

# **Rethinking European defence: The Europeanisation of national defence policies in theory and practice**

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**Paper prepared for the epsNet Plenary Conference  
Budapest June 2006**

Workshop: The Europeanisation of National Systems

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## Introduction

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In the aftermath of the French and Dutch referenda on the European Constitutional treaty, questions related to the dynamics of the European Union and its effects on national public policy have taken on renewed interest. In this perspective, national defense policy has a unique role, with little formal constraints on the EU level, developments on the national level remain nonetheless important in the political development of the Union and European developments such as the creation of a European defense agency raise numerous questions. As Brian White, “the ESDP functions on a number of different levels of analysis, and in particular, simultaneously on the European and national levels. As such, it is necessary to envision an analytical perspective that allows us to explore the different links between these two levels.”<sup>1</sup>

**How are current phenomena, on the one hand national reforms or military “transformations” and on the other, the institutionalization of European defence best analyzed and understood?** The challenge is thus to analyze and reconsider the « unidentified military object » that is the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), but above all how to analyze and understand the effects of this policy on national defence policies and vice-versa. In other words, how can we better understand the dynamic relationship between national defence policy reforms and the progress made at the European level in the framework of the ESDP?

While these questions are of utmost importance, both for the future of European defense and for the practice of leadership in the Common Foreign and Security Policy, for which France and the United Kingdom find themselves in the position of associate-rivals, they are inadequately treated in current literature and thus constitute an interesting and fruitful research topic.

Our analysis will first examine how the relationship between the ESDP and national defence has been considered in academic literature and question to what extent this relationship has been ignored in both defence oriented literature and literature on European integration.. Secondly, our analysis will go beyond this « state of the question » in the discipline to consider the usefulness of the Europeanisation framework to consider the issue, exploring what the

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<sup>1</sup> White, Brian. 2002-2003. Expliquer la défense européenne: un défi pour les analyses théoriques. *La revue internationale et stratégique* (48):89-97. Translated from : « *La PESD fonctionne à différents niveaux d'analyse et, en particulier, à la fois au niveau européen et aux niveaux nationaux. Ainsi il nous faut envisager une perspective analytique qui nous permette d'explorer les liens entre ces deux niveaux.* »

concept brings to the debate and how to **operationalize** the concept using examples from our research.

The general thesis defended is as follows: looking at alternate ways of analyzing the issue and constructing a framework based on Europeanization and policy transfer, allows us to take into account phenomena of convergence in national defence policies (particularly those of the UK and France) and the dynamics at work on varying levels of governance that lead to policy change. As well, on an empirical level, the progress of the ESDP is thus an essential and structuring issue of the international and military policy of the UK and France in the long term through mechanisms of interaction and influence that operate on a number of levels and create dynamics of policy transfer that drive change. The ESDP will thus be a structuring factor in defense policy decisions for the foreseeable future in both countries but the paths of influence are not one-way streets and the national policies in these two states will contribute to changing policy on the European level and the creation of European norms in the defense field, both as a matter of practical reason and as a question of power and control in the EU (he who dictates the norms has less of an adjustment to make and thus more control over his own destiny).

**Both the rich literature on Europeanisation and *security studies* (defence policy centered studies) nonetheless neglect the relationship between national defence policy and the ESDP**

### *Defence oriented literature and European integration*

Security Studies, the main sub-discipline for studying defence policy « is defined by two-self limiting characteristics by its general permeation with one (only) of the approaches to international relations, namely Classical realism, and by its particular circumscription of interest, namely high politics-state politics- and military force, which secures the state. »<sup>2</sup> Inspired by classical realism and neo realism to a large degree, these intellectual foundations make it fairly difficult to understand the influence of a non-state organization like the European Union on the individual States in an area such as defence policy. With this said, works that have specifically tackled the questions linked to defence on a national level and the EU have generally focused on

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<sup>2</sup> Gwyn Prins, "The four-stroke cycle in security studies," *International Affairs* 74, no. 4 (1998): 781.

the relationship between European Defence Policy and NATO, more specifically questions linked to capacities and bridging the so-called capabilities gap between European allies and the United States. Linked to this first theme is that of the transatlantic question, ...a question perhaps ...There is however very little in the end that deals with the EU-national dynamic, much less the Europeanization of the defence sector from a more strategic (rather than EU integration studies) standpoint.

How has it dealt with the question:

- The relation between the ESDP and NATO, the capacities question
- The transatlantic question (linked to the first)
- Very little that deals with the EU-national dynamic...much less Europeanisation...Howorth and Menon...

In many ways the limits of the discipline, linked to its theoretical heritage, explain the limited interest given to the study of the European Union, the reification of the State and the importance given to the State as the predominant actor in international relations and in the anarchical international system, do in fact limit the possible role the European Union could play in such a strategic sector as defence policy.

### ***Europeanisation: neglecting defence policy***

As Anand Menon remarks “defense has received little attention in the public policy literature. Many politics textbooks fail to refer to defense at all, and whilst policy making cases studies abound on a host of other policy sectors, defense is strikingly understudied in this way.”<sup>3</sup>

The question of Europeanisation, on the other hand, has been one of the most active debates in recent years in the discipline of public policy analysis.<sup>4</sup> The debate on Europeanization which will discuss in more depth later on in the article has incited numerous works both in Europe and in the United States with a number of works of reference that one can

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<sup>3</sup> Menon, Anand. 1994. Continuing Politics by other means: Defence Policy Under the French Fifth Republic. *West European Politics* 14 (4):74-96. .

<sup>4</sup> To get an idea on the amplitude of the studies undertaken, we inventoried in English and French those works in major libraries which have focused on the question of Europeanization irregardless of their definition of said phenomenon.

only applaud in the way in which they deal with the difficult question of a multi-level games that are the essence meme of the European political system today. Nonetheless, despite the progressive and ongoing construction of a common security and defence policy and the rise in multilateral and bilateral cooperation between European countries (despite any problems these may entail), the effects are only rarely brought up and the most often to insist on the lack of influence on the national level or the eventual use of the CSDP as a power multiplier particularly for countries such as the UK and France.

Despite this myriad of approaches very few works have dealt directly with the question of defence policy. The vast majority of works have dealt with economic and social policy. A quick overview of works available in major political science libraries shows that amongst the number of works dedicated to Europeanisation, few in English or French that deal directly with questions of defence policy or more generally questions linked to armed forces or military issues. Of the hundreds of existing works, on the other hand, the analyses of financial and economic systems or even social systems are largely dominant.<sup>5</sup> A few notable works should be brought up: Bastien Irondelle's article in the *Journal of European Public Policy* deals with the professionalization of French armed forces in the framework of Europeanisation. While not specifically "Europeanization" led, the collective work edited by Anand Menon and Jolyon Howorth on the effects of EU defence policy on the national level is in fact a precursor. The major limits of these works are linked also to a chronological question as they were written or focused on a time period before the major progress made post-Saint Malo at the European level.

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<sup>5</sup> Dyson, K. 2002. *European States and the Euro : Europeanization, variation, and convergence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Eberwein, Wilhelm, Jochen Tholen, and Joachim Schuster. 2002. *The Europeanisation of industrial relations : national and European processes in Germany, UK, Italy and France*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, Howell, Kerry E. 2004. *Europeanization, European integration and financial services : developing theoretical frameworks and synthesising methodological approaches*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, Krebber, Daniel. 2002. *Europeanisation of regulatory television policy : the decision-making process of the Television without Frontiers directives from 1989 & 1997, Integration Europas und Ordnung der Weltwirtschaft ; 24*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, Menz, Georg. 2005. *Varieties of capitalism and Europeanization : national response strategies to the single European market*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, Pallis, Athanasios A. 2002. *The common EU maritime transport policy : policy Europeanisation in the 1990s, Transport and mobility series*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Paraskevopoulos, Christos J. 2001. *Interpreting convergence in the European Union : patterns of collective action, social learning and Europeanization*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York: Palgrave, Schmidt, V. . 2002. Europeanization and the mechanics of economic policy adjustment. *Journal of European Public Policy* 9 (6):894-912. , Thatcher, Mark, and European University Institute. Robert Schuman Centre. 1999. *The Europeanisation of regulation : the case of telecommunication, EUI working papers*. RSC ; no. 99/22. Florence: European University Institute.

More recently, works applying Europeanization to the study of foreign policy have come have enriched our knowledge of the concept and paved the way for further studies linking Europeanization to policies previously considered as « immune » to the pressures of European integration.<sup>6</sup> This is a promising phenomenon as Brian White points out: « the impact of European processes on the elaboration of the policies of member states is considerable, and has become the subject of increasing attention in research in foreign policy. The specialists of a common defence policy could build on these works and develop them in terms of an identical perspective. »<sup>7</sup>

As such, our analysis furthers this enquiry, asking what contribution Europeanization can make to analyze defence policy. By defining a theoretical framework and applying it to our empirical data, the usefulness of Europeanization to understanding the mutual influences between national defence policies and the progress made at the European level should be made apparent.

### **Enriching the debate: what is the contribution of Europeanisation to the study of defence?**

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The concept of Europeanisation is a fashionable term that has been approached in a number of different ways. Yet, as we will discover, not all approaches are useful in understanding defence policy and answering the questions laid out by our research.

#### ***Conceptualizing Europeanization and defence: Europeanization without “Europe”***

In questioning the Europeanization of such a domain, we are aware of the difficulties associated with this concept and though an exhaustive theoretical analysis is not our objective, defining Europeanization in the context of this paper and our research in order to understand the dynamics at work between the different levels of governance in Europe and the incidence on national policy is necessary. While we agree with Claudio Radaelli that Europeanization «has

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<sup>6</sup> Tonra, Ben. 2001. *The Europeanisation of national foreign policy : Dutch, Danish and Irish foreign policy in the European Union*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Wong, Reuben Yik-Pern. 2005. *The Europeanization of French foreign policy : France and the EU in East Asia*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>7</sup> White, Brian. 2002-2003. Expliquer la défense européenne: un défi pour les analyses théoriques. *La revue internationale et stratégique* (48):89-97.

something to do with the penetration of the European dimension in national arenas of politics and policy,"<sup>8</sup> a more complete and more detailed overview of the term is required. In the now seminal work of Risse, Green-Cowles and Caporaso (2000), the authors define Europeanization:

« As the emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is of political, legal and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalize interactions among the actors and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules.»<sup>9</sup>

Claudio Radaelli defines Europeanization in steps: « Process of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles ways of doing things and shared beliefs which are first defined and consolidation in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.»<sup>10</sup>

These definitions, useful in common policy areas, are largely too restrictive and problematic in a sector in which formal European institutions are only nascent and formal pressure or direct influence on the national level is limited. In defense policy, the progress of integration is measured as much through, rhetoric, doctrine or intentions or in non EU frameworks that in the domain of concrete legal or political structures. As such, it is necessary to look elsewhere, toward other definitions of Europeanization particularly those questions associated with the evolution of cognitive structures such as those proposed by Knill and Lehmkuhl on *framing*. These authors propose 3 mechanisms of Europeanization: *institutional compliance*, *altering domestic opportunity structures*, *altering the beliefs and expectations of domestic actors*. If the first two are hardly applicable to defense, the last mechanism which bases analyses on cognitive logics is infinitely more pertinent and interesting for our analysis. This mechanism implies the transformation of beliefs that influence the strategies and the preferences of national actors, leading to corresponding institutional adaptations. While this focus on the

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<sup>8</sup> Radaelli, C.,( 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Risse, Thomas, Maria Green Cowles, and James Caporaso, eds. 2001. *Europeanization and Domestic Change: Transforming Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.p.272.

<sup>10</sup> Radaelli, Claudio M. 2001. The domestic impact of European Union Public Policy: Notes on Concepts, Methods and the Challenge of Empirical Research. *Politique européenne* (5):107-142.,p110.

cognitive aspects of Europeanization is essential to the study of defense policy, Europeanization goes beyond this. Inspired by the works of Palier, Surel and Hassenteufel, we view Europeanization as processes of “institutional, strategic and normative adjustments induced by the European construction that can occur on both the European as well as national levels”<sup>11</sup> This definition holds two advantages: it conceives of processes not simply as top-down or bottom-up but as a whole, enabling us to take into account active participation of actors on all levels and the dynamic relationships they hold. “In trying to analyze the processes more than the levels of government or the actors, this interactive and dynamic perspective is better suited to identify and specify the changes in public policy produced more or less directly by the European construction.”<sup>12</sup> As well, this conception of Europeanization allows us to take into account the 3 “i’s” dear to the contemporary studies of policy, ideas, interests and institutions, which, in our opinion, and based on empirical data, are inseparable.<sup>13</sup>

This definition of Europeanization which concentrates on dynamic rather than static processes invites an adopted theoretical framework to understand, even “map” the processes and changes at hand.

However, once defined, the concept remains difficult to put into practice. What mechanisms are at work? How can we define them? Thus, we propose to couple Europeanization with policy transfer theories. Policy transfer originally destined to understand the relationship between different government entities on different levels within the United States has gained ground in studying transfers between polities such as the UK and the US. In the case of defense, this allows us to analyze:

- 1) The dynamic relationship(s) between the national, European, as well as NATO levels  
(informal groups and contacts between national chiefs of staff, European Chiefs of Staff, Ministries of Defence, NATO)

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<sup>11</sup> Palier, Bruno, Yves Surel, Isabelle Bruno, Sophie Enos-Attali, Sophie Jacquot, Alexandra Jönsson, Lou Mandin, Antoine Mégie, Pauline Ravinet, Rosa Sánchez Salgado, Christophe Scheidhauer, Elizabeth Sheppard, and Cornelia Woll. 2006 (à paraître). *L'Europe en Action: analyses d'eupéanisation, Logiques Politiques*. Paris: Harmattan., p32. Translated from: « Par là même, l'analyse des interactions apparaît comme la plus stimulante : elle invite à étudier précisément l'eupéanisation, autrement dit ces processus d'ajustements institutionnels, stratégiques et normatifs induits par la construction européenne qui peuvent se produire tant au niveau européen qu'au niveau national. »

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.34. Translated from : « En essayant d'analyser des processus plus que des niveaux de gouvernement ou des acteurs, cette perspective interactive et dynamique est mieux à même en effet d'identifier et de spécifier les changements de politiques publiques produits plus ou moins directement par la construction européenne. »

<sup>13</sup> See Hall, P. (1997), Surel (1998) and Hassenteufel, Surel (2000)

- 2) The horizontal relationships between EU countries, increased contact between ministries of defence, increased number of liaison officers between armed forces (for example at the Joint Services College at Shriven ham but also in France at the Délégation aux Affaires Stratégiques). Increased sharing post-operations (ie after Kosovo between the UK, France and Germany)

The concept of Europeanization, defined as such as an interactive and dynamic process, while a good heuristic tool, it does not alone enable us to systematically map the processes in question. For that other, complementary tools must be used. A number of different approaches allow us to apprehend the interactive processes liable to lead to convergence and comparative policy change such as diffusion, isomorphism, policy diffusion and policy transfer.<sup>14</sup> In our analyses, the concept of policy transfer appears interesting in a number of ways for our study of French and British defence policies in the European context. Increasingly utilized in comparative research, this approach intends to explain the ways in which exchanges and (the) diffusion of certain political/policy solutions between different systems or levels of governance are produced<sup>15</sup>. Originally conceived in the American context to take into account exchanges between different levels of government within states and between federal states in the US, its value in the context of the European Union can not be denied.

The concept can thus be defined, according to D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh as:

“the process by which knowledge of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system”<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> See Holzinger, K., and C. Knill. 2003. Explaining Cross-national Policy Convergence : Concepts, Causes, and Conditions. and Enos, Sophie, Alexandra Jonsson, and Elizabeth Sheppard. 2005. Understanding Policy Change in Europe Through the Prism of Convergence *The Bologne Center Journal of International Affairs (Johns Hopkins University SAIS Bologna Center)* 8:123-134..

<sup>15</sup> See. in particular Dolowitz, David P., and D. Marsh. 2000. Learning from Abroad : the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy making *Governance* 13 (1):5-24., pp. 1-4 and Bennett, C. 1991. What is policy convergence and what causes it ? : review article. *British Journal of Political Science* 21 (2):215-233..

<sup>16</sup> Dolowitz, David P., and D. Marsh. 2000. Learning from Abroad : the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy making *Governance* 13 (1):5-24., p. 5.

Policy transfer draws attention to the interactions between actors and events belonging to different political systems in order to explain how, and by what concrete processes, public actions in different contexts can mutually influence each other. Analyzing the processes rather than the results, it does not presuppose a complete convergence of results, opening up the way for the possibility of divergences<sup>17</sup>. This is particularly important in a policy field in which policy choices can stretch out over 10, 20, even 30 years for certain programs. As well, policy transfer compares through a spatial dimension (not temporal), modifications of policies both in the definition of their goals, their content, instruments, implementation, style. As such, it is useful for highlighting policy change

For these reasons, it would thus seem logical for us to have recourse to policy transfer to understand how policy reforms and tendencies to convergence can be produced in the conduct of certain policies. The literature devoted to policy transfer offers a large number of mechanisms that can explain how the diffusion of certain ideas or policy solutions occurs between different political systems. Particularly interesting and complete, the analysis of Knill and Holzinger evokes seven mechanisms which are not exclusive and can be at work concurrently. Based on these mechanisms, the dynamics at work in defense policy can be analyzed.

### *A framework that allows us to rethink and reconsider our empirical evidence*

It would firstly perhaps be appropriate to ask ourselves why we even ask these questions. Links or influences of Europeanization on a policy such as defense policy which is construed as being of utmost importance to national sovereignty and identity and as such is the epitome of regalian public policies, seem at best weak and at worst inexistent. Given that defense policy is usually considered the *ultima ratio* of the State, it can even seem inappropriate to speak of convergence or Europeanization with respect to it.<sup>18</sup> It can seem all the more so in the cases of

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Holzinger, K., and C. Knill. 2003. Explaining Cross-national Policy Convergence : Concepts, Causes, and Conditions..

<sup>18</sup>Howorth, Jolyon, and Anand Menon, eds. 1997. *The European Union and National Defence Policy, The State and the European Union Series*. London: Routledge..

France and the UK, countries that, traditionally, seem to be opposites when it comes to questions of defense. Even more recently, their positions on the American-led coalition in Iraq opposed the two states.<sup>19</sup> London and Paris are particularly contrasted by the organizations of their respective armies, the relationships between the state and the military industrial complex, as well as their position with respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU. In fact observations at the empirical level, drive us to this exact problematic.<sup>20</sup> A careful analysis of defense policies in Europe since 1990 compels us to reconsider this judgment. Particularly, in the framework of the *Strategic defence review* the policy of Tony Blair that puts defense at the center of his European policy, allowing thus for the Franco-British Declaration at Saint-Malo.

Since the 1990s, France and the United Kingdom share similar conceptions of the role of the military and of the soldier in modern military operations which define their strategy and how they handle war. According to these conceptions, military interventions rely more upon coalitions than upon a single State and must be both rapid and flexible. Soldiers evolve from the statute of warrior to that of a peacekeepers or peacemakers. Furthermore, the countries make similar diagnoses of the strategic context (the uncertainty of the geopolitical environment, the new perception of war...) and faced with these conditions; ask identical questions, particularly with respect to the organization of the military structure. Though the professionalization of the military was accomplished in the United Kingdom decades ago, France- as in a number of other European countries- did not embark on such a reform until the 1990s. Above all, recent official and internal strategic documents in both countries encourage the progressive integration of the armed forces according to the notions of interoperability and jointery.<sup>21</sup> In terms of the defense industry, the two countries have both declared themselves concerned with the difficult situation of national defense industries. From similar diagnoses as to the dysfunctions of the chain of

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<sup>19</sup> Our empirical data demonstrates that the Iraq question has in fact brought the two countries to cooperate more and European defense more generally to advance.

<sup>20</sup> For a brief discussion on the incongruous nature of these interrogations in the context of important sovereign policies such as defence, family policy or foreign policy see Enos, Sophie, Alexandra Jonsson, and Elizabeth Sheppard. 2005. Understanding Policy Change in Europe Through the Prism of Convergence *The Bologna Center Journal of International Affairs (Johns Hopkins University SAIS Bologna Center)* 8:123-134..

<sup>21</sup> Jointery can be defined as missions or operations organized conjointly among the different armed service branches, in which troops issued from these different services are integrated in order to maximize efficiency and flexibility. As Colin Powell put it, "joint warfare is team warfare." (November 1991) "Message from the Chairman" in *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces*. Interoperability "encompasses doctrine, procedures and training as well as systems and equipment. It is the capability of people, organizations and equipment to operate effectively together so that every unit on the battlefield can share information with every other unit on the battleground": Sessions, S. et Jones, C. (July 1993); Joint Staff (1992), Washington, DC, *C4I for the Warrior*; Ministry of Defence (1998) *Strategic Defence Review*, London, TSO; *Le Projet de loi de programmation militaire 2003-2008*, Paris, DICOD.

command, the insufficient budgetary means and the deficiencies of national defense industries<sup>22</sup>, France and the United Kingdom affirm together, as early as 1998, the necessity of a reinforced European cooperation in order to face the difficulties noticed.<sup>23</sup>

This contextualization leads us to look more closely at the two defense policies in question. Looking closely at the directions chosen by major players such as France and the UK in defence policy at the national level and the engagements that have been taken at the European level but also those made by smaller states in the same sector, the mutual influence emerges through documents and interviews as an integral part of the policy process. With this said, it is then necessary to determine an adequate framework in order to systematically map out the possible paths of influence and understand the interactions. As such the framework we have defined above can be useful.

From our empirical evidence, a number of observations may be made and a number of concrete mechanisms detected. These mechanisms promulgate norms and a new cognitive “vision”, changes that could in fact be assimilated to a paradigmatic change or a change in referential that redefines cognitive matrices (in the case of defence this ranges from the role of the military in society to the construction of the enemy). We will concentrate here on but a few, following it up with a look at the national/European and horizontal/bilateral dynamics at work. These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive in the dynamic relationships between national defense policy and the European level. In this paper, will be look at four particular mechanisms at hand: emulation/learning, transnational cooperation, the promotion of policy models and the economic mechanisms.

### *Emulation and/or learning*

K. Holzinger and C. Knill use the generic term emulation to designate the fact, that a state, concerned about resolving a difficulty at hand and/or desirous of avoiding lagging behind, copies choices made by the majority of states. According to the authors, this mechanism, that we

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<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Defence (June 2000) *Kosovo Lessons from the Crisis*, London, TSO ; Ministère de la Défense (November 1999) *Les Enseignements du Kosovo : Analyses et Références*, Paris.

<sup>23</sup> The Declaration of the Anglo-French Summit (25 November 1999).

find in the literature under names as diverse as imitation, mimesis, policy borrowing or even band-wagoning<sup>24</sup>, potentially leads to the convergence of goals, of content or even of instruments, but in no way to the convergence of results or policy styles.

This is equally true of learning, a mechanism akin to emulation yet differing with respect to the choice of the reference model and the degree of copying. With learning, the state concerned with change seeks not to imitate the majority of the other States, but to learn from the lessons resulting from the experience of another state faced with similar challenges. They extract, from the observation of what is done elsewhere, what should be done and what should be avoided. Transfer is thus not automatic. It is, in fact, more the deviation with respect to the original model that is more probable. Nonetheless, as Holzinger and Knill point out, learning favors the convergence of policy orientations.

The cases under consideration verify this. In defense, the constant uncertainty concerning the role of the EU and the definition of its missions drives European countries to monitor what the others are doing to define their own policies. In France, for example, during the preparation that led up to the programming laws currently in place, the British example is underscored. During the Senate debates on finances, the importance of European and UK comparisons is highlighted: “the amelioration announced does not allow us to bridge the gap-already important-with the British army...we all work in terms of comparisons and when we speak of Europe, comparisons are necessary...”<sup>25</sup>

The French have been particularly concerned with lagging behind the UK, who in turn have been concerned with Europeans falling behind the US. The British view their role as a bridge looking forward to the US and learning from them and turning back and being a model for other European states. The use of this “model” by other countries is seen as a major European strategy for the UK Ministry of Defence, who seek to push through certain reforms that have been long desired in NATO but which seem easier to sell under a European label.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Holzinger, K., and C. Knill. 2003. Explaining Cross-national Policy Convergence : Concepts, Causes, and Conditions., p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> M. François Trucy, rapporteur spécial de la commission des finances... 7 Dec., 2000.

<sup>26</sup> Interviews.

In the UK, while official comparisons tend towards the analysis of US reforms, during informal conferences and talks, the comparison with France is often evoked (as well as with other European powers considered as potentially “serious” military partners).<sup>27</sup>

On a more strictly “European” level, the cases that are under consideration in our study prove yet again that learning mechanisms are at work. In the defense field, the constant uncertainty concerning the role of the EU, the definition of its missions and the technical needs necessary to accomplish these tasks, force European countries to monitor what the others are doing to define their own policies and if necessary adapt. In the cases of the French and the British, this adaptation comes in the form of insuring that they are able to accomplish those tasks other nations may not be able to (for technical or financial reasons), and particularly in the insurance that they will be able to be framework nations to lead any EU missions given their technical and practical know how. Joint operations in the context of European interventions also give different member states the ability to compare and contrast approaches, doctrines and equipment.

### *Transnational cooperation*

The transfer of public policy through transnational cooperation rests on the regular interaction, on the transnational level, between elites and national experts that seek, together, to find policy solutions. Brought together in networks of transnational consulting, expertise, evaluation and information, these actors develop shared perceptions of a policy problem and the solutions applicable. These are then diffused to political decision makers in other countries. Acting within the national decision-making structure, on the perception and interpretation of domestic and global events to which public action must respond, this transfer process finds its expression in shared knowledge and can thus explain the consideration of an issue by different policymakers in similar terms and through similar conceptions. A number of examples in defense policy can be highlighted.

The diffusion of ideas through cooperation in think tanks (*FRS*, *RUSI*, Chatham House) is important and also extends to defense ministries whose members often sojourn in these types of

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<sup>27</sup> Interviews.

research environments.<sup>28</sup> In London, for example, researchers at RUSI include former active military officers with expertise in specific issues; these think tanks are often relied upon for consulting by the Civilian powers and thus provide a bridge between the various authorities that contribute to policymaking. Conferences put into place at the ministerial level reaffirm this “sharing” of experiences. Both in London and Paris, conferences are held which permit actors from private industry, academia and public office to exchange ideas. For example, the colloquia “Towards a sustainable European defence?” in June of 2005 included roundtable concerning “System of systems” which included topics on French information centric systems and British NEC. Representatives of Alcatel Space, Thales, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Italian National Armament Director, the Chief of the Air Staff of the UK and French Air Staff met and discussed the topics and their pertinence at the European and transatlantic level, particularly the question of whether the different systems will be able to understand each other and whether they will be effective.<sup>29</sup>

One of the most telling examples of transnational cooperation in defense policy intervenes in the post-war phase in Kosovo. In June 1999, in France a working group is put together by the defense ministry to analyze the events and the lessons of the operation and evaluate defense policy. The document produced entitled *Les enseignements du Kosovo: Analyses ET Références*, illustrates the political, industrial and military preoccupation of the French government. The deficiencies are highlighted including the problems of interoperability and the NEC which enables cooperation in a coalition (particularly an Americano-British context). But, this national reevaluation was not sufficient, in fact, the lessons that come out of this analysis highlight the need to open up to a European perspective : “our perspective can not be solely national. The lessons of the conflict must be drawn with our European partners, both on the political and military levels.”<sup>30</sup> Though the events in Kosovo reaffirm France’s engagement in NATO, it is above all the construction of a European defense that is affirmed and the debate is elevated to the European level. In the final months of 1999, informal reunions between the French, British and Germans are implemented in order to permit discussions and share the experts’ views on the lessons. In France, the director of the DAS (Delegation aux Affaires

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<sup>28</sup> Interviews.

<sup>29</sup> Symposium of the Defence Economy Council, Ministère de la défense, at Ecole Militaire, June 8, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Ministère de la défense, *Les enseignements du Kosovo*, p. 9

Stratégiques) Marc Perrin de Brichambaut was present in order to analyze what the French possessed and what the other Europeans established and could offer in terms of lessons.<sup>31</sup>

This cooperation has increased exponentially since Saint-Malo, on the one hand, on both a formal and informal level in the EU, the Ministers of Defence of the Member States now meet separately from the Foreign Affairs Ministers, allowing them to share experiences and information. On an individual level, the high level bureaucrats such as spokesman for the Ministries regularly meet in Paris or London, allowing discussions on ongoing operations and challenges and feedback on possible political problems.<sup>32</sup> On a purely military level the phenomenon is similar, with the multiplication of liaison officers between different national armies and of course with the creation of the European Chiefs of Staff, the cooperation between different armed forces has also been increased.

This transnational cooperation does not necessarily lead to complete convergence as the lessons of the war in Kosovo attest: the lessons of the UK and France do not forcibly converge. However, this cooperation does lead to mutual comprehension and the transfer of solutions, information and instruments across national lines. Interoperability amongst Europeans particularly between the French and British is at the top of the list of priorities for both countries who seek to the position of framework nations for European missions. Though interoperability could be seen as endangering the ESDP (given the underlying attachment to US reforms), it seems unlikely given this transnational cooperation which seemingly prevents European countries from taking distinctly different paths.<sup>33</sup> The conjoint experience in Bosnia has deepened the transnational cooperation. These operations are the first time in decades in which the two Armies have worked together. The sharing of experiences is at the center of the construction of norms at the European level. This is confirmed by interviews particularly with military officers involved in these operations.<sup>34</sup> These experiences have then been translated into European operations (Concordia, Artemis...) in which these first experiences have been confirmed.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview.

<sup>32</sup> Interviews.

<sup>33</sup> Irondelle, Bastien, Martial Foucault, and Elizabeth Sheppard. 2004. Comparaison et place prospective du Royaume-Uni dans l'Europe de la défense Minsitère de la défense, DAS., p.31.

<sup>34</sup> Interviews.Ibid.

### *Promoting policy models*

Through the promotion of policy models mechanism, convergence results from the more or less direct promotion, by individual states or international institutions, of policy orientations, without coercion. In other words, there is the diffusion of a model, either by a State, which does everything for other states to imitate it, or by international institutions that suppose that their members seek to attain common norms and goals.

In the domain of defense policy, the European Defense Agency is particularly apt at promoting the “models” and “norms” defined in the Headline Goal and other documentation. As such it has been at the center of British and French actions to promote policy orientations. “For the British the first mission and reason for being of the Agency is contributing to the reinforcing of European military capacities, by constituting a coordination instrument but above all as a level to constrain European partners to spend more and augment their capacities...”<sup>35</sup> This is illustrated for example in the Annual Reports and Accounts 2003-2004 of the Ministry of Defense that states, “*We provided a valuable contribution towards the EDA... and put forward the UK’s stance at the various EU meeting with conviction, including the need for the Agency to be focused on harnessing and strengthening defence capabilities*»<sup>36</sup> The question of capacities, of technology and spending are the only dimensions mentioned, while the rest of the report is silent on questions of cooperation such as OCCAR or the LOI. Thus we see to what extent they are central to their conception of European defense. The UK occupies a major percentage of those posts both at NATO and in the EU that deal with defense capacities, suggesting that this will to promulgate certain policy models and norms is intentional.<sup>37</sup> For example, during the final negotiating phase on the Agency the Deputy-Director of International Security Policy at the MOD highlighted the UK’s positions based on 4 foundations: Europe is not as she should be in defense matter, even the limited objectives of the Headline Goal have not been attained; Within NATO, European capacities are judged insufficient; interoperability problems exist with

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p19.

<sup>36</sup> MOD, Annual Reports and 2003-2004, p199.

<sup>37</sup> Irondelle, Bastien, Martial Foucault, and Elizabeth Sheppard. 2004. Comparaison et place prospective du Royaume-Uni dans l’Europe de la défense Minsitère de la défense, DAS., p. 18. Interview.

American armed forces.<sup>38</sup> The UK desires a higher level of interoperability with serious partners in Europe, notably France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and eventually Poland.<sup>39</sup> These privileged partners will be those who do the most on network enablements and the conclusions on the *Strategic Defence Review* highlight the importance given to the NEC by the UK which demands increased investments in the sector by the different partners. As such, the UK, along with France has tried to impose these orientations<sup>40</sup> that are necessary to accomplish a minimum number of tasks but the UK believes particularly that « *Europeans are not really pulling weight* ». <sup>41</sup>

The Headline Goal and Headline Goal 2010 developed on the European level as well as the documentation that has followed such as the European Security Strategy, have shown that at a European level, while the French and the British indeed to propose their own models, the European level had a downward pressure on national reforms. While they were particularly involved in defining the Headline Goal, the French and British, have on the national, had to make the appropriate decisions concerning their ability to meet their own engagements made at the European level. Particularly worrisome is the overstretch of the British military, involved in Iraq and elsewhere and who are faced with a number of problems. This pressure to live up to their engagements, particularly for two countries who seek to be the leaders in the domain is a very real issue.

### *Economic dynamics*

The ever increasing integration of international economies constitutes the last of the seven mechanisms evoked by Knill and Holzinger<sup>42</sup> that can produce policy convergence. For these authors, this mechanisms result from *regulatory competition*, leading governments to abolish progressively national regulations that constitute an obstacle or barrier to the free circulation of

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<sup>38</sup> Sarah Beaver, colloquia *Monthly Roundtable*, New Defence Agenda, Brussels, 19 Jan. 2004. For a more in depth analysis see *Ibid.*, p. 19-20.

<sup>39</sup> Interviews.

<sup>40</sup> US-CREST. 2002. *Future Military Coalitions : The Transatlantic Challenge*, Report of a French, German, UK, U.S. Working Group. Arlington, VA: US-CREST Center for Research and Education on Strategy and Technology., p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> Interviews.

<sup>42</sup> Holzinger, K., and C. Knill. 2003. *Explaining Cross-national Policy Convergence : Concepts, Causes, and Conditions.*

goods, workers and capital and the competitiveness of national industries on the international market. This process leads in principle essentially to a convergence around the principle of minimal State intervention in civil society.

In industry, the EU is as such a platform, a meeting place that allows arms producing countries to compete on the international level. As such, the restructuring or privatization undertaken is destined to opening formerly nationalized companies to European partners. On the European level, the OCCAR (*organisation conjointe pour la coopération en matière d'armement*)<sup>43</sup> has permitted increased cooperation in arms programs which the newly created Defense will complement. These programs have taken on an increasingly large part of the French defense budget for example: from 1996 to 2002 it increased from 15% to 34%.<sup>44</sup>

On the national level in France, for example the SNECMA was opened to private capital “in order to permit new European groups”.<sup>45</sup> The question of the future of French naval yards was framed in a European context as well: “In my report, I questioned how the DCN (naval yards) would find a place in the European industry of tomorrow if it remained a company owned 100% by the French state...In order to create true alliances and industrial partners so as to guarantee its spot in the world market, the DCN should on the contrary be able to proceed with mutual participations with other groups.”<sup>46</sup>

In the UK, for similar reasons, the defense industrial policy aims at a “healthy and globally competitive defence industry” that develops “new strategies to take account of the transition to an evolving international defence market.” Commonly called the “Khaki Economy,” as defense economy has been affected by the increasingly international competition that globalization creates. European arms industries are indeed faced with numerous common difficulties: the fall in the volume of exports, a decline in turnover, downsizings. Challenged by American competition, illustrated by the fusion of the five leaders in the defense industry, Europe has sought to consolidate its own industry, by constituting three leading entities with BAE

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<sup>43</sup> Jacques Isnard, « L'agence de l'armement reçoit ses lettres de créance », *Le Monde*, 19 Jan., 2002.

<sup>44</sup> Irondelle, Bastien. 2003. Europeanization without European Union? French Military Reforms 1991-1996. *Journal of European Public Policy* 10 (3), p.10.

<sup>45</sup> Association diplomatie et défense, Colloque Défense : quels projets après 2002 ? French Senate, *Défense Nationale, Sénateur J-M Boucheron*.

<sup>46</sup> M. Jean Faure, Compte Rendu Séance du Sénat, 17 Dec., 2001.

Systems, EADS and Thales. On both sides of the Channel, naval yards and ground-based armament industries are being reformed and reorganized.

These industrial changes reflect the interest as well of interoperability which is driven by the urge to seek out efficiency and cost effectiveness in the context of decreased defense budgets in the post cold war period. The European level consequently must be taken into account as an active dynamic in the production of convergence phenomenon and policy change when these are considered through the “optic” of competition and economic pressures. Going further empirical data confirms this, in defense industrial policy, the importance of the intensification and the coordination of European efforts in research is underscored, this is the sector the most linked to capacities and interoperability.<sup>47</sup> The UK is particularly unhappy with the reality of its relationship with the US and the relative lack of the technology transfers from the US.<sup>48</sup> This has highlighted the need for European countries to pool their efforts in order to bridge the technological and capabilities gap and respect budget constraints: the question of cooperation in industrial research and development is one of the major preoccupations of the British in the framework of the Agency.<sup>49</sup> “What British armed forces and government want: not to be left behind in what the US has/can project so they want to maintain interoperability but know budget can(t) stretch as far as what that implies so if a savings can be made by working collaboratively, for example aircraft carriers, then its attractive.”<sup>50</sup>

The new paradigm promulgated is based on the “normalization” of defense industry with what could be considered similar to the “référentiel du marché” of Pierre Muller. We move from the necessity of total national autonomy and a nationalized industry to a “globalized” industry, competitive in the market, and capable of allying itself with other transnational groups, specifically other European groups. As A. Hamel points out :« The new geopolitical context, the decrease in military budgets and in export markets, the pressure of European convergence criteria and the vigorous competition of American industries have effectively shattered the era of national certainties, leading to profound restructurings.”<sup>51</sup> European pressure is particularly felt in France,

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<sup>47</sup> See the special report of the European Institute (Washington,DC), *Transatlantic interoperability in Defense industries: How the US and Europe could better cooperate in coalition military operations*. September 2002.

<sup>48</sup> *Hopes and Ambitions of the European Defence Agency*, Press Conference, Nick Witney, Head of European Defence Agency Establishment Team, Brussels, 28 April 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Interviews. Jacques Bayet, « *L'agence européenne de défense* », Conférence ECADES, Chear, 23 Sept. 2004.

<sup>50</sup> Interview.

<sup>51</sup> Hamel, p282. “La nouvelle donne géopolitique, la baisse des budgets militaires et des marchés à l’exportation, la pression des critères européens de convergence monétaire et la concurrence vigoureuse des industries américaines

where budget balancing is an integral part of the Stability pact, and as a result, military budgets have felt the tightening of the belt in recent years. This, combined with a general downward trend in budgets in European countries (though not limited to) has contributed to a pressure on these countries from above and within to control spending

With these mechanisms “mapped out” two dynamics can be identified more generally. Firstly, national-dynamics are at work. National reforms such as professionalization have more or less overtly been undertaken with the “European factor” in mind. In France for example, they have been equally important in the reorganization and modernization of national forces particularly in the implementation and decision-making pertaining to networking or what the British deem NEC and force interoperability on the national level (jointery) and international level in coalition. The debates that were held behind closed doors in the elaboration of the current programming law (*Loi de programmation Militaire 2003-2008*) attest to the importance even prior to the engagements made at Helsinki. More recently the importance of networking whether it is labeled NEC, NCW or NEB, has been debated in open conferences, at the various ministries as well as in think tanks such as the RUSI who bring together military, political and civilian authorities as well as academics in the appropriate fields to discuss strategic questions and the implications not only for France and the UK but for the totality of Member States.<sup>52</sup>

Equally, engagements made on the European level such as the battlegroups, the Headline Goal 2010, and even operations in theater in places as close as the Balkans and as far away as Indonesia have served as constraints on the national level in terms of force size and choices in equipment, as well as diplomatic choices.

Finally, in a more bottom up dynamic, particularly in the cases of France and Great Britain, the national level and norms have been transferred towards the EU level, in the form of uploading the increased sharing of information and procedures has led these two leaders to take their norms and incorporate them into the documents and strategies on the European level.

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ont effectivement fait voler en éclats l'époque des certitudes nationales, entraînant dès lors de profondes restructurations.”

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted that Sweden is one of the countries the most implicated in question of modernisation and interoperability.

On another level, horizontal dynamics between EU countries can be observed. In EU countries, faced with similar constraints look to each other for solutions. This is all the more natural when the EU itself does not impose given the intergovernmental nature of the policy sector. As such, countries such as France and the UK, with similar military engagements and similar expeditionary doctrines, who occupy a similar leadership position in European defence are bound to a) compare and share information on the own solutions at a formal and informal level, leading to situations of *policy learning* and b) share this information and solutions beyond their own borders to the other members of the EU, who though not in the same position in terms of framework nation and international obligations on a military level, are interested in the PESD and have signed up for the long haul. Concrete examples can be seen in the creation of joint doctrine centers and joint exercises. More specifically on a simple bilateral level, the French and the British have undergone an important *rapprochement* trading liaison officers but also having regular meetings of upper level staff such as spokesman.<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusion

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How can we analyze the relationships and processes at work in defence policy between national systems and the European Union? What does this framework add to the way we think about the effects of European integration on defence policy? These are the questions that this article has tried to respond to briefly.

Through the study of French and British defence policy, particularly the reforms undertaken in terms of transformation and modernization of the organization and doctrine of the armed forces in the past decades, this framework enables us to observe a number of phenomenon. Firstly, it allows us to look beyond the top down/bottom up divide, and particularly look beyond what can be limiting in terms of formal constraints to identify the informal mechanisms of learning and exchange between countries and between Member States and the EU and between individual member states. It also permits looking at the role of certain individuals or groups of individuals (top ranking officials at the MOD, both civilian and military) and the groups that they create and relationships they hold outside of formal circles. The relative frequency of these

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<sup>53</sup> Interview at the French Ministry of Defence, Office of the Spokesman.

exchanges and dynamics will only increase in the future as the EU undertakes more civilian and military operations and as governments are increasingly limited in terms of spending on research and development. These multiple constraints and pressures both the EU and the domestic and even international contexts encourages cooperation and learning on a number of different levels (particularly industry, doctrine and organization)<sup>54</sup> and through different dynamics.

As the institutions put into place in more recent treaties such as the PSC but also the EDA increase in usefulness and extend their capacities, we can suppose that the nature of the dynamics will formalize in certain aspects, possibly reinforcing the creation of a “European way of doing things” in the medium to low intensity<sup>55</sup> operations that are an integral part of the tasks taken on by the EU. The numerous contacts that exist already between military and civilian defence elites, politicians, and academics, which have thus far been mostly informal, can only benefit from the multiplication of opportunities to meet, discuss and exchange on the future of national armies and their place in European integration.

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<sup>54</sup> In the dissertation on which this article is based a more in depth account of the three levels and the dynamics is analyzed.

<sup>55</sup> Interview, MOD London, Directorate of European Affairs.

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