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**Europe and the Petersberg Tasks – Nation-State  
behavior through the prism of Strategic Culture**

**Florian Lang**

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Les llengües de treball son castellà, català, anglès i francès

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Langues de travail: catalan, castillan, anglais et français

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# EUROPE AND THE PETERSBERG TASKS – NATION- STATE BEHAVIOR THROUGH THE PRISM OF STRATEGIC CULTURE

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Florian Lang

Màster Oficial en Integració Europea,  
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#### RESUM/RESUMEN/ABSTRACT:

The Petersberg Tasks is the most ambitious set of operational tasks the EU has set itself in the development of the CSDP. For the practical utility of this set of tasks, it can be expected that the strategic cultures of the member states have to be compatible to a large extent in order to create a European strategic culture with a clear conception. This study compares the strategic cultures of Germany, the United Kingdom and France in respect of their compatibility by testing a comprehensive paradigm of strategic culture in two recent cases, offering the circumstances of conducting the Petersberg Tasks.

#### RESUM EN CATALÀ:

Les missions Petersberg són l'operatiu militar més ambiciós organitzat per la Unió Europea en el desenvolupament de la CSDP, Política Europea de Seguretat i Defensa. Amb l'objectiu d'aconseguir una organització efectiva y funcional d'aquestes missions, és desitjable que les cultures estratègiques dels diferents Estats membres siguin, en gran mesura, compatibles en benefici d'una cultura estratègica europea amb directrius clares. Aquest estudi compara les cultures estratègiques d'Alemanya, el Regne Unit i França en referència al seu nivell de compatibilitat contrastant-les amb dos casos recents, exemples paradigmàtics de cultures estratègiques integrals. D'aquesta manera, pretenem descriure les circumstàncies en què es desenvolupen les missions Petersberg.

**KEYWORDS:** Strategic Culture; European Security; International Crisis Management

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## I) Introduction

After the cold war, the global security environment had significantly changed. The great threat for Europe - another devastating and possibly nuclear war on European soil between the US (or NATO) and the Soviet Union - was finally banned after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Consequently, with the absence of this existential threat, the transatlantic security community embraced their responsibility for conflict prevention and solution or peace-keeping and peace-making in a global context. In a United Nations context, this sort of tasks is known as the initiative "Responsibility to Protect". In Europe, the Petersberg Tasks form the catalogue for operational task in this global security context.

The Petersberg Tasks, elaborated in 1992 by the West European Union (EU) in Bonn, Germany, and extended in the following Treaties of the European Union, include in Article 28B of the Treaty of Lisbon: "...joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilization. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories."

The European perspective on international security and international crisis management, which should be shaped by those tasks, can be observed on distinct but often interdependent policy making levels. A very obvious starting point is a multilateral perspective to analyze the functioning of the institutional framework of the European Union as an actor in this foreign policy realm. Interestingly enough after this framework had been reformed with the Treaty of Lisbon, CFSP and CSDP have been object to numerous studies examining democratic legitimation, organizational effectiveness and real impact of EU Foreign Policy. For further reading of studies from EU perspective, a number of scholars can be recommend, for example Helene Sjursen<sup>1</sup>, dealing with democratization of CFSP, as well as Nicole Koenig<sup>2</sup> and Daniel C. Thomas<sup>3</sup> about the

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<sup>1</sup> see: Sjursen, Helene (2011): The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy: the quest for democracy, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 8, pp. 1069-1077

<sup>2</sup> see: Koenig, Nicole (2011): The EU and the Libyan Crisis – In Quest of Coherence?, *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 4, pp. 11-30

EU's quest for a coherent foreign policy. Highly recommendable are also the thoughts of Anand Menon<sup>4</sup> and Sten Rynning<sup>5</sup> evaluating research approaches for the study of CFSP CSDP.

This study however chooses a point of view that has not received the deserved attention but is constituted at the very fundament of a functioning *common* security policy of an emerging multilateral strategic actor as the EU. It seeks to identify and comparatively analyze nation-specific strategy styles with the objective of making statements about the likeliness of a functioning CSDP crisis management based on cultural compatibility as it is translated into strategic behavior. Because, although other explanatory factors like institutional and capability limitations play a greater or lesser role, ignoring the nation-specific strategic culture means risking 'blackboxing' governments and opening up for all the intellectual dangers of misperception.<sup>6</sup>

Embracing this perspective, it can be presumed that combining the security policy standpoints of 28 Member States is an objective of utter ambitiousness. They can be expected to have a very different idea of threat evaluation, the conditions for the use of force and the global outlook. For such a set of operational tasks as the Petersberg Tasks, that includes the necessity to respond fast and fierce to grave violations of human rights or terrorists threatening the orderliness of sovereign states, the countries of the European Union should – if not share a common strategic culture – at least be compatible to a degree that allows quick decision finding and action. Thus, comparing the strategic cultures of the EU member states seems to be a logical, continuative first step when examining the EU's ability to conduct the full range of the Petersberg tasks on a CSDP level.

The study aims to identify strategic cultures in Europe and to test the inferred national strategic behavior in two recent international crises that offered quite precisely the

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<sup>3</sup> see: Thomas, Daniel C. (2012): Still Punching below Its Weight? Coherence and Effectiveness in European Union Foreign Policy, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 3, 2012, pp. 457–474

<sup>4</sup> see: Menon, Anand (2012): Power, Institutions and the CSDP: The Promise of Institutional Theory, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1, 2012, pp. 83-100

<sup>5</sup> see: Rynning, Sten (2012): Realism and the Common Security and Defence Policy, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1, 2012, pp. 23-42

<sup>6</sup> Booth, Ken (2005): Strategic Culture: Validity and Validation, *Oxford Journal on Good Governance*, Vol. 2, Nr. 1, March 2005, p.27



conditions, the implementation of the Petersberg tasks was intended for. By revealing the connection between strategic culture and strategic behavior in these scenarios, statements about the compatibility for the context of international crisis management can be made.

Truly significant and therefore object of interest for this study are the big three of the EU, Germany, the United Kingdom and France. Although the dynamics between the 28 single states of the European Union and the dynamics between certain groups with common security interests are decisive factors for the EU's ability to respond to international crises, the CSDP crises management depends heavily on the relation and interaction between the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

To investigate the influence of strategic culture in international crisis management situations, the study takes a look at two violent civil-war crises, namely in Libya 2011 and Mali 2012/2013. The choice for these two case studies is guided by the proximity in time that doesn't leave much room for interpretations based on a slow evolvement that strategic culture could entail. What does make these two cases different from each other and worth investigating is that they share quite precisely the composition of a civil-war like conflict as covered by the Petersberg Tasks but differ widely in their geopolitical relevance, thus in the quality of attention they receive in the international community. While in Libya US and NATO commitment was strong, the European countries were almost left alone in concern about the conflict between jihadists and the government in Mali with either the option to act unilaterally or within a CSDP conducted mission. Due to the variety of differences that exponentially rises when adding observation levels, the non-commitment of the NATO will form the central differing element regarding the analytical considerations.

The referent group in the case studies is the individually defined elite of the 'political-military decision-making sphere', which has more detailed insights in security issues, reflect societal moods and are by profession shaping the agenda and national discourse.<sup>7</sup> Narrowing the referent group to the mentioned elite gives us the opportunity to entail information from a rich scope of elements without drifting into irrelevance. A limited referent group very suitable for the outreach and scope of this study, are directly

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<sup>7</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.22

involved political-military decision takers. Thus, the study limits the referent group to Head of State, Foreign Minister, Defense Minister and official representatives of those positions.

The objects of analysis will be limited to a representative sample of content of official and public statements addressing the opinion-making, decision-making and decision-justification of the political-military sphere in the key moments of the chosen crises. Given the interdependence between public discourse and decision-making sphere, it can be assumed, that if a strategic culture exists it has to materialize in the decision-communication towards the public and the representatives in the parliament.

For the purpose of tracing strategic behavior deriving from strategic culture in the objects of analysis, a symbol analysis is most suitable for the abovementioned objects. If strategic culture indeed has dominant effects on strategic behavior, it can be assumed that the behavioral pattern experienced a social translation into a specific rhetoric and language that is constant across decision-making sphere (even if opinions differ) and strategic context and be logically related to the set of preferences.

If the strategic behavior proves to be congruent across the cases it can be argued that a strategic culture exists and transfers to a certain degree into strategic behavior that is predictable. This degree will be defined by how dominant cultural aspects have influenced the strategic behavior when argued against the influence of ahistorical or non-cultural, hence materialistic-structural factors.

The first section is dedicated to the research framework, providing a brief history of the notion of strategic culture in security studies and a comprehensive analytical framework for strategic culture. The second section will then translate central historical and cultural tenets into this framework for each of the three countries. In the third section this framework is tested in the selected case studies. The results regarding the strategic behavior in the case studies will then, as the conclusion, allow making statements, addressing the driving question behind this study: Does a nationally individual strategic culture translate into strategic behavior, and if so, are the strategic cultures of Germany, the United Kingdom and France compatible to a degree that enables the construction of an effective CSDP crisis management?

## II) Research Framework

### A. The notion of Strategic Culture in Security Studies

This section elaborates the development of the notion of strategic culture as an instrument to analyze nation-state behavior in security and defense related decision taking, with an implicit focus on the use of military force. The concept of strategic culture is hereby an interdisciplinary, constructivist theory that aims to make statements and predictions about nation-state behavior that cannot be sufficiently explained by strictly realist approaches. According to Ken Booth, one of the most renowned researches in the field of strategic culture, several of its attributes makes it an essential complementary theory in the science of international relations.<sup>8</sup> First, it contributes to the understanding of the behavior of a strategic actor on its own term, for example taking history into account. Also, it tears down the boundary between the domestic environment in which decisions are produced and the external security environment by reminding that decision-making and military structures and processes operate in specific political cultures. Finally, it helps to explain irrationalities in the behavior of a culture other than the observer's and therefore improve communication and general understanding. In the following, this section wants to explain how the concept of strategic culture significantly contributes to the understanding of nation-state's military behavior and to give insights about the dynamics of security policy in a multilateral framework.

Strategic culture was first introduced into the field of security studies when Jack Snyder examined possible reactions to limited nuclear operations as a discussed alternative to previously prepared massive operations. In this study, Snyder defined strategic culture as 'the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy'<sup>9</sup> and concludes that unique historical experiences, distinctive political and institutional

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<sup>8</sup> Booth, Ken (2005): Strategic Culture: Validity and Validation, Oxford Journal on Good Governance, Vol. 2, Nr. 1, March 2005, p.26-27

<sup>9</sup> Snyder, Jack L. (1977): The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, R-2154-AF, 1977, p.8

relationships and the preoccupation with a different set of strategic dilemmas had indeed produced a ‘unique mix of strategic beliefs and a unique strategic behavior based on these beliefs’<sup>10</sup>. This interpretation challenged the classical view of generic rational actor paradigms and game-theory models that saw the United States and the Soviet Union as two actors playing the same nuclear war game and suggested that they would therefore apply similar strategic decision making.<sup>11</sup> Snyder assumed a certain consistency in this strategic culture that would, if not unlink strategic behavior from the immediate conditions and changes in the strategic environment, but make it respond ‘in a way mediated by preexisting cultural beliefs’.<sup>12</sup>

Along with Snyder there was a number of scholars in the late 70’s and early 80’s that came to the conclusion that contemporary security and defense studies did not recognize sufficiently that much of the strategic ideas and strategic behavior depend on the ‘educational progress of social construction’.<sup>13</sup> Because of the ongoing cold war and the United States as the birthplace of this first generation of scholars, it is not surprising that much of their work was intended to provide insights about the strategic behavioral patterns of the United States and the Soviet Union regarding the use of nuclear force. Colin S. Gray, one of the most renowned scholars of the first generation addressed in his early works the notion of national style compared to the rational style of the United States strategy and the dynamics between national style and nuclear strategy.<sup>14</sup> Other important contributors were Carnes Lord, writing implicitly about the American Strategic Culture<sup>15</sup> as well as Carl G. Jacobson, Ken Booth and David R. Jones when comparing the strategic power of the United States and the Soviet Union<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.38

<sup>11</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.8

<sup>12</sup> Snyder, Jack L. (1977), *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, R-2154-AF, 1977, p.8

<sup>13</sup> Gray, Colin S. (1999): *Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back*, *Review of International Studies*, 25, p.51

<sup>14</sup> See: Gray, Colin S. (1981) ‘National Style in Strategy: The American Example,’ *International Security*, Vol.6, 1981, pp. 21–47

<sup>15</sup> See: Lord, Carnes (1985): *American Strategic Culture*, *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 5, 1985, pp. 269–93

<sup>16</sup> Jacobson, Carl G.; Booth, Ken; Jones, David R. (1990): *Strategic power: USA/USSR*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, May 1990

Their findings suggested that the Soviet Union had a preference for preemptive, offensive use of force that was deeply rooted in Russia's history of external expansionism and internal autocracy. The United States, on the other hand, showed the tendency for a sporadic, messianic and crusading use of force that was deeply rooted in the moralism of the early republic and in a fundamental belief that warfare was an aberration in human relations.<sup>17</sup>

With the introduction of this interdisciplinary approach into the field of security studies, Snyder and the other agents of the „first generation” engaged decent scholarly attention for the notion of Strategic Culture. This attention led to the continuous development of the concept of strategic culture in the following years that was marked by the spill-over from nuclear strategy studies into all fields of security studies and severe methodical controversies. The common classification of strategic culture into three generations of scholars differently addressing those concerns was introduced by Alastair Ian Johnston in his works about strategic culture.<sup>18</sup> For Johnston, considering him of the third generation, the separation of the generations is not only applied on the scopes of interest but puts emphasis on the severe logical consequences the different methodical approaches and the interpretation of the results have. Because of space constraints and the utter importance of exactly this controversy for the present study, the methodological debate between Alastair Ian Johnston as agent of the third generation and Colin S. Gray as agent of the first generation will be the methodological aspect in spotlight.

The first generation, as mentioned above, wanted to explain the fundamental and hegemonic differences between US' and Soviet thoughts on nuclear strategy. Scholars from this generation innovatively added Strategic Culture to the realm of security studies but also demonstrate severe weaknesses in their studies. Those weaknesses described by Johnston are related to the vague and all-consuming definition, the mechanically deterministic conclusions and the unchangeable persistency.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Johnston, Alistair I. (1995): Thinking about Strategic Culture, *International Security*, Vol. 19, No 4, 1995, p. 36

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.38

Third generation scholars in most part thoroughly exclude strategic culture from strategic behavior but assume that the country-specific strategic culture does have an effect on a nation's strategic behavior.<sup>20</sup> The determinism of the first generation is neglected by excluding behavior from the independent variable and conceptualizing strategic culture in a way that allows it to vary, affected by recent experiences much more than by deeply historically rooted deterrents.<sup>21</sup> Johnston concludes that the general strength of the third generation and its superiority rely on the researchability of the approach by turning strategic culture into the independent variable and strategic behavior into the depended variable, where organizational culture can be an intervening variable<sup>22</sup>

The description of particular weaknesses of the different approaches helps to identify and address key concerns when creating a research framework dealing with strategic culture. In its essences however, Johnston thoughts on strategic culture are a heavy critique on the first generations failure to explain anything because they tried to explain everything<sup>23</sup>

In Gray's opinion, scholars of the third generation in general, and Johnston as its most progressive agent, do not understand the nature and concept of strategic culture, when implying that strategic behavior can be observed distinctively from strategic culture in a cause/effect relation from the former on the latter. The methodological rigor that Johnston applies 'is admirable but it ought not to take precedence over an inconvenient reality'.<sup>24</sup>

In promoting the idea that makers of strategic decisions would be quasi non-cultural entities that are affected by strategic culture as well as other explanatory factors (e.g.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.41

<sup>21</sup> Legro, Jeffrey W. (1995) , *Cooperation Under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint during World War II* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); cited in Johnston (1995): *Thinking about Strategic Culture*, p.41

<sup>22</sup> Johnston, Alistair I. (1995): *Thinking about Strategic Culture*, *International Security*, Vol. 19, No 4, 1995, p. 42

<sup>23</sup> Gray, Colin S. (1999): *Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back*, *Review of International Studies*, 25, p.54

<sup>24</sup> Gray, Colin S. (2006): *Out of the Wilderness: Primetime for Strategic Culture*, *United States Nuclear Strategy Forum*, Publication No.0004, 2006, p.3

from a materialistic-structural perspective), they would illogically assume that a decision taking person could be left uncultured by his social background. Gray notes that ‘Strategic behavior can be eccentric from some viewpoints, incompetent, unsuccessful, even contrary to cultural norms, but it cannot be a-cultural, beyond culture. A de-cultured person, organization or security community would have to be deprogrammed even of the process of learning about, and from, his or its own past’.<sup>25</sup>

It is hard to escape the logic of Gray’s arguments, in finding that strategic behavior patterns are a part of a nation’s strategic culture. Observing the realm of strategic ideas separately from the realm of strategic behavior in order to weigh the influence of strategic culture against other explanatory factors does indeed imply the existence of a realm not exhibited by encultured human beings. Thus applying the notion of strategic culture means to embrace the idea of an all-encompassing context as there indeed cannot be strategic behavior beyond culture.

But if the concept of Strategic culture ‘defies falsification’<sup>26</sup>, trying to explain all that ‘weaves together’<sup>27</sup>, how can a research framework be conducted that still provides information to interpret strategic behavior patterns regarding the use of force, occurring in a security sub-context like crisis management, leading to plausible insights about the general compatibility of the countries which can be seen as a necessity for the independent functioning of multilateral framework like the CSDP?

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<sup>25</sup> Gray, Colin S. (1999): Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back, *Review of International Studies*, 25, p. 62

<sup>26</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.19

<sup>27</sup> Gray, Colin S. (1999): Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back, *Review of International Studies*, 25, p. 68

## B. A Framework for Strategic Culture

This study follows the concluding recommendation of Colin S. Gray, not to pursue strictly one line of research (first vs. third generation) but to find new, practical ways to combine the two main approaches.

It makes the assumption that a contemporary country-specific strategic culture, which is dominated by persistent, normative elements based in historical experience and shaped by recent experiences, influences and shapes the nation-state behavior regarding the use of force.

But instead of testing this strategic culture against other explanatory factors when making statements and predictions about the persistency of strategic behavior over time, this study tries to observe the functioning of strategic culture in two different strategic contexts. It wants to query, if and how the contemporary strategic culture has translated into strategic behavior patterns when applied in specific strategic scenarios and if they show consistency across strategic contexts. If they prove to be consistent across strategic contexts, it would mean that the strategic cultures of the three countries indeed influence strategic behavior. This would then make it possible to predict further strategic behavior in other contexts and therefore to make statements about the compatibility of the strategic cultures. If they show great variance across the contexts, it would imply that strategic culture has less influence than the strategic context which would lead to the result that the strategic behavior of the three countries is context-dependent and thus not sufficiently predictable by the ideational culture of the countries.

With this objective in mind, this section first produces an analytical framework that leads us to a testable image of the contemporary country-specific strategic culture of the United Kingdom, France and Germany. Keeping in mind what Gray stated about the universality of Culture this image has to be to some degree descriptive and arbitrarily weighted from the researcher's perspective. Nevertheless, the close relation of the observed dimensions of strategic culture to the study interest should reduce the methodological flaw that inevitably occurs at some point of any strategic cultural study. To address this flaw in favor of the testability, the study will rely on the strategic culture paradigm as proposed by Johnston.



As a definition of the composition of a strategic culture serve three basic elements of Strategic Culture described by Kelly Longhurst.<sup>28</sup>

Foundational elements of a strategic culture are those basic, deeply rooted values and qualities that have their origin in a primordial or formative phase of the country. Security policy standpoints lie between foundational elements and the regulatory practices and can be best described as common contemporary interpretations of how core values of a strategic culture are to be promoted through a framework of preferences of policy choices by political decision-takers. Regulatory practices form the observable manifestation of strategic culture. They are ‘longstanding policies and practices that actively relate and apply the substance of the strategic culture’s core to the external environment, essentially by providing channels of meaning and application’<sup>29</sup>. The regulatory practices are dependent on the dynamic between foundational elements and security policy standpoints. Thus, regulatory practices usually are a set of policy-options given to decision makers in a general regulatory context, restraint by foundational elements of the strategic culture.

The study will translate secondary literature that has been produced about the three countries in question, and primary sources when necessary, into a model of ranked strategic preferences that inspired by Johnston’s central paradigm of strategic culture.<sup>30</sup> With a ranked set of preferences it will later be possible to make statements about the effect of strategic culture via the consistency of the ranking assumed across the varying strategic contexts. Also it is a way to reduce the estimated effect of cross-national overlapping ideational elements as ranking will lead to a further specification and individualization of the element as of the whole set.

In his studies, Johnston made assumptions about ‘the role of war in human affairs (whether it is inevitable or an aberration), about the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses (zero-sum or variable sum), and about the efficacy of the use of force (about the ability to control outcomes and to eliminate threats, and the conditions under

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<sup>28</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.17

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Johnston, Alistair I. (1995): *Thinking about Strategic Culture*, *International Security*, Vol. 19, No 4, 1995, p. 46

which applied force is useful).<sup>31</sup> With the disappearance of a third, possible nuclear war and the constant disappearance of clear antagonism in global politics, the assumption that European countries would face in any way a zero-sum threat can't be made. Still, the perception of the threat can translate into offensive, unilateral win-maximizing or compromised, multilateral win-distributing strategies. Thus, although it meets fairly well the scope of interest the study will translate it into a more contemporary set of preferences and objectives. For this purpose, the study will use a table, inspired by Wilhelm Mirow.<sup>32</sup>

proclivity to use of force	1	2	3	4
Conditions for the use of force	Territorial defence, reaction to immediate threat	Plus humanitarian Intervention, stopping grave violation of human rights	Plus self-serving intervention, pursuit of power, material or ideological interests	Plus territorial & political expansion and conquest
Military Strategy	Restraint, highly proportionate, low risk tolerance	proportionate, low-moderate risk tolerance	Disproportionate, moderate risk tolerance	Highly disproportionate, high risk tolerance
Level of cooperation	Neutrality (defensive)	Affiliation with alliances/Organisations	Affiliation with particular states	unilateralism (offensive)
International/domestic authorisation requirements	high domestic/high international	high domestic/low international	low domestic/high international	low domestic/low international

The ranking will occur through arbitrarily, weighting the foundational elements, security policy standpoints and to some extent the regulatory practice within each of the dimensions in order to make a statement about their magnitude. At this point, there is a direct link between strategic culture and strategic behavior.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Mirow, Wilhem (2009): Strategic Culture Matters - A Comparison of German and British Military Interventions Since 1990, Table 1: Strategic norms concerning the legitimate ends and means of Defense Policy LIT Verlag Münster, 2009, p. 11

### III) The Strategic culture of Germany, the United Kingdom and France

#### A. The Strategic Culture of Germany

##### 1. Essential Elements of the German Strategic culture

Discovering a formative period in which foundational elements have their origin proves to be in the German case an endeavor not too difficult. After World War II, Germany's pre-war strategic culture that was shaped by its extraordinary militarism and the deep nationalistic sentiments due to its defeat in World War I, was turned into the exact opposite. Germany's strategic preferences are very much influenced by this formative period.

For Germany's devastating defeat, a burning Europe and the feeling of guilt for the uniquely horrifying crimes committed by the Nazi Regime, the Germans blamed its ill culture of militarism and nationalism and were eager to erase it.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, the international community was determined to eliminate all militaristic capacities and tendencies in order to prevent Germany being a substantial global threat again.<sup>34</sup> The German society fully cooperated with the Allied occupants by bringing the old military and political elite to justice and distributing anti-military propaganda for example through relentless text books for schools.<sup>35</sup> Being traumatized and ashamed of the crimes they had committed or were a conscious part of, the guilt that Germans felt, made them unable to feel pride towards their nation.<sup>36</sup> Germans suffered from an exhaustion of nationalism and statism, which means that the concept of the state as the organizing principle to which pledge allegiance, was highly rejected within a mindset,

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<sup>33</sup> Conrad, Björn; Stumm, Mario (2004): German Strategic Culture and Institutional Choice: Transatlanticism and/or Europeanism?, *Trierer Arbeitspapiere zur internationalen Politik*, No.9, 2004, p. 16

<sup>34</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.27

<sup>35</sup> Skemperis, Georgios (2003): *Strategic Culture in Post-War Europe*, ELIAMEP Postgraduate Notes, 2005, Issue 1, p.15

<sup>36</sup> Duffield, John S. (1998), *World Power Forsaken. Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, Stanford 1998, as cited in Conrad, Björn; Stumm, Mario, *German Strategic Culture and Institutional Choice: Transatlanticism and/or Europeanism?*, p. 17

in which the state is the problem and not the solution.<sup>37</sup> Alienated by the prospect of yet creating an own national identity, several tendencies in Germany after WWII summed up to form a preferences for multilateralism and the integration into a broader international framework. Because Germany should never again be able to conduct unilateral power politics, the recommendation for the integration in international security commitments fixed in the German Basic Law, provided for an alternative foreign policy strategy.<sup>38</sup>

The military in Germany was not only perceived with a different notion, but rejected in its entirety after WWII. It was no longer seen as the embodiment of a national identity and self-consciousness but the image of the soldier was defamed, removing military culture entirely from state and society.<sup>39</sup> This relation to the military and the use of force was also established in the German Basic Law, that forbids the preparation of a war of aggression and restraints the use of the German military to defense purposes in own territory or the territory of allied countries.<sup>40</sup> The military was denied of being instrument of foreign policy and embedded in the multilateral NATO-framework, with the *Bundeswehr* subordinated to NATO allied command.<sup>41</sup>

After the cold war when international crisis management entered the main stage of international security policy and along with its non-military contribution in the Gulf War 1990/1991, Germany's foreign policy was criticized of being weak, pacifistic and neutral, accused of using cheap excuses for its restraint and the international community demanded the normalization of Germany's security policy.<sup>42</sup> Germany' decision makers

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<sup>37</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.46

<sup>38</sup> Duffield, John S. (1998), *World Power Forsaken. Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, Stanford 1998, as cited in Conrad, Björn; Stumm, Mario, *German Strategic Culture and Institutional Choice: Transatlanticism and/or Europeanism?*, p. 17

<sup>39</sup> Longhurst, Kerry (2004): *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989–2003*, Manchester University Press., p.47

<sup>40</sup> Conrad, Björn; Stumm, Mario (2004): *German Strategic Culture and Institutional Choice: Transatlanticism and/or Europeanism?*, *Trierer Arbeitspapiere zur internationalen Politik*, No.9, 2004, p. 17

<sup>41</sup> Hoffmann, Arthur; Longhurst, Kerry (1999): *German Strategic Culture and the Changing Role of the Bundeswehr*, *WeltTrends*, No. 22, Spring 1999, p. 148

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151

were struggling with having the inherent desire to be a reliable partner and the international pressure on the one hand, while having the deeply rooted anti-militarism in its public discourse. Consequently, it was not until 1994 when Germany's constitutional court confirmed the basic compatibility of the German Basic Law with the use of force in foreign territory, leaving the interpretation of a key security policy issue to the domestic legal framework.<sup>43</sup>

The high expectations that have been generated by that development have been disappointed since then. The often criticized strategic deficit that Germany displays in international crisis situations is mainly due to varying degree of public debate on specific situations. When the media coverage is strong and critical, German governments tend to follow more pacifistic point of views, in topics that don't receive full attention by media and public debate, deployment of military forces just might be an option. This drastic discrepancy in the perceptions of Germany as a global security actor between Germany's political leaders and the German people forms today maybe the most defining element of the strategic culture of the country as a whole. As a precise example for this discrepancy serves the resignation of Germany's former *Bundespräsident* (president of the federation) Horst Köhler who tripped over the remark that it is absolutely justifiable to conduct German military capacities to secure Germany's vital economic interests. The outrage and critique in the German media and public debate were intense enough to frustrate the *Bundespräsident* who was overwhelmed by the public reaction and resigned in consequence.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Stöhr, Florian (2012): Sicherheitspolitische Kultur in Deutschland - Politik und Gesellschaft im Widerstreit?, ISPK Kieler Analysen zur Sicherheitspolitik, Nr. 31, 2012, p. 3

<sup>44</sup> Sueddeutsche Zeitung (2011): Horst Köhler über seine Rücktrittsgründe, 09.06.2011

## 2. Strategic preferences for Germany

### Conditions for the use of force – 2

The deployment of military forces –especially the deployment of combat troops- in foreign territory has not stopped to be a topic of utmost delicacy in Germany. The juridical restraints and fierce public and parliamentarian debate that go along every decision regarding the use force, define war as the absolute aberration and the last of all means in human affairs. As a sub-assumption of a preferred strategic option, it can be inferred that *German policy-makers will only deploy military troops when substantially threatened or as a last resort in case that all other non-military strategies in an international crisis have failed and catastrophic consequences can be expected.*

### Military Strategy – 1

The deeply rooted anti-nationalism forbids Germany to pursue power or interest politics to a large scale. Offensive strategies are constraint to a very limited set of justifiable options, with extremely low risk tolerance. Thus, restraint strategies have the prospect of securing beneficial outcomes while leaving a significantly broader flexibility in political action. It can be inferred that *German policy-makers will choose non-confrontational strategies and highly restraint military operations.*

### Level of cooperation - 2

Germany is embedded into a network of multilateral organizations and political frameworks. For a long time directly subordinated to the NATO-command, a driving force for the European Integration and the functioning of the United Nation, it can be inferred that *German decision makers will only apply military force in a broad framework of multilateral organizations and its allies.*

### International/domestic authorization requirements - 1

Germany is heavily constraint by its Basic Law when the military is sought to be used as foreign policy instrument. Also a German use of force, without a UNSC mandate and European support seems unimaginable. Thus, it can be inferred that *Germany has high international and domestic authorization requirements.*

## B. The Strategic Culture of the United Kingdom

### 1. Essential Elements of the UK's strategic culture

The participation in two world wars and the aftermath of those devastating wars have consequently left their mark on post-war Great Britain, shaping existent foundational elements and imposing new ones. Still, the implications naturally differ widely from those of Germany both from a social and a political perspective and specifically in their magnitude. Hence, the strategic culture of the United Kingdom was rather shaped than newly invented by WW II. The same does apply for the second formative period of Tony Blair being Prime Minister from 1997-2007, that should prove to be a very influential anomaly indeed.

Starting as a major colonial and maritime power into the 19th century, the United Kingdom saw a severe decline in relative power over the course of two world wars and an exhaustingly threatening cold war.<sup>45</sup> By the end of WW II, the United Kingdom had to face the fact that it had been displaced as the leader or hegemon of the international community. Nevertheless, the notion of the empire and the desire to maintain the status quo remained vital in British strategic culture as a heritage of the country's glorious past.<sup>46</sup>

Guided by the multilateral structures that emerged after World War II (most notably the NATO) the United Kingdom's policy makers as well as the British people were reminded of the importance of the transatlantic link in security matters and the cultural ties between Great Britain and the United States. The purpose for this was the common concern about the soviet menace and the possibility for the former hegemon to conduct a foreign policy that would be more influential than its relative power suggested.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2004): Continuity in the face of upheaval – British Strategic Culture and the impact of the Blair government, Special Issue, European Security - Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski (eds), Frank Cass., 2004, p.4

<sup>46</sup> Skemperis, Georgios (2003): Strategic Culture in Post-War Europe, ELIAMEP Postgraduate Notes, 2005, Issue 1, p. 10

<sup>47</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2004): Continuity in the face of upheaval – British Strategic Culture and the impact of the Blair government, Special Issue, European Security - Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski (eds), Frank Cass., 2004, p.4

As it is the case with Germany, the notion of crisis management became central to British security policy after the common threat of a new world war was banned by the fall of the Soviet Union. In line with the other NATO Members, the United Kingdom's security policy was in search for a new *raison d'être*.<sup>48</sup> Although the defense and deterrence strategy that entailed the cold war era was consequently abandoned, the Gulf War 1990/1991 displayed the high demand for 'sanitized' military involvement in international crisis management and generated high expectations in the conventional use of force.<sup>49</sup>

When coming into office in 1997 Blair was eager to redefine British foreign policy, paying special attention to the role of the armed forces and international crisis management. Blair pursued the strategy of attempting to create and mediate an all-encompassing western-led international security framework of EU, NATO and the UN Security Council - referred to as the "international community" - with an interventionist approach.<sup>50</sup> This military doctrine was very much taken from George W. Bush's military doctrine of pre-emptive strikes and disregards the sanctity of national sovereignty based on the Westphalian states system in cases where nation-states have systematically sought to abuse the rights of individuals or groups within their territory.<sup>51</sup> This was a fundamental shift in the conditions under which the UK would consider the use of force, in that values might have to be fought for with military force. As Clark states, Blair saw a world that was about the willingness to embrace a liberal democratic capitalist world order on a global scale in which the use of military force for fighting is as much a policy instrument in the developing world as foreign aid.<sup>52</sup> Blair's interventionism that was not thoroughly supported by British people is an influential

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<sup>48</sup> Wallace, William (1992): *British Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 3, Jul., 1992, p. 423

<sup>49</sup> Mäder, Markus (2004): *In Pursuit of Conceptual Excellence: The Evolution of British Military Doctrine in the post-cold war era 1989-2002*, *Studies in contemporary History and Security Studies*, Peter Lang (publish.), Bern, 2004, p. 25

<sup>50</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2004): *Continuity in the face of upheaval – British Strategic Culture and the impact of the Blair government*, Special Issue, *European Security* - Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski (eds), Frank Cass., 2004, p.12

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Clark, Michael (2007): *Foreign Policy*, chapter in: Seldon, Anthony (ed.), *Blair's Britain 1997-2007*, Cambridge University Press, Sept. 2007, p.599



anomaly regarding Britain's conservative tradition. "The continuous effort of avoiding any shift in the international balance of power for over a century can explain why the British polity has been tormented with conservatism. British political leaders, electorate, even the academia were oriented against risky policies, avoiding initiating invasive ventures, and joining only after benefits had been secured."<sup>53</sup> Although it is to expect that tory governments like the one of Prime Minister David Cameron are keen to preserve aspects of the conservative tradition, the impact of Blair's years in office on the strategic environment for his successors is tremendous. Following more than influencing George W. Bush's war on Iraq, the UK has participated in creating the threats of the 21st century. Addressing these threats requires at least an alteration of the traditional conservatism.

The UK's colonial past, coupled with its institutional embedding in the international community, has created a sense of responsibility and global outlook in the minds of the British public and political elites regarding the UK's international responsibilities for peacekeeping and crisis management. There are no obvious 'no go areas' for the UK armed forces in the way that the German armed forces are constrained.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Skemperis, Georgios (2003): Strategic Culture in Post-War Europe, ELIAMEP Postgraduate Notes, 2005, Issue 1, p. 10

<sup>54</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2004): Continuity in the face of upheaval – British Strategic Culture and the impact of the Blair government, Special Issue, European Security - Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski (eds), Frank Cass., 2004, p.9

## 2. Strategic preferences for the United Kingdom

### Conditions for the use of force – 3

Blair's interventionism and classical Tory conservatism differ essentially in the question of pre-emptive strikes and the justification for conducting combat forces. Cameron's conservatism is more likely to considerate all possible consequences and decide more pragmatically. It can be inferred that *British decision-makers will apply military force if it serves the British scope of interest and potential consequences are perceived as justified by potential outcomes.*

### Military Strategy - 2

The element of conservatism, provided in the observed period, promotes strategic considerations with a low risk tolerance towards casualties and costs. Still, the United Kingdom is willing to raise the risk tolerance to small scale if British interest is at stake. It can be inferred that *British decision-takers will choose restraint military options to avoid casualties and costs.*

### Level of cooperation – 3

The United Kingdom has a differentiated look on the European Integration and seems to cooperate just in the case it serves its interest. Of particular importance is the strong alliance with the USA. It can be inferred, that *British decision-makers work to together with particular states, most preferably via the transatlantic link.*

### International/domestic authorization requirements – 2

The notion of conservatism implies that the use of British force and military personnel has to be justified adequately in front of the public discourse and the parliament. Internationally, the United Kingdom as a member of the Security Council is mostly unrestrained, in particular cases is US support necessary. Thus, it can be inferred that *the United Kingdom has high domestic and low international authorization requirements.*

## C. The Strategic Culture of France

### 1. Essential Elements of France' Strategic Culture

The French strategic culture was fundamentally shaped in two periods after the Second World War. While the basic foundational elements were laid in France' so-called fourth republic in the time right after WW II, the French Strategic Culture as a stable notion was implemented in France' fifth republic, when Charles de Gaulle, arguably the most influential Frenchman in France post-war foreign policy, consolidated these elements into a national strategy.<sup>55</sup> Philip H. Gordon states that although the vision of Charles de Gaulle was the continuation of the fourth republic's vision of France' defence, the Gaullist years are still unique, long lasting, clearly definable and highly consequential.<sup>56</sup>

'Grandeur' is one of the terms that frequently appear when French Foreign Policy standpoints or, more negatively interpreted, French nationalism is described. In the opening lines of 'Memoires de guerre', Charles de Gaulle states that for him 'France is not really herself unless in the front rank; that only vast enterprises are capable of counterbalancing the ferments of dispersal which are inherent in her people; that our country as it is, surrounded by others, as they are, must aim high and hold itself straight, on pain of mortal danger. In short, to my mind, France cannot be France without greatness.'<sup>57</sup>

Although introducing the notion of 'greatness' into French strategic culture, Charles de Gaulle never defined how 'grandeur' actually translates in behavior. This task was left to historians of his presidential heritage. 'Grandeur' can be best summarized as the will to be an ambitious, universal and inventive player in global politics and defend the independence, the honor and the rank of the nation. Still, Grandeur should imply

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<sup>55</sup> Skemperis, Georgios (2003): Strategic Culture in Post-War Europe, ELIAMEP Postgraduate Notes, 2005, Issue 1, p. 19

<sup>56</sup> Gordon, Philip H. (1993): A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and Gaullist Legacy, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 6

<sup>57</sup> De Gaulle, Charles (1954): Mémoires de guerre – L'Appel : 1940-1942 (tome I), éd. Plon, Paris, 1954; cited in Mahoney (2000) : De Gaulle: Statesmanship, Grandeur, and Modern Democracy, 2000, p.16

unlimited imperialistic ambitions as it did the notion of empire which roots back to the pre-war era and was excessively present in the fourth republic.<sup>58</sup>

In summary, the ‘grandeur’ aspect of France’ strategic culture entails in its quintessence the idea that France is an regionally and globally leading security actor that is independent from multilateral security frameworks in its capability to provide for his own interest. France nuclear deterrence policy is one example for this independence, as well as national interest politics in its sphere of influence (e.g. ex-colonial Africa) that have been perceived as neo-colonialist policies.<sup>59</sup>

A second aspect of the French strategic culture is it challenging American hegemony, an element also constituted in Gaullism. In an in-depth analysis of French anti-Americanism, Sophie Maunier identifies distinctive forms of French anti-Americanism.<sup>60</sup> Although a fundamental aspect of Gaullism, the French anti-American sentiments last already for centuries and are deeply rooted within political and cultural elite alike. The French political critique circles around the power ambitions of the United States with inherent hypocrisy regarding the liberal values and the disregard over territorial sovereignty of states.<sup>61</sup> Also, the cultural influence of the US on Europe is met with deep skepticism.<sup>62</sup> This cross-contextual anti-Americanism manifested in French opposition and critique to US foreign policy in numerous occasions throughout the post-war era, dominated by Gaullist France challenging US foreign policy. Opposing the war on Iraq is commonly seen as the model case for this anti-Americanism shown in political decisions. Although French anti-Americanism was used to legitimize the standpoint and wholeheartedly embraced by the decision making sphere, common sense and the lack of direct national interest contributed significantly to the opposition. Other occasion like the heavy critique on the US approach in

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<sup>58</sup> Mahoney, Daniel J. (2000): *De Gaulle: Statesmanship, Grandeur, and Modern Democracy*, Transaction Publishers, 2000, p. 17

<sup>59</sup> Mesfin, Berouk (2010): *Only a Folie de Grandeur? Understanding French policy in Africa*, African Security Review 17: 1 Short, 2010, p. 4

<sup>60</sup> Meunier, Sophie (2005): *The Distinctiveness of French anti-Americanism*, Chapter prepared for the book *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, edited by Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, Cornell University Press, 2007

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.16

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17

aftermath of the Tsunami 2004, criticizing that US interest motivated rather than humanitarian aspects, the opposition of the Vietnam War, the culture-driven public debates about the Google Print project and the most recent concerns regarding the transatlantic free trade agreement, serve as self-evident cases of recent anti-Americanism.<sup>63</sup>

The third element, whose foundation lies within the 4th republic but was fully embraced by de Gaulle's fifth republic, was the reconciliation with Germany and the attempt to embed the neighbor into a French-led European framework. The idea behind the reconciliation on the French side - and in de Gaulle's mind in particular - was to bind the threat that Germany was still believed to constitute at that time within a multilateral framework and to benefit from Germany's vast economic potential in a French-led European economic and defense integration.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.2

<sup>64</sup> Skemperis, Georgios (2003): Strategic Culture in Post-War Europe, ELIAMEP Postgraduate Notes, 2005, Issue 1, p. 20

## 2. Strategic preferences for France

### Conditions for the use of force – 3

The notion of grandeur implies that the French armed forces have to be at any given moment capable of ensuring the security of the nation and preserving the French interest, independent from any given multilateral security framework. It can be inferred that *French decision makers will choose to deploy the military force when French vital interests or the security of its global standing are at stake.*

### Military Strategy - 3

Likewise the notion of grandeur sets the course for this variable, in that France has an exceptional, leading status in the world. This standing is to preserve and defend even if costs considerably high. It can be inferred that *French decision-makers will choose offensive strategies and embrace the risk as long as it defends France' standing in the world.*

### Level of cooperation - 3

Although a driving force behind European Integration, French cooperation is mainly guided by an avoidance of the US-led NATO framework due to the traditional anti-Americanism. It can be inferred that *cooperation happens context-dependent along French interest and is usually the cooperation with particular states, especially Germany.*

### International/domestic authorization requirements - 4

The notion of Grandeur is to a large extent socially integrated. French public discourse does therefore only marginally restrain the use of force. From the international perspective is France as a permanent Member of the UNSC able to conduct military on its own behalf and would have to face rather mild diplomatic consequences if not acting in line with the whole UNSC. It can be inferred that *France' authorization requirements are low both from a domestic and international point of view.*

D. Graphical illustration of the Nations' paradigm

proclivity to use of force	1	2	3	4
Conditions for the use of force		Germany	United Kingdom, France	
Military Strategy	Germany	United Kingdom	France	
Level of cooperation		Germany	United Kingdom, France	
International/domestic authorisation requirements	Germany	United Kingdom		France

## IV) Strategic Culture in Practice

### A. Case Study Libya

#### 1. Germany's strategic behavior in Libya

‘Decisions on the use of military force are always extremely difficult to take. We have carefully considered the options of using military force, its implications as well as its limitations. We see great risks. The likelihood of large-scale loss of life should not be underestimated. If the steps proposed turn out to be ineffective, we see the danger of being drawn into a protracted military conflict that would affect the wider region. We should not enter a military confrontation on the optimistic assumption that quick results with few casualties will be achieved. Germany, therefore, has decided not to support a military option as foreseen particularly in OP 4 and OP 8 of the resolution. Furthermore, Germany will not contribute to such a military effort with its own forces.’<sup>65</sup>

With this statement, the German ambassador to the United Nations, Peter Wittig, declared Germany's abstention from voting on UN Security Council Resolution 1973. Entailed in this statement, is the assessment of the conditions by German foreign policy elites regarding the possible military strike. The statement is emphasizing especially Germany's very low risk tolerance, given that an intervention would still lie within the expected range of conditions where the use of force as a humanitarian intervention is a justifiable option.

For Germany's internal decision-making process leading to the abstention, Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle has been the acknowledged driving force.<sup>66</sup> The day after the passing of UNSC Resolution 1973, he further emphasized the awareness of dramatic risks as driving factor by stating that ‘we are still very skeptical about the option of a

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<sup>65</sup> Wittig, Peter (2011): ‘Explanation of Vote by Ambassador Wittig on the Security Council Resolution on Libya’, 17th march 2011, cited in Miskimmon, Alistair (2012): *German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis*, p. 392

<sup>66</sup> Hansel, Mischa; Oppermann Kai (2013): *Counterfactual Reasoning in Foreign Policy Analysis: The Cases of German Non-participation in the Iraq and Libya Interventions of 2003 and 2011*, Paper to be presented at the 63rd PSA Annual International Conference “The Party's over?”, Cardiff, march 2013, p. 22



military intervention in Libya also included in the resolution. We see considerable dangers and risks in this. Therefore we cannot agree to this part of the resolution. German soldiers will not participate in a military operation in Libya.’<sup>67</sup>

In a session of the German Parliament, he showed himself in particular skeptical about the effectiveness of a no-fly zone in ‘in a country like Libya [...] which is approximately four times bigger than the Federal Republic of Germany’. Westerwelle raised the possibility that the intervention may ‘weaken rather than strengthen the democratic movements across North Africa’<sup>68</sup> and answered to the question of a German journalist, if political pressure is of any matter to a crazy dictator: “The question is, if Germany fights a war in Libya, with international participation [...] and I won’t accept, that there is a war fought in Libya with German soldiers [...] Because what if the no fly zone, that means airstrikes, proves to be unsuccessful, with ground forces further approaching? Are we going to go there then with our own ground forces like it happened in Iraq? I want to prevent Germany from such an asymmetrical situation”.<sup>69</sup>

The impression of Germany pushing out of circle of the Western security framework - considering the rigor with which it justified its abstention - was even enforced when Defense Minister Thomas de Maiziere indirectly accused the British and French of a lack of planning, saying that: ‘I believe that each military operation must be analyzed to determine whether its goals can be achieved with appropriate means and within an appropriate time frame as well as how one gets out at the end. Every one.’<sup>70</sup>

Over the course of the conflict however, Germany has not been sidelined constantly. Germany sought the cooperation with all possible allies and international organizations, promoting thoroughly their understanding of international law. Guido Westerwelle was keen to ensure that he welcomes UNSC Resolution 1970 as the ‘hoped-for clear response from the international community to the brutality of the Libyan leadership’<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011a): Official Statement 17.3.2011, Auswärtiges Amt

<sup>68</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011b): Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 17/95, 16 March 2011, cited in Hansel, Mischa; Oppermann Kai (2013): Counterfactual Reasoning in Foreign Policy Analysis: The Cases of German Non-participation in the Iraq and Libya Interventions of 2003 and 2011, p. 26

<sup>69</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011c): Außenminister Westerwelle im Interview mit dem Deutschlandfunk zu Libyen, Auswärtiges Amt, translation by author

<sup>70</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2012): German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis, p. 393

<sup>71</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011d): Official Statement 27.2.2011, Auswärtiges Amt

as well as EU Council Decision 2011/137/CFSP and added that they are both decisions ‘that we worked actively to help bring about.’<sup>72</sup> Only one week before UNSC Resolution 1973, Westerwelle announced that ‘the international community must increase the pressure on the Libyan leadership. The UN Security Council has to take another look at the situation in Libya. Additional targeted sanctions and an end to all payments to the Qadhafi regime need to be urgent items on the EU and UN agendas. Every action beyond the scope of targeted sanctions must be authorized by the UN Security Council and can only proceed with the approval of partners in the region.’<sup>73</sup> Demonstrating the strong cooperationist tradition of German Foreign Policy, Germany was pushing the topic forward in the international agenda as long as a political solution was possible. When a military strike became probable, Germany backed out of the international community. This indicates that the extreme risk aversion of German decision-makers is the dominant factor, surely more dominant than other yet observed notions of strategic culture like seeking international cooperation and the basic willingness to apply in international crisis management.

Chancellor Angela Merkel had left designing an adequate response to Libya to Guido Westerwelle and his Federal Foreign Office and made clear in an interview right after the abstention that her Foreign Minister had acted in line with her position on the matter. In an interview on March 17th, she said that the abstention does not signify not acting and defended the economic sanctions imposed. Regarding a military intervention she still offered a somewhat different perspective, saying that she is ‘very skeptical about a military intervention and that I, as chancellor, can’t lead German Forces into a mission with highly uncertain prospects’.<sup>74</sup> When asked at what point she would consider military action, she answered: “We defined that point very clearly in Afghanistan for example. The terrorism planned and armored there is a threat for Europe. It can be said beyond any doubt that in Afghanistan our security is defended. That reasoning does not apply for Libya.”<sup>75</sup> Next to the low risk tolerance, Chancellor Merkel directly refers to an aspect defined in the strategic culture that has to be

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<sup>72</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011e): Official Statement 07.03.2011, Auswärtiges Amt

<sup>73</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2011f): Official Statement 28.2.2011, Auswärtiges Amt

<sup>74</sup> Merkel, Angela (2011): Interview with Saarbrücker Zeitung, Bundeskanzleramt

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

questioned at this point. Is a humanitarian intervention to stop grave violations of human rights really a part of the strategic culture? The Chancellor speaks in clear terms of the defense of the security at home and the Defense Minister states that ‘the responsibility to protect a country’s civilian population if its government violates human rights is firmly anchored in international law. But does that mean we are allowed to intervene? Or does that mean we’re actually required to?’<sup>76</sup> It appears that in terms of the conditions for the use of force, condition 2 only applies when condition 1 is fulfilled coevally.

With Westerwelle pushing for more pressure on the Gaddafi Regime and keeping military options on the table if legitimized by the UN Security, Germany’s final decision to even abstain from vote is a memorable one. Given the possibility that Germany could have symbolically participated through logistic or medical contributions, Germany decision came as a surprise and imposed the German government to severe criticism from EU and NATO partners. While the strict ‘no’ to the deployment of the military, especially to combat troops can very well be explained with Germany’s very low risk tolerance, the abstention from vote cannot. Alan Miskimmon argues that Berlin could have been too sure that the US would not participate either.<sup>77</sup> The abstention is also frequently put into the context of two important regional elections.<sup>78</sup> The abstention from vote along China and Russia was in the end maybe just ‘the biggest foreign policy debacle since the founding of the Federal Republic’<sup>79</sup>, a mistake committed by an inexperienced Foreign Minister.

In sum, the strategic culture is profoundly constituted in the strategic behavior of Germany in the Libya crisis, confirming the assumptions about behavior made in the previous chapter. The extremely low risk tolerance has shown to be the most dominant. It has a measurable influence on the conditions under which the use of force is applied

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<sup>76</sup> Miskimmon, Alister (2012): German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis, p. 393

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 395

<sup>78</sup> See: Hansel, Mischa; Oppermann Kai (2013): Counterfactual Reasoning in Foreign Policy Analysis: The Cases of German Non-participation in the Iraq and Libya Interventions of 2003 and 2011, Paper to be presented at the 63rd PSA Annual International Conference “The Party’s over?”

<sup>79</sup> Fischer, Joschka (2011): Ein einziges Debakel, Spiegel-Gespräch, Der Spiegel, 35/2011, cited in Hansel, Mischa; Oppermann Kai (2013): Counterfactual Reasoning in Foreign Policy Analysis: The Cases of German Non-participation in the Iraq and Libya Interventions of 2003 and 2011, p. 3

and the power to outplay Germany's emphasis on cooperating with international organizations and their allied states.

## 2. The UK's strategic behavior in Libya

„Tonight British forces are in action over Libya. They are part of an international coalition that come together to enforce the will of the United Nations and protect the Libyan people. [...] What we are doing is necessary, it is legal and it is right. It is necessary because together with other we should prevent him from using his military against his own people. It is legal, because we have the backing of the United Nations Security Council and also of the Arab League and many others. And it is also right, because I believe we should not stand aside when this dictator murders his own people [...] I believe that we should all be confident that what we are doing is in an just cause and in our nation's interest”<sup>80</sup>

With this announcement from the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, David Cameron declared that from now on airstrikes of British forces were enforcing UN Security Council Resolution 1973. Cameron makes yet a clear reference to the conditions for the use of force in this case by highlighting the moral interest as well as the national interest. While the moral interest is a universal one, Cameron's referral to the national interest indicates that military force is an adequate instrument of foreign policy that should be applied when Britain's national interest is at stake. This national interest was further explained when David Cameron was speaking in front of the House of Commons on March 18th, justifying Britain's profound support for UN Security Council Resolution 1973: “Let us be clear where our interests lie. In this country we know what Colonel Gaddafi is capable of. We should not forget his support for the biggest terrorist atrocity on British soil. We simply cannot have a situation where a failed pariah state festers on Europe's southern border. This would potentially threaten our security, push people across the Mediterranean and create a more dangerous and uncertain world for Britain and for all our allies as well as for the people of Libya”<sup>81</sup> Foreign Minister William Hague specified this opinion, when he showed himself concerned that ‘after these recent events

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<sup>80</sup> Cameron, David (2011a): Statement outside 10 Downing Street, The Telegraph, 20.3.2011

<sup>81</sup> Cameron, David (2011b): Speech to the House of Commons, BBC online, 18.03.2011

with Gaddafi running amok exacting reprisals on his own people, estranged from the rest of the world, as a potential source for terrorism in the future, that would be a danger to the national interest of this country’<sup>82</sup>

The aspect of moral and national interest was embedded in a narrative of ‘three criteria which I set out consistently out over the last three weeks’<sup>83</sup>, that have been loosely adopted by Cameron when he made the speech in front of 10 Downing Street on the 20th. According to William Hague, when commenting on the vote in favor for Resolution 1973, these include ‘a demonstrable need - and the actions and statements of the Gaddafi regime in recent days have provided that demonstrable need. Secondly a clear legal basis; this is the clear legal basis in the Resolution of the United Nations Security Council. And, third, broad support from within the region itself and that is evident in the statement of the Arab League and in the readiness to participate in a no fly zone, for instance, by members of the Arab League.’<sup>84</sup> Next to the interest, the aspect of authorization and cooperation plays a main role in the decision-justification of Britain’s decision-making sphere. Given the fact that a unilateral military intervention might have only caused criticism from the countries that in general refused military action, the consequences for Britain within the international community would have been marginal, if not consequent action would have raised applause within its allies. The repeated mentioning of the UN as ‘the world’s governing body, the clearest possible resolution, the clearest possible legal basis of action’ and the involvement of the Arab World, emphasizing that this is ‘the Arab world asking us to act with them’<sup>85</sup>, can much more be related to the domestic requirements. The interventionist Blair years had caused frustrating results, the need for international legitimation and incorporation is therefore high. Hence decision-makers were especially eager to ensure that ‘the Arab League unanimously appealed for a resolution and a no fly zone’ and the Resolution 1973 does ‘not empower us to implement regime change it empowers us to protect and

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<sup>82</sup> Hague, William (2011b): "UK is at the forefront of the international effort to isolate Qadhafi regime", 15.03.2011, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

<sup>83</sup> Hague, William (2011d): Foreign Secretary William Hague discusses the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on BBC Radio 5, 20.3.2011

<sup>84</sup> Hague, William (2011a): Foreign Secretary comments on UN vote on Libya no fly zone, 18.03.2011, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

<sup>85</sup> Cameron, David (2011b): Speech to the House of Commons, BBC online, 18.03.2011

safeguard the civilian population so that they can, hopefully, in the future determine their own future’

Connected to the international legitimization, is the risk awareness that is demonstrated by the decision-makers. Cameron answered in an interview that ‘of course I had to think extremely carefully before taking these steps’ but that ‘it does seem to me that it is right for Britain not to play some disproportioned part, not the grand stand, not something we’re not, but play our part with our allies, the American, the French, the Arab countries’. As expected from the strategic culture of Britain, the decision-makers did not push forward an ‘all in’ approach including ground forces in order to end the conflict as soon as somehow possible but kept closely to the objectives of the UN Resolution. As William Hague confirmed in an interview right after the actions had begun: “Well here the UN resolution is also clear because it, while it does mandate [a no fly zone, enforcing cease fire], it’s very clear that there must not be a foreign occupation force in any part of Libya. So it does not support the idea of a ground invasion of Libya, let’s be clear about that.” Instead, military was used in a cost- and casualty-effective way to ensure an outcome of the civil-war in favor of the rebels.<sup>86</sup>

In the end, the military contribution of Britain was composed of a formation of Typhoon fighters and one of Tornados G4 aircrafts, that were supported by several intelligence and tanker aircrafts with transport aircrafts to follow.<sup>87</sup>

The British Government was eager to demonstrate how little effort has achieved so much in terms of ending the violence and avoiding civilian casualties. Foreign Minister William Hague published a letter he had received from ‘a member of the local council in Misurata, thanking Britain and the allies for their action[...] for coming to the aid of the Libyan people, as he puts it, in their most needy of hours’. Hague also particularly mentions that the local council could ‘testify for the effectiveness and the accuracy of those strikes and confirm that there has been not a single case of civilian injury let alone death in and around Misurata’<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Hague, William (2011d): Foreign Secretary William Hague discusses the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on BBC Radio 5, 20.3.2011

<sup>87</sup> Ministry of Defense (2011): Operations in Libya having a very real effect, 22.03.2011

<sup>88</sup> Hague, William (2011c): Foreign Secretary statement following the London Conference on Libya, 29.03.2011

In sum, the strategic culture shaped the strategic behavior to an extent that allows relating the decision-making process to the British strategic culture. The government has justified thoroughly, why in their eyes the use of force is appropriate and frequently pointed out the national interest that the operation entails. The conservative Tory government shaped a military contribution containing very low risk for British soldiers and a proportioned use of its vast military power to reach the objectives announced. Interestingly, British decision-making sphere put high emphasis on the legality of the mission and the embracing of the Arab world as partner and solicitant for the operation. As mentioned above, the United Kingdom was not necessarily required to have all possible legitimation, but demonstrated the legality as domestic authorization requirement. It is very likely, that the interventionism of Tony Blair, especially the Iraq war, has produced a recent change in British strategic culture towards more international cooperation. In the Libya case however, more international outlook is difficult to imply, as the US were crucially involved conducting the first attacks under their command.<sup>89</sup>

### 3. France' strategic behavior in Libya

“France solemnly calls on all members of the Security Council to support this initiative and to adopt the draft resolution. If it is adopted, we are prepared to act with Member States — in particular Arab States — that wish to do so. We do not have much time left. It is a matter of days, perhaps even hours. Every hour and day that goes by means a further clampdown and repression for the freedom-loving civilian population, in particular the people of Benghazi.”<sup>90</sup>

Alain Juppe's urgent call in front of the UN Security Council for support on the resolution that France had drafted together with the UK and the US, is another sign for the role in front-row when the situation in Libya made a military intervention more and more necessary and likely. French president Sarkozy was the first western leader who

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<sup>89</sup> Hallams, Ellen; Schreer, Benjamin (2012): Towards a 'post-American' alliance? NATO burden-sharing after Libya, *International Affairs*, 88: 2 (2012), pp. 321-323

<sup>90</sup> Juppe, Alain (2011): Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, 17 March 2011

discussed the possibility of launching military strikes against Qaddafi ‘to assume its role, its role before history in stopping his murderous madness.’<sup>91</sup> Already at the end of February 2011, when the UK was still seeking more profound international support, not seeing the point for military action already come, Nicolas Sarkozy called for a no-fly zone to ‘prevent the use of that country's warplanes against its population’<sup>92</sup>. As the situation worsened in the beginning of March 2011, President Sarkozy was also the first western leader to discuss a ‘strategic plan that includes striking an extremely limited number of points which are the source of the most deadly operations’<sup>93</sup>. The reasoning of the French government solely concentrated on the humanitarian, moral aspect, highlighted by Foreign Minister Alain Juppe: “Colonel Al-Qadhafi’s troops pursue their violent conquest of liberated cities and territories. We must not give free rein to warmongers; we must not abandon civilian populations, the victims of brutal repression, to their fate; we must not allow the rule of law and international morality to be trampled underfoot.”<sup>94</sup> France had made very clear, very early, that the country saw the conditions for the use of force as fulfilled in the Libyan case and that France is ready to lead the international community in such an effort. The French exceptionalism constituted in the notion of Grandeur can be observed in this willingness to counter grave violations of human rights as a powerful protector of international law. That the protection entails the use of military force has hereby not been questioned at all, confirming that France is willing to take offensive measures when serving its interest, although the interest is in the rhetoric of a wholly humanitarian nature.

In this effort, France didn’t take much regard of their partners. Although seeking the legitimization by international law and regional powers, France unilaterally pushed the agenda forward towards decisive actions against Qaddafi. The best example for this unilateral engagement was the recognition of the National Libyan Council (NLC). On March 10th, President Sarkozy welcomed representatives of the NLC and declared that

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<sup>91</sup> Sarkozy, Nicolas (2011a): Sarkozy Puts France at Vanguard of West’s War Effort, New York Times, 20.03.2012

<sup>92</sup> Sarkozy, Nicolas (2011b): Libya no-fly zone call by France fails to get David Cameron's backing, The Guardian, 23.02.2011

<sup>93</sup> Sarkozy, Nicolas (2011c): Libya: Nicolas Sarkozy to urge 'targeted air strikes', The Telegraph, 10.03.2011

<sup>94</sup> Juppe, Alain (2011): Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, 17 March 2011



he regards ‘the NLC as Libya’s legitimate representative’<sup>95</sup> This untuned push forward that was accompanied by criticism of his European partners, shows how eager France was to take lead in this crisis, even if it would mean alienating key allies and acting unilaterally. It confirms the insights of strategic culture and goes even beyond, drifting towards non-cooperation. Another aspect regarding the way France cooperated with its allies, was the deep skepticism towards a political NATO engagement. When David Cameron announced that operational command would soon shift to NATO, Nicolas Sarkozy reasoned that ‘it would be playing into the hands of Colonel Qaddafi to say NATO is taking over’ because ‘NATO cannot swallow the United Arab Emirates and Qatar’, therefore is ‘the NATO issue a practical and not a political one. The political coordination is with the 11-member coalition’.<sup>96</sup> By highlighting the NATO’s difficult relation with the Arab World, the behavior shows the expected tendency away from the transatlantic security framework.

The promotion of France as the leading force of the international community against Qaddafi, included the authorization of the UN Security Council and generally positive reactions to the plans on behalf of the Arab World. When speaking in front of the UN Security Council, Alain Juppe emphasized that ‘the international community has reacted in near unanimity’ and that ‘regional organizations have [also] expressed themselves forcefully. First and foremost, the League of Arab States called on the Security Council [...] to establish a no-fly zone’<sup>97</sup>. Although authorization requirements for the use of force are both domestically and internationally low, France showed that the confirmation of the UN Security Council and the embracement of regional powers are key requirements for the use of force.

In sum can be observed that France’ strategic culture is constituted in its strategic behavior during crucial moments of the Libyan crisis. France saw very early the conditions for the use fulfilled and demonstrated great eagerness in leading the international community to fierce response to the crimes the Qaddafi regime was committing. France behavior towards its key allies was marked by the search for

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<sup>95</sup> Sarkozy, Nicolas (2011d): Libya: France recognises rebels as government, BBC online, 10.03.2011

<sup>96</sup> Sarkozy, Nicolas (2011e): Libya: Nicolas Sarkozy reignites row over Nato military role, The Guardian, 25.03.2011

<sup>97</sup> Juppe, Alain (2011): Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, 17 March 2011

international confirmation but also the unilateral pursue of their own interest with a political distance to the NATO. This is in line with the expectations, but goes beyond that, with a tendency towards unilateralism.

## B. Case Study Mali

### 1. Germany's strategic behavior in Mali

When it became clear, that the Malian forces would not be able to withstand the fast approaching Islamist and Tuareg forces and France started its ad-hoc intervention, Germany's security policy decision-making sphere, hurried to demonstrate full political support for France' decision to answer the call of Malian government. In various statements, Merkel, Westerwelle and de Maziere, justified the intervention in front of the international law, the EU interests and the strategic rationale. Defense Minister de Maziere said in an interview three days after the intervention: "France' intervention with military forces is consequent and correct. The Malian army was not able to stop the terrorists approaching from the north. This is an essential necessity though and declared goal of France' intervention. France is acting according the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the international law."<sup>98</sup> In an official statement immediately issued after the official beginning of Operation Serval, on the 11th of January, Guido Westerwelle had already confirmed that Operation Serval is legitimized by international law and strategic necessity, adding in a foot note that the French government had previously informed Germany.<sup>99</sup> The reason for this was the statement of Guido Westerwelle earlier at the same day, when in an assessment of the situation in Mali, he had not lost a single word about a possible military intervention from Europe and displayed the position that Germany has had for most of the course of this conflict: "I am very concerned about the further escalation of the situation in Mali. [...]It is right, to push on the efforts to deploy the African intervention force with all given dispatch. [...] Addressing the security situation, the EU has signaled the willingness to support

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<sup>98</sup> De Maizière, Thomas (2013a): „Den Einfluss des Westens nicht überschätzen“, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 13.01.2013

<sup>99</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2013a): Federal Foreign Minister Westerwelle on France's intervention in Mali, 11.01.2013, Auswärtiges Amt

the training of the Malian forces, if – and only if – when the needed conditions are given.”<sup>100</sup> Following these policy standpoints, Germany has acted with a cautious strategy regarding the prospect of a European (or German) military contribution but not in a countervailing fashion as it did in Libyan crises. Germany supported the drafts for the resolutions 2071 and 2085, giving a broad UN mandate to African Union and ECOWAS deploying troops and was also engaged and committed to the creation of the CSDP Training Mission, which was on the agenda since October 2012. On the necessity of action on the side of the international community, Angela Merkel noted that ‘free democratic states cannot accept that the North (of Mali) turns into a safe haven for international terrorism. We know that Malian forces are too weak to act. They need assistance.’<sup>101</sup> Defense Minister de Maiziere showed he was confident, that Germany is ready to meet expectations and responsibilities in international crisis management, including a possible German military contribution. Referring to Germany’s position as one of the biggest economies in the world, he stated: “If an engagement is the political will, necessity or decision, the *Bundeswehr* has to be capable of and ready for military operations, and it has to be ready fast and without long preparations.”<sup>102</sup> Still, the decision-making sphere made very clear that a participation of combat forces would be in no way an option, in contrary to other military assets like training staff and logistic material.

After a phone conversation between Guido Westerwelle and French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, the Federal Foreign office issued a press release, saying: “Foreign Minister Westerwelle conveyed the German Government’s offer to examine together with the French Government how Germany, while not sending combat troops, can support the French mission in political, logistical, medical and humanitarian terms.”<sup>103</sup> Yet, in October after UN Security council Resolution 2071 had been passed, Westerwelle mentioned to the press that ‘Germany is not going to deliver weapons to

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<sup>100</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2013b): Federal Foreign Minister Westerwelle on the situation in Mali, Auswärtiges Amt, 11.03.2013

<sup>101</sup> Merkel, Angela (2012): Kampf gegen Islamisten: Merkel gibt grünes Licht für Mali-Mission, spiegel.de, 22.10.2012

<sup>102</sup> de Maiziere, Thomas (2013b): Zwei Transall-Maschinen für Mali, Federal Defense Office, 16.01.2013

<sup>103</sup> Auswärtiges Amt (2013b): Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle has telephone conversation with French Foreign Minister Fabius about the situation in Mali, 14.01.2013

Mali. We also won't send combat troops. It is about training and instruction. It's about technical, financial and humanitarian support for an African Mission'<sup>104</sup>.

Again, the German reservations to the use of their own force have prevailed in the debate. Although not sidelined this time, it was obvious that the German idea of humanitarian intervention is mostly the idea of politically supporting other countries intervening. The risks of a possible asymmetric situation in West Africa with German combat troops involved have dominated the military discourse, with high ranking Bundeswehr –officials concerned 'that the Bundeswehr is once again thoughtlessly and irresponsibly sent into a mission that is part of fragmentary political conception. The term training disguises what the Bundeswehr could face in Mali and that is a direct involvement into warlike fights. The soldiers rightfully ask themselves if they are again sent to the desert for alliance policies'<sup>105</sup>. This mentioned alliance policy as an aspect of German Foreign Policy is maybe the most significant one when examining the German relation to the use of force. As Germany's strategic culture tends to embrace international organizations and the wide range of their allies, the decisions taken by those allies and organizations are supported and promoted until the very moment when decision-making turns into action. At this moment, Germany's actual conditions for the use of force (immediate threat, defense of national and ally territory) dominate the cooperation aspect. Although it did not reach the extent as it did in the Libya-crisis, this element has been consistent across the cases.

Also did the domestic authorization requirements again prevent a more relevant contribution. The sending of two Transall transport aircrafts to transport ECOWAS-troops to Mali was not necessarily designed to play a part in the intervention, but due to the fact that this is 'a measure below the barrier of a measure that requires a mandate of the German Bundestag.'<sup>106</sup>

For Germany's participation in the CSDP Mission EUTM Mali, the EU could agree on, on the 17th of January, and the sending of a special tanker aircraft following a French request, such a mandate became necessary and approved on the 28th of February in the German Parliament. In total, Germany's military was able to deploy Transall aircrafts,

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<sup>104</sup> Westerwelle, Guido (2012): Keine Kampftruppen, aber Training für Mali, tagesschau, 23.10.2012

<sup>105</sup> Wüstner, Andre (2012): Militäreinsatz in Mali beunruhigt Bundeswehr, Zeit Online, 26.10.2012

<sup>106</sup> de Maiziere, Thomas (2013b): Zwei Transall-Maschinen für Mali, Federal Defense Office, 16.01.2013

four A310 tankers and contingent of military personnel of 330 consisting of 180 soldiers for the training mission and 150 as logistical transport assistance.<sup>107</sup>

In sum, Germany's strategic culture of extreme constraint regarding the use of military force and the extreme low-risk tolerance has been consistent across the cases. Also, the decision-makers struggle to meet on the one side the expectations of the international community and the domestic expectations to refuse using military force as foreign policy element. This contradiction has led to a remarkable critique of humanitarian organizations in Germany. They accuse Foreign Minister Westerwelle of mixing humanitarian assistance with military contribution in order sell Germany's logistical, financial and medical support as meeting Germany's responsibilities to militarily act in a humanitarian crisis.<sup>108</sup>

## 2. The UK's strategic behavior in Mali

“The situation in Mali is a serious concern for the UK. It would not be in our interests to allow a terrorist haven to develop in Northern Mali. As a responsible member of the Security Council, we must support the region in limiting the danger of instability in that part of Africa, threatening UK interests. [...] I would like to reassure the House that British forces will not undertake a combat role in Mali. The Prime Minister has authorized a limited logistical deployment following a direct request from one of our closest allies.[...] We must not allow northern Mali to become a springboard for extremism, and create instability in the wider West African region. The ferocity and fanaticism of the extremists in northern Mali must not be allowed to sweep unchecked into the country's capital. France, which has an historic relationship with Mali, is quite rightly in the lead.”<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Deutsche Presse Agentur (2013): Deutsche Soldaten nach Mali: Kabinett plant mit 330 Mann, ntv.de, 18.02.2013

<sup>108</sup> Medecines sans frontieres (2013): Mali: Medizinische Hilfsorganisationen werfen Außenminister Westerwelle Missbrauch humanitärer Hilfe vor, Pressemitteilung 30.01.2013

<sup>109</sup> Simmonds, Mark (2013): Foreign Office Minister statement on Mali, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 14.1.2013

Summarizing the UK government's standpoint on the French Intervention in Mali, Foreign Undersecretary Mark Simmonds demonstrated differences in the opinion of the decision-makings sphere across the two cases. While in Libya the UK saw itself required to participate and take a leading role in action, the responsibility for a military intervention was in Mali delegated to France, emphasizing its colonial past in West Africa. In explaining its political support and military contribution in form of logistical support and intelligence exchange, the British decision-justification reminded a lot of the German response.

In a first reaction David Cameron praised the French intervention, highlighting that 'there is a very dangerous Islamist regime allied to al-Qaeda in control of the north of that country' and because this threat was now pushing forward to the south 'we should support the action the French have taken'<sup>110</sup>. For this reason, 'we were first out of the blocks, as it were to say to the French, we'll help you, we'll work with you and we'll share what intelligence we have with you and try to help you with what you are doing'<sup>111</sup>. Still, as in the German case, a role of British forces in the combats was consequently denied from the beginning of the intervention, with David Cameron and William Hague jointly confirming that 'no British forces will be involved in a combat role at all.'<sup>112</sup> This should be mainly due to the action that France had already taken and was inevitably forced to presume whether additional combat forces of the international community would accompany them or not. After the UN Security Council Resolution 2085 had passed, David Cameron's special representative to the Sahel, including Mali, showed himself concerned that 'if we don't act, we send a message to all secessionist groups that the international community turns a blind eye to states within states [and] there is very real threat of further attacks in Africa and, eventually, Europe, the Middle East and beyond' and added that 'I'm not going in with a closed mind to rule anything out. We will do our best to play our part. I haven't ruled anything out.'<sup>113</sup> It can be argued, that if the request to the French government on behalf of the Malian

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<sup>110</sup> Cameron, David (2013a): Mali: No UK army boots on the ground – Cameron, BBC Online, 14.1.2013

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2013): UK to provide logistical military assistance to Mali, 12.1.2013

<sup>113</sup> O'Brien, Stephen (2012): Britain to support African force in bid to recapture northern Mali, The Telegraph, 23.10.2012

Government would not have occurred, that for British decision-makers a military intervention would have lied within a broader scope of options, dependent on the development of the situation. As this outcome was avoided, the traditionally low risk tolerance ruled out an engagement in combat, because the British national interest was already served by the French intervention and the support could occur in very cost-effective way without harming British military personnel.

The British support for the EUTM Mali was also comparable to the German response. Foreign Office Minister David Lidington welcomed the creation of a CSDP mission because ‘the EU has an important role to play as part of the international response to the crisis in Mali’, but also emphasized that ‘the training mission will be time-limited with a clear mandate to advice and train Malian armed forces: it will not be engaged in combat’.<sup>114</sup> Defense Secretary Philip Hammond outlined after the agreement, which additional military assets are planned in for the CSDP Mission. He stated that apart from financial assistance for the African-led intervention force and the logistical assistance already provided to the French consisting of two transport planes and a surveillance aircraft, the UK will contribute ‘up to 40 British personnel either in a headquarters or training team role’ but not provide troops in a combat role or force protection for the mission’ as ‘that role is being carried out by French and Czech personnel.’ So although contributing to all initiatives taken during the course of the crises, the UN Security Council Resolutions 2071 and 2085, the EUTM Mali and the French unilateral intervention, the United Kingdom avoided the use of their own force.<sup>115</sup>

In this case, the low-risk tolerance and the high domestic authorization requirements were the constituted, dominant factors of Britain’s Strategic culture. In the view of British decision-makers the interests and the influence that the United Kingdom has in francophone West-Africa did not make up for a more risky response in form of a combat participation. The non-commitment of the NATO and the US has very likely played its part in those considerations and enforced the cautiousness of British decision-makers. Persistent over the two cases, was the high domestic authorization requirements and the embracing of all included international organizations. A plausible explanation

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<sup>114</sup> Lidington, David (2013): UK welcomes establishment of EU Training Mission to Mali, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 17.03.2013

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

for this is impact of the Blair legacy on now more cautious and risk-aware British public discourse in terms of military interventions and Britain's heavy reliance on the transatlantic link. The cooperation level that was estimated is therefore only partially appropriate as both cases illustrate a clear shift towards more international cooperation.

### 3. France' strategic behavior in Mali

"French forces brought their support this afternoon to Malian army units to fight against terrorist elements. This operation will last as long as is necessary. The terrorists have recently regrouped on the line that artificially separates North- and South-Mali, they have even advanced and seek to strike a fatal blow to the very existence of Mali. France, like its African partners and the international community cannot accept this. We are facing an aggression, so I decided that France is ready to respond on the side of our African partners, on request of Malian authorities. France will do this within the framework of the Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. We will be ready to stop the terrorist offensive, because this is the requirement of solidarity and responsibility."<sup>116</sup>

At the time of this statement given by French President Francois Hollande, informing the public about the French military intervention in Mali, first air strikes had already been conducted. The French reaction in form of a unilateral intervention, naturally the key aspect of the Mali conflict, can even more than the Libyan case be seen as a profound constitution of the notion of Grandeur and the strategic options it implies. Again, a French President took the lead when international political pressure turned into action. The special relation with Mali as an ex-colony serves in this regard as an amplifier, which can be noted in the dominating rhetoric of post-colonial responsibility and friendship. This was especially emphasized, as France' national interest of securing industrial engagement in west-Africa seemed to apparent to international observers which compelled Francois Hollande to remind that 'France is not pursuing any particular interests other than the safety of a country that is a friend and no other purpose than the fight against terrorism. That's why our action is approved by the

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<sup>116</sup> Hollande, Francois (2013a): France launches Mali military intervention, Al Jazeera English, 12.01.2013



international community and welcomed across the African States<sup>117</sup> To not let any confusion about the objectives of the operation occur, Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius defined the three key objectives of the military operation: “The first is to stop the southward offensive by the armed terrorist groups who were threatening the whole of Mali and particularly the capital, Bamako. This operation is under way and is going satisfactorily. The second objective is to prevent the collapse of Mali. This is the essential precondition for restoring Mali’s territorial integrity. The third objective is to allow the implementation of the international resolutions, whether those of the United Nations, the African Union, ECOWAS or the EU. This is of course our main objective”<sup>118</sup>. Whether or not materialistic interest formed the cornerstone of strategic thinking in Paris or the violent situation and the defense of the population, France proved again the assumption regarding the conditions for the use of force and showed also, considerably more than in the Libyan case, that it is prepared to take high risks in order to confirm its self-perceived high standing in the world.

Still, this standing in the world proved to be very closely related to the legality in front of international law. The reference to the Malian request and the UN Security Council resolution and the Charter of the United Nations highlights the contemporary desire in all western countries to demonstrate international consensus and regional ownership. Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius declared regarding the legitimacy of the French intervention: “I want to stress that this intervention falls strictly within international law. It responds to a formal request by the Malian President and is being conducted in accordance with the UN Charter, in compliance with UNSCRs 2056, 2071 and 2085. The framework is therefore the UN, Mali is making the request, and our partners are the Africans and the international community. Obviously, we don’t intend to act alone. We have – and I would like to highlight this – almost unanimous international political support. We’ve acted in a fully transparent manner; we’ve informed all our partners.”<sup>119</sup> For France in this case, this consideration was very meaningful as France had been

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<sup>117</sup> Hollande, Francois (2013b): Déclaration du Président de la République à l’issue du Conseil restreint de défense, Présidence de la république, 12.01.2013

<sup>118</sup> Fabius, Laurent (2013): Mali: Statement by Laurent Fabius, Consulate General of France in New Orleans, 23.01.2013

<sup>119</sup> Fabius, Laurent (2013): Mali: Statement by Laurent Fabius, Consulate General of France in New Orleans, 23.01.2013

frequently accused of using its post-colonial influence to pursue economic interest politics with 37 major military operations from 1960 to 2006.<sup>120</sup>

As it was the case in Libya, France did not seek the assistance or commitment of NATO in this conflict, which was confirmed by NATO General Secretary Anders Fogh Rasmussen who said, that no request for assistance was transmitted by the French nor did the NATO discuss this case because the UN Security Council foresees an African-led stabilization force.<sup>121</sup> Instead, France accepted the help of particular key allies although this help has jointly been a merely symbolic, logistical assistance.

In sum it could be observed that in the Malian case the assumed strategic behavior has prevailed. The fight against terrorism, the stability of industrial assets in the region and solidarity for the former colony were vital interests at stake, which fully justified a military operation at considerable risk, conducted practically unilaterally. For this operation France sought the legal confirmation and political support of its key allies and welcomed assistance and could rely on very low internal authorization requirements. The focus of cooperation was clearly directed towards Europe although US surveillance and intelligence was accepted. The NATO - just like in the Libyan case - was avoided to the most possible extent.

### C. Summary of the Findings

In the case of Germany, the identified strategic culture translated profoundly into strategic behavior in both cases. Interestingly, the German rhetoric and political self-perception as an international security actor indicated a strategic culture, which includes countervailing grave violations of human rights with military force when necessary. The participation in the wars in Kosovo and Afghanistan with combat troops (although restraint in the mandate), had suggested that such a normalization process indeed had

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<sup>120</sup> Griffin, Christopher (2007): French Military Interventions in Africa: French Grand Strategy and Defense Policy since Decolonization, Paper prepared for the International Studies Association 2007 Annual Convention, February 28-March 3, 2007, Chicago, IL, p. 7

<sup>121</sup> Rasmussen, Anders Fogh (2013) : NATO backs France in Mali, but says no aid request, *Hürriyet Daily News*, 14.01.2013

taken place. Germany's strategic behavior however clearly showed that the conditions for the use of force are practically limited to the defense of the own (or ally) territory and immediate threats to national security. Germany's extremely low-risk tolerance marked the core of German rhetoric regarding an operational military strategy and served as explanation and tranquilization of the war-wary German population. This rhetoric founds its peak in the abstention from vote in the Libyan case and the justification of that decision. Germany's strategic culture can explain the only symbolic contribution in the Malian case and could have explained a symbolic contribution in the Libyan case, but it is not able to provide a plausible explanation for the abstention from vote. The cooperation and the international authorization of the use of force were in both cases sought in the most multilateral setting possible, confirming what has been expected. Germany's domestic authorization requirements proved to be extremely high. The domestic legal framework strictly limits the strategic options Germany possess due to the definition of the *Bundeswehr* in Germany's Basic Law while the historic anti-nationalism and anti-militarism dominates the public debate.

The United Kingdom perceived the potential risk and cost of a military intervention in Libya as justified regarding the strong international commitment, especially of the US. As expected, the defense of the national interest is just as an important part regarding the decision-making process as it is the humanitarian necessity. In the Malian case, this commitment was missing which led to a contribution on a very low-risk level with out-of-combat troops. Also part of the decision in Mali, was the fact that France did not leave very much to do apart from logistical assistance. A more offensive strategy would have therefore been illogical. Without the intervention from France, the United Kingdom would probably have applied the same requirements in Mali as it did in Libya and participated in an international effort. The United Kingdom cooperated with international organizations and allies in order to lower the risk of the operation. Comparing the Libyan and the Malian case reveals the expected strong relation to the US and the NATO when it comes to own military actions.

In the case of France, the strategic behavior exceeded the assumptions derived from the identified strategic culture in the contrary direction as it does in the German case. In both cases, the French decision-maker's rhetoric was very much implying the notion of Grandeur and the independent, leading role France wants to play in international politics. In the Libyan case this resulted in the demanding promotion of military strikes

and the implementation of the no-fly zone, which contained unilateral elements not in line with European and transatlantic partners. In the Malian case, France even decided to militarily intervene by itself, taking unilaterally the risks and possible consequences of such an operation. As expected, this behavior is showing the national interest as a justification, with the national interest being a proof of its self-perception as well as materialistic interests. Also in both cases it is shown that cooperation ought to go along French interest and is therefore happening as long as France' agenda is the leading element. Still, France is seeking a solid legal legitimization for its actions as it is sensitive for the impact of other regional powers and the political support of its allies, while it was expected to act on the traditional low domestic but also on low international authorization requirements.

## V) Conclusions

### A. On Strategic Culture as analytical tool in Security Studies

The ongoing circulating analytical and methodological debate around the notion of Strategic Culture has indicated that it is an instrument which should be applied with the utmost caution and this warning has proved to be justified. It was certainly demonstrated that an image of a contemporary Strategic Culture is in most cases not able to produce solid predictions about the strategic behavior in very specific strategic contexts. It would be necessary to identify an extensive set of sub-assumptions for a broad selection of different strategic contexts that would have to entail a huge variety of variables to determine. It can be stated at this point, the notion of Strategic Culture does maybe not defy falsifiability but it most certainly defies determinism. As Ken Booth put it, the study of strategic culture is a demanding intellectual challenge that will always rather be art than science, as like most important dimensions of international politics.<sup>122</sup> In the case of Britain, it could be demonstrated very well how ambitiously changing Foreign Policy had changed the Strategic behavior almost completely to the contrary of what could have been expected before Tony Blair came to office. This indicates that

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<sup>122</sup> Booth, Ken (2005): Strategic Culture: Validity and Validation, Oxford Journal on Good Governance, Vol. 2, Nr. 1, March 2005, p. 26

there is a variety of aspects with different magnitudes able to change solid historic tradition.

This does not mean however, that the notion of Strategic Culture is not useful in the study of nation state behavior regarding the use of force. Although sometimes key aspects of behavior changed across the contexts, it was within a range that was not contradicting the overall impression of the strategic culture of the countries. It was certainly shown that an image of a contemporary strategic culture is able to give a plausible framework of limited options and assumed reactions. Most plausible, in fact close to determinism, has been proved the German Strategic culture that was so crucially influenced by the horrific Nazi-Regime and the consequences of its behavior. Germany has produced a line of security policy standpoints and regulatory practices that cannot be explained by any structural-materialistic theory but only with the notion of Strategic Culture. Therefore, the comparison of the three different strategic cultures is also able to give plausible insights regarding the question if these strategic cultures show compatibility, which would be a key requirement for an efficient CSDP Crisis Management and the conducting of the Petersberg Tasks on an EU-level.

#### B. On the compatibility of the three strategic cultures

As the strategic cultures have been constituted to a sufficient extent in the strategic behavior across two cases of similar military tasks and different strategic context, it is now possible to make statements about the observed compatibility regarding the use of force in humanitarian crises that are covered by the Petersberg Task.

In general, the strategic culture of France and the United Kingdom are to a very large extent similar regarding the role that the military and the use of force play as foreign policy instrument. Both countries share a long tradition of military interventions and have a clear conception regarding the conditions for the use of force. British and French decision-makers have shown in both cases that they embrace the ‘responsibility to protect’ that was unanimously adopted on the 2005 UN summit<sup>123</sup>, as part of their responsibilities as permanent members of the UN Security Council. It is in both

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<sup>123</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. (2010): The Responsibility to Protect—Five Years On, *Ethics & International Affairs*, 24:2, 2012, p. 143

countries widely accepted and demanded to clearly define and communicated why a humanitarian intervention is not only morally justified but also in the nation's very interest.

These similarities have translated into the strategic behavior as well in the decision-justifications of the decision making sphere and resulted into a demonstrated strong partnership in the Libyan-case. The partnership in Mali has to be interpreted with more caution however. Although Britain's military did only provide a rather symbolic contribution to the French intervention, it can be argued that this was a reciprocal interest for both countries. While France was eager to demonstrate its unilateral responsibility and readiness to act in francophone West-Africa, the United Kingdom was able to pursue a proportionate and conservative approach, doing justice to the relatively high domestic authorization requirements and the non-commitment of the NATO. Because the United Kingdom had absolutely no need to take risks after France' unilateral action, it can be argued that these very specific political aspects have prevented a broader British commitment rather than a strategic culture of restraint.

It was also possibly to trace and confirm differences between two the countries. While the United Kingdom has a very strong link to the transatlantic framework and sees introducing the US into the operational framework as a way to reduce the risks significantly, in France, the notion of grandeur implies the independency from bi- or multilateral alliances. This especially counts for the NATO and the US. In Libya, France tried to avoid the transatlantic link and promoted the Franco-British relation while in Mali, France acted unilaterally, ignoring the non-commitment of the NATO and the US.

Completely different is the case for Germany's strategic culture. It became more and clearer in those recent crises that the German strategic culture is high incompatible to France and Great Britain. Although the rhetoric of the decision-makers follows those of the British and French in condemning grave violations of human rights, highlighting the responsibility of the international community to act and promoting hard decisions on a broad multilateral basis, Germany rules out his own engagement either right from the start or even in the most critical moments. Germany's behavior in the Libya-crisis is of course related to the anti-nationalistic, anti-militaristic and anti-interventionist strategic culture but still inexplicable. The abstention from vote along the BRIC countries has rightfully produced severe criticism and pulverized Germany's political desire to

become a normalized security actor demonstrating its vast economic potential. Germany's wish to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council seems from this perspective a very strong overestimation of one's own capabilities. Put apart from this grave political mistake in Libya, Germany has also in the Malian case demonstrated the huge gap between self-aspirations and the reality of their domestic legal and social restrictions. The German legal process is not at all suitable for a quick, consequent response to a humanitarian crisis in form of an intervention, as the use of the *Bundeswehr* is thoroughly bound to the defense of an immediate threat and only allows the military action beyond that under strict restrictions and with full parliamentary participation and control. Additionally, the fierce renitence against the use of the military at all as foreign policy instrument, that has been fully persistent across time and contexts, continuously slows and restraints decision-making processes and is either used as inner political calculation by or manifested as solid credo inside the decision-makers.

Adding Germany to the comparison reveals the big gap and high incompatibility between Germany on the one side and France and the United Kingdom on the other side. France and the United Kingdom share key aspects in their strategic cultures that overlap to a degree, which would allow further integration in defense issues. Additionally - France and the United Kingdom taken together - they embrace a broad spectrum of interests and responsibilities in most regions of the world. While often reciprocal, the differences between the specific interests don't defy a strong cooperation but just might define which of the countries turns out to be the leading force in an initiative. Germany, in this regard, could be classified as the sick man within Europe's big three. Its strategic culture of extreme constraint clashes with the external demand and political desire for more international responsibility, leaving no significant assistance in international crises except rhetorical and diplomatic support

That impression is very much reflected and confirmed by the Franco-British defense cooperation, announced in November 2010, entailing the 'strengthening of operational linkages between the French and UK Armed Forces, sharing and pooling of materials and equipment, building of joint facilities, mutual access to defense markets, and increased industrial and technological co-operation'<sup>124</sup>. Enforcing the bilateral ties on security and defense issues to this extent while sidelining in Germany the crucial factor

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<sup>124</sup> Cameron, David (2010): UK-France Defence Co-operation Treaty announced, Ministry of Defense, 02.11.2010

for a further European Integration in this regard, can therefore be expected to have severe consequences for CSDP crisis management, meaning crisis management at an EU-level.

### C. On the consequences for CSDP crisis management

“The European Union, for its part, has failed miserably. ‘Institutional’ Europe has not faced up to the challenge. In the North African saga it does not exist. It is incapable of agreeing on how to act, on whether to recognize the Libyan opposition and most, of all, on the legitimacy of the use of force. The disunity is total and particularly striking when it is a question of deciding on war – that is to say when history becomes tragedy and it is necessary to move from frothy rhetoric about the rights of man.”<sup>125</sup>

This devastating conclusion of the renowned French newspaper ‘Le monde’ is an example of how the EU’s role in the Libya conflict was perceived, highlighting the disunity between the countries in a situation where no time was to be left. Others described it as ‘Europe’s ‘perfect storm’, revealing all of the EU’s inherent weaknesses while simultaneously offering an opportunity to put into use its full spectrum of instruments.<sup>126</sup> This study hasn’t revealed much to counter this perception but illustrated that persistent, individual strategic cultures give a plausible explanation for this disunity. Much more important, by putting the focus on the most crucial moments (the final decision about a humanitarian intervention) of the two conflicts, it has been shown that the EU did not play a role at all when the use of force became necessary. The same counts for the conflict in Mali, where the French intervention and broad military effort did disguise that if had the jihadist militias been allowed to march on Bamako the whole idea of a Training Mission and further EU support would have become meaningless.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Le Monde (2011); cited in Miskimmon, Alister (2012): German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis, German Politics, Vol. 21, No.4, pp. 392-410

<sup>126</sup> Brattberg, Erik (2011): Opportunities lost, opportunities seized: the Libya crisis as Europe’s perfect storm, European Policy Centre, Policy Brief June 2011, p. 1

<sup>127</sup> Coolsaet, Rik (2013): Mali: Another European Intervention without the EU?, Egmont Security Policy Brief, No. 42, January 2012, p. 3



But besides the fact that ‘today the EU institutions are simply not equipped to launch a rapid response operation of this type’<sup>128</sup>, the high discrepancy between the German strategic culture on the one side and the French and British on the other, make it highly implausible that a ‘European Strategic Culture’ as outlined in European Security Strategy could ever evolve. It is not imaginable that there will ever be German combat troops involved in a humanitarian intervention under EU-initiative and demand, without a profound and case-specific evaluation by the German Parliament. Not even to mention, that the German Basic Law would have to be thoroughly revised in order to broaden the operational spectrum according to what is needed for a rapid response in such situations. The consequence of this is, that although both cases (especially Mali) entailed exactly the description of a humanitarian crisis for which the EU Battle Group Concept was once implemented, an actual use of this military arm of the EU was neither in Libya nor in Mali anyway near of serious consideration. Still, it would be not justified to just blame the German strategic behavior for this consistent failure of the CSDP crisis management. Great Britain and especially France, where the notion of empire and grandeur respectively are still very influential, do not show a high interest in a European consensus but reserve their right to act unilaterally or bilaterally according to their own national interest and international law. And while France is continuously pushing for a French-led European security framework independent from the NATO, the United Kingdom keeps closely their ties to the United States and the transatlantic security framework.

Because this incompatibility between the European security actors, that directly derives from the individual strategic cultures, the German *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* already predicts the upcoming end for CSDP. The renowned newspaper argues that because of the disunity between its actors and its insufficient military capabilities, the Common Security and Defense Policy is ‘heading for its collapse’<sup>129</sup>. As mentioned before, the study of strategic culture should not entail such determinism. But with the three strategic cultures not being compatible, a functioning, effective CSDP crisis management is most certainly not plausible.

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>129</sup> *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* (2012): EU-Verteidigungspolitik wird zum gescheiterten Projekt, 07/05/2013

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