Foreword by Michel Barnier

A Strategic Culture for Europe

Elmar Brok
on building a European culture of security

EU Security Policy after Iraq

Christoph Heusgen
on the existence of a EU culture of security

Klaus Naumann
on the military needs of a culture of security

Michael Baun
on the necessity of a common strategic culture

and others

Asle Toje, Editor
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Foreword: the Challenges that the EU Needs to Take Up in Order to Develop an Effective Strategic Culture

Michel Barnier

The European Security Strategy, adopted by the European Council on 12 December 2003, defines the framework chosen by the European Union to deal with crises and counter the terrorist threat, organized crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

This strategy is bolstered by the Constitutional Treaty, which provides inter alia for mutual assistance and solidarity clauses between States. The European Defence Agency, to which I personally committed myself in the Convention, will give European defence a technological and industrial base. It will help strengthen our ability to act.

Finally, the Foreign Minister will give the EU a face and a voice, serving a more multilateral and effective international order.

The European Union’s strategic culture is concretely reflected through European defence. Let’s not forget it: European de-

Summary
The foreign Minister welcomes OCGG’s initiative and stresses that the European Union’s strategic culture is about European defence where important steps are being taken.

About the Author
Michel Barnier is the French Minister of Foreign Affairs.
fence is already a reality on the ground. With Operation Artémis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the EU has shown its ability to deploy forces rapidly outside the continent. In the Balkans, the Europeans are responsible for the bulk of international peacekeeping and regional reconstruction. On December 2nd of this year, the EU has deployed 7,000 men in Bosnia as a result of taking over from NATO.

We find ourselves at an early phase of a complex and challenging undertaking. This will take time, energy and commitment. The EU is changing and new tools are being developed to face new challenges.

It is therefore a pleasure to see a student-run organisation, like the Oxford Council on Good Governance, eager to contribute to the debate on such an evolution.

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1 Les défis que doit relever l’Union européenne pour développer une culture stratégique opérationnelle.
Introduction: the EU Strategic Culture

Asle Toje

I am pleased to introduce this discussion panel on the EU strategic culture. In 2005 the European Union finds itself at a pivotal point in its development. Institutional framework and military capabilities are in place. The EU now faces difficult choices whether to remain a primarily civilian actor in international politics or to transform itself through greater foreign and security policy integration. Much will depend on what compromise is reached tying political objectives to the possible use of force. Questions of strategic culture are situated at the heart of this debate.

European leaders make no secret of their desire for the EU to play a greater role in international security. So why then have the results been so limited? First of all, the situation is not as dire as some critics of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) claim it to be: the EU states have already pooled significant military capabilities that can be applied in concert either through the Rapid Reaction Force or in Battle Group coalitions of “the will-

Summary

The 2003 EU Security Strategy stressed the “need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary, robust intervention.” But what is a ‘strategic culture’ and what does it mean in a EU context? The OCGG has put together a panel of high-profile security experts to think freely around this topic. The views expressed in the contributions are those of the authors, while the proposed policy recommendations are to be attributed to the OCGG alone.

About the Author

Asle Toje is Director of the Security Section at the Oxford Council on Good Governance.
The member states have adopted a Security Strategy outlining future missions, both offensive and defensive. The EU has also developed institutions to conduct and coordinate operations.

On a practical level, the EU has so far come up with a number of ‘common strategies’. So far the EU has taken on three military missions: Operation Concordia in Macedonia, Operation Artemis in Congo and, in December 2004, and Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Union is also currently active in two police missions in the Balkans (EUPM and Proxima) and one rule of law mission in Georgia. This is no small feat considering the EU’s past track record in this field. It ought to be noted, however, that the missions outlined above are all relatively low-intensity “pre and post crisis” missions and could have just as successfully been handled by NATO or one of the major powers. None of the EU missions can claim to address major issues of our day.

The reason the EU foreign policy output in terms of dealing with actual crisis has been so limited is closely linked to the way decisions are made. The inherent conservatism of lowest common denominator decision-making can be a safeguard from costly visionary excursions, but it can also be a bottleneck preventing meaningful policies from being formulated. Although all member states see the merits of acting in concert, many are unwilling to have their sovereignty restricted when it comes to foreign policy. The current need for unanimity in Council decisions on security issues grants in effect all 25 member states a veto over EU policy. The Iraq war exposed the difficulties of keeping a common position in times of strife.

In 1983 Headley Bull observed that ‘… the power or influence exerted by the European Community and other such civilian actors was conditional upon a strategic environment provided by the military power of states, which they did not control.’ This point was emphasized by the Yugoslav civil wars of the 1990s, and has been reemphasized by the events in 2003-2004 in Iraq and in Sudan’s Darfur region. For the EU to be an effective foreign policy actor the member states must channel relevant parts of their foreign and security policies through the EU. This process has thus far been hampered by a persistent lack of consensus on where, how, when and for what reasons the EU should engage in foreign policy.
This is the problem EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana refers to when he highlights the ‘need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary, robust intervention.’ But what is meant by “strategic culture?” As contributor Ken Booth puts it: ‘A strategic culture defines a set of patterns of and for behaviour on war and peace issues.’ Central to strategic culture is the belief that factors such as traditions, values, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, habits, symbols, achievements and historical experience shape strategic behaviour and actual policy making. At a time when Europe and America frequently find themselves at odds it is increasingly important to seek out the reasons for these differences. In times of rapid change to “know thine ally” may be as important as to “know thine enemy.”

So what can we expect from the EU as a strategic actor? There are somewhat simplified three approaches to answering this question. One approach is “market led”, assessing developments in light of the goals to be achieved. This is the approach of the 2003 Security Strategy. Strategic culture is seen as a means to deliver the Union from the current mood of indecisiveness. Europe has a global security role to play and needs the kind of military forces that will enable it to play such a role. The goals of EU security demand capabilities in humanitarian and rescue operations, peacekeeping and crisis management— up to and including peacemaking. In the 2003 EU Security Strategy this was expanded further: ‘[i]n failed states military instruments may be needed to restore order.’ The 2010 Headline Goal agreed in 2004 goes some way towards defining what level of force the EU states envisage and under what circumstances force should be used, yet a clear consensus has yet to be established.

A different entry point is through the strategic cultures already in place. The EU strategic culture is, as most EU initiatives, being constructed on top of and in addition to structures already in place. There are at least three schools of thought on the topic of the geographic and mission scope of EU security policy. One school, consisting of smaller states and led by the neutrals Finland and Austria, would like to see the CSDP continued as a consensus-driven regionally-oriented crisis management initiative. They are opposed by Europe’s two great military powers, the UK and France, who would like to see the coalitions of EU-states undertake a wide range of missions on a global scale. Germany has focused on the need for UN mandates and common assessment of missions, preferring to see the CSDP less as
a tool for power projection than as a means to curbing unilateralism and deepening the process of European integration.

Both these approaches are problematic. Tracing the EU strategic culture via national strategic cultures suggests that one of these approaches will prevail, becoming the EU position. This could lead to analysis that misses an important element—what the CSDP offers beyond the sum of its ingredients. The problem of “market led” analysis is that it can lead to the sort of deterministic assumptions about the ‘real’ intentions of actors that marred much strategic analysis during the Cold War. One must also keep in mind that the EU cannot and will not remain in a state of “permanent revolution”. The surge of integration of the past decade will at some stage need to be consolidated. Our contributors differ sharply on whether the EU will be able to develop a strategic culture.

A third, and to date the least explored approach to analyzing the EU’s strategic culture, is to consider how Europe’s unique historic experience, political climate, and ideology is likely to shape strategic behaviour. Elements in such an approach would include the shared memories of the destructiveness of war (World War II), a disinclination to think strategically (the superpowers on both sides of the iron curtain dissuaded autonomous strategic ambition), a belief that multilateralism delivers better results than unilateral engagement (the rationale underpinning the European Union). Charting the EU strategic culture from this angle would be less burdened by the histories of the nation states and less predestined by the hopes and expectations of the future. As Winston Churchill said about this topic ‘We’re not making a machine, we’re growing a living plant, and we must wait and see until we understand what this plant turns out to be.’

Building on the policy recommendations from the journal’s previous issue and with an eye on the current debates, the OCGG offers six policy suggestions to help consolidate the progress made:

**OCGG POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **Recruit a force of Europe’s finest.** The EU Rapid Reaction Force and Battle Groups will be the Union’s first line of defence—alongside NATO and national formations. Much as ‘multi-hatting’ is a clever political compromise it fails to deliver the imagery capable of capturing the imagination of the ordinary citizen. The OCGG sug-
gests that the EU assemble a small, directly recruited military outfit based on the best Special Forces traditions. The primary task of the EU Special Forces would be to carry out missions ranging from rescuing hostages to protecting EU dignitaries en route. In doing so the EU would deliver easily comprehended “added value” since most of the EU states are effectively unable to protect or rescue their citizens outside their own borders. The force would also provide a corps to “carry the flag” that will not disappear at the drop of a hat. It would give the EU a face that is not that of a Eurocrat. A battalion of Europe’s finest would further embody a feeling of community. The force should through targeted investment and frequent exercises with national counterparts seek to become the leader in its field.

2 **Establish an EU Security Council.** The EU must become quicker, less formalistic and more able to reach decisions in the face of dissent. Not least because the EU must be ready to step up and fill the role of a first line proponent of the UN Charter at a time when other champions are scarce. The OCCG encourages the three great powers to agree to join an informal EU Security Council in times of crisis accompanied by a rotating member from the three secondary powers and one member from the small states. The Commission should be granted sole right of initiative to place matters before the EU Security Council. Within this framework maximum openness should be sought and voting rules should be kept simple. The directorate’s decision should be used in times of crisis to overcome the inherent deadlock of consensus-rule with twenty-five potentially vetoing states. If agreement is reached the issue should be returned to the standard EU decision-making procedure where subsequent decisions can be made by qualified majority voting. Such a security council should remain close to the Political and Security Committee but should remain informal, as attempts at formalisation are likely to trade much-needed efficiency for marginal added legitimacy.

3 **Times has come for an Article 5.** When the Western European Union was incorporated into the EU, the organisation’s strong-worded collective defence Article 5 was left out for fear it would compromise the CSDP’s complementarity to NATO. Five years later this question is no longer as relevant. The importance on NATO has been drastically reduced after the 11 September 2001 attacks
on America. The US intends to withdraw up to 70,000 troops—or almost a third of its military presence—from abroad, most of them from Western Europe. This should focus minds in London, Paris and Berlin on the European Union’s role in European territorial security. Especially the new member states cannot be expected to wholeheartedly support the loftier elements of the CFSP without firm security guarantees. With NATO “out of area and out of business” the EU needs a collective defence article 5. The time has come to internalise the remaining elements of the WEU.

4 **Adopt a human security doctrine.** Although the European states have found ways to maintain peace within their borders, they need to recognize that in the outside world overall progress can lapse into savagery. The 2003 EU security strategy needs to be put to work. The EU should expand on the consensus from the EU security strategy (‘in failed states military instruments may be needed to restore order’) into a doctrine of human security, as suggested in the Study Group’s on European Security Capabilities recent report. Recent terrorist attacks and armed conflicts affirm and reaffirm a trend where civilian casualties are not unintended victims but primary objectives of modern war. The oegg asserts that the EU has a moral obligation, recognized by European citizens, to act to prevent large-scale loss of civilian lives in Europe and beyond. A human security doctrine, would aim, first and foremost, to protect people, calm violence and establish a rule of law. This doctrine should, in the prudent spirit of the Weinberger-Powell doctrine, suggest why, where, when and how the EU should be able to act.

5 **Europe must integrate its defence.** The 2003 European Security Strategy points out that Europe’s security is inextricably linked to threats emanating from outside of Europe’s borders. To back this statement with actual policy will require personal leadership by heads of government. A failure to effectively coordinate Europe’s military capabilities will have a negative impact on Europe’s ability to advance its own interests. Following this defence integration is not just an appealing thought—it is a necessity. The oegg joins the 2004 Venusberg Strategy in the call that the compilation of a list of military tasks should precede and provide the framework for transformation of European security through integration of the armed forces of the member states, planning for future missions, procurement programs and budgetary planning. The EU needs to
draft detailed plans for offensive and defensive operations. In particular, a common database should be created immediately to protect critical infrastructure such as water resources, chemical plants, power plants, pipelines, bridges and tunnels etc.

6 **Recast the transatlantic relationship.** With its military withdrawal from Europe and declining attentiveness to European points of view, the United States has put an end to the familiar transatlantic burden/power-sharing arrangement. In the case of the Iraq war the Americans did not demand that the Europeans shoulder the burden of the operation and did not give them a hearing over how they felt the situation would be best handled. Put bluntly, the opinions of the empty handed are taken lightly. European governments need to come to terms with this. Restoring this relationship is no longer a matter of papering over the cracks and acting as if nothing has changed. NATO, the central institutional mechanism within the Euro-Atlantic sphere for the past fifty years, is sliding into irrelevance. The attempts at carrying transatlantic relations on a bilateral level have reduced European influence in Washington to its lowest level ever. A new transatlantic relationship will have to be forged between the EU on the one hand and the US on the other. For this to happen the EU must get serious about hard power. The transatlantic relationship can only be reborn if Europe develops an effective strategic culture.
The Oxford Journal on Good Governance

References

1. What is commonly referred to as the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was earlier known with the word Common first –CESDP. The final acronym used in the EU Constitutional Treaty is CSDP.

2. Regarding Russia, the Ukraine, and the Mediterranean region.


7. See: Introduction the Oxford Journal on Good Governance, 1 (1). See also P.M. Martinsen ‘Forging a Strategic Culture – Putting Policy into the ESDP’ in the same issue [available online:www.oxfordgovernance.org/journal].


Paving the Way to a European Culture of Security

Elmar Brok
Norbert Gresch

Security in the 21st century can neither be provided by military means alone nor be based on one country’s national powers alone. This is the credo laid down by the EU in its European Security Strategy (ESS) of December 2003.

New threats, such as terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, ‘failed states’ and organized crime demand an integrated approach to security policies. This approach must be comprised of military instruments and capabilities alike that range from conflict prevention to ‘nation building’.

The European Security Strategy, which was specially supported by the European Parliament, pursues three strategic goals:

1. coping with a broad spectrum of threats,
2. strengthening security in the EU neighbourhood, and
3. supporting an international order based on effective multilateralism.

Summary
To move away from relying solely on check-book diplomacy the EU need to develop a genuine security culture, and the foundations for such a culture are already in place.

About the Authors
Elmar Brok is the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament.

Norbert Gresch is Deputy Head of Division Secretariat of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy.
The EU desires to be a credible actor in security matters. It seeks to handle crises more actively and above all to prevent them. It will develop the necessary diplomatic, military and industrial capabilities with greater determination and make use of its different foreign policy instruments more coherently.

Ten years after its diplomatic and military failure in the Balkans, it is at the same place, Bosnia and Herzegovina that the EU is now intending to implement exactly that comprehensive approach. In the “Althea” mission it is actually combining civil and military elements of crisis management. The European approach distinguishes itself most notably against the background of the difficulties experienced by the US-led coalition forces in Iraq, notably not only to win a fast war with the means of technological advantage but also to win peace in the end.

The crisis in Kosovo made people realise that only a regional approach can really ensure peace, provided that it addresses aspects of security, democratic constitutional and legal principles, human rights and, last but not least, economic development, not in a day but through gradual effort and perseverance.

That approach goes back to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Final Act of Helsinki (1975), which consisted of three baskets: security, democracy and economic development. It determined the structure of the Stability Pact for South East Europe and in fact became the predominant feature of European foreign policy in recent years.

Yet the EU was unable to properly guarantee security for a long time. Only the progress achieved in the past five years has brought the EU towards closing that gap and towards acquiring the above-mentioned diplomatic, economic and military instruments and capabilities, with the help of which it can now emerge as a credible actor in international crisis management. European security policy is still a young baby and shows signs of fragmentation. The common Security Strategy set the framework. But the outlines are already visible and the competence areas are gradually becoming clearer: 7,000 EURFOR soldiers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, plus police, reconstruction programmes (CARDs) and stability and association agreements (SAAs). At the same time, the EU acts as the protecting power, recon-
struction partner and provides a general perspective for the country concerned.

A similar responsibility for Kosovo lies ahead. In this case the international community must no longer hide behind the military mission of NATO. The Balkans remain the number one security interest for Europe.

European diplomacy is gaining power and credibility. In Macedonia the European Union’s High Representative was able to prevent a civil war. In the Ukraine Javier Solana, the European Parliament and Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski have undertaken a similar mediation. It is the outspoken goal of the EU-25 to create democracy and stability in its neighbourhood, of which the Ukraine is an important part.

The mediating role the EU played when addressing Iran’s use of nuclear technology, with the United Kingdom, France and Germany taking the lead in the EU-25, indicates that preventive diplomacy does not stop at the EU’s front door. The perspective remains a global one but many conflicts can only be resolved together with our American partners.

The Middle East belongs to that category. The initiative will remain with the quartet (USA, EU, Russia, UN) in cooperation with Arabic partners. The EU must seize all possibilities in the post-Arafat phase to achieve a revival of the peace process. Again, the unity of security, democracy and economic development is important. Already today the region is connected closely to the EU with respect to trade and economics. The EU could also contribute much know-how in the process of creation of a functioning democratic Palestinian state.

European peace forces combined with a strong police component in Gaza? Why not? NATO’s general secretary Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is already offering military capacity. Would not a European mission be much more suitable, with strong elements of civil, police and law enforcement? The answer probably lies elsewhere. Can such a young baby already master such a complex task? Would there be enough European troops for such a peace-keeping mission? Would the political will in the common foreign policy of the EU-25 be strong enough to take over such a major burden in an international undertaking,
which would reach way beyond signing a cheque?

The EU will not be able to neglect certain responsibilities, if asked by and receiving a mandate from the UN, if asked by both sides of the conflict, if the USA and thus NATO coordinated the mission and if the European public would accept such crisis management. This is where the European Parliament together with national parliaments must initiate opinion-forming debates.

After decades of development aid with very limited effects, not the least of which in Africa, it became clear that there is no development without security. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the EU completed its first autonomous military mission (Artemis) requested by the UN and headed by France, and it handed over to UN blue-helmet forces as foreseen. Now the EU is helping establish an integrated police unit in Kinshasa.

The European Security Strategy has delivered an analysis of the threats to Europe and a definition of common security interests. The new Constitutional Treaty has opened up possibilities for cooperation in defence-intensive contributions, military research, armaments and the establishment of multinational forces. Even without the Constitution, due to political will, EU member states have agreed this summer to the concept of battle groups, the goal for the forces in 2010 and the creation of a European Defence Agency.

It is this mosaic of individual decisions in the framework of the Security Strategy that lays the foundations for a genuine European security culture.
Military Needs of a Strategic Culture in Europe

Klaus Naumann

Any answer to the question of which military capabilities Europe may need in order to implement its security strategy properly has to be based on the European Security Strategy (ESS) adopted at the EU Summit on 12 December 2003 in Brussels. This document sets three strategic aims:

1. Defence against threats;
2. Strengthening of Europe’s security in its neighbourhood, and
3. Promotion of a world order on the basis of effective multilateralism.

Those aims describe pretty well the nature of Europe’s strategic culture at this moment. They permit the conclusion that Europe’s main emphasis is on the politics of persuasion or, as some would call it, soft politics. What is new is that military means are not excluded but seen as the last resort of politics. This is a culture that is reactive in nature and thus gives the initiative to aggressive opponents.

Summary

The EU needs to find a better balance between hard and soft politics. General Naumann warns that the current strategic culture is reactive in nature thus giving the initiative to aggressive opponents and stresses that for the EU strategic culture to be effective the hearts and minds of the citizens must be won.

About the Author

General Naumann is former Chief of the German defence staff and Chairman of NATO’s military committee.
That marks the main difference from the 2002 American National Security Strategy (NSS), which seeks to retain the initiative in an incalculable world full of uncertainties and dangers. It perceives a situation in which the traditional monopoly of states to use military force seems to wither away as non-state actors using military means, including, hypothetically, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and cyber war, enter the international arena. Consequently the US puts more emphasis on hard politics, aims at a pro-active self-defence and includes preventive as well as pre-emptive military action in its quiver of political options. Therefore the first issue of an adequate strategic culture that needs to be discussed in Europe is whether Europe’s emphasis on persuasion is right or not. I am of the opinion that both sides, the Europeans as well as the Americans, need to find a better balance between hard and soft politics.

For the Europeans this means discussing thoroughly whether the strategic environment characterized by risks such as terrorism, international organized crime, proliferation of WMD and missile technology and failing states requires Europe to:

1. Look into prevention and pre-emption as options of politics, never as principles of it, in order to cope with an environment in which WMD and cyberattack may be used;
2. Discuss to what extent the prevailing views on jus ad bellum and jus in bello, as well as the authorization of the use of force, which seem based on armed conflicts between states, will suffice in today’s world, when non-state-actors appear to challenge the state’s prerogative to use armed force to pursue its interests;
3. Decide to what extent and in particular where Europe might possess the political will to intervene and see it through in order to keep risks at a distance from Europe and
4. Achieve a better balance between hard and soft politics that could re-establish a transatlantic partnership, which would give Europe more options than merely executing American decisions.

Following these first and indeed decisive steps one could identify which military capabilities Europe would need to implement such a strategy of pro-active peace preservation and dissuasion. Should Europe fail to do this then its strategy will remain as inconclusive as the ESS—occasional sounds of sabre rattling that always stop short of steps that could dissuade opponents to act against Europe. It is for this reason that many in Europe regard the extant European capabili-
ties as sufficient. The strategy fails to address the hard choices in a way that allows Europe to cope with crises in situations in which the US for whatever reason might be unable to help. Consequently, most attempts to modernise and transform European military capabilities have failed so far.

Europe finds itself today in a rather powerless situation: The EU countries spend approximately 60% of what the United States spends on defence, but their output in terms of power projection is 10% of the Americans’ at best. Improvement, if it is envisaged at all, is limited to a few countries, among which France and Great Britain are clearly taking the lead. The second step should therefore be to identify which capabilities the EU should develop in order to implement a more balanced EU Security Strategy and to regain influence over Washington crisis decision making when common American and European interests are at stake.

Building upon the European Capabilities Action Plan, the Council of the European Union in May 2004 outlined a Helsinki Headline Goal for 2010. The intent of the new headline goal is to transform the existing EU Rapid Reaction Force into a highly mobile, highly flexible force through addressing the shortfalls outlined above. It is doing so through a series of specific milestones in conjunction with the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP), including:

1. The creation of a European Defence Agency in 2004 to monitor the improvement of capabilities;
2. The availability of an aircraft carrier and associated air wing in 2008;
3. The development of a European Airlift command fully operational by 2010;
4. Developing appropriate compatibility and network linkage of all communications equipment and assets, both terrestrial- and space-based, by 2010 and
5. The development of an EU information-sharing policy and associated framework for implementation by 2010, with an interim architecture by 2006.

Clearly there are some reasons for optimism as the European Union continues to develop its military capabilities. However, despite these positive statements and action plans, there are still several major obstacles that need to be addressed. It should be noted that the capa-
bilities necessary to implement a more pro-active strategy will not be available before the end of this decade. Moreover, it should be understood that the decisions taken so far constitute nothing but a first step. Further adaptation and transformation is necessary. Specifically, it must not be forgotten that it is unclear how these rather modest goals will be achieved in light of declining defence budgets in most European countries.

Therefore a third step is of utmost importance: How can decision-makers win the support of the European public for a more pro-active strategy? Two achievements are mandatory if one wishes to succeed in winning the hearts and minds of Europeans for a better balance between carrots and sticks in a strategy that keeps risks at a distance from Europe:

First, the Europeans must be made aware of the dangerous situation in which they live and of the fact that security means being prepared to act elsewhere in order not to be forced to fight in Europe. Secondly, they must understand that security is nowadays a global task that Europe can shoulder only in close cooperation with the US. This requires, first, abandoning the flawed idea that Europe should unite in order to form a counterweight to American power. That idea is doomed to fail in Europe and those who pursue it run the risk of destroying the hope that Europe may one day be able to speak with one voice. To take the proposed road means implementing NATO and EU commitments in order to forge a new transatlantic agreement on how to share risks, roles and responsibilities.

The result of this could possibly be preparedness to modestly increase defence spending. That does not appear too likely. Alternatively, Europeans could generate the political will to bundle European efforts and agree on some rather limited transfer of national sovereignty to the EU. This would be the prerequisite to establishing some EU-owned and -operated multi-national component forces as enablers or force-multipliers, which could simultaneously serve as modules in NATO component forces. In this way Europe might eventually have capabilities that match its strategic ambitions and needs.

Notes

1 The ‘justice in going to war’ and ‘justice in the conduct of war’
A strategic culture is persistent over time, but neither particular elements nor a particular culture as a whole are immutable. Nevertheless, those elements together or in part deserving to be called ‘cultural’ do tend to outlast all but major changes in military technology, domestic arrangements or the international environment.

Strategic culture is derived from history, geography and political culture, and it represents the aggregation of the attitudes and patterns of behaviour of the most influential voices; these may be, depending on the entity, the political elite, the military establishment and/or public opinion.

A strategic culture defines a set of patterns of and for behaviour on war and peace issues. It helps shape but does not determine how an actor interacts with others in the security field. Other explanations (e.g. institutional or capability limitations) play a greater or lesser role in particular circumstances. Strategic culture helps shape behaviour on such issues as

Summary
This article explores the meaning of the concept of strategic culture. Dr Booth gives 6 reasons why the term is an important one warns that although the study of strategic culture remains an art rather than science it can only be ignored at someone’s peril.

About the Author
Dr Ken Booth is E. H. Carr Professor and Head of Department of International Politics, University of Aberystwyth

the use of force in international politics, sensitivity to external dangers, civil-military relations and strategic doctrine. As a result of continuity in these matters, it is legitimate to talk about particular ‘styles’ in the theory and practice of strategy.

The examination and validation of the concept of strategic culture will be an intellectually demanding task. It will also remain an art rather than science; like most important dimensions of international politics, its explication will never be amendable to quantification. But it is a key concept and can only be ignored at someone’s peril, be it an academic reputation or a nation’s security. There are several reasons for thinking of strategic culture as a key concept. It is one thing to discuss the problems that might be caused by the misuse of the term, but what about the problems that might be caused by ignoring its possible significance?

There are six main (overlapping) reasons why the concept of strategic culture is important.¹

• First, it erodes the impact of ethnocentrism with all that implies for the theory and practice of strategy. Ethnocentrism affects strategic interaction in many different ways, but most obviously by contribution to the misperception of one actor by another.

• Second, understanding strategic culture is a fundamental part of ‘know thine enemy and know thy self’, one of the most basic principles of war. It contributes to an appreciation of a strategic actor’s behaviour on its own terms, and this is the starting point of understanding.

• Third, and related, is the way strategic culture sensitizes us to the importance of history if we want to ask the right questions about the motivations, self image and behavioural patterns of others.

• Fourth, it helps break down the artificial boundary between the domestic environment within which policies are made and the external security environment. It reminds us that decision-making structures, military establishments and decision-making processes all operate in peculiar political cultures. It therefore draws attention to the differences between nations when the ‘science’ in political science is tempted to play them down.
• Fifth, it helps to explain the apparent ‘irrationalities’ in the thinking and behaviour of those not socialized in the cultural traditions of the observer. This produces an improved ability to communicate or otherwise deal with others.

• Finally, an understanding of cultural variables can be crucial in scenario perception and threat assessment, since it can give nuance and insight into the way a strategic actor might behave in both great and small issues.²

In sum, to ignore strategic culture risks ‘black boxing’ another government—or an emerging strategic actor like the European Union—in an extreme fashion and so opens one’s theories and policies to all the dangers that might flow from misperception. Strategic theory without strategic anthropology consigns the study of a threat and use of force to capabilities analysis, the crudities of old-style political realism and the flaws of the rational actor approach. A nation’s culture is one of those ‘shadowy regions’ of the subject, to use Michael Howard’s phrase, together with the psychology of decision-making and other approaches wherein we might discover more subtle explanations of some of our most pressing problems. As long as one recognises that in strategic culture one is ‘discerning tendencies, not rigid determinants’³, then the end result should be richer theory and more effective practice.

The study of the concept of strategic culture has come far - but by no means far enough since its origin in the late 1970s. At that time, the concept was in a somewhat analogous position to that of the concept of the military-industrial complex just after it first had been conceived. President Eisenhower’s Farewell Address gave focus to thinking about the phenomenon, but it took time before the concept was given empirical flesh and theoretical shine. Much of this work was done in reference to the study of the US and the USSR: the evolution of Soviet and American thinking about strategic doctrine, the role of force, the ‘normal’ size of armed forces and the traditional role of military in society could not be fully understood without reference to the former’s 800-year history of chronic insecurity and the latter’s first century and three-quarters of ‘free security’. Similarly we are just beginning to fathom the impact European history will have on the EU strategic culture.
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Is there such a thing as a European Strategic Culture?

Christoph Heusgen

‘We need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention.’ How does the European Union actually translate this plea of its Security Strategy into political practice? And what are the specificities of this European Strategic Culture?

Before responding to these questions we have to recall that several decades before 1999 the EU had already developed into a global economic player with its own economic strategic culture of promoting free markets worldwide. In the political arena, the EU had traditionally only conducted a declaratory policy. The Balkan Wars in the 1990s clearly demonstrated the limitations of its capacity to actually act, and a lack of collective political will and crisis management capabilities. The St. Malo Summit of December 1998 between President Chirac and Prime Minister Blair created the political precondition, and the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty in the summer of 1999 finally allowed the EU to set up the instruments necessary to

Summary
It cannot be repeated often enough that no crisis today can be solved by military means alone. In terms of strategic culture the EU 2003 Security Strategy imposes clear limitations on the use of force by the European Union, which will always act within the framework of the United Nations Charter.

About the Author
Christoph Heusgen is Head of the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit at the Council of the European Union.

Note
The article is contributed in a private capacity and the opinions expressed are solely those of the author.
become a global political player. Since then, the EU has been developing its own strategic culture characterized by a number of specific objectives:

1. The EU has to be ready to engage globally. European security cannot be guaranteed if the EU limits its activities to its neighbourhood. The main threats confronting the EU — terrorism, the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, regional crises, failed states and organized crime — are a challenge even when geographically far away. The EU recognizes this fact and has already engaged outside its own continent: it deployed a military force to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003, sent military observers to Sudan/Darfur in 2004, and dispatched EU Special Representatives to the Middle East, the Great Lakes, Afghanistan and the Southern Caucasus.

2. The EU has to be ready to employ the broad range of instruments that it has at its disposal. This actually constitutes the main specificity and strength of the European Union’s strategic culture. In developing its crisis management tools, the EU has clearly understood that no crisis today can be dealt with successfully through employing military means alone. In practice, a broad range of tools is required, and in this respect, no other organization equals the European Union: the EU has diplomatic and political instruments, assistance funds and development aid and civilian and military capabilities. To be effective, these tools have to be used in a coherent way. To achieve this, the European Constitution establishes a Union Foreign Minister who will be in charge of tasks related to external relations, which until today are shared between the High Representative, the rotating Presidency and the Commission. To provide support to the EU Foreign Minister, a European External Action Service in Brussels with representations worldwide will be created.

3. The EU has to be ready to react early to an emerging crisis. Conflict Prevention is the key to successful crisis management, and the EU, particularly since the Swedish Presidency in 2001, has turned conflict prevention into one of its trademarks. Today, there exists a comprehensive EU policy and practice of regular assessments of global developments. An internal EU “watch list” allows for regular, systematic analysis of the situation in critical countries or regions worldwide and thereby also allows for early preparation and
use of the broad range of EU instruments. The establishment of an
EU civil-military planning cell will facilitate early planning for the
potential use of these instruments. EU interventions in the former
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2001, Javier Solana’s successful
efforts that same year to broker an agreement on the future structure
of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the efforts by the “EU
3”, in close co-ordination with Javier Solana, in 2003/4 to prevent
Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities, are examples of
the EU’s conflict prevention policy in action.

4. The EU must to be ready to react rapidly to an emerging crisis.
Decision making in the EU is reputed to be rather lengthy. In the
past, there was some justification for this assessment. But the EU has
changed: the creation of the post of the High Representative, and the
establishment of the Political and Security Committee and other in-
stitutions now allow for rapid decision making and implementation.
The setting-up of a Rapid Reaction Mechanism by the Commission
and of pools of readily available civilian crisis management resour-
ces (e.g. police), and the implementation of the “Battle Group” con-
cept in the coming years will further promote the rapid deployment
of the broad range of EU instruments. There are already a number of
examples of successful rapid deployments of these instruments, in
particular Operation Artemis in DRC in the spring of 2003.

5. The EU has to be ready — when necessary — to intervene ro-
bustly. On the one hand, recent history teaches that no crisis exists
which can be resolved by military means alone. But on the other
hand, there will always be situations in which the threat or the ac-
tual use of force may be warranted. Until recently, the EU did not
have military instruments at its disposal, and this clearly limited its
potential for successful crisis management. This has changed rap-
idely since 1999: EU soldiers have been or are being deployed in the
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, DRC, Sudan/Darfur and
Bosnia. At present, a number of initiatives are being implemented to
improve further the military effectiveness of the EU: the establish-
ment of the Defence Agency; the creation of a civil-military plan-
ning cell and an EU Operations Centre, the “Battle Group” concept
etc. It must also be highlighted that the European Security Strategy
imposes clear limitations on the use of force by the European Union,
which will always act within the framework of the United Nations
Charter.
It cannot be repeated often enough that no crisis today can be solved by military means alone. To succeed, it is essential to employ a broader range of instruments. This is why the EU is well placed for crisis management including conflict prevention, and this is also what characterizes the specific nature of the EU’s “strategic culture”.
How Necessary is a Common Strategic Culture?

Michael Baun

The European Union (EU) does not have a common strategic culture, if by this we mean broad agreement among its member states about the means and ends of security policy, including common understanding and views on the use of military force. Whether it will ever have one is questionable given the considerable divergence of national military doctrines and traditions, a problem that will only grow with continued enlargement.¹ Does this mean, however, that the EU cannot be a decisive and important strategic actor?

Before answering this question, we need to clarify exactly what is meant by the term ‘strategic actor’ as it pertains to the EU. In particular, we need to differentiate between two aspects of the EU’s strategic role: as a ‘framework organization,’ and as an ‘actor organization.’² In the former capacity, the EU creates the conditions for resolving external conflicts and disputes by embracing neighbouring countries and regions in networks of economic, political, and institutional ties of varying density.

Summary
Baun questions whether the EU needs to develop a strategic culture in order to be a military strategic actor. He concludes that a common strategic culture is unlikely because of a lack of common identity but that this will not necessarily constrain the EU as a strategic actor.

About the Author
Michael Baun is Professor Marguerite Langdale Pizer Chair in International Relations Department of Political Science Valdosta State University
The prospect of greater integration with the EU encourages disputing parties to resolve their differences peacefully. Enlargement carries this logic the furthest, but it can also be seen in the EU’s emerging European Neighbourhood Policy. In the latter capacity, the EU intervenes more directly to deal with external security crises, whether as a mediator or through the deployment of civilian (police, technical assistance) or military instruments. While no one disputes the EU’s unique capability to play an important strategic and security role as a framework organization, it is generally its latter capacity, especially the decisive deployment of sufficient military force, that most people have in mind when questioning the EU’s ability to be a significant strategic actor.

It is generally assumed that without the development of a common strategic culture the EU will never be a strategic actor of this sort. Given the unlikely prospects for a common strategic culture, therefore, the EU would appear consigned to a more-or-less permanent secondary status as a global strategic player. The EU will continue to be an influential presence in the world, and will no doubt exercise its useful capacities as a civilian or post-conflict actor, but it will never be capable of influencing strategic developments through the deployment of militarily force in any major way, nor will it be able to engage in the kinds of pre-emptive or preventative actions that are increasingly perceived as necessary in the emerging global security environment. Contrary to these conventional assumptions, however, this article argues that it is indeed possible for the EU to be a military strategic actor even without an underlying common strategic culture.

To begin with, the absence of a EU strategic culture does not mean the absence of common foreign policy values and interests. That these exist is most clearly indicated by the new European Security Strategy (ESS). While the ESS falls short of establishing a strategic or security doctrine for the EU, thus providing concrete bases or guidelines for military action, it does represent a general consensus on key security threats, strategic objectives, and foreign policy principles. Despite its generality, it represents a ‘kind of ideology’ for EU foreign policy. The existence of this common foreign policy ideology, itself a reflection of the EU’s basic or foundational values, provides a necessary and perhaps even sufficient normative basis for EU military action in the absence a common strategic culture.
However, the EU must take two additional steps if it is to become a serious strategic actor. First, it must create the necessary military capabilities. Some progress has been made on this front in recent years, notably the establishment of a European Defence Agency to enhance cooperation in the research, development, and acquisition of armaments and equipment, and the decision to create a number of multilateral ‘battle groups,’ consisting of 1,000–1,500 troops each and capable of being deployed for peacekeeping missions within ten days for a period of up to four months. The EU is also creating a separate (from NATO) planning cell for military and police missions, and possibly an operations centre to run them. On the other hand, the attempt to create a larger and more robust European Rapid Reaction Force, consisting of 60,000 troops capable of being deployed within 60 days and sustainable for one year, appears to have foundered on budgetary, logistical, and political difficulties.

Despite the considerable progress that has been made, clearly more needs to be done to provide the EU with the necessary military capabilities to be a major strategic actor. This article is not the place to discuss the various ideas for how to achieve this. Instead, what is important to note is that there is a close connection between capability and action. The possession of military power may not automatically create the predisposition to use it, as some might fear. But the possession of adequate, deployable military capabilities would at least give the EU the option of using them in certain situations, should it so decide. It would also probably make this decision a lot easier. Following Kagan’s analysis of the ‘psychology of power and weakness,’ it could lead to a recalculation by the EU of when the use of force is a reasonable response to perceived security threats, as well as alter its perception of the nature of such threats. In this way, the development of improved military capabilities could have, by itself, an impact on the development of EU strategic culture.

The EU’s second task is to revamp its decision-making structures, to allow more timely and efficient decisions about the deployment of military force. Presently, the deployment of military forces (or civilian capabilities as well) requires the unanimous agreement of all member states. This is difficult enough to achieve in an EU of twenty-five, but will only become more problematic with further enlargement. A way out of this decision-making trap needs to be found that permits the more rapid deployment of EU forces in pursuit of generally rec-
ognized common interests (such as those detailed in the ESS), or that at least enables a smaller subset of more like-minded member states to take decisive military action in the EU’s name while drawing on common resources and capabilities.

Addressing this problem will likely require institutional reforms that go beyond the changes contained in the new constitutional treaty. The nature of possible reforms—whether these might involve the use of majority voting procedures for decisions concerning the deployment of military force or perhaps the creation of an EU “security council” consisting of representatives of handful of the member states that would be empowered to make such decisions—can be endlessly debated. The key point is that the capacity to decide is a crucial component of the capacity to act, and every bit as important as the possession of adequate material capabilities. It is also vital to the development of a robust strategic culture.

A strategic culture does not emerge fully-born, but is grown and shaped through the exercise of leadership, in response to external security challenges and under the influence of domestic politics. For all its huge military potential, American strategic culture — its ability to effectively use that power — would not be what it is today without the capacity of American Presidents to exercise the strong and decisive leadership that is provided them by the Constitution. The EU is, of course, a wholly different sort of polity, and will never possess the kind of centralized decision-making structures or authority of a traditional nation-state. Nor would most Europeans want this. But an improved capacity to decide is absolutely necessary if the EU is to play a more significant external and global role.

By creating sufficient military capabilities, and by revamping its decision-making structures, the EU can create the conditions for consensus and more effective cooperation on foreign and defence policy, thus enabling itself to become a more important strategic actor, even in the absence of a common strategic culture. A core set of common foreign policy values and interests already exists to provide a normative basis for this role. Over time, a common strategic culture may indeed develop. In fact, it is more likely to develop through the experience of strategic actions and policies that would be enabled by such reforms. This is not to argue that strategic culture can be imposed in a top-down fashion or created at will. But its development must be
assisted, and to some extent led.

Ultimately, the development of a common strategic culture requires the development of a common identity, including a sufficient level of mutual trust. The EU is not quite there yet, and recent and future enlargements may bring temporary setbacks on this road. In the meantime, the EU does not have to wait for the birth of this new common identity before attempting to shape the world around it according to the common values and interests which it already demonstrably possesses. Indeed, the world may not allow it the luxury of waiting.

Notes


3 For discussion of the EU’s global role, see Roy Ginsberg, The European Union in International Politics: Baptism by Fire (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).


6 In the words of one of the drafters of the document on Javier Solana’s policy planning staff. Quoted in Karen Carstens, “Multilateral Man,” European Voice, 18 November 2004, p. 10.

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Europe’s Strategic Culture and the Relevance of War

Peter van Ham

The EU’s founding myth goes as follows: ‘Once upon a time, there were nasty states who didn’t like each other much, even fighting bloody wars. Then the EU-Fairy showed them the way to cooperate, first on coal and steel, afterwards on other things as well. Today, Euro-people look back in wonder on their ignorant and aggressive forefathers, and they live happily ever after.’ This is, of course, an abridged version of the EU-discourse. But in all stories on European integration, overcoming narrow-minded nationalism and avoiding war amongst member states are attributed to the EU’s strategy of pooling sovereignty and consensus-based policymaking. Bad states make war; Good Europeans make compromises.

This EU-myth breaks a pattern since historically war and violence have played a major part in state-formation. Without war, ‘we’ would hardly know who ‘we’ are. The EU likes to portray itself as a postmodern entity that does not require war to establish itself as a political player.

Summary
Contrary to the EU’s founding myths, war may play a constructive role in the making of Europe. Van Ham asks the question whether war is perhaps exactly what is needed in order to make Europe.

About the Author
Dr Peter van Ham is Deputy Head of Studies at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael in The Hague, and Professor at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium.
This is a doubtful claim. Quite on the contrary, perhaps even Good Europeans need a war to get real, to grow up? Charles Tilly has famously claimed that states do not only make war, but that war also makes (constructs and justifies) states. Given the EU’s identity deficit, it seems logical to ask whether (and, if so: how) the EU could or should emulate the lessons of state-formation by dealing with security and defence matters, perhaps even going as far as fighting wars.

The EU’s Eurobarometer opinion poll indicates that across the EU, the general populace already favours (with an impressive 72% majority in March 2004) a clear European security-cum-defence role. Rationally, the continental organization of European defence is advantageous, since the economies of scale derived from EU-level military R&D, defence procurement, planning, and operations, are impressive. The EU now restricts itself to peacekeeping and peace-support operations, mainly in Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also way ‘out of area’ in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These are piecemeal steps towards changing the EU’s identity (and image) from a purely ‘civilian actor’, to a modest Superpower with a regional reach.

The EU’s ‘military’ operations, however, are not of the masculine, heroic kind. Or, to play on Gordon Gekko’s words: ‘Peacekeeping is for wimps!’. And so is nation-building, economic and political reconstruction, post-conflict reconciliation, etc. These are activities that involve the deployment of unarmed (or, at most, lightly-armed) forces in a peaceful environment. Peacekeepers are impartial, relatively passive. Their job is to uphold consensus and stability. On the opposite end of the spectrum we find war-fighting. ‘War’ involves combat operations, when precision-guided missiles are fired and Terminator-like special forces engage in network-centric warfare, preferably followed closely by ‘embedded’ journalists reporting in ‘real time.’

Clearly, the EU has not yet embarked upon this kind of war-fighting, but has limited itself to the so-called ‘lower echelon’ of the conflict spectrum, leaving the more heroic action to the U.S. and NATO. This seems to corroborate the maxim that the U.S. is from Mars and the EU from Venus. Such a gendered analysis makes us appreciate why the EU lacks confidence and status in the military arena. No matter how many body bags return from peacekeeping missions around the globe, as long as the EU is solely in the business of caring,
compassion, building, and creating, it will remain unimpressively pedestrian.

The EU’s moderation and modesty may be ethically, or morally, preferable and even superior. However, Gareth Evans was particularly addressing Europe when he claimed that ‘[i]t took us most of the [1990s] to re-learn that war can be a progressive cause’. In a similar vein, Christopher Hill indicated that ‘[s]tudents of the European Union have for too long neglected geopolitics, either because they could not see its relevance to a ”civilian power” or because they were uneasy with that kind of discourse for normative reasons.’ This state of denial may continue to give pleasure to those who subscribe to the ideal that the EU constitutes a security community where members of the system must no longer perceive each other as threats, and hence expect to settle their disputes peacefully. But this idyll only goes so far in solidifying Europe as a Gemeinschaft. The EU is now experiencing the limits that its civilian integration-project imposes on the process of identity-formation, for those same Eurobarometer polls also indicate that EU citizens just do not want, eventually, to feel more ‘European’, but prefer to stick to their national and/or regional roots.

The inevitable—be it equally uncomfortable—conclusion may be that what is necessary for the EU to become ‘bad’ and cool, is to engage in military interventions, preferably without a United Nations Security Council’s mandate. This would signal to the EU’s international partners that ‘Europe’ has reached the political Champions League. It would also signal that the EU (and not the state) takes responsibility for security and defence matters. Cynthia Weber therefore argues that ‘intervention is understood to be the flip side of sovereignty’, turning ‘sovereignty and intervention [into] the boundary of a sovereign state’s authority.’ The bottom-line is that ‘to speak about intervention practices is to imply the existence of sovereign states (…) [O]ne way to assert the existence of something (sovereignty) is to insist upon the existence of its opposite (intervention).’ But owning guns does not make a soldier: the EU has to make its mark, collect scalps, and earn respect. Following this line of argument, the EU may take the next step and prove its ‘manhood’, to itself and the rest of the world by ignoring and violating the sovereignty of others, marking its own territory by trespassing onto the territory of others.
The centrality of war as a state-builder and identity-congealer is not only a political phenomenon with a long history; it remains lurking in the nature of Europe’s postmodern society. Within the EU’s Kantian space war has been exorcised and delegitimised, turning the political game into collective nit-picking over voting rights and subsidies; European politics has become domestic politics. But buried inside Europe’s Postmodern Man still lingers a Nietzschean desire to glorify war as the greatest of all mental and physical stimulants. It is part of Nietzsche’s notion of the duality within individuals, the dynamic between their Apollinian and Dionysian sides. In his *Die Geburt der Tragödie (The Birth of Tragedy)*, Nietzsche claims that the Apollinian principle exemplifies self-knowledge and moderation (Europe’s civilian, reflexive mode), whereas the Dionysian element is a symbol of primal unity where ‘each one feels himself not only united, reconciled and fused with his neighbour, but as one with him’⁹ (Europe’s new role as a military actor).

The Dionysian notion of ‘war’ is therefore the flip-side of the ‘Good (Apollinian) Europe’, a psychological urge to experience the danger of life at the ‘wild side’, because the ‘splendours of freedom are at their brightest when freedom is sacrificed at the altar of security.’¹⁰ One could argue that in today’s world, war is the IR-equivalent of bungee-jumping, something intrinsically useless but exciting so that it gets the adrenaline flowing. Without war and anarchy as the ultimate ‘Other’, the appreciation of Europe’s peaceful and domesticated ‘Self’ would be less real, and ultimately decline. War is the Jungian ‘shadow’ which gives Europe’s Persona its depth, and—although Europeans won’t easily admit to it—also a foundation, and a sense of community. As Chris Hedges has argued, ‘The enduring attraction of war is this: Even with its destruction and carnage it can give us what we long for in life. It can give us purpose, meaning, a reason for living. Only when we are in the midst of conflict does the shallowness and vapidness of much of our lives become apparent.’¹¹

This presents an uncomfortable reading of the EU’s Eurobarometer’s continued appeal for a more European approach to security and defence and the development of a new European strategic culture. Would a European war (or better: a war fought by the EU, as the EU) offer opportunities for redemption and emancipation, of salvation and regeneration? This is a myth, of course, but arguably a powerful and persistent one. It is a myth whose Dionysian assumptions will up-
set those wanting to cling to the EU’s model as a civilian power. But since the history of nation-building points to the centrality of war to solidify identity and territory, taking this next step has a good chance of resuscitating the EU, giving it a new lease on political life.

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Less May Be Better in EU Security and Defence Policy

Sten Rynning

Defence policy is now an integral part of the European Union. In recent years, this previously derided body has advanced impressively, taking on military crisis management tasks, building institutions to handle security and defence policy - including an armaments agency - and promoting the development of small but effective military units for out-of-area interventions. Still, there is no clear answer to the question of the purpose behind the ESDP: what is the EU aiming to achieve by military means?

This question concerns political purpose, and some are inclined to argue that strategic culture is a matter of finalité and therefore can be postponed: The EU will discover down the road the nature and extent of its ambitions. Many in Europe believe that this process holds great potential, which is typically illustrated with reference to the EU approach as an alternative to that of the US. To these people it does not really matter that the EU does not yet have the prerequisite strategic cul-

Summary
A voice for inaction: Rynning argues that the EU should remain what it is, a successful European peace project, and leave strategic affairs to those who have the capacity to both think and act strategically. To pretend that the EU can do something it is not designed to do could undo the Union.

About the Author
Sten Rynning is an Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Southern Denmark.
ture for defence policy because they trust and hope that the ESDP will undermine and eventually replace the allegedly gung-ho US war on terrorism.

This position is problematic. In my opinion the EU cannot aspire to develop the strategic culture that is a prerequisite for tough military engagements. Why? - The EU is historically wedded to a vision of liberal progress that has served Europe well because it made war impossible within the Union. However, the EU is a pluralist construction that cannot hope to gain political unity and a sense of purpose in foreign affairs nor the institutional and popular capacity to mobilize resources for large military campaigns. The EU should remain what it is, a successful European peace project, and leave strategic affairs to those who have the capacity to both think and act strategically – such as the US or coalitions of willing European states. To pretend that the EU can do something it is not designed to do is to court disaster. The EU should therefore take stock and ponder the wisdom of moderation: less may be better.

**STRATEGY AND THE LIBERAL MIND**

International relations do not necessarily produce conflict – but sometimes they do. In these instances, military means increase their relevance and actors think strategically about their employment for the purpose of prevailing. This type of perilous conflict gives strategy its particular and dangerous flavour. Fundamentally, strategy concerns the meeting of two opposed willpowers where each seeks to prevail. Victory implies survival for yourself, but also defeat for your enemy. Strategy and the study of it can therefore appear to be a brutal business. Strategists would counter that their business is to make peace or at least to avoid war, which is sometimes possible by determining the right combination of dissuasion, deterrence and deceit. By implication, the core of strategy is defined not so much by military strategy, which concerns the movement and coordination of armed forces, but by the political dimension inherent in grand strategy – which concerns the way in which decision-makers draw on a common understanding of strategy – a strategic culture – and tie political and military means together to achieve security.

The EU has never done any of this; it has never done strategy. Moreover, and crucially, the EU has entered the domain of defence affairs rejecting this view of strategy, with the hope that defence can be done
differently. The EU does not think of itself as an actor in a zero-sum contest as NATO did during the Cold War. In the post-Cold War era, the EU asserts that conflicts can in fact be solved to everyone’s satisfaction. Liberal progress trumps zero-sum games. This is evident from the Petersberg crisis management agenda that has informed security policy thinking in the EU since the early 1990s: military force is about the EU’s third party involvement, i.e. it is about bringing peace and prosperity to regions struck by hostility.

In the course of the negotiations leading up to the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty the EU decided to create a new instrument, Common Strategies. Whilst related to foreign policy rather than defence, one might have expected that the exercise would lead the EU to identify priorities in certain domains and the most effective ways of realising them – in short, to think strategically. This may be the idea, but the strategies adopted so far – in relation to Russia, the Ukraine, the Mediterranean – reveal a tendency to define strategies as catch-all programs with a lack of priorities and diffuse decision-making power. Instead, the real plan seems to be one of trusting the hidden liberal hands – markets and civil society – to do most of the job.

Later, in the wake of the 2003 Iraq war, the EU heads of state and government tasked High Representative Solana to write an EU Security Strategy which they adopted in December 2003. Again, the extent to which this strategy eschews questions of defence and strategy is remarkable. Instead, the emphasis is put on security through progress – reflected in the title, “A Secure Europe in a Better World.” The EU appears not to fathom the possibility that it might have to secure itself through hostile engagements intended to defeat an adversary.

THE LIBERAL FOUNTAIN AND ITS LIMITS

Edward H. Carr launched a “realist critique” of naïve optimism but also tempered the criticism by the observation that policy must be based on both utopia and reality. The liberal utopia of the EU finds its roots in the reaction to the carnage of the Second World War and the hope that Europe can move beyond power politics. Handing the control over coal and steel to a supranational authority and tying France and Germany to common institutions were seen as a recipe for peace. Today, in a new Europe with the EU significantly enlarged, the goal has not changed much. The EU still seeks to safeguard the institutional core while also transforming the new democracies that
have been invited to join the construction. This continuous goal has helped the EU to develop into a uniquely pluralist region.

There is a direct link from this history and internal vision to the current foreign policy vision: both are liberal, both seek to root progress in pluralism and reconciliation. It is indeed difficult to imagine a different foreign policy vision for the Union because it would too easily contradict the Union’s founding myth and the political glue that holds it together. The realist critique does not address the fact that the EU has a utopia – all actors have one – but rather the fact that this utopia might mask the reality of international security.

Externally, the EU runs the risk of underestimating the dangers inherent not merely in world politics writ large but in the effort to promote liberalization. Liberalization represents fundamental change in other societies, and local adherents of the status quo can be expected to fight back before giving up their power to rule and enjoy.

The Balkans represents a case in point. It took US air power and Croat ground advances to bring the Serbs to the Dayton negotiation table in 1995; it took US air power and the threat of a ground war to make Serbia concede defeat in Kosovo in 1999. It is only by bringing defeat to these opponents of change that liberal policies can ever be implemented. However the EU does not contemplate campaigns to defeat, only to improve. This incapacity to define enemies and deal with them strategically will be a dangerous handicap in situations of conflict.

This brings us to the internal dimension of the European utopia because some might be tempted to conclude that the EU, as a consequence of these insights, should build up its capacity for strategic action. Thus, it could be argued that the EU should strengthen executive authority, establish solid procedures for the mobilisation of military force, and wrap military forces into a grand strategy pinpointing the principal threats to the EU and ways of dealing with them. This would be a mistake, however, because it runs against the grain of the pluralist foundations of the EU. Following E. H. Carr again, we know that “sound political thought must be based on elements of both utopia and reality”, which in the EU context is to say that the attempt to realise “strategic unity” in all likelihood would cause the European construction to fragment politically. This is so because cen-
Centralised authority would run counter to national decision-making, which is founded on national histories and distinct institutionalised understandings of what policy is for, and because centralised authority would run into a crisis of popular legitimacy, which in the long run undermines the rationale for external military engagements. In short, the EU simply does not have what it takes to become a traditional strategic actor. The EU must remain pluralist or it will cease to exist.

**QUO VADIS?**

On the basis of these observations I conclude that the EU should not do defence policy and military strategy: it does not fit the bill, and it risks fragmentation if it tries to engage in this domain. Less defence policy, therefore, may be better. This policy advice is difficult to act on because of the ESDP momentum – building on the logic of an ever closer union and the European integrationist refrain that more may be better. Still, as I have argued here, it is dangerous for the EU to think that it can simply do more of the same. Strategic ambitions without strategic foundations will sooner or later lead to defeat. The EU could, of course, seek to do not only more but also better defence policy, perhaps to represent an alternative to the US, but it must then squarely face up to the full strategic logic and be prepared for the possible need to fight and defeat adversaries. However, as I also argued, the attempt is bound to fail because formal and informal political realities of the EU will not allow for such a development.

The only real option for the EU is therefore to explicitly recognise the limits to its defence policy ambitions. In particular, the EU should not pretend it is capable of undertaking significant military coercion, which involves a range of operations from tough crisis management to war-fighting. The EU should thus not attempt to handle the next Kosovo war, wherever it may appear.

The EU should instead cultivate its liberal utopia, and thus protect its inner coherence, which is already challenged as things stand at the moment following successive enlargements. The EU will remain capable of exerting structural power abroad – inciting other actors to change their ways via partnership, development, and association programs. But the EU will also have to leave military power in the hands of real strategic actors: this could mean the US via NATO, an option that must be retained, but perhaps also in the hands of multi-
national coalitions that emerge from the bottom-up military planning inherent in recent European defence reforms. The primary challenge with which the EU is faced in the domain of defence policy is therefore to recognise its own limits and to facilitate parallel action.

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The success of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is not just a question of threat assessment, strategic concepts, and military capacities. It also depends on the convergence of defence thinking and belief among national societies. Can Europeans overcome the legacies of their distinct national defence histories to develop a common perception of security threats and the way in which to best counter them?

Strategic choice in democracies is strongly influenced by ideas, norms, and beliefs concerning the use of force to achieve certain ends. Traumatic defeats, oppression, betrayal and exclusion, guilt as well as military triumphs plant themselves deep into collective memories as ‘lesson learnt’ and ‘beliefs held’. How else to explain Germany’s reluctance to send troops abroad, Poland’s difficulties with trusting European partners, Britain’s attachment to the US, France’s insistence on an autonomous global role?

Summary
Institutional socialisation has its limits. The EU is operating on thin ice without sufficiently convergent national strategic cultures. The road ahead is through openness and transparency, even if this could upset current consensus and ambiguities.

About the Author
Christoph O. Meyer is lecturer in International Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London.

The author currently edits on a book on the making of a European strategic culture to be published by Palgrave.
The split among European countries over Iraq can partly be explained with recourse to strategic culture as is argued in a recent book. But even for smaller operations incompatibilities in strategic thinking may cause serious problems for the EU: They could lead to an inability for initiating or sustaining operations due to lack of public support for the goals of a mission, or disagreement over UN authorisation and US cooperation, or incoherent strategies and rules of engagement, or insufficient resources and delays of action. It is therefore crucial for the success of ESDP to understand, manage and if possible narrow down differences in strategic thinking.

Judging from what government representatives agree in Brussels one may think that strategic convergence is real. The unanimous agreement on a European Security Strategy has confounded many observers. But the document has some blind spots and may still hide substantial disagreement, especially regarding cooperation with the US and the activist use of force to prevent threats.

The problem is that strategic convergence has so far been mainly driven by institutional socialisation at the level of foreign policy elites. It has taken place especially through the creation of the High Representative’s Office and permanent Brussels based committees of national representatives such as the Political and Security Committee (PSC). Javier Solana and his staff often managed to mould consensus positions by carefully listening to national concerns and sometimes subtly ignoring them, while the PSC has developed a shared esprit de corps, which helps it to formulate common approaches and avoid national vetoes.

Yet, despite all this progress, institutional socialisation has its limits. The politically sensitive issues can be papered-over, postponed or not tackled at all, the overloaded agenda and the large number of participants can hamper substantive discussions about longer term strategic choices. Furthermore, some member states cannot effectively join the discussions because of administrative overload, and peer pressure may mean that some members are not persuaded, but rather pushed to agree.

Most importantly, national awareness, understanding and ownership of these Brussels based-processes remains relatively low given the small number of participating individuals, the fact that top na-
tional decision-makers, especially Defence Ministers, do not meet as frequently within an EU context, and that few national-based news media are actively reporting about and commenting on these activities. Therefore, political actors in the domain of ESDP ought to know that they are operating on thin ice without sufficiently convergent national strategic cultures.

Still, convergence is happening due to other factors. One is the changing security environment brought about by the demise of the Soviet Union as an immediate or even medium term threat. This has meant that re-active self-defence oriented countries such as Germany are coming under increasing pressure to abolish conscription and have taken steps to downgrade territorial defence as the only and most important raison d’être of their armed forces. The demise of the Soviet Union has only weakened the strong attachment in Western Europe to the United States as the only viable provider of security, while the attachment remains quite strong in former Warsaw pact countries with experience of Soviet rule.

A second driving force is the publicised experience of violence and cruelty in the Balkan wars in the 1990s, which led to strong pressure on national politicians to act militarily, thereby challenging norms of intervention and paving the way for a more activist defence of values through the EU and sanctioned by the UN. Sweden is the prime example of a traditionally neutral and militarily reluctant country, where humanitarian and value concerns were a key motivation to actively integrate with and contribute to ESDP structures and operations.

While not all the lessons from the Iraq war are clear at the time of writing, the strongest intra-European supporters of the US-led invasion have already learned that the United States post 9/11 does not listen very much to even its closest allies, that it uses force in a different way, and that it is much less concerned with international law and collective security. If the Bush administration continues its foreign policy, public support for European autonomy in security and defence matters is likely to rise judging from the experience of the previous four years.

What should be the right political response to the persistent differences in strategic cultures? One is to accept differences as a given
and look for more flexible and/or less ambitious ways of developing ESDP structures, for instance by directorates, avant-gardes or core groups. However, flexible forms of governance are no substitute for building broad support in Europe on vital security issues beyond institutions and Brussels committees.

Keeping parliamentarians and journalist at arms’ length may have been necessary to allow for rapid progress on ESDP and has enjoyed broad support in Brussels. In the age of media democracy and volatile public support for European integration, however, steps should be taken to increase the involvement and participation of national actors in the framing of ESDP, especially the parliamentary select committees, Defence Ministries, and, crucially so, the media. They all can help to make national and European security choices more transparent, show that history has more than one lesson to teach, and allow for a real discussion about the common security challenges facing European countries today.

This is likely to lead to a greater visibility of intra-European differences leading to more political conflict in Brussels. This is preferable nevertheless to a situation, in which the ‘hour of Europe’ is proclaimed in Brussels, but effective action on the ground falters because of a lack of political and public resolve.

Notes

EU Strategic Culture and U.S. Ambivalence

Jeffrey S. Lantis

In 1977, political scientist Jack Snyder suggested that elites articulate a unique cultural outlook on security-military affairs that is a manifestation of public opinion, socialized into a distinctive mode of strategic thinking. While the abrupt end of the Cold War challenged cultural interpretations of state behaviour, the rise of constructivism brought new life to the study of strategic culture.

The constructivist research program devotes particular attention to identity formation, which is linked to organizational processes, history, tradition and culture. Alexander Wendt describes state identities and interests as ‘socially constructed by knowledgeable practice’. Related studies focus on the role of elites in constructing a ‘negotiated reality’. Leaders clearly pay respect to deeply held, popular convictions, yet they also choose when, where and how to stake claims of strategic cultural traditions. In this sense, leaders can become strategic ‘users of culture’ who ‘redefine the limits of the possible’

Summary
US leaders remain highly sceptical of any move toward a common EU strategic culture. Drawing on theoretical insights from the strategic culture literature, this essay explores the origins of transatlantic tensions and raises questions about the significance of EU strategic culture in the coming decade.

About the Author
Jeffrey Lantis is Chair of the Department of Political Science at The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio.
through policy discourse.³

DEFINING AND DEBATING A EUROPEAN STRATEGIC CULTURE

Recent theoretical insights coupled with events have prompted a fascinating debate over whether the European Union is capable of forging a bond of common threat perceptions and interests. Optimists such as Paul Cornish and Geoffrey Edwards contend that there are signs that a European strategic culture is already developing through a socialisation process. They define EU strategic culture as simply ‘the institutional confidence and processes to manage and deploy military force as part of the accepted range of legitimate and effective policy instruments’.⁴ However, others question the plausibility of creating a common EU strategic culture in any circumstances. Julian Lindley-French charges that Europe lacks both the capabilities and will to establish a common foreign policy in the foreseeable future.

Given considerable doubts in Europe about whether the establishment of a common strategic culture is even possible, it should come as no surprise that the Bush administration has largely ignored the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Formally, the administration has tracked developments and tapped U.S. liaisons to the various offices and institutions under construction. But informally, government officials question the premise of coherence in European foreign and security policy based on decades of interaction with their counterparts in the region. In spite of steps toward unity on foreign policy in Europe, the EU continues to embody the intergovernmental model in the eyes of the United States. Bush’s re-election in 2004 is likely to intensify this perspective.

Thus, whether or not the EU is capable of crafting a common strategic culture, the Bush administration seems intent on ignoring it. Much like the analogy of a tree falling in the forest with no one to hear it, what may matter most in the coming decade is whether there is growing acceptance in Washington and other world capitals that a common European culture could exist.
SOURCES OF U.S. AMBIVALENCE

Indeed, the root of the Bush administration’s deafness to the construction of new security institutions in Europe may be a shift in American strategic culture itself in the wake of 11 September 2001. Theorists argue that an abrupt redirection in strategic culture is possible in response to dramatic foreign policy shocks. Just four months after the terrorist attacks, President Bush’s 2002 State of the Union address bluntly characterised America’s enemies as an ‘Axis of Evil’, intent on the destruction of western values. The war on terrorism stresses American security through pre-emptive strikes on potential enemies. One need only contrast the 1999 war in Kosovo with the 2003 war in Iraq to find evidence of fundamental changes in how the United States approaches allied operations, strategy, and planning.

The Bush administration is also ambivalent about European progress toward the ESDP because of differing threat perceptions. In the wake of 11 September, the president argued that terrorism, tyranny and the spread of weapons of mass destruction represented fundamental threats to American security in the 21st century. While sympathetic, European leaders were preoccupied at the time by a different vision of homeland security, characterized by concern for economic stability, ethnic and religious tensions in their own countries and spill over from Middle East conflicts. Citizens of Europe believe that the United States has acted precipitously since 11 September and overestimates the threat of terrorism and proliferation.5

Finally, the White House remains disinterested in EU strategic culture because of deep-seated scepticism about its potential. Neoconservatives in the administration believe that the concept of a EU strategic culture is, at best, hyperbole. At worst, it represents an effort by European powers to balance power against U.S. interests. Bush administration officials have observed that Europe is rarely unified on important foreign and security policy objectives. Even if there is some measure of consensus on an issue, Europe lacks the capabilities to act in a concerted way. Neoconservatives see a ‘strategic schizophrenia’ in Europe that is ‘trapped between engaged and disengaged concepts of security, reflecting a profound strategic confusion’.6 Multiple security institutions with overlapping interests only confound the potential for agreement on a common strategic orientation.
MANIPULATING PERCEPTIONS

Studies of strategic culture offer additional insights on this problem. While the literature focuses on broad consensus in support of security narratives, there is a school of thought that suggests elites have a surprisingly large amount of latitude to manipulate the generation and usage of strategic cultures. Indeed, elites are often the purveyors of their societies’ common historical narratives and have the power to frame policy realities.

This argument has both positive and negative connotations. If EU officials are the keepers of strategic culture, then their discourse can help shape national, regional, and international perceptions. The Franco-British declaration at Saint-Malo in December 1998 was one such effort to prime the pump for the development of a common strategic culture. The December 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) built on this momentum, calling on the EU to become a ‘more credible and effective actor…ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world’. It seeks to define a new European security policy reality—articulating strategic objectives and prescribing enhanced policy instruments.

However, the potential for elites to construct perceptions of strategic culture may also have negative implications for transatlantic ties. Indeed, every governmental action in Europe that appears to undermine an EU strategic culture may indeed slow down progress. In Washington, both Democratic and Republican administrations have tried to deconstruct European strategic culture. In the late 1990s, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright articulated her concerns about the ‘3-Ds’ of the Saint-Malo initiative, stipulating that the U.S. would support progress in this direction provided there was no ‘decoupling, duplication and discrimination’. Bush administration officials have been vocal about the significant capability gaps between the United States and Europe. As Philip Gordon argues, the quick success of the Afghanistan campaign ‘reinforced the already strong perception in some quarters in Washington—especially in the Pentagon—that it is easier to fight alone than with allies who have little to offer militarily and who might hamper efficient decision-making’.

At the same time that neoconservatives in the Bush administration were defining U.S. strategic culture in the wake of 11 September, they were also consciously shaping American perceptions of the
strategic cultures of foreign nations. Indeed, administration officials willingly engaged, and even encouraged, the intra-European divide. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s now-infamous characterisation of Germany and France as part of ‘old Europe’ is a case in point. Neoconservatives’ seizure of European division on the Iraq question was designed mainly to goad France and Germany into support for the war in Iraq and foster rivalries that might eventually advantage the United States. Some conservatives in the United States have already given up on Europe, arguing that we should ‘stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world’. In the wake of tensions over the war in Iraq, they argued, NATO was effectively ‘dead’.11

**CONCLUSION**

Even if one allows that a nascent European security culture looms on the horizon, present challenges create a series of obstacles for greater cooperation. First, the Bush administration has opposed the development of an EU strategic culture and, instead, encouraged an intra-European divide as part of a short-sighted strategy to confront security challenges. Second, the EU has proven itself incapable of acting in a truly unified way in the face of contemporary challenges. Some champion the war on terror and seek to reap the benefits of membership in the coalition of the willing, others question the entire enterprise. The establishment of an enhanced European security architecture is a step in the right direction to overcome this handicap, but it faces a long road ahead. Third, the EU still lacks the specific military capabilities that are necessary to respond to major challenges in the 21st century. These obstacles stand in the way of both effective operations and strategic culture.

Contemporary theories of strategic culture emphasise the role of elites as keepers of the culture. EU officials strive to define a common vision of security coordination, yet almost every state leader takes actions that undermine such initiatives from time to time. This is the dilemma of constructing/defining a contemporary European strategic culture. While some leaders strive to define the realm of the possible, others remind us of the continuing challenges. So long as leaders in North America and Europe develop unique characterizations of strategic cultures to suit their own state interests, transatlantic tensions will continue.
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A Wake-up Call to European Leaders: the Sophistication of U.S. Foreign Policy

André Nilsen

The reelection of George W. Bush to another four year term as President of the United States, and his promotion of National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to Secretary of State, makes it imperative and urgent that the European Union gets its act together in foreign, security, and defence policy. While European leaders are quarrelling among themselves, Bush is busy shaping the future of our world.

Bush and his administration are neither ignorant nor short-sighted in the way they conduct US foreign policy, despite the failure in securing stability in Iraq and the vitriolic criticism offered by many European commentators. On the contrary, the President and his key advisors have understood that the most sophisticated way to shape the world in the years ahead is to carry out extensive institutional engineering. The Bush administration has indeed demonstrated great astuteness in their long term strategy of using American power, wealth, and technology to reshape markets, states, civil societies, and

Summary
The Bush administration is institutionalizing American power at its peak by shaping the key political and economic structures in the world to suit long term American interests. European leaders must resist and give their full support to Solana’s efforts to craft a unified, strong EU as a global actor.

About the Author
André Nilsen is the Chairman and Managing Director of the OCGG and a DPhil candidate in political economy at Oxford.
international organizations around the world.

In order to understand this strategy and its consequences, we must start by recognizing that the nature of politics and economics is not the same in all countries. The way political arenas and marketplaces are built differ greatly. Variation is manifest not only between advanced industrial countries and less developed countries but even among the countries of Europe and North America. In politics, there are differences between parliamentary and presidential regimes, multi and two party systems, and pluralist and corporatist government-interest group relations. The same applies equally in economics, where the characteristics of markets, firms, central banks, business associations, and labor unions vary among countries. There are several varieties of both constitutions and capitalisms in the world.

Importantly, political and economic institutions reflect culture, embody lessons from history, and set out rules of the game. Needless to say, they therefore have clear effects on people and organizations. They shape our world view, values, and interests, thereby affecting what we want and how we go about getting it. This, in turn, affects the political and economic outcomes.

Different varieties of constitutions and capitalism are therefore biased towards different political and economic solutions. Some political systems concentrate power either in the executive branch, as in the United Kingdom, or in special interest groups, as in the United States, allowing policies hidden from or out of step with public opinion. Others disperse power among a range of actors, as in the European Union and most of its Continental-European Member States, resulting in greater degrees of transparency and accountability. Likewise, some economic systems are driven by cut throat capital markets, as in the Anglo-American world, where only the interests of shareholders are recognized as legitimate. Others are characterized by trust and cooperation, as in the Continental-European world, securing long term stability for not only owners but also management, workers, suppliers, customers, and local communities.

This recognition of variation and its effects opens up vast new horizons for the political and economic entrepreneur. Those who want to promote good governance, and EU foreign minister Javier Solana includes this as a key goal in the European Security Strategy, will see the
virtue of political systems that disperse power and economic systems that are characterized by trust and cooperation. Others, however, and one may want to include the Bush administration in this category, will be more interested in manipulating political and economic systems to suit their power and profit motives than in good governance.

Whether the objective is good governance or power and profit, instead of engaging in a series of battles in order to influence individual decisions, a more effective approach emerges. Redesigning political and economic institutions, adding those features that create a bias towards your preferred outlook, norms, and objectives, will substantially increase the probability of subsequent outcomes supporting your agenda. Moreover, a one-off effort at securing appropriate institutions might save you a lot of trouble later. If skilfully done, you may never again have to intervene in exasperating battles about individual decisions. In short, institutional design is the sophisticated version of policy-making.

This is not a strategy that suits everybody, since any attempt to redesign social institutions requires significant intellectual and material resources. On the one hand, institutions are the products of history and culture just as much as rational design. An institutional engineer will therefore have to carefully use ideology, spin, propaganda, and public diplomacy to frame the new set of institutions so that they appear to be consistent with traditions and conventions. On the other hand, actors often have vested interests in certain institutional configurations. Thus, any attempt to reconfigure is likely to meet with resistance. Perhaps even a war or two will be required in order to achieve a desired outcome.

The United States has the resources. Drawing on the Ivy League, East coast think tanks, the CIA, and the Pentagon, the Bush administration should be well placed to engage in this kind of statecraft around the world. But why should the United States bother? Having more military power and economic wealth than ever before, it could surely challenge the terms of individual decisions in a range of policy areas in a host of countries – and probably win all the battles. So why do it the difficult way?

The reason is simple: hegemonies do not last forever. The military and economic superiority of the United States is probably today at its
climax and can only decline. In military terms, history teaches us that whenever a hegemon gets too invincible, balance of power politics soon ensures that other actors collaborate and catch up. In economic terms – the middle level of Joseph Nye’s three-dimensional chessboard model of international politics – the world is already multipolar. And it is likely to become more so as the American twin deficits grow increasingly unsustainable, the European Union reaps the benefits of extending the single market to financial services, Russia gets more confident in countering corruption, India rouses its engines, and China releases its tremendous potential for growth.

The growing multipolarity of the world is perhaps best illustrated in the area of space policy, which has great ramifications both in military and economic terms. Against the explicit objections of the United States, the European Union has launched a large scale and long term cooperation project with India and China to develop the Galileo satellite navigation system as a direct competitor to the American GPS system.

Being at its peak, and recognizing it, the most effective investment America can undertake with all its arms and money is to mould the institutions that govern the world to fit its national interest. Institutional engineering takes place most evidently on the national level, when the United States promotes ‘regime change’ or in other ways ‘advises’ or ‘liberates’ individual countries.

However, it also happens on the regional level, although often in a less transparent manner given the tradition of secrecy in diplomacy and the often technical nature of the issues. One example is the pressure from the Bush administration on the European Union to adopt new accounting and corporate governance rules consistent with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Such a change would serve American multinationals but could undermine the distinct variety of political economy from which European business derives its comparative advantage. Another example is the effort by the United States to compel the European Union to leave collective defence to NATO. This would preserve American dominance and prevent Europe from being able to pursue its own distinct interests. A third example is the campaign by the Bush administration to persuade the European Union to admit Turkey as a Member State. Turkish accession would not only lead to a weaker and more divided European Union but would in many ways
leave us with an American Trojan horse in our midst.

Lastly, institutional entrepreneurship is practiced on the global level. This is the case when the United States uses international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund as foreign policy tools to secure friendly governments and open markets. It is also evident when the United States sidelines the United Nations in order to avoid being constrained even by the very lowest common denominator of acceptable behaviour.

Never underestimate your opponent, is a saying with much truth to it. Rather than dismissing Bush and his retinue for being narrow-minded and failing to understand the consequences of their foreign policy, it is time Europeans appreciate the intelligence and skill with which the United States is engaging in a long term and comprehensive effort to remake the world order. It is easy to be distracted by the impressive military might on show in Afghanistan and Iraq. More important, however, is the quieter but equally forceful pressure being exercised on a vast number of political arenas and marketplaces below the surface in order to tailor foreign and international institutions to America’s advantage. These guys are not kidding when they are talking about ‘a new American century’ based on ‘full spectrum dominance’.

If the European leaders are the great statesmen they like to think they are, they will stop squabbling and give their full support to Javier Solana in his effort to turn the European Union into a real global actor. The European Union urgently needs a unified and strong foreign, security, and defence policy that is at least as sophisticated as that of the United States. Anything less will leave it to George W. Bush to sketch out the contours of the future of humanity.

What is at stake is the nature of civilization that binds humanity together. Whereas Europe is firmly committed to human rights, the rule of law, multilateral cooperation, and international law, America under the Bush administration has shown ample contempt for all these fundamental values in the course of its all-embracing and never-ending ‘war on terror’. Without immediate action to create a more powerful European Union, it is the American vision that will prevail. Not a particularly nice thought. And certainly not something future generations will easily forgive current European leaders.
It is a pleasure to see the Oxford Council on Good Governance eager to contribute to the debate on such an evolution Michel Barnier

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