

dr hab. Jacek Czaputowicz

University of Warsaw

**EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE.
INTERNATIONAL RELATION THEORIES PERSPECTIVE**

Introduction

The European Security and Defence Policy was initiated in 1999 by the leaders of France, Jacques Chirac, and the United Kingdom, Tony Blair. According to commentators, it was the war in Bosnia that started the breakthrough, leading to an identity crisis in Europe and reevaluation of when it was admissible to use force. The USA's increasing military capacity was not balanced with any proportionate defence outlays in Europe. The evolving economic environment, limited resources and changes in public spending put the existing views on national defence into question. The growing asymmetry in the distribution of military capacity caused tension among allies and opened the opportunity of creating new ground rules for cooperation (Czaputowicz 2003, Meyer, Strickmann 2011: 72-77).

The reference literature is largely unanimous in its evaluation of the effects of institutionalisation of security and defence cooperation, judging it as successful. However, these optimistic estimates should be moderated. Though the financial crisis stimulates economic integration, it makes it difficult for the military one by pressing on the balanced budgets and military expenses cuts (Telò 2013: 32-34).

Article presents various explanations of why the ESDP was established, as interpreted by theories of international relations, such as realism, liberalism, constructivism and Pierre Bourdieu's field theory.

1. Realism

The realist theories maintain that the European Union is not an autonomous actor but a field where the states interact. It was due to the material factors, not the norms and

security culture, that the ESDP emerged. However, the strongest states will bear its costs only as long as it serves strengthening their influence. The ESDP is controlled by the largest states – France, Germany and Great Britain, and the institutionalised framework of cooperation facilitates shaping the external environment according to their interests. (Hyde-Price 2012: 18-21, 34, Dyson 2010: 120).

Realist researchers tend to seek explanations of why the ESDP was established in the structural evolution of Europe's international system after the end of the Cold War. The military presence of the United States on the continent was reduced, and united Germany became the potential candidate for the regional hegemonic leader. This tipped the strategic balance in Europe, with various voices alerting to the threat of a possible security vacuum in Europe. By developing the cooperation in the security field, the Europeans wanted to avoid the security dilemma by implicating the growing power of Germany within European security institutions. Yet another goal was to increase Europe's capacity to run foreign missions and reduce the dependence on the United States in this respect (Jones 2004: 11, Jones 2007).

Other researchers point to the influence of the balance of power mechanism in reaction to a shift towards unipolarity. Balancing consists in accumulating the 'common' potential of all countries against an external super power (Pape 2005: 10, Calleo 2009: 137, more broadly: Posen 2006). The Europeans eye the American freedom of action with caution and are afraid that they could lose influence over the emerging world order, although they do not oppose the US in any overt manner, balancing America through 'soft', diplomatic measures to question its one-sided military policy (Walt 2005: 124-125). Increasing the relative power of the European Union will also provide a boost to the ESDP (Selden 2010).

The balance of threat theory fails to explain the creation of the ESDP, as European countries used the NATO 'umbrella' and their security was not challenged. From the point of view of the theory, only the total withdrawal of the United States from Europe could cause enough of a 'shock' to propel European countries towards closer integration in the area of security. This, however, never happened. Meanwhile, according to the bandwagoning theory, raising Europe's military capacity is much rather a boost than blow to NATO and transatlantic relations (Locatelli 2012).

The hegemonic stability theory, rooted in realism, says that the weaker country joins a more powerful one to in order to share the benefits of international order guaranteed by the hegemon. This was the policy of Germany in the 1990s, dropped in reaction to the unipolarity and hegemonic position of the United States in the world.

From the point of view of neoclassical realism, the ESDP is shaped both by power relations and domestic variables, such as leadership involvement. Scholars explain the behaviour of Germany with attempts to avoid the impact of mechanisms of 'abandonment' and 'entrapment'. Under the first scenario, Germany feared the American withdrawal from Europe, which would leave the country vulnerable to new security threats. Under the second, Germans would have to confront the possibility of being dragged into a conflict against their interest (Press-Barnathan 2006: 275, 280). The ESDP counteracts the workings of these two mechanisms and thus constitutes a useful tool of strengthening German influence in Europe.

Some voices also say that Europe does not balance the United States for three reasons. Firstly, the distribution of benefits and costs in a unipolar system works in such a way that states try to avoid the costs in a situation where the share in the profit pool is low. Secondly, the difference in the potential of the United States and other countries is sufficiently vast that the Europeans have no real capability of preventing the Americans from running a certain policy. Thirdly, the US's allies in Europe depend on America for their security. Balancing the power of the United States would require a significant increase in the military budget, which is hardly feasible in the times of the economic crisis. European governments may sometimes 'softly' balance the United States through diplomatic means, but from a military standpoint they are not able to question the global American domination (Wivel 2008: 295-296).

The 2003 military operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo was, from the realist point of view, an expression of struggle for power between Europe and the United States. The stakes were particularly high for France, a country that wanted to improve its position in Africa after the failed intervention in Rwanda in 1994. Acting under the framework of the ESDP, it could both obtain the necessary mandate and share the costs of the operation with other countries (Ginsberg, Penksa 2012: 43, Jaher n.d.: 83-84).

The opposition towards the American operation in Iraq, backed by France, was the first proof of Germany's ability to publicly oppose the United States. It also highlighted Germany's independence in international polity, boosted its morale and role as an alternative to America's global position (Jaher n.d.: 86).

To sum up, the realist approaches include the influence of power upon the relations within the European Union and its security and defense policy. The critics indicate that realism discounts the role of transnational forces and the impact of the EU institution on the member states.

2. Liberalism

The liberals claim that realism fails to grasp the depth of impact that the institutional ESDP has over states (Howorth, Menon 2009). They perceive the state as a product of domestic factors. The nature of the political system and preferences of internal actors, such as political parties, institutions and groups of interest, shape the makeup in international policy. States create norms and rules to secure themselves against the uncertain future, while social actors and enterprises exert their pressure on governments (Rousseau, Walker 2010: 27). The security dilemma is in fact a fiction, since countries dispose of unlimited possibilities of developing their cooperation (Morgan 2010: 35-36). Institutions mitigate the anarchy of the international system, limit the influence of superpowers and provide weaker countries with an opportunity to express their opinion on the actions of powerful states.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the United Kingdom and France initiated the security and defence cooperation, fearing that the United States may reduce its involvement in Europe. The ESDP was designed as a tool complementary to NATO. It was conceived as a continuation of the process initiated in the 1970s, together with the creation of the European Political Cooperation, the institutionalisation of cooperation, norms, consultations and methods of reaching compromise. The direct impulse, however, lay in the tactical overhaul of British security policy (in the strategic aspect, transatlantic relations retained their superior position). The initiative of Tony Blair, then the prime minister, was accepted by high-ranking state officials (Dover 2005).

Traditional theories of European integration did not concern the defense and security policy of the Union since they developed relatively late. Neofunctionalism concentrated around economic questions whereas the classical intergovernmental approach did not notice the integration possibility in high politics - the core of state's sovereignty (Hoffmann 1966: 882). The question is addressed to a much greater extent by the liberal intergovernmentalism, which accepts both the significance of state power and the impact of the preferences of internal actors on the country's security policy. The ESDP strengthens international law and creates a common good in the form of greater security. It is shaped by way of negotiations among member states, with state governments representing internal interest groups (Moravcsik 1991).

The exchange of information and opinions among members of ESDP working groups helped create a common understanding of security problems. States, acting as principals, delegate their implementation competence to EU institutions – the Council

and the Commission. The institutions prevent situations in which individual member states take a stand with regard to security without consulting it with other countries. By acting together, states increase their military potential and reduce costs of activity (Smith 2004; 99-101, Ginsberg, Penksa 2012: 44).

From the perspective of multi-level management, the foreign policy of the EU is not a sole domain of states. The NGOs also participate in shaping the security norms, as it is illustrated by the case of adopting the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Trade (Joachim, Dembinski 2011).

3. Constructivism

From the constructivist perspective, security depends not only on the distribution of military capacities but also on the dominant culture of the system (Meyer 2006). States with a different culture will adopt a different approach in similar situations. The strategic culture is defined by a system of shared meanings that shape the perception, communication and activity of countries within the domain of security. Threats are constructed through a social process as the result of historical, cultural, ideological factors and dominant discourses.

The political and military culture is part of a broader political culture, a product of norms, ideas and patterns of behaviour. It is determined by the way in which members of the given community perceive the issues of national security, the army as an institution and the use of force. When analysing security policy, it is important to look into how historic events are interpreted by various social groups, how this policy is created and how the decision-making process is legitimised (Berger 1996). The European security culture is characterised by the delegitimisation of power politics and desecuritisation of political and social life.

The norms, rules and beliefs shared within the ESDP shape the properties of its actors. The representatives of member states and EU institutions have to reconcile various security traditions, as well as strategic and bureaucratic cultures (Meyer, Strickmann 2011: 63-64). Through socialisation, the ESDP affects the identities and interests of countries that adopt the communal perspective.

According to constructivists, shared experiences of military missions, similar risk assessment and socialisation of elites within common institutions create a normative space necessary to shape the European strategic culture (Meyer 2005, Meyer 2006: 1-6). Events such as the 1990s crisis in Bosnia, establishment of the European Union's own

military capacities and gradual resignation from compulsory conscription in favour of a fully professional army may all be explained by the combined impact of material and ideational factors.

As military capacities become insufficient to tackle the challenges, elites are increasingly open to new ideas. The war in Bosnia led to a major identity crisis among Europeans and made countries reassess their approach to the admissibility of the use of force. The growing asymmetry in the distribution of economic capacities increased the tension between the United States and its European allies and created the possibility of questioning existing agreements in order to lay down new ground rules for cooperation. The ESDP is thus not dominated, as realists would have it, by the logic of the lowest common denominator and zero-sum game, but is governed by common norms and values that determine the interests and identities of member states (Breuer 2012: 126).

If physical security of a state concerns its sovereignty, the ontological security refers to the stabilisation of identity warranted by relations with other countries (Czaputowicz 2012: 179). European countries acquire ontological security through the creation of institutions that enable them to negotiate and implement the idea of order in cooperation with other states. Long-lasting dissonance gives rise to a sense of threat, which may lead to engaging in the creation of alternative structures and emancipation.

According to constructivists, this is the path travelled by Germany. The ESDP offered an alternative choice, the function of which was to overcome the dissonance in its relations with the United States and NATO, triggered in connection with the process of determining the mandate, mission and measures (Berenskoetter, Giegerich 2010: 410). The ESDP is thus construed not only as a product of the steps taken by France and the United Kingdom but also a result of Germany's endorsing the initiative.

Contrary to realists, who say that the German support for the ESDP is motivated by the desire to balance America's military power, constructivists claim that it is motivated by the attempts to create a platform for negotiating the means and specific mandates of missions in order to adjust them to the German value system and state identity discourse. For Berlin, the ESDP affords a better solution than NATO, while for Washington its emergence limits the options for negotiating the rules of international order with Europe. As a direct consequence of German policy, the ability of the United States to shape European policies is limited (Berenskoetter, Giegerich 2010: 410). However, this constructivist point of view seems debatable, assuming as it does that values take precedence over interests in state policy and that German values are positioned as superior to American values.

The fate of the ESDP depends ultimately on the creation of a common strategic culture. Constructivists are optimistic in this measure, noting that despite the persisting and potentially obstructive differences between those that support NATO and those wishing to build European defence systems, between proponents of autonomous defence and those that believe in international cooperation, or between those that focus on protecting their own territories and those that are willing to pursue overseas military interventions, the strategic cultures of European countries are becoming ever more closer: France has been increasingly NATO-friendly, Germany is growingly interventionist, while the UK and Poland are now more pro-European (Griegerich 2006).

However, constructivism has been criticised for failing to give adequate focus to material factors and power distribution within the system, concentrating too much on the convergence of strategic culture and risk perception, and for ignoring the significance of internal actors, such as diplomats and higher military staff. This last issue is explained by the sociological theory of security field.

4. Bourdieu's field theory

Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theory of field (*habitus*) combines realist material structuralism with the constructivist inclusion of ideational factors. Researchers working within this approach claim that it would not have been possible to create the ESDP, had it not been for the prior emergence of transnational diplomatic and military capital and institutionalisation of two fields: European foreign policy, where politicians competed for impact on European policies, and international defence, where the military cooperated within NATO. When the Cold War ended, European international policy and defence cooperation entered a stage of crisis, expressed in the inability to solve the Balkan conflict and a radical reduction of the military budget. For diplomats and military officials in the EU member states, the idea of strengthening European military capacity afforded a perfect solution (Merand 2010: 343).

The ESDP is thus a synthesis of the European security field, built around NATO, and the European foreign policy field, concentrated around the former Franco-German cooperation. Institutionalised security field interactions forged specific social roles and power structures. The Americans took the leading position in the hierarchy, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany and then France, a country that contested the existing security order. The idea of shared military capital met with general approval among the countries. Also the diplomatic capital rooted in EU structures provided a source of

career and influence to many diplomats. The operational logic of these two fields now constitutes the social core of the ESDP (Merand 2010: 343). In other words, contrary to other theories, the field theory claims that the ESDP stems from the long experience of cooperation within NATO and not only the process of European integration, as the functionalist spill-over mechanism would have it.

The approach discussed above is based on the assumption that change happens at the civil servants and policy formulation level, not on the political level. 'Political entrepreneurs', or the epistemic communities of French and British officials, shared a common understanding of European security challenges and convinced their leaders, Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair, to go beyond the transatlantic-European dichotomy and sign the declaration in St. Malo. Not everyone, however, can be a 'political entrepreneur'; having a military and diplomatic capital and a specific position within the fields is prerequisite. France and the United Kingdom, as permanent members of the UN Security Council, had enough of a capital to lend credibility to their proposed innovative European security policy. It could succeed because it complied with the social mandate held by decision makers with regard to international and security policy (Merand 2010: 356).

Conclusions

Various theories offer diverging explanations as to the establishment of the ESDP. The realists perceive the relations within the EU from the perspective of the nation states and taking into account the power interactions. Their explanations seem to be the closest to reality. They look for the driving force in the structures of the international system, changes in polarity and the desire to balance America's power by Europeans.

However, a bigger picture is the one including also the explanations proposed by other theories. Liberals usually highlight the significance of internal factors, such as domestic political processes and interest groups. Meanwhile, constructivists recognise the impact of the strategic culture and processes of socialisation, while field theory adherents discuss the issue of the previous institutionalisation of the fields of foreign and security policy, as well as the impact of civil service circles.

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Jacek Czaputowicz

European cooperation in the field of security and defence. International Relation theories perspective

Abstract

The paper discusses various theoretical explanations of the European cooperation in the field of security and defence. According to realist explanations this cooperation was a response to external evolutions in the international system, i.e. changes in polarity and distribution of power. Liberals say that it was rather due to internal factors. Constructivists argue that it was a result of elites' socialisation, while according to Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, it was caused by civil servants and military staff at the policy implementation level. The paper argues that external factors underlined by realists were decisive, i.e. America's decreasing involvement in European security.

Key words: *ESDP/CSDP, realism, liberalism, constructivism, Bourdieu*