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CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

Normative Power and Military Means: the evolving character of the EU's international power

In 2003 the EU launched its first military operation, breaking the taboo on the collective EU use of military force. Another ten military operations followed suit. In this dissertation I have sought to assess the evolving character of the EU's international power by analyzing the EU's military operations. Using the Normative Power debate to develop a framework to distinguish between different types of military operations, it makes an argument on the EU's international power on two levels. First, it has analyzed the EU level outcome (i.e. the character of EU military operations). Second, it offers an empirical account of the political decision-making dynamics of the EU's military operations. In a nutshell, the dissertation's central finding is that cooperative bargaining has driven a change of the EU from a normative power to a more liberal power.

Based on a comparative analysis of the EU's military operations and in-depth case studies, the main findings of this dissertation can be summed up in four core claims:

1. The character of the EU's military operations has changed considerably over time.
2. Advocacy coalitions illuminate mechanisms of change in the EU's multilevel foreign policy framework, because it takes seriously the contestation over substantive ideas, while acknowledging the institutional setting.

3. EU foreign policy change is a dynamic process that primarily involves cooperative bargaining.

4. The EU is moving towards becoming a Liberal Power in world politics.

Below I will elaborate on those four claims, reflect on the limitations, the prospects of this research and outline avenues for future research.

8.1 The changed character of EU military operations

Building upon the indicators established in chapter 2 to assess the character of EU military operations, the dissertation shows that in the period 2003-2016, the EU's military operations have changed along three dimensions: justification, policy-embeddedness and UN-authorization.

First, the EU is more open about allowing its military involvement to be motivated by its strategic interests besides the normative considerations that it adduces. As I have shown in chapter 4, while the EU's first military operations had a clear value-based justification (i.e. implementing peace agreements in the Balkans, protecting civilians in Congo and Chad), since EUNAVFOR Atalanta (2008) the EU has become more explicit about its economic and security interests. Including this utility-based justification in the mandate affects the nature of the operations. For example, as shown in chapter 6, in terms of actual deployment EUNAVFOR Atalanta has become increasingly focused on protecting the EU's trade routes, though it did not forsake its duty to protect the World Food Program.

Second, the EU ensures ever more that its military involvement is effectively coordinated with its other external action instruments. In the early years of CSDP, it was not unlikely that once a military operation was launched, it would come to dominate the EU's involvement with the country (e.g. Artemis 2003). Increasingly however, EU military operations are part of an overarching political framework. Typical examples of increasing the policy-embeddedness of EU military operations are the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa and the Sahel-Strategy. Moreover, the position of the EU Special Representative vis-à-vis the Operation Commander is a clear indicator of the institutional relationship between civilian and military efforts. While existing research has pointed at Ashton's lack of activism on CSDP, the decreased role for the Council Presidency to launch a military operation as a flagship initiative, and a general EU-intervention fatigue, to account for the drop of larger, more robust military operations after Solana's departure, it emerges that this

more integrated approach (“comprehensive approach”, as the EU puts it) may well have led to a re-assessment of the (added) value of the military instrument.

Third, the EU emphasizes the importance of “effective multilateralism”, with a particular role for the UN. Especially in the field of authorizing military interventions, the EU has highlighted the importance of UN-authorization. However, in the actual decision-making process on launching EU military operations the picture is much more ambiguous. While the EU does not challenge the need for UN-authorization to engage in executive military action, it does stretch the limits of multilateralism. Not only has it refrained from action when explicitly asked by the UN (e.g. Congo 2008), it pushes for military action in the Mediterranean notwithstanding serious doubts of UN institutions.

In sum, the development of the EU’s military operations is characterized by an increase of utility-based justification and has become increasingly embedded in an overall political framework. Moreover, the research suggests the EU stretches the limits (of the importance) of UN-authorization in the decision-making on the launch of military operations. The changes on these three dimensions point in different directions in terms of the character of the EU’s international power. This rather paradoxical development of the EU’s identity as a security actor is discussed further in section 8.3.

8.2 A Public Policy approach to CSDP

In addition to enhancing our understanding of the changing nature of the EU’s military operations as reflecting the EU’s evolving international power, this dissertation aimed at advancing the theoretical debate on studying EU foreign policy change.

At a conceptual level, this dissertation takes issue with the EU as unitary actor. The eventual launch of an EU military operation is the aggregated effect of the dynamic interaction between the actors involved in the decision-making process. Hence, the dissertation has aimed to unpack the contestation about the EU’s use of military force.

To this end, I have proposed a public policy approach, the Advocacy Coalition Framework, primarily for two reasons. First, it serves as a heuristic device to grasp the complex decision-making in launching EU military operations. The use of advocacy coalitions allows to focus on the battle of ideas among different groups of actors that are each united by common belief-system. As such, a variety of actors can be included by looking at their ideational commonalities rather than their institutional roles. Thus, both EU level actors and Member States could be included in the analysis, instead of focusing on either level or opposing the two against each

other. In both respects (structuring ideas and actors), ACF thus offers a meaningful structure to the analysis of the contestation over the EU’s use of military force.

Focusing on the policy core ideas concerning the use of military force, I distinguished between four advocacy coalitions: Global Power EU, Euro-Atlanticists, Human Security and the Bystanders. While the first two hold different positions on the degree to which, specifically, the EU should be an ambitious international security actor, the latter two coalitions stand out for their greater reluctance of using military force in general, albeit for different reasons. Whereas the Human Security coalition stands out for its emphasis on limiting the use of military force to value-based concerns, the Bystanders’ reluctance has to be understood more in terms of risk-averseness.

The second reason for taking an advocacy coalition approach is that it allows us to study the evolving nature of the EU’s military operations as a “policy change”, which enriches our understanding of the underlying mechanisms that drive such (foreign) policy change. Departing from ACF’s distinction among different pathways of policy change, in this dissertation I have developed this into concrete and carefully-theorised mechanisms. This then serves to connect ACF to various institutional theories, which allowed me to specify the mechanisms of policy change involved.

8.3 The mechanisms of change in CSDP

The different institutionalist approaches point at different mechanisms by which change occurs. Is it a process of institutional learning, or does it all boil down to power politics and institutional entrapment? Or is there a possibility of cooperative bargaining?

Especially from the key cases analysed in chapters 5 and 6, it emerges that CSDP decision-making is best understood as a case of cooperative bargaining, but chapter 7 also goes to confirm this view. The other mechanisms play a role as exceptions to the general context of cooperative bargaining.

Central to the idea of *cooperative bargaining* is that the actors do not change their preferences and ideas, but are willing to compromise and go beyond the lowest common denominator. The clearest example of cooperative bargaining has been the case of EUNAVFOR Atalanta, as presented in chapter 6. Combining value-based justifications (i.e. protecting the WFP-shipping) with utility-based justifications (i.e. protecting commercial trade routes), the driving force behind this operation, the Global Power EU coalition, gained broad support across the different coalitions. Also, as I have shown in chapter 5, the launch of EUFOR Althea initially could count upon a wide support basis, despite different views on the scope of the mandate and

the relationship with NATO. In particular, since actors differed over whether or not to include fighting organized crime in the task-description of EUFOR Althea, it was incorporated as a secondary task. Moreover, while the Euro-Atlanticist vetoing of terminating the executive mandate clearly does not fit with cooperative bargaining, the solution to keep the executive mandate while shifting the focus to training tasks is an example of cooperative bargaining. This cooperative bargaining took the mandate beyond the lowest common denominator.

However, as time progressed the positions of the different coalitions vis-à-vis Althea hardened. Evidence of *hard bargaining* was found in the unilateral withdrawal of troops and the vetoing of terminating the executive mandate of the operation.⁸⁶ Similarly, in the (non-) case of Congo (2008) hard bargaining was predominant. Against the fierce opposition from both Germany and the UK, and the pressure to get operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta launched, France withdrew its support for a third operation in Congo. As such, the actor constellation changed and deprived the Human Security-coalition from a crucial proponent. Another non-case which was characterized by hard bargaining is Libya (2011), in which different coalitions were not afraid of vetoing different proposals on the table.

The actual experience of launching operations together under EU-flag has not resulted in a clear convergence of positions on the use of military force, i.e. the combination of cross-case and cross-coalition *learning*. Most learning takes place within the bounds of a coalition. For example, most parties agreed on the lack of progress in BiH, but the way this affected their assessment of what that should mean for EUFOR Althea differed from one coalition to the next. Another example is the way in which the actual experience with NATO and the EU in fighting piracy, in the case of Atalanta, led to an increasing enthusiasm for the EU-operation in the Euro-Atlanticist coalition. Also, the expanding scope of this operation to include land was accepted by the Bystander coalition based on actual experience with the shifting activities of the pirates. An example of within-case learning that transcended individual coalitions has been the strengthening over time of the position of the EU Special Representative in EUFOR Althea.

Strengthening the position of the EUSR is an indicator of an increasing policy-embeddedness of the EU's military operation. However, at a more general level the more fundamental change towards the increasing policy-embeddedness of the EU's military operations cannot be characterized as a cross-case learning process. Though the different coalitions have agreed upon the notion of a "comprehensive approach", they continue to fight over the actual relationship between the military

⁸⁶ Nevertheless, in the end a negotiated settlement was reached by keeping the military mandate but shifting the focus to capacity-building and training.

instrument and other foreign policy instruments. While convergence has taken place on the necessity of bringing together the different foreign policy instruments at the EU level, the different coalitions maintain their different views on the relative priority of those instruments. For example, while the Global Power EU coalition insists on the added value and front-runner role of the military, other coalitions tend to highlight its more complementary, assisting role. Cross-case learning has been much less evident and remained limited to the level of secondary aspects. The most notable example is the inclusion of an end-date in all CSDP operations as a result of the fight over the termination of EUFOR Althea.

Finally, in the context of persisting differences on the use of military force there is a strong dynamic of *institutional entrapment*. Once an agreement has been reached, it is difficult to go beyond the scope of that agreement. In particular, UN-authorization functions as a strong entrapment-resource. As both the case of Libya (2011) and Sophia (>2015) show, coalitions reluctant to get involved invoke the barrier of getting UN-support (e.g. request of UN-OCHA or phasing the operation). In sum, while the intergovernmentalist nature of CSDP with strongly held belief systems of the different actors involved indicate a strong case for hard bargaining, this is not an adequate characterization of the EU's decision-making on CSDP. Yet, the opposite extreme of a convergence of positions based on an accumulation of common experiences (i.e. learning) has been rather weak as well. In line with Sabatier's expectation, learning takes primarily place on secondary aspects and within the bounds of coalitions.

Instead, what stands out in the decision-making on CSDP operations is a process of cooperative bargaining. The changes on two key dimensions, policy-embeddedness and justification, are the outcome of a process of cooperative bargaining. The different coalitions kept their distinctive profiles on the use of military force, but allowed for the inclusion of elements into the operations' mandates that are key to other coalitions. While utility-based justifications are increasingly added to the EU's Joint Decisions, value-based justifications are not discarded. Moreover, agreeing upon the need for bringing together the different foreign policy instruments, the contestation over their relative hierarchy continues on a case-by-case level. While the "comprehensive approach" is increasingly institutionalized, there is still considerable room of manoeuvre in the actual balance between civilian and military instruments in particular cases.

So, cooperative bargaining is the dominant and distinctive mechanism of CSDP-action, allowing the CSDP to advance step-by-step without however eradicating the deep and continuing differences between the actors involved. The other mechanisms play a secondary role. Hard bargaining is key to explaining the EU's non-cases, as I have shown by the case of Congo 2008. Moreover, institutional entrapment is of

importance once an operation is launched. Overall, genuine learning across cases and coalitions plays a limited role.

The distinctive role for cooperative bargaining in the launch of EU military operations sheds light on the debate whether an intensification of common operational experience produces a common strategic culture. This dissertation shows that, even in the EU context, what can be considered a likely case for convergence, different strategic cultures persist and learning remains relatively limited. I have shown that cooperative bargaining is the mechanism that connects those persistent differences on the use of military force to EU level outcomes. National strategic cultures do not necessarily converge, but neither do they lead to deadlock.

8.4 The EU as an international security actor

Combining the insights on the different changes of EU military operations and the underlying decision-making mechanisms, what does this tell us about the evolving character of the EU as an international security actor?

From a Normative Power perspective, which dominated the policy and scholarly debate on the EU's foreign policy, as I have elaborately discussed in chapter 2, one would expect the EU's operations to be: a) justified in value-based terms, b) complementary to the EU's overall engagement and c) authorized by the UN. The comparative analysis of the EU's military operations, however, points out that the EU did not develop in this ideal typical direction. While the increasing policy embeddedness of EU military operations fits well with a comprehensive Normative Power, the increasingly explicit justification of operations in utility-based terms does not. Doubts on the EU as a normative power security actor are further fuelled by an analysis, in chapter 7, of the role of UN-authorization in the launch of EU military operations. In this chapter I have shown that although the EU has, so far, not acted without UN-authorization, the case of EUNAVFOR Sophia underlines that it is a matter of contestation whether UN-authorization is a *sine qua non* or not.

How to weigh these trends? Within the Normative Power debate, authors differ on the relative importance of objectives (i.e. justification) and instruments (i.e. policy-embeddedness). However, a common denominator is a strong disagreement with an instrumental use of UN-authorization (e.g. Diez and Manners 2007). Hence, I would argue that the more recent developments of the EU loosening up the constraints of UN-authorization, are most problematic and crucial from a Normative Power perspective. It is a "living by example" that diffuses an understanding of UN-authorization that is at odds with a Normative Power's commitment to bind itself to international law.

In all, the findings suggest that the notion of the EU as a normative power needs considerable revision. Hence, we need to identify alternative international power identities that may characterize the evolving character of the EU as a security actor. To this end, I have introduced, in chapter 3, on the basis of the aforementioned three dimensions, a typology that distinguishes between four international power identities: interventionist Normative Power, comprehensive Normative Power, Liberal Power and Realist Power.

Over 10 years of a Security and Defence Policy I was able to evaluate the evolution of the character of the EU as an international security actor. The operational military experience has put its stamp on the EU's ideas on the use of military force. Rather than being a stable, commonly shared identity, the EU's "distinctive" normative military engagement is under pressure. The interaction of an increasing utility-based logic with attempts to upload operations to the UN level (i.e. Sophia) suggests a "great power mentality." While the EU stays within the red lines of multilateralism, in the case of EUNAVFOR Sophia it clearly looks for stretching its boundaries. Nevertheless, the EU is not a typical realist actor either. In the last decade there has been a lot the EU did not do, i.e. it did not develop into a real competitor of NATO by looking for conducting operations at the higher-end of the Petersberg tasks. The internal dynamic of continuing contestation over the EU's ability for decisive and robust military action constrains the activist forces and prevents the EU from developing into a traditional realist power. As a former French official (2016) put it: "CSDP is no longer the way to legitimize the EU as foreign policy actor".

Eventually, the combination of the embedding of the military instrument in a broader foreign policy repertoire with the increase of utility-based considerations (without militarization), leads to the conclusion that the character of the EU as an international security actor fits well with the notion of a Liberal Power. As I have explained in chapter 3, a Liberal Power is not focussed on the military instrument, i.e. military force is not key to its foreign policy identity. This partly has to do with the fact that its strengths lie elsewhere, but also with a strong culture of risk-avoidance (see Wagner 2015). At the same time, a Liberal Power does have a keen sense of its key interests that it defines primarily in economic terms. To further these interests it is willing to employ the full range of instruments in its foreign policy toolbox, including, but not predominantly, the military instrument.

8.5 Reflections and future research

While this dissertation has aimed at developing a coherent theoretical framework and at presenting the qualitative data in a structured and transparent manner, it is not without limitations. In this section I will reflect upon the main contributions and limitations of this dissertation. To this end I address the following issues: 1) the state of the literature, 2) studying CSDP as a public policy field, and 3) sources and accessibility.

First, after an initial phase in which CSDP was mainly studied in descriptive terms, this has been changing quickly. By now there is a considerable amount of IR-inspired research (e.g. Hyde-Price 2013; Rynning 2011a; Meyer 2005; Meyer and Strickman 2011; Pohl 2013) and institutionalist literature (e.g. Dijkstra 2013, Juncos 2013; Menon 2011) on CSDP.

So far, however, it has been difficult to develop a framework that is able to capture both the EU as a whole and its underlying dynamics. One notable recent attempt has been Koenig's (2014) use of role-theory to capture change and continuity at the EU level as a result of the contestation over the character of the EU's international power. Her case study on the EU and Libya shows that the EU's "performance" is the combined outcome of its self-image, contestation among Member States and among EU institutions, and expectations of external actors. Nevertheless, role theory remains rather silent on the mechanisms of change and, in the application of Koenig, sticks to the institutional divide between Member States and EU institutions. In that respect, the use of advocacy coalitions combined with the institutionalist-mechanisms of change, as proposed in this dissertation further develops a research agenda that aims to understand the contestation over the EU's international power.

The related question is, of course, whether studying CSDP as a public policy is actually valid. Its application in this dissertation has shown it added value in some important respects. The use of advocacy coalitions in the field of security has been fruitful to approach it as a battle of ideas as much as a battle between actors. Moreover, it has brought a wider range of actors to our attention than is common in CSDP literature. A notable example is the active and distinctive role that Sweden, in leading the Human Security-coalition, played in both Althea and Atalanta, even if it was not successful on all accounts (e.g. termination of Althea and launch of 3rd Congo-operation).

Still, it has to be admitted that the advocacy coalitions that were derived from differences in strategic cultures, do not always perfectly map on the actions of individual actors that are part of these coalitions. While most of these findings may be interpreted as an exception to the rule, or are a matter of degree (on rather secondary issues), in some cases actors' positions in CSDP may be more amenable

to change than is usually assumed in the ACF. For example, under Commission President Juncker the European Commission has become more ambitious concerning the EU's Security and Defence Policy (see Die Welt 2015). In a Strategic Note, the Commission's in-house think tank paints a picture of "the rest of world is arming itself to the teeth" and the need for European collective force as "our new normal" (EPSC 2015). Thus the Commission has come closer to the Global Power EU-coalition. At the same time, France is said to "steer away" from CSDP (Gomis 2015). While this does not necessarily indicate that France is leaving the Global Power-EU coalition altogether, it could mean that it is adopting a less activist position.

The change of actors and/or their "deviating" behaviour raises questions about the stability and coherence of the coalitions. Although it works to structure the analysis, the notion of coalitions could be developed further. For example, I have not included differences of degrees, i.e. the different positions of actors *within* a coalition. Although a key assumption of ACF is that actors share a belief system, an avenue for future research would be to differentiate between core members and those bordering on another coalition (along the lines of Rozbicka's (2013: 840) distinction between core members and tag-alongs). For example, as I mentioned above, the Commission is positioned in this research as a Bystander, but has affinities with the Global Power EU-coalition in its aim for strengthening the EU as an international actor.

As I already noted in section 3.3, Sabatier's requirement of "non-trivial coordination" of coalitions, in addition to a shared belief system, is less developed in the CSDP-coalitions. Compared to left-right dimensions that structure many policy areas, the predominance of national strategic cultures in the international field of security make this a distinctive policy domain, in which the shared ideas of coalitions, and indeed the infrastructure for discursive exchange and coordination, are anchored less deeply. In the end, actors may quite strategically opt-out from, or opt-in, a particular military operation. As such, a full application of the Advocacy Coalition Framework to the CSDP may be more difficult and subject to some reservations.

This is not to say, however, that the relevance of the amendments that this dissertation proposed to the AC-framework is limited to the study of CSDP. Although there are particular ("sui generis") elements to the EU's military operations, which are reflected in the operationalization of the change-mechanisms, the connection of advocacy coalitions to mechanisms of foreign policy change could prove useful for the study of other EU foreign policy domains as well. For example, it would be interesting to see whether learning plays a more important role in decision-making domains that are less intergovernmental, i.e. external trade (an exclusive EU competence) and climate change (shared competence). Moreover, this framework

could travel beyond the EU context and prove helpful for other multilateral organizations dealing with foreign policy and security issues. Although it is likely that in those cases there will be even less coordination than in the case of EU-coalitions, and that they hence call for some further adaptations of the framework, the operationalization of the change-mechanisms as proposed in this dissertation might enhance our understanding in the decision-making of, for instance, UN mandates and NATO-operations.

Third, as I was also to experience myself, in the policy domain of security, accessibility to sources and documents can be cumbersome. As already mentioned in section 1.5.1, most of the EU's planning documents are not publicly accessible, let alone minutes of the different committees that would allow to carefully trace the interaction among the actors involved. In the absence of these sources, I have triangulated the publicly available data of media sources and governments' communication vis-à-vis parliaments, with leaked documents, and information provided by a whole range of interviewees covering different time periods, countries and institutional positions. Governments' communication vis-à-vis parliaments depends on a formal obligation to do so and/or an active parliament. In combination with time- and language barriers, in terms of national documents, I have come to primarily rely on mainly German, Dutch, Swedish and British documents. A possible bias in this research is that in terms of both documents and interviewees, the perspective of Eastern-European countries is underrepresented, although this may be partly connected to their (relatively secondary) positions in the coalitions. Moreover, it has become increasingly difficult to speak with people that have been involved with CSDP ever since its emergence. In addition, the validity of those accounts has to be critically assessed, as over time the accuracy of their memories is likely to decrease.

8.6 Prospects: EU power in a changing environment

In 2003 the European Security Strategy proclaimed optimistically: "Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free." While the EU is still prosperous, secure and free compared with many other places, recent developments at its eastern and southern border have raised questions about the EU's ability to keep it this way. This dissertation clearly shows that the utility-based component in the EU's military operations has become more salient. The scope of the EU's external action is increasingly defined by the sum of its utility-based interests. Moreover, the EU's "comprehensive approach" points at a process of bureaucratization, rather than a militarization of the EU's CSDP.

The increasing explicit inclusion of utility-based considerations into the EU's decision-making on the launch of military operations as witnessed in this dissertation has at a more strategic level been confirmed by the Global Strategy (GS), which was launched in June 2016 to replace the 2003 ESS. The Global Strategy kicks off with the call for "a stronger Europe." For the first time the EU lists some vital interests, emphasizing its own security and hard power elements (cf. Biscop 2016). As such, compared to the ESS, realpolitik elements have become markedly stronger, even if the Global Strategy is keen to underline that "our interests and values go hand in hand." An EEAS-official (F 2016) I interviewed even claimed that the stronger prominence of "interests" in the Global Strategy bears witness to the fact that "the power politics of the 19th century is back."

Following from this, the new Strategy refers to both EU border security and human security (Global Strategy 2015: 9/20). However, their relative priority and possible contradictory implications are not addressed. The presence of both reflects the continuing contestation over the guiding principles of the EU as a security actor. The self-characterisation of "principled pragmatism" (Ibid.: 16) suggests that the EU's self-conception as a normative power is only embraced when the circumstances allow for it. Such a stance does, indeed, fit with a Liberal Power conception, a conception that may actually give some guidance to the balancing act between principles and pragmatism.

In this dissertation, the ambiguity in the relationship between border security and human security came most strikingly to the fore in the case study on EUNAVFOR Sophia (in Ch. 7). Related to these different conceptions of security is an increasing "intertwining" of internal and external security, as is in fact confirmed by the Global Strategy (2015: 7). Like the discussion on a militarization in CSDP, as raised by Manners (2006a/b), research on the EU's internal security policies concerning border control have voiced similar concerns about the role of the military in the operations of the EU's external border management agency, Frontex (e.g. Aas and Gundhus 2015; Leonard 2010). The recent agreement on the European Commission's proposal for a European Border and Coast Guard (European Commission 2016) adds to the need to further assess the development of the EU as an international security actor with research on the nexus between internal and external security is necessary. At the same time, such an approach might also lead to a better understanding of the working of coalitions across policy domains. For example, because of different decision-making rules, a powerful coalition in internal security may be weaker in external security. When these policy domains become increasingly interconnected, this raises questions about how this affects the battle of ideas among different belief systems.

Another notable event with possible implications for the development of CSDP is Brexit (see also Palm 2016). On the one hand, Brexit deprives the more military activist coalitions from a critical partner. On the other hand, when looking at the actual contributions to CSDP operations its role appears less indispensable.⁸⁷ Moreover, for more military robust operations the UK and France were already inclined to operate outside the EU-framework (e.g. Libya). Nevertheless, the UK leaving the EU means a serious shift in the balance of power among the advocacy coalitions. It would, for instance, change the balance in favour of terminating Althea's executive mandate and the development of an EU Operational Head Quarters. The latter would strengthen the position of the EU level institutions vis-à-vis the Member States in the field of Security and Defence.

To sum up, Brexit reinforces a comprehensive approach in which the military instrument is present but not necessarily essential for the EU's foreign policy identity. With Brexit, the EU moves further away from the opportunity to develop into a significant military power. While the military power at the higher end of the Petersberg tasks is weakened, it provides the Global Power EU-coalition, notably France, with the opportunity to strengthen its position in this policy domain. At the same time, it can be expected to further push Germany out of its Bystander-role. While Germany has consistently made significant contributions to EU military operations, it has deliberately refrained from taking a leadership role.

Resulting from the different ideas of the coalitions, the struggle to find the balance between ambitions and capabilities will continue in CSDP. This dissertation has aimed at identifying, conceptualizing and showing how the battle of ideas concerning the use of force developed in the launch of military CSDP operations in the period 2003-2015 to evaluate the evolving character of the EU's international power.

87 Note moreover that as a non-EU member the UK would be able to contribute to EU military operations as a third country. However, it would not have a role in the initial decision-making process.