

No might, no right: Europeans must re-discover military power

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Introduction¹

Unless Europeans acknowledge the importance of military force and the ability to project power on a global scale, any discussions on strategy or foreign policy will be largely futile. The paper starts by taking stock of some of the setbacks recently experienced by the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and outlines the fundamental changes that are taking place in the European security debate. It then identifies the need to acknowledge the indispensability of military force and the importance of projecting power globally as Europe's foremost challenges.

European defence in crisis?

A shadow of uncertainty looms over European defence.² A lasting financial and economic crisis is having crippling effects upon budgets and capabilities.³ Worse still, unless halted and reversed, defence budget cuts will jeopardise the very viability of the industrial and technological base of Europe's defence.⁴ Furthermore, the inability of the CSDP to play a meaningful role in Libya and its underwhelming performance in Mali is making the EU's pledge to become a credible foreign policy actor –let alone a strategic one– increasingly unsustainable. The fact that these were two crises in Europe's immediate neighbourhood, where there were humanitarian and strategic interests at stake and the Americans had stated their preference for Europeans to take matters into their own hands, makes the CSDP's shortcomings even more patent. The case of Libya in particular, where both the UN and the Arab League had demanded an intervention, brought to light the EU's impotence in a scenario that met all the criteria that are ideally required to trigger CSDP action.⁵ Yet all the EU managed to come up with was the usual strongly-worded made-in-Brussels communiqué.

European defence has also recently experienced a number of high-profile setbacks on the industrial front. Most visible of all has been the failed merger of BAE Systems and EADS after months of negotiation. At a time of financial strain and mounting global competition, a deal between Europe's two main defence-industrial giants would have represented a qualitative leap forward in the consolidation of the European defence technological and industrial base. Instead, the drawing of a broad political red line by Europe's main capitals makes any efforts to promote greater industrial cooperation by either the European Commission or the European Defence Agency (EDA) all but ineffective. To this should be added Germany's recent decision not to contribute financially to the

¹ This paper is one of the **Elcano Royal Institute's** contributions to the **European Global Strategy Project**. The author would like to thank Daniel Fiott, Alexander Mattelaer, Martin Ortega and James Rogers for their valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

² See Daniel Keohane (2012), 'Who cares about EU defense policy', *Internationale Politik*, 6/VI/2012.

³ See Christian Mölling (2011), 'Europe without defense', *SWP Comments*, nr 38, November; and Thomas Valasek (2011), 'Surviving austerity: the case for a new approach to EU military collaboration', *Centre for European Reform*, 22/IV/2011.

⁴ See Daniel Fiott (2012), 'The European Union and geostrategy: the importance of critical defence infrastructure', *European Geostrategy*, 8/X/2012.

⁵ Sven Biscop (2011), 'Mediterranean mayhem: lessons for European crisis management', *Egmont Security Policy Brief*, 19/IV/2011.

French-led Multinational Space-based Imaging System for Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Observation (MUSIS) electro-optical satellite programme.⁶ The project tackles a capability which recent European operations showed was lacking and is therefore critical to Europe's ability to operate autonomously. Politically, it was one of the standard bearers of the EDA's activities in the realm of armaments cooperation.

Beyond financial woes and the shadow of the Libya, Mali and EADS/BAE Systems fiascos, the CSDP's future –or, for that matter, that of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)– is threatened by mounting political friction at the heart of Europe. The opening of a political rift between the UK and the rest of the EU does not bode particularly well for the latter's foreign and security ambitions. Without Britain's global mindset, military excellence and forward-looking strategic culture it is hard to take European foreign policy, let alone the CSDP, seriously. According to Ulrich Speck, '[l]osing Britain's power resources [...] would end Europe's global ambitions and turn it, at best, into a regional player with some interests in the eastern and southern neighborhoods. An inward-looking EU could live with Britain's departure, but for an outward-looking EU this would be a deadly blow'.⁷

The last few years have also revealed significant rifts in the Franco-German relationship, the very engine of European integration and the one without which neither the CFSP nor the CSDP can function politically.⁸ Franco-German tension has much to do with the two countries' different ideas of the kind of institutional and political reforms that are needed for the EU to emerge stronger from the financial and political crisis assailing the continent. There is, however, a broader strategic rationale for this distancing, namely France's growing frustration with Germany's lack of commitment on defence and its hesitation about the consequences that France's emerging bilateral strategic partnership with the UK may have for European foreign and security policy.⁹ In the words of François Heisbourg: '[f]rom the eurozone crisis to intervention in Libya and Mali, and the failed merger of EADS and BAE Systems, the differences and tensions between Paris and Berlin are palpable'.¹⁰

The CSDP's recent setbacks, France's return to NATO and its entry into a military-strategic partnership with the UK in November 2010, and the shift from a geopolitical paradigm defined by the US overreaching to one increasingly defined by the spectre of US strategic retrenchment across the board, all seem to coalesce around a broader theme: a change in the mechanics of the European security debate, away from the so-called EU vs NATO debate.¹¹ Raised in the old institutional question (European autonomy vs transatlantic cohesion), European academics and security pundits would do well to grapple with this new reality soon.

This ain't your daddy's CSDP

Ever since the Cold War, institutional questions have been part of most European security debates.¹² However, it was during the 1990s, particularly following the creation of the CSDP in 1999, when they really rose to political prominence. More often than not under

⁶ Leo G. Michel (2012), 'Cross-currents in French defense and US interests', policy', *Strategic Perspectives*, nr 10, April.

⁷ Ulrich Speck (2012), 'Why Britain is vital for the European Union', *Carnegie Europe*, 26/XI/2012.

⁸ Gerard Errera (2012), 'France is running out of time to restrain Germany?', *Financial Times*, 6/XI/2012.

⁹ Luis Simón (2013), 'A spider in Europe's web? French grand strategy from Iraq to Libya', *Geopolitics*, 3/II/2013.

¹⁰ François Heisbourg (2013), 'The Union at Europe's heart is frayed', *Financial Times*, 20/II/2013.

¹¹ On US strategic retrenchment and its implications see Walter Russell Mead (2013), 'As America's credibility wanes, Iran upgrades its nuclear capacity', *Via Meadia, The American Interest*, 13/II/2013.

¹² Jolyon Howorth (2000) & John T. S. Keeler (Eds.) (2003), *Defending Europe: the EU, NATO and the quest for European autonomy*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

a technical mask, the EU vs NATO issue cut across most CSDP discussions during the 2000s, whether over military planning and conduct, capability development, operations, flexibility or armaments and industrial cooperation. Ultimately, the salience of the EU vs NATO tension in European security discussions was a reflection of a political reality whose foundations went back to the end of the Cold War: European mistrust about excessive US power, both in Europe and beyond. The mistrust reached its peak in the year following the September 11 attack, as the Bush Administration's 2003 invasion of Iraq provided many in Europe with a recognisable face (Bush's) and an event (Iraq) against which they could easily define themselves. However, Bush's embrace of multilateralism during his second term, Obama gaining office in 2008, the US withdrawal from Iraq and its embrace of a 'leading from behind' narrative turned the European security debate upside down.

The question is no more whether Europeans should build their political strategy around NATO or the EU, but whether they will in fact be able to 'do' strategy at all. Strategy presupposes coming around to two basic and simple facts: recognising the indispensability of military force and the need to be able to project power globally. And both are widely contested in Europe. There is, admittedly, a sense of déjà vu in all of this. In the late 90s, France and the UK already tried to organise the European security debate around these two themes as they sought to persuade other Europeans about the indispensability of military force and the importance of projecting power globally. That was essentially what Saint Malo was about.¹³ And that is what CSDP was supposed to be about. However, the benefit of hindsight allows us to see the Franco-British attempt to frame their vision in an EU setting in the late 90s as a bridge too far or, rather, a bridge too soon. There are two main reasons for this.

The first is that the EU was, both as an institution and a discursive arena, already loaded with a heavy dose of 'civilian power' baggage.¹⁴ This made it seemingly difficult for the CSDP (an EU project) to carry its message through to the many officials, academics and pundits that make up the EU-sphere. It soon became clear that the only way to 'sell' security in the EU was to acknowledge the political properties and sensitivities of the target audience, namely the Europeans' dislike of military force and preference for diplomacy and multilateralism.¹⁵ Making EU military action conditional on UN approval, the CSDP's embracing of low-end peacekeeping and civ-mil cooperation and the CFSP's emphasis on effective multilateralism and, more recently, its indiscriminate adoption of strategic partnerships left and right took care of that. Unfortunately, it also 'took care' of the initial vision behind the CSDP project: it left it devoid of any strategic substance.

The second reason underlying the CSDP's inability to become a serious instrument of strategy was France's political hostility towards NATO or, for that matter, the UK's hostility towards the EU. Such hostility was responsible for much political noise about institutional haggling and moved the attention away from the issues that really mattered. France's recent reintegration into the Alliance's command structure means this second obstacle has been largely overcome. In a way, so has the first obstacle: the attempt by France and

¹³ Jolyon Howorth (2000), 'Britain, France and the European Defence initiative', *Survival*, vol. 42, nr 2, pp. 33-55.

¹⁴ James Rogers (2009), 'From "Civilian Power" to "Global Power": explicating the European Union's "Grand Strategy" through the articulation of discourse theory', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 47, nr 4, pp. 831-862.

¹⁵ Felix Berensktoetter & Bastian Giegerich (2010), 'From NATO to ESDP: a social constructivist analysis of German strategic adjustment after the end of the Cold War', *Security Studies*, vol. 19, nr 3, pp. 407-52.

¹⁶ Luis Simón (2012), 'CSDP, strategy and crisis management: out of area or out of business?', *The International Spectator*, vol. 47, nr 3, pp. 100-115.

the UK to pitch their strategic vision through the EU. After all, through their 2010 military agreements and their close cooperation during the Libya crisis, France and the UK have shown that they are losing their patience with the EU's inability to get its foreign-policy act together and that they are ready to go alone when necessary. The ball is now in the rest of Europe's court.

Granted, their preference for bilateralism or unilateralism (as in Mali) can be perceived elsewhere as an attempt on the part of France and the UK to impose their own priorities upon other Europeans. And it is important that this political impasse be overcome and that Europeans behave as a coherent foreign and security policy actor. However, this does not mean Europeans should aim for typically middle-of-the-road compromises where they should not be sought. Admittedly, all parties need to give way. Should other Europeans become serious about military force and the need to think globally about security, the UK and France will have little choice but to accept a greater political input from them. Having said that, the very recognition of the indispensability of military force and of the importance of being able to project power globally should be non-negotiable. The following section explains why.

Back to basics: strategy, military power and geographical reach

Despite its expansion into different activities of social life, strategy is a concept that is traditionally associated with warfare.¹⁷ Throughout much of history, strategy and military strategy have been used interchangeably. No wonder strategic thinking was largely reserved to individuals who either came directly from the military or had a strong military background. Admittedly, students of strategy did acknowledge the need to place the term within the realm of grand strategy, a broader concept that encompasses not only warfare but also diplomacy, trade and culture. However, by and large they did so while assuming a neat hierarchy whereby all the different elements of power (economic, cultural, political, technological, etc.) were judged primarily on the basis of their contribution to military power.¹⁸ It is relatively recently that this assumption has been increasingly challenged.

Over the last two decades, the mushrooming of cross-sectoral national security strategies in different countries has illustrated as much as it has fostered a more 'horizontal' conception of grand strategy, in which the different elements of power are understood in a less hierarchical and more horizontal manner. It is perhaps Yale historian John Lewis Gaddis who has made the case for such an approach most strongly and eloquently. In his words, grand strategy...

'[...] is an ecological discipline, in that it requires the ability to see how all of the parts of a problem relate to one another, and therefore to the whole thing. It requires specialisation to some extent -the mastery of certain parts- but it also demands generalisation, for without that skill there can be no sense of how an entire system works, where it's been, and where it's going'.¹⁹

¹⁷ Mackubin T. Owens (2007), 'Strategy and the strategic way of thinking', *Naval War College Review*, vol. 68, nr 4, pp. 111-24.

¹⁸ Basil H. Liddell Hart (1967), *Strategy: the indirect approach*, Latimer Trend and Co Ltd, Whitstable; Michael Howard (1979), 'The forgotten dimensions of strategy', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 57, nr 5, Summer, pp. 975-986.

¹⁹ John L. Gaddis, 'What is Grand Strategy?', *Karl Von Der Heyden Distinguished Lecture*, Duke University, 26/11/2011, p. 9.

Thinking in grand strategic terms, Gaddis contends, means 'seeing forests and not just trees [...] relating all of the means at your disposal to the ends you have in view'.²⁰ The notion of integration becomes central: the military, economic, industrial, technological and other elements of power cannot but be seen in relation to each other and to the broader system (grand strategy) that gives them meaning.

In a way, the growing emphasis on integration is to be welcome. It serves to ward off excessively short-sighted and one-dimensional conceptions of grand strategy. After all, the gunboat brings economic prosperity and political stability, but prosperity and stability are much needed to fund, sustain and improve military capabilities. Having said this, the rapid popularisation of 'grand strategy' that we are currently witnessing could very well lead to the opposite problem: a minimisation of the importance of military force. It is in Europe, perhaps with the partial exceptions of the UK and France, where the risk of overstating the need to broaden the concept of grand strategy is strongest. This risk is particularly visible when grand strategy is discussed in an EU context, where the very notion of strategy or grand strategy seems to have become synonymous with the so-called comprehensive approach. Although 'formally' part of the power toolbox, the EU's understanding of the comprehensive approach is premised upon the military's relegation to multilateral peacekeeping tasks and last-resort endeavours, which in turn amounts to its de facto cornering, marginalisation and shrinkage.²¹ Some have even suggested that the very end of strategy is not to preserve and expand European security and prosperity, but to extinguish military force itself.²²

Ultimately, the increasing marginalisation of the military in Europe results from a lack of understanding of the constructive and stabilising role it plays in international politics. Military power is not just an asset of last resort that comes to the fore in exceptional circumstances. It encompasses a wide array of 'silent security' functions, beyond defence or waging war, that is.²³ These include intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance, deterrence, prevention and defence diplomacy. In the words of Alfred Thayer Mahan, 'force is never more operative than when it is known to exist but is not brandished'.²⁴ 'Broadly considered', Mahan goes on, 'force must be regarded as an inevitable factor in the maintenance of the general international balances'.²⁵

Only when military force plays a reassuring and facilitating role in the rear can other instruments of power (economic, cultural or diplomatic) achieve their full potential. US power offers a most illustrative example in this regard. It is its very possession of hard power that imbues the US's soft power with meaning, thereby making it 'smart', ie, strategically informed and useful. The seal of the US, with an eagle that holds a bundle of arrows in one hand and an olive branch in the other, stands as a powerful iconic reminder of the interdependence between diplomacy and war in the American mindset. So too is Teddy Roosevelt's oft-cited maxim about the need to speak softly and carry

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 16.

²¹ On the military's relegation to peacekeeping and last resort endeavours see Michael E. Smith (2011), 'A liberal grand strategy in a realist world? Power, purpose and the EU's changing global role', *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 18, nr 2, March, pp. 144-163. On the marginalisation of military force within EU strategy see Simón (2012), *op. cit.*

²² Smith (2011), *op. cit.*, p. 146.

²³ On the concept of 'silent security' see Jeremy Blackham & Gwyn Prins (2010), 'Why things don't happen: silent principles of national security', *The RUSI Journal*, vol. 155, nr 4, pp. 14-22.

²⁴ Alfred T. Mahan (1912), 'The Place of Force in International Relations', *The North American Review*, January, pp. 28-39.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

a big stick. The capability and willingness to use force are equally important. Without either of them, 'softer' instruments of power lose their effectiveness and purpose. When American academics and policy-makers praise the wisdom of soft power or smart power (the combination of 'hard' and 'soft') they stand on firm ground. When Europeans invoke normative power with no reference to military force, they are just clutching at straws.

Europeans should be wary of the risk of turning the logic of strategy on its head. Force breeds not only destruction but also peace and stability. But peace for peace's sake can be no foundation for strategy. Military power has kept a peace worthy of its name in Europe, that is, one founded upon the rule of law, political and economic freedom and social justice. It was through military force that the allies conquered that kind of European peace in the Second World War. And it was through forward military presence, strategic deterrence and a collective defence system that peace was preserved during the Cold War. More recently, the military played a leading role in spreading peace across the European continent following the collapse of the Soviet Empire: think of NATO's partnerships and enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe and its intervention in the Western Balkans.

Military force has little purpose unless embedded in a broader political vision. The role that economic integration, the rule of law, political institutionalisation and socialisation have played in cementing peace, stability and prosperity in Europe over the last seven decades cannot be emphasised enough.²⁶ But it is one thing to acknowledge such an invaluable contribution and quite another to believe that the economic, political and legal structures that military power helped build can be emancipated from strategic realities and somehow sustain themselves, as if on auto-pilot. They cannot. And this is a fact that applies not only to Europe and its broader neighbourhood, but also beyond. It is explained by the geographical interdependence of politics and of strategy and leads us to a second and critical point: the need to think holistically about strategy applies to its various instruments or functions as much as it applies to geography. The strategist must not only understand how the military, economic, diplomatic or other instruments of power relate to each other and to overall security. He must also understand how geopolitical dynamics in the world's different regions relate to each other and to the whole, particularly from the perspective of his own interests. Moreover, he must understand how all 'functional' and geographical dynamics relate to each other and to the whole. Ultimately, that is what grand strategy is about.

The very idea that Europeans can preserve their prosperity and security by concentrating their resources in one geographical area is as problematic as the notion that soft power can run alone. This is a point of timely relevance. As strategic and foreign policy debates in Europe and elsewhere are increasingly influenced by the rise of Asia and by emerging tensions in that region, the belief that Europeans would do well to keep their strategic energies to their own neighbourhood seems to be rapidly taking hold. Why worry about Asia 'when there is so much to do in the neighbourhood', the new mantra goes.²⁷

²⁶ For a recent account of the importance of economic integration for European stability and peace see Jan Zielonka (2013), 'Why the world should worry about European disarray', *Current History*, January, pp. 7-12.

²⁷ See Jonathan Holslag (2012), 'Crowded, contested and congested: security and peace in the Eurasian Sea and what it means for Europe', Brussels Institute for Contemporary China Studies, October. For an alternative view see James Rogers (2009), 'From Suez to Shanghai: the European Union and Eurasian maritime security', *Occasional Paper 77*, EU Institute for Security Studies; James Rogers & Luis Simón (2009), 'The status and location of the military installations of the member states of the European Union and their potential role for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)', *Briefing Paper for the Security and Defence Sub-Committee of the European Parliament*, 19/11/2009; Ulrich Speck (2012), 'Security in East Asia is Europe's Business too', *Strategic Europe*, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 22/11/2012.

It remains unclear, however, how exactly Europeans will be able to exercise influence in their immediate neighbourhood while ignoring adjacent regions whose economic, political and strategic developments will unavoidably have an impact on such a neighbourhood. Presumably, the very same logic that leads Europeans to conclude that developments in their neighbourhood affect the security and prosperity of their homeland should lead them to think that developments beyond affect the stability and security of their own neighbourhood.

Unless they are able to canvass global influence, any efforts by Europeans to entrench themselves in their own backyard will be futile. Dynamics from far away regions that are expected to be in the demographic, economic and technological lead of global geopolitics will quickly find their way into the neighbourhood and, eventually, into Europe itself. That Russia or the Middle East –presumably two areas all Europeans agree they should care about– are increasingly affected by geopolitical and geoeconomic forces emanating from Asia is not much of a secret at this point. It is also fairly safe to assume that the rise of China and Asia’s evolving geopolitical balances will increasingly affect Russia’s energy, economic and strategic calculations.²⁸ From a European perspective, not having the option of ‘playing’ Asia, without prejudicing the different ways in which this might be done, means renouncing to an increasingly important source of leverage in their dealings with Moscow. The Russians know better. Hence, Putin’s forcefully publicised rapprochement to Beijing elucidates an understanding of how playing the China card can bring Russia leverage elsewhere, whether vis-à-vis Europeans, the US or even Japan.

The Middle East is another obvious example of the geographical interdependence of politics and strategy. As the bulk of its energy outflow shifts quickly from Europe to Asia, its security dynamics will be increasingly influenced by the calculations and doings of Asian powers. In this regard, some voices in Washington are already warning about the Middle East’s new-found importance as a sub-theatre of their so-called pivot to Asia. The heavy dependence of Japan and South Korea (Washington’s closest allies in north-east Asia) on Middle-Eastern energy means that the supply of America’s first line of defence in East Asia will largely depend upon its ability to continue to underpin a favourable balance of power in the Middle East. Russia and the Middle East are only two examples. Unavoidably, all of the different areas of the European neighbourhood (be it the Caucasus, the Red Sea, the Arctic or even West Africa) will be increasingly reflecting geoeconomic and geopolitical dynamics emanating from Asia.

Implying that Europeans should find a strategic ‘niche’ in their neighbourhood is like saying they should find a niche in ‘civilian power’ or in low-end peacekeeping. Small powers find niches out of sheer limitations and out of necessity. Big powers think globally, both functionally and geographically. Europeans still have a choice, but their window is closing. Europe will either be a global power or it will be no power at all. Being able to exercise influence in Asia will be of particular importance. For it will be largely in that region where the price of the currency of power will be negotiated and set. Therefore, it is strategic myopia (ie, getting too bogged down in their neighbourhood) that Europeans should

²⁸ Tony Brenton (2011), ‘Russia and Asia’, *Asian Affairs*, vol. 42, nr 1, pp. 14-27.

watch out against. The question is not whether the neighbourhood is more important than the area beyond or vice-versa. That is a false debate. It is as pointless as haggling over whether military force matters more than economic prosperity or diplomatic weight. One can simply not be explained separately from the other. As Clausewitz reminds, diplomacy and warfare are only two different manifestations of politics, that is, the pursuit of power. Similarly, Europeans should understand that the neighbourhood and the area beyond are interconnected theatres in the same geopolitical and geostrategic play. They cannot be tackled separately. That the different functional and geographical levels of politics and strategy are connected is a fact of life. Whether Europeans choose to ignore that fact is something they do at their peril. This leads to a final point: the ability to think holistically about strategy does not presuppose certain strategic or foreign policy choices. It is simply about being able to have a strategy or a foreign policy at all. This is perhaps best seen with an example.

Many in Europe might question the wisdom of following the US in a military-strategic pivot that is largely about balancing China's rise. After all, or so does the story go, European security interests are not directly challenged by the rise of China in the same direct manner as those of America are, given the latter's physical presence and mutual defence commitments in East Asia. Additionally, Europeans have much to benefit economically from keeping their diplomatic relations with Beijing as cordial as possible.

More broadly, a strategic case could be made for Europeans to try to play the role of a 'third force' or arbiter of Asian geopolitical dynamics. For one thing, the absence of strategic friction between Europe and either the US or China, Asia's key powers, means that an increased European presence in the region could contribute to defusing tensions and bringing about a stable environment in Asia, one conducive to prosperity, collective security and positive-sum dynamics. For another, for small and medium Asian powers (eg, Australia, South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, etc.), Europeans could be a source of fresh air. Most of these countries see themselves increasingly trapped between China, with whom they enjoy deep economic ties, and the US, the ultimate guarantor of their security and political autonomy. Europeans could offer these countries the opportunity to diversify their options and mitigate the risks and heavy losses in autonomy that would come with a Cold War-type scenario. Neither Russia nor India have the economic, technological or naval resources or the political profile, due to their respective frictions with China, to play that role. Thirdly, great Asian powers (Russia, India, Japan, China and the US) would highly value the favours of extra-regional powers, which they would perceive as a most useful source of leverage in a context of great-power strategic competition in East Asia. This could give Europeans economic and political leverage vis-à-vis those powers in Asia and in different parts of the broader European neighbourhood, where all of those powers are implicated.

Conclusions

Even if they were to pursue some sort of global offshore balancing strategy, Europeans would need to invest in the kind of capabilities that would allow them to project power globally and tip the strategic balances –particularly in Asia– in whatever direction they see fit. Trade and diplomacy will not suffice. This leads to this paper’s overarching point: having the ability to project strategic power globally does not prejudice any particular foreign policy choices, including a given positioning alongside a hypothetical US vs China spectrum. It would merely allow Europeans to have a foreign policy of their own, one that is not at the mercy of other powers. Only once they acknowledge the importance of being able to project military power on a global scale does the discussion about European geopolitical objectives and about the ways in which security and defence policy can support such objectives become a serious one.