Discourse analysis can be explained as a way to study and understand how language is used and the effects that usage has on society, humans and their relations to one another. The method does not see language as something abstract system with linguistic rules etc, but as an act. This way of analysing data is a way to understand the descriptive nature of language and to reach an understanding of how language and symbols affects people's experiences of the world. When using language, one is also acting in a certain way and the usage of language is also influencing how we see, think and feel about different situations. The discourse analysis method examines if, and how, discourses shape social action in different ways (Svensson, 2019).

Since a discourse analysis is examining how different ways of using language functions and how language is created in different social contexts, it can be used on any type of written or oral language, but also on non-verbal communication like one's tone. Because of this a broad range of different materials can be suitable for a discourse analysis like; books, articles, newspapers, government documents, social media posts, interviews, speeches etc. By analysing these types of material with the help of a discourse analysis, one aims to gain a better understanding of social contexts and how these different contexts are communicated (Svensson, 2019).

In the discipline of social science, discourse analysis has an important role because the method can be used as a way of understanding how society is created, or as Svensson (2019:17)

describes it, how society is constructed. Svensson explains how discourse analysis can be used to examine how specific wordings, expressions or metaphors can be used in different organisations to see if and how the language is used to convince people to follow one's lead.

The big difference between discourse analysis and other types of linguistic-based methods are that the discourse analysis emphasises on the contextual meanings of the language that is being examined. Things like social aspects of the communication and the way language is used to achieve specific effects (e.g., build trust, evoke emotions) are being examined. The discourse method can for example analysis vocabulary (e.g., words and phrases in an ideological association), structure (how the structure of a text can create emphasis or built a narrative) and genre (different material can be analysed in relation to the aims of the genre for the conversation e.g., political speeches).

Other possible methods that were looked at was, for example, a text analysis. The main difference between the methods is that a text analysis only examines written texts where the agent, in the matter, is not a crucial part of the method. The discourse analysis, on the other hand, focuses on examining the language that is being used and can be seen in different types of dialogues, conversations, interactions, reports, documents. In other words, it can be either written, verbal, visual or in audio form with the agent being crucial for the method (Boréus & Bergström, 2018:18ff).

Because of this a text analysis would not work as effectively since this thesis not only wants to focus on just the written text, but also on the agent and the discourse on where and what has been said and written. Another problem with text analysis, in this case, is that it is often used to look at grammatical cohesion and how the structure of sentences are analysed. In discourse analysis the agent is at the centre of the analysis, where both communication and social purpose, in relation to the agent, is analysed with is more interesting in this case (Boréus & Bergström, 2018; Svensson, 2019).

4.2 Operationalization of the key concepts and analytical tool

The key concept of French sovereignty was identified and based on the previous research and the theory of strategic culture, which are described down below.

French Sovereignty

It could be argued that, because of past experiences, the French are very aware of what it means to see the sovereignty be weakened after a war (i.e., WW2) and the fear of being required to rely upon allies who do not share the same interest as France. Therefore, understanding that independency, sovereignty from "superpowers", be able to protects boarders, not being overrun by others, having a strong nuclear deterrence, are important factors for this. Aspects like these can ensure and help the sovereignty. From these past experiences of being in a humiliating position, France learned to understand the importance of a country being able to have its sovereignty intact.

EU-Strategic Autonomy

As previously mentioned, France had understood that it was no longer a military super-power, as they once had been during de Gaulle's time. The French had also concluded that it was risky to only be dependent on the US and NATO for military help and military cooperation's to feel safe in the changing global environment. The French felt as the EU-countries has more in common, both in history, geography etc, which would mean that one's enemies and interest should be closer to the ones of France. Because of this, a more effective and strategic autonomic EU should be prioritized to protect and ensure the external environment. Strengthening the common security and defence policy's and having a stronger military cooperation was ideas to strengthen the autonomy.

Willingness to use military force (to shape external factors)

With the French feeling that a threat getting closer (e.g., Russia), alliances changing, the aspect of finding other military motivated allies became more important. One of the great lessons France learned from WW2 was that one can not only always rely on one set of allies. The French mindset, and in how they have approached the EI2 cooperation, also shows that the French are willing to work with other countries, but much rather on a smaller scale, with

counties that France regard as "more serious" when it comes to defence and security. The French wants to have a close cooperation with other countries, but only if they have similar visions as France. As important as the EU-strategic autonomy is, France have also, with the direction PeSCo has taken, understood that they cannot solely rely on the fact that other EU-countries will have the same interests. They have learnt from past experiences that it is important that one's ally's also have the same priorities and understand the French mindset.

Analytic tool

The analytic tool will look as below. These aspects are being looked for in the material to identify aspects of French strategic culture that is relevant for this thesis. These are all factors that the theory and previous research points to French strategic culture being summed up to.

Key-concepts of French strategic culture:	Examples of words, phrases, sentences being looked for in the material:
French Sovereignty	Sovereignty, defence, territory, state, conflict, nuclear deterrence, security, autonomy, diplomatic relations, diplomatic negotiation, international agreements, building military, increased military, decreased military, resources, global security environment, cooperation, (major) attacks, decision-making autonomy, Gaullist tradition, multilateralism, challenges, unilateralism, alliance, Russia.
EU-Strategic Autonomy	EU (European Union), PeSCo, CSDP, "common European strategic culture", global security environment, European soil, cooperation, alliance, Russia, collective force, mobilization, "intervention force", defence and security in a European context, transatlantic relationship, coalition, "European-project", destabilization, "European doorstep", common threat.
Willingness to use military force (to shape external factors)	NATO, The UK/Britain, USA/The US/America, military, autonomy, global security environment, threat, cooperation, alliance, "taking the lead", Sahel, Middle East, Russia, "military command structure", the Atlantic Alliance, superpower, military power state, military interests, aggression, EI2, multilateral defence, transatlantic relationship, coalition, destabilization, common threat.

4.3 Material and data collection

The thesis will use three different government materials that focuses on the French security and defence, called the White Papers and Strategic Review. A White Paper is a government-issued

document, in this case, on the French Defence and National Security reform for the French Armed Forces, intended for the state and its citizens. The three different White Papers that are going to be used are: the 2008 French White Paper on Defence and National Security, 2013 French White Paper on Defence and National Security, and 2017 Strategic Review of Defence and National Security.

In 2008 and 2013 the formal name for the documents were called French White Paper on Defence and National Security, and in 2017 it changed names to Strategic Review of Defence and National Security. The content of the documents is still the same type of information, even with the name change. This data is collected to be give a more nuanced picture of the French national view of security and defence policy and how it has changed over the time period of 2008-2017.

These three White Papers were chosen based on two specific factors. 1. The discourse on globalisation and world politics are at constant change, therefore a specific timeline is needed for it to be a relevant analysis. 2. The later White Paper were written in 1974 and 1994, the gap between 1994 and 2008 might not be as relevant since it might be hard to understand the context and the changes in between those years, especially since this is a bachelor's thesis.

5. Analysis

To understand the analysis, it is important to remember what the theory of strategic culture is, and more importantly what French strategic culture is. Snyder (1977) and Kline (1991) describes it as each state in the world has a very internal uniqueness that has been formed by history, geography, cultural aspects, national politics, economics, military, and war etc. Snyder also pointed to central aspects of strategic culture being the uniqueness of each situation, the historical heritage of a state, the specific military culture but also the role that the military fill in the states policy-making processes.

As previously mentioned, the French strategic culture could be summarized, with the historical experiences from the past they understood that one must be able to act autonomously. There was also a belief that France was still a great power that should use its great power to influence world politics through a prominent position, this both in an independent way but also in multilateral organization. The French have been open to close cooperation, as long as their partner has the same vision as France. This is the core of the French identity, according to the theory of strategic culture.

The analysis will be divided in to three main sections, all of which will examine the key concepts of French strategic culture: "French sovereignty", "EU-strategic autonomy" and "willingness to use military force (to shape external factors)". These topics were chosen based on previous research, theory and through reading the material. With the help of previous research and the theory of strategic culture one could argue that the key concepts of French strategic culture could be summarized as French sovereignty, the importance of EU-strategic autonomy and the willingness to use military force to shape external factors. One could argue that there are even more key concepts to consider, but for the sake of this being a bachelor's thesis with limited space and timeframe these will be viewed as the most important ones.

The previous research and theory chapters gave, as mentioned above, some indications on how French strategic culture could viewed; the importance of strategic autonomy for the French state, a well-functioning European Union and military command to be able to be active in missions where France has their interests. It is also clear that new threats have been emerging for the past few years, primarily Russia being seen more and more as a bigger threat. With the

EU choosing to adhere with the German idea of PeSCo the French recognized the probability of their ideas would not be the primary focus of that defence cooperation and consequently started to look closer to the idea of the EI2. Down below the three key concepts will be analysed.

5.1 French sovereignty

From the French national security and defence policy from 2008, called the White Paper (WP), the key points that were made was the threats of "the globalised world" and the negative consequences that these threats could result in. It is underlined how the world with the globalisation has resulted in an even more connected environment that also contributes to both political and economic crisis to spread at an even faster rate than before (French White Paper 2008:23). The global security environment was viewed as different to what it used to be, although it was expressed that this was not necessarily something bad or that the situation had necessarily worsened, but that it needed to be observed through a different perspective to be able to act up on certain situations (ibid:33).

One could argue that the White Paper published in 2008 not only identified greater direct threats towards the own territory and against the French sovereignty, but that it also had a clear global perspective where the stability of regions, that are strategically important to France, was of major importance. The biggest threat and worst case scenario that the French could identify was expressed as; *"the combination of a major terrorist attack on European soil, using nonconventional nuclear, chemical or biological-type means, together with a war situation in one of the strategically important zones for Europe"* (French White Paper 2008:38).

The idea of strategic autonomy is something that is always mentioned in one of the opening chapters of the French White Papers/Strategic Reviews. Viewed as the base for freedom of decision and action for the French state (Defence and national security 2013: Twelve key points, 2013:5), the idea and importance of French sovereignty is declared as:

"France intends to preserve its sovereignty, by providing itself with the resources to act and influence events, and contribute to international security, by ensuring its action enjoys national and international legitimacy." (French White Paper: Defence and national security 2013:19).

In addition, it suggests that France should not take its ability to preserve sovereignty for granted, and therefore it is within their best interest to work towards having the resources needed to uphold the sovereignty they currently have and strengthen this even more (ibid.:20). The NATO and EU commitments are also motivated as being compatible with the preservation of the French sovereignty and decision-making autonomy. This in turn could be seen as a helping factor for the sovereignty of the French state.

Strategic autonomy has continued to be of significant importance in the 2017 Strategic Review (p.54), being described as a "key objective" in relation to the country's sovereignty and freedom of action. It stresses how *"France must preserve its capability to decide and act alone to defend its interests"* (ibid.). It is also made clearer that this importance of strategic autonomy is in relation to Europe trying to determinate its own foundation for strategic autonomy. For that reason, it is of greater importance for the French state to be able to take action and exert its influence in order to support this. This could be a way for France to make sure that the French strategic autonomy and sovereignty is strengthened through their influence in the European strategic autonomy – thus adhering to French interests – but additionally that the French view European strategic autonomy as something closely related to their own views.

Another interesting aspect of the Strategic Review from 2017 is how often the word "autonomy" is used. In the White Paper from 2008 it was used in relation to the French states own strategic autonomy, but in 2017 the word was repeated both with increased frequency but also in different aspects. The word autonomy, in the French context, can also be seen as a concept that carried forward the Gaullist tradition, mentioned in the previous research chapter, of reserving final decisions-making power for France. The Strategic Review from 2017 (p.61-63) recognises that France should neither trust nor depend on multilateralism as a saviour in times when facing challenges or threats. France therefore requires investment in its own capacities to act unilaterally or in alliance with other partners, as well as collectively together with the EU and NATO. This would mean that France would have a complement to the French strategic autonomy in addition to cooperating in situations when needed. The Strategic Review (2017:70-71) also shows to lead by example and invests more money into the defence budget and widens the operational ambition for alliances with partners. The way the mobilisation is described could be viewed as pragmatic as it can be understood that France is willing to support

any type of cooperation and alliances that help the French national defence and security, regardless of whichever way the cooperation might present itself (e.g., EU, NATO, bilateral, sub-regional etc.).

Another factor for the French strategic autonomy and sovereignty, that can be found within all the three latest White Papers and Strategic Reviews (2008, 2013 and 2017), is the importance of the French nuclear deterrence. The 2013 White Paper (p.72) indicates to the centrality of the French nuclear deterrence as an essential factor in the country's security strategy, which is till viewed as one of the most critical parts of the French military and a backbone of French strategic autonomy, being expressed as *"Nuclear deterrence is the ultimate guarantee of our sovereignty"* (ibid.:20). The nuclear deterrence is explained as the key to permanently ensuring the independence of French decision-making and freedom of action. Even as the French express the desire for a stronger European and EU defence and security, the 2013 WP shows the importance of the nuclear deterrence, and how it is still one of the fundamental parts of France's strategic thinking. The nuclear deterrence continues to be referred to as the "*corestone of our fence strategy*" in the Strategic Review from 2017(p.69) and expressed as the key protection against aggressions towards the French state. It also points out that the mere existence of nuclear deterrence contributes to the overall security of the Atlantic Alliance and Europe.

By maintaining capabilities, like nuclear deterrence, the permanent ability to protect territory and economic interests etc., France's ultimate goal can be viewed as the desire to attain power in military coalitions and to have some leverage in different types of cooperation. It maintains that France must be able to act both autonomously, or as a leading nation in a multinational operation, therefore also contributing to multinational operations (Strategic review of defence and national security 2017: Key points, 2017:3).

5.2 EU-strategic autonomy

The WP from 2008 expressed an interest in a stronger and more united Europe, who would have a bigger presence in international security and defence. Europe should be able, as a collective force, to handle the risks and threats are identified in the 2008 WP (ibid:75). The EU is also seen as the only organisations that can mobilise a handful of different resources like economic, diplomatic and military to use in different sorts of crisis management in order to

stabilise the global environment (ibid:75ff). Because of the globalised security threats, identified by France, it is argued by the French that the EU needs to strengthen their ability to handle these types of civil and military crisis management (ibid:78). France's proposal to this was, for instance, an EU-led "intervention force" consisting of 60.000 personnel with the capacity to be used in an international crisis. The common goal of the European Union should, according to the 2008 WP, be to give the EU the ability to carry out more peacekeeping operations around the world simultaneously. This is not only in regard to military means, but also civilian resources and personnel that can be used in crisis management. This type of "intervention-force" was needed because of the security situation of the globalised environment (ibid:83).

One can see a somewhat clear picture of EU as a crisis manager, where the EU is seen as a central actor to help stabilize the outside world and manage different types of crises. It is also stressed that the EU should not only have a role in external crisis, but also in internal crisis management in a European context; this internal work also needs strengthening. The 2008 White Paper expressed how France wants to see a version of the EU that has the ability to protect the citizens of the Union and act in internal crises (e.g., terrorism) (ibid:83).

The 2008 White Paper highlighted something which had not been highlighted in the same way before, emphasising the importance of all defence and security strategies in a wider European context which would look at terrorism, missile attacks, cyber-attacks, health crises and environmental crises as the biggest threats facing the European Union the next coming decades.

One major event that took place between the publication of the 2008 WP and the 2013 WP was the global financial crisis and the accelerated degradation of public finances in many Euro-countries, such as France. Because of this France needed to (continue) scale down its defence personal and military capabilities. The 2013 White Paper did still maintain with the five key points that the 2008 WP had set out (protection, awareness, prevention, deterrence, and intervention) but stressed that there should be a better unity in between them. One major difference was how France, in the 2013 WP (p.62-66), begun putting a greater focus on defence and security in a European context. The French strived to strengthen the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the goal being an advanced way of sharing and developing of a

greater strategic vision for the EU. With the theory of strategic culture this could be explained by the Arab Spring that had happened a few years prior and the instability in the Sahel where the French had a rather large presence. Also, the changes in the US policies can be argued as weighing heavily on the changes in the WP, with the expectation on that the US would be even more selective about what types of missions to engage in. This could suggest that the US was going to take a secondary role and share the burden with more European countries, and even let them take the lead in the areas that the US does not consider as big of an interest.

One could also argue that the WP from 2013 took lessons from the interventions in Libya and Mali, where the war in Libya showcased an important occasion in the transatlantic relationship, for the first time since the NATO was created the organisations assts were made available to a coalition that was led by EU states. In both countries the operations were either lead solely by the French or in a coalition with the UK (French White Paper on defence and national security 2013, 2013:60-62).

The operations in Libya and Mali made the French realise that it could be difficult to do something like that again without relying heavily on the military assets of the US, which had been done in the previously mentioned military operation. This could be seen in the WP from 2013 (p.74-77) when studying the financial considerations as well as the need to develop the military, in addition to developing a better way of sharing this on an EU-level. This, alongside the big emphasis on the "European-project" (e.g., CSDP) was something that the Holland administration focused heavily on in the 2013 WP. It wanted an even more devoted collaboration within the CSDP and to develop the idea of it even further, which was not emphasized as much in the WP from 2008.

The Strategic Review from 2017 (p.56ff) continues to express the importance of a European defence and the larger vision for France to take the lead in shaping a European defence policy. This is expressed as a response to a world filled with "threats and opportunities". This review still maintained for a European strategic autonomy and the ambitions EU should have for that. The importance for a strategic autonomy was motivated by the fact that both France and the rest of Europe are at this time (in 2017) were facing big challenges and issues. The destabilization of the Middle East (with focus of ISIS and conflicts in Syria) and the aggressions

of Russia in Crimea endangered the European security and threat of closing in on a war on the "European doorstep". In some sense, the risks that were described in the Strategic Review from 2013 was pointed out as having become real in 2017, therefore it was of even greater importance to strengthen the EUs strategic autonomy.

5.3 Willingness to use military force (to shape external factors)

The French have generally been very consistent when it comes to using their military force to shape external factors. Unlike many other western democratises, who had a sort of intervention fatigue after the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the French where still busy sending troupes to Tchad and Mali, still actively using their military in different types of interventions. As a result of this, the French became very wary of the importance being able to use military force to ensure safety for their own territory. With the EUs PeSCo choosing to go on Germany's more "all including" and more diplomatic line, France also could see a problem with PeSCo not going in their favour of their interests. The theory of strategic culture points to the French then, because of this, needing to make sure that the states interest could be upheld through different shapes or forms, for example through cooperating with other states that are willing to use military force to shape the external factors.

As previously stated, one of France's the long-standing concerns have been the one of having sovereign decision-making power and not giving up to other "superpower" states. From the previous research it is known that in order to strengthen the French sovereignty (and to show a clear sign of wanting to be able to act in that sovereign way) then-president De Gaulle made the choice of having France taking a step back from NATO and their military command structure. With the NATO cooperation the French felt that they were under the command of the Americans and therefor had less sovereign power, something they could increase by not being a part of the military command structure (Berstein, 2001:307ff).

This mindset changed with the 2008 French White Paper (WP), where one big change, from the days of general Charles De Gaulle, was how NATO was a big part of the strategic review. In the previous WPs from 1973 and 1994 this was not highlighted since it was still a French belief during the time that De Gaulle's idea of sovereignty could be upheld. Back in 1973 the

main focus, to ensure the country's sovereignty, was instead of the threat of one single definable enemy and in 1994 the new focus became the one of the nuclear deterrents.

The 2008 White Paper (p.93ff) however, asserted after an almost forty-two-year absence, the renewed French commitment to NATO's military command structure. One could argue that the way the 2008 WP expresses its interest in NATO was yet cautious, calling it a *"complementary organisation"* (p.93) (together with the EU) to the French security and defence. However, in the White Paper published in 2013 (p.59) this is declared to be of an even greater importance saying that the French security strategy is tied to NATO for it to work, writing that:

*"Our defence and national security strategy **cannot be conceived** outside the framework of the Atlantic Alliance and our engagement in the European Union."* (White Paper on Defense and Security 2013:59).

This could be seen as the French understanding that on their own, without the military power of NATO, their interests could be at risk of not being protected. Coming to recognise that the French state is not a strong single acting superpower that could protect its own sovereignty and act within its areas of interest without the alliance of for example NATO and the EU. This is further underlined in 2017, when NATO is called a "key component of European security" and, as such, logical for the French armed forces to be an active part of (Defence and national security: Strategic review 2017:57ff). With the new threats that were being mentioned here, alongside the fact that the French would not be able to uphold their interest solely by themselves this renewed interest in NATO can also be seen as a solution for any potential problems in regard to the French security and defence policy.

In the White Paper from 2013 (p.35-36) it is reiterated that the level of threats to France has risen, but it is the first time that Russia is mentioned explicitly as a threat. Before this the external threat levels had been pointed mostly to the Middle East and Africa, where France has been very active through military actions. With the ongoing crisis in Crimea the nearby threat was suddenly much closer than when the 2008 White Paper was written. Previous research could tell us about the French after occurrence of Crimea and indicating this as a part of the French strategic culture and why it has been important for the French state to strengthen their

military by allying themselves with other military powers or other countries that are willing to use military force in these types of situations.

It is summarised in the 2013 White Paper that:

"The 2013 classification of the priority threats facing the territory, the population and French nationals abroad to be addressed by the defence and national security strategy are: aggression by another State against the national territory;" (Defence and national security 2013: Twelve key points, p.2).

This was not declared as clearly in the earlier document and the wording "aggression by another state" is also used here in a way that had not been previously. In the earlier document (White Paper, 2008:64-68) aggression is used more in general terms in regard to nuclear deterrence or terrorism but not worded with relation to another state being the aggressor. The specific close by threat of Russian could also be seen as a motivational factor for the French to renew their interest in NATO.

In the 2017 Strategic Review the threat of Russia was even further explicitly mentioned with it making it clear that the Russian military is a well working machine with *"capabilities often surpassing their European counterparts in quantitative terms"* (p.41). If the French state feared that the Russian state would not only be able to aggravate because of a well-functioning military force but also because of its size, this would count as an even larger threat. This since the French are both geographically close to Russia, but also since it could not be confidently said that the French, on their own, would be able to stand against Russian military power. It could then be argued that, as a result of past experiences the French are very aware of what it means to see the sovereignty be weakened after a war (i.e., WW2) and therefore understand that with the help of e.g., NATO and other countries that have the same military-using interest as themselves it could potentially strengthen them.

This is also where the idea of the European Intervention Initiative could be seen as a potential part in the puzzle of the French strategic culture. Before the 2017 Strategic Review the types of multilateral defence, security and military cooperation that were mentioned were NATO and the EU. After the EUs stance on what direction PeSCo should go the French were not as keen

on perusing PeSCo as actively as before, this was also where – in 2017 - the EI2 is mentioned for the first time. The desire of "building a European strategic autonomy" is communicated, and it is linked to the threat level rising for the past few years. It is somewhat clear that the shift in the development of PeSCo had made France express themselves this way, writing that the EUs global strategy needed a fresh perspective for the rest of Europe in order for it to be useable in a pragmatic way (Strategic Review, 2017:56).

While the French still maintains that they want to pragmatically strengthen the CSDP (ibid.:57) and PeSCo it is made obvious that a European military cooperation that can be actively used is now more of a current interest. The Strategic Review (2017:57) is indicating that the European military build-up must not only be a long-term project but that it should work effectively in situations where it is needed, and will require support from the major European states, including France. This could be seen later in President Macron's speech from 2017, mentioned in the first chapter, how it is of the greatest interest that the countries that are a part of the EI2 has the same military views as France. The French could possibly see a French lead defence and security cooperation as military motivated as themselves, used in areas of interest that the French prioritizes themselves. Using this instead of the "Germany-led" PeSCo, where French ideas and interests might not be as heavily prioritized since the strategic culture of Germany and France are different. Because of this they also have different interests and ideas of how to reach the goals the state has. It can be argued that it is easier to reach the goals of strategic autonomy and strengthen one's sovereignty if one's allies one has had the same ideas and interest as you, therefore simplifying the implementation of actions where one see most fit.

6. Results and conclusions

The ambitions with this bachelor's thesis have been to examine how the theory of strategic culture can help explain France's actions and views regarding common security and defence cooperation's and how it also can help explain the specific actions of France, with a focus on PeSCo and EI2, particularly in relation to the European Union. The first step was to identify what the theory of strategic culture, and particularly French strategic culture, meant. The theory clearly stated that each state has a very internal uniqueness that has been formed by history, geography, cultural aspects, national politics, economics, military, and war etc. (Klein, 1991). For the French this meant that they understood from past experiences, of being in a humiliated position, that one important factor for the country was that it should always be capable to act autonomously and that the country was still a great power and therefore must use this to have a prominent position in the globalised world. To be able to hold this power and try to use their influence multilateral organisations like EU, UN and NATO has been used (Kirchner & Sperling, 2010:24).

Finally, one can see that the French still have their focus on their sovereignty, even though on the surface it can appear that they are more interested in cooperation and that they are not as "bound to" their sovereignty. With this, one can still see that they are using different constellations to still strengthen their sovereignty and not be dependent on one ally in order to get the results they intend (e.g., strengthen their sovereignty). With the nearby threat of Russia and the EU going on the German-line for PeSCo, the French instead started to build their idea of a European security initiative; called the EI2. This was in line with the French mindset, a cooperation where they could lead, with other European countries, but also non-EU countries like the UK. The EI2 did not force France to only cooperate with other EU countries, unlike PeSCo. This also meant that the French did not need to stay dependent on the EU defence cooperation. In the end, the results showed that the French sovereignty is the common factor, the most important aspect. The French wants to protect their own sovereignty.

The EI2 is a way for France to try to reconcile competing objectives. For much of a decade France has felt disappointed with the EU and the CDSP, where they feel that neither does enough nor tackle difficult problems (e.g., military missions). The French felt alone out there, with their military missions, trying to tackle problems that were affecting the whole of EU and

did not get enough support. After the Russian aggression on Crimea, they recognized that better work needed to be done. The Trump-administration made sure that they could not trust in the US for military help and Brexit opened the door to do more in the EU, since the UK often blocked a lot of ideas. PeSCo was viewed as the possible solution that could bring together the EU states that wanted to deepen their security cooperation's. The problem was the two different sides and which side PeSCo should lead with. There was the German line which wanted an as inclusive as possible cooperation. Then there was the French line, who argued for a much more exclusive cooperation with a small group of likeminded countries. When the EU chose to go on the German line, the French were left with the understanding that if any EU country can be a part of this cooperation the likeliness of it becoming a slow machine where next to nothing will happen is likely, hence the idea of the EI2. The EI2 is important to the French as a way for them to reconcile the idea of the French strategic culture. To show lead in the international area and with that strengthen their own sovereignty.

To summarize the answer to the research questions, the theory of strategic culture gave indications on which key concepts are part of the French strategic culture. According to these key concepts, the importance of French sovereignty, the strengthening of the EU autonomy and cooperation with other military motivated countries where some of the reasons behind the actions and views regarding common security and defence cooperation's. It also helped explain that the French interest in the EI2 had to do with the fact that the EU decided to go on a more inclusive line with PeSCo, something France was not interested in. Instead, they created the EI2 where they could take the lead. In one way, one can put it as that the French have not been interested in becoming more European, they are interested in making Europe more French.

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