AIMS

The aim of the Review is to consider the external posture of the European Union in its relations with the rest of the world. Therefore the Review will focus on the political, legal and economic aspects of the Union’s external relations. The Review will function as an interdisciplinary medium for the understanding and analysis of foreign affairs issues which are of relevance to the European Union and its Member States on the one hand and its international partners on the other. The Review will aim at meeting the needs of both the academic and the practitioner. In doing so the Review will provide a public forum for the discussion and development of European external policy interests and strategies, addressing issues from the points of view of political science and policy-making, law or economics. These issues should be discussed by authors drawn from around the world while maintaining a European focus.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editors will consider for publication unsolicited manuscripts in English as well as commissioned articles. Authors should ensure that their contributions will be apparent also to readers outside their specific expertise. Articles may deal with general policy questions as well as with more specialized topics. Articles will be subjected to a review procedure, and manuscripts will be edited, if necessary, to improve the effectiveness of communication. It is intended to establish and maintain a high standard in order to attain international recognition.

SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editorial Assistant at the Editorial Office. The manuscript should be accompanied by a covering letter stating that the article has not been published, or submitted for publication, elsewhere. Authors are asked to submit two copies of their manuscript a well as a copy on computer disk. Manuscripts should be 6,000-8,000 words and be typed, double spaced and with wide margins. The title of an article should begin with a word useful in indexing and information retrieval. Short titles are invited for use as running heads. All footnotes should be numbered in sequential order, as cited in the text, and should be typed double-spaced on a separate sheet. The author should submit a short biography of him or herself.

BOOK REVIEWS

Copies of books sent to the Editorial Assistant at the Editorial Office will be considered for review.
Competing Visions for the European Union Grand Strategy

PASCAL VENNESSON

Abstract. What should be the grand strategy of the European Union (EU)? What are the main arguments about the EU’s role in the world that compete in public discourses in Europe? What are their sources and characteristics? The objective of this paper is to identify, clarify, and discuss critically four alternative grand strategies for the EU that can be termed Euro-neutralism, Superpower EU, Euro-Atlanticism, and Civilian power EU. These four grand strategic conceptions underline the policy debates regarding the EU security strategy as well as its implementation. First, I define the notion of grand strategy and explain its significance for foreign policy making. Second, I uncover and discuss the four competing visions for the EU grand strategy.

I Introduction: What Grand Strategy for the EU?

In October 2008, a hearing was held at the European Parliament on the perspective of the deployment of an EU naval mission against acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast. At this hearing, where delegates from the Council of the European Union (EU) and the EU Military Committee defended the opportunity of the mission, several members of the European Parliament (MEPs) strongly disagreed. Calling the planned EU mission ‘military nonsense’, British Conservative MEP Geoffrey van Orden (European People’s Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats [EPP-ED]) noted that it was a ‘desperate attempt’ by the French EU presidency ‘to run up the EU flag on another military operation during its time in office’. Greek MEP Giorgos

* Earlier versions of this article were presented at the International Conference on EU-Asian Relations in the twenty-first century, Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, at the Law-Social and Political Sciences Seminar entitled ‘The European Union and the World’, European University Institute and at the Workshop entitled ‘Grand Strategy and the New World Order’, European University Institute-Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies. I thank the participants and especially Marise Cremona for their comments and suggestions.

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Dimitrakopoulos (EPP-ED Group) criticized the setup of a 'global armada', while German Green MEP Angelika Beer explained: ‘There is no clarity to the limitations of this mandate. Will the EU be able to sink ships and arrest pirates?’ Portuguese socialist MEP Ana Maria Gomes underlined the ‘moral problem’ of the EU mission, which, in her view, is only about ‘protecting oil tankers’. ‘Nobody gives a damn about the people in Somalia who die like flies.’ While the EU NAVFOR Somalia/operation ‘Atalanta’ was finally adopted by the Council on 10 November 2008, during the brief hearing, these MEPs expressed, beyond political and national cleavages, a set of positions about that particular mission that reflected broader conceptions about what the EU should and should not do in international politics.

What should be the grand strategy of the EU? What are the main arguments about the EU’s role in the world that compete in public discourses in Europe? What are their sources and characteristics? The objective of this paper is to identify, clarify, and discuss critically four alternative grand strategies for the EU that can be termed Euro-neutralism, Superpower EU, Euro-Atlanticism, and Civilian power EU. These four grand strategic conceptions underline the policy debates regarding the EU security strategy as well as its implementation.

The adoption in December 2003 by the European Council of the European Security Strategy (ESS), the 2006 Commission’s Communication ‘Europe in the World – Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility’, as well as many other EU official documents like the Treaty of Lisbon or the European Neighbourhood Policy, shows that EU policymakers worry about coherence and planning in their daily action. Quite deliberately, they have been engaged in the making of strategies for the EU. In December 2007, the presidency conclusions invited the Secretary General/High Representative, in association with the Commission and in cooperation with Member States, to examine the implementation of the strategy and to make propositions to improve and complement it. Since December 2007, the EU Institute for Security Studies (ISS) organized three regional seminars on the EU and global governance (Rome, June 2008), on the neighbourhood policy (Natolin, June 2008), and on the EU’s approach to international security (Helsinki, September 2008), as well as a Forum on the definition of a strategy for the EU’s security interests (Paris, October 2008). In the conclusions of its December 2008 meeting, the European Council shared the analysis on the implementation of the ESS and agreed to strengthen and optimize the resources of the EU in that domain. These policy debates are ongoing, but there is a persistent lack of awareness of the range of positions and policy options available to the EU.

This paper is organized as follows. First, I define the notion of grand strategy, and I explain its significance for foreign and security policy making. Second, I uncover and discuss the four competing visions for the EU grand strategy: Euro-neutralism, Superpower EU, Euro-Atlanticism, and Civilian power EU.
II What Is Grand Strategy?

1. Grand Strategy: Sources and Significance

Grand strategy is a crucial but contested notion. Before the 1920s, the expression ‘grand strategy’ was barely used, and the notion is largely a product of World War I. During the war, policymakers realized that military force, although crucial, was only one dimension of the conduct of the war. In order to prevail, belligerent countries had to combine, balance, and coordinate economic and societal mobilization; technological innovation; diplomatic manoeuvres; media (propaganda) influence; and other policies. This uneasy coordination of different policy domains to support the armed forces in wartime is the original meaning of grand strategy notably presented during the interwar period by Basil Liddell Hart, Ernest Wageman, and Admiral Castex, for example. After World War I, the notion of grand strategy was broadened beyond the wartime context to include numerous peacetime activities. In short, grand strategy far from being uniquely about military force (the realm of military strategy) was originally about the ways in which non-military policies can support military power in peacetime and wartime and ultimately contribute to security.

For Paul Kennedy, grand strategy is: ‘the capacity of the nation’s leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term (that is, in wartime and peacetime) best interests’. This definition might be useful for some purpose, but it blurs two analytical distinctions: grand strategy is different from foreign policy, and the conception, the principles of a grand strategy might be different from their implementation, the actual policy.

I define grand strategy as a polity’s conception of its security goals and of the ways it plans to ensure its security. When it is formally specified, a grand strategy provides a broad vision of international security, defines the nature of potential threats and risks, and identifies the options and instruments that the polity considers the most efficient for dealing with those threats. Policymakers use this as a


basis to define, in broad terms, priorities and criteria for policy choices regarding security in order to balance ends and means.\(^6\)

Three aspects of this definition should be emphasized. First, the definition refers to a polity, not to a state, nor to a great power. States in general and great powers in particular are not the only international actors who have grand strategies. Empires, city-states, and terrorist groups all design grand strategies. While the grand strategies of great powers have been getting considerable attention, grand strategies are far from limited to great powers. In fact, it is often the smaller and weaker powers who need the ingenuity of strategy, that is ‘those who fight against the odds, out-weighed defenders or over-ambitious attackers, who must try to circumvent enemy strengths and exploit enemy weaknesses’.\(^7\)

Second, my definition focuses on security not, as Paul Kennedy does, on long-term best interests, which are best captured by the notion of foreign policy. While security usually is an important aspect of foreign policy, a grand strategy is not identical with foreign policy as a whole.

Third, my definition puts the emphasis on the conception, the principles, and the assumptions, and it excludes behaviour. Whether this conception and these principles shape observable behaviour is an empirical question left outside of the definition.\(^8\) Other analysts disagree and choose instead to include in their definition of grand strategies, policy decisions, actions and policies actually implemented. The problem with these definitions is that grand strategy becomes nothing more and nothing different from the action itself. It becomes impossible to distinguish grand strategic ideas from their implementation. Yet, before implementation, there should be something to implement. It is only if grand strategy is distinguishable from action that it becomes possible to focus on the making of grand strategy as such and to evaluate empirically its own specific influence on policy.\(^9\)

Decision makers and analysts disagree over the impact of grand strategic principles and assumptions on foreign policy choices. On the one hand, some doubt that strategy, least of all ‘grand’ strategy, is possible or even desirable.\(^10\) The matter only gets worse when the polity in question is the EU, a collection of nation-states surely connected and bounded to one another in some areas but retaining key competences in others and often having their own grand strategies. On the other hand, however,


other analysts and some decision makers believe that grand strategy is a fundamental element of foreign policy. Henry Kissinger, for example, observed that ‘a conceptual framework is an essential tool of foreign policy…. Its absence produces exactly the opposite of freedom of action; policy-makers are forced to respond to parochial interests, buffeted by pressures without a fixed compass’.\(^\text{11}\) Despite debates among historians on various aspects of their policy, the leaders of the Roman Empire, Philip II of Spain, and Hitler had grand strategies.\(^\text{12}\) In sum, for some, grand strategy is nothing, while for others, it is (almost) everything. In what follows, I show that there is a fruitful way to conceptualize grand strategies and make sense of their own intrinsic importance without overestimating their influence. By doing so, I seek to contribute to the ongoing debates about the ‘coherence’ of EU external action.

2. Grand Strategy and Foreign Policy Preference Formation

To move beyond the conventional view that a grand strategy is either shaping every aspect of policy or wishful thinking, it is useful to conceptualize grand strategies and the making of grand strategies, as an important exercise in foreign and security policy preference formation.\(^\text{13}\) Foreign and security policy preferences are identified, formalized, and revised through the formulation of grand strategies. The formation of these preferences comes from the continuing confrontation between objectives and resources, which is at the heart of what the formulation of a grand strategy is all about. Formulating a grand strategy is an attempt to close the gap between what policymakers wish to do and what they can do.

The making and the very existence of a grand strategy are political, and the 2003 EU’s security strategy *A Secure Europe* is not an exception. This process helps policymakers to make explicit and to reformulate values, beliefs, and relations among actors. Important for any international actor, this process helps policymakers to make explicit and to reformulate values, beliefs, and relations among actors. Important for any international actor, this process of preference

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formation is particularly complex and sensitive for the EU, since it has to accommodate a greater number of actors with conflicting preferences. The EU international presence and its roles have been a resultant, the cumulative consequences of many disparate initiatives in various areas, some by Member States, others by the commission. Making the EU’s international role into a matter of self-conscious choice is a major undertaking. Grand strategies in general, and the EU’s grand strategy specifically, have four aspects: the search for problems that can be solved, the manipulation of constraints, the self-conscious rationalization of past actions, and the establishment and/or adaptation of an institutional identity in a context of intense bureaucratic politics.

Moreover, the formulation and the adoption of a grand strategy are in itself a strategic move domestically and externally. Domestically, the purpose of a grand strategy is to legitimize the EU as an international actor, create common viewpoints and analyses, prevent disputes over foreign policy, provide guidance, and favour coherence. It should be constraining. The goal of *A Secure Europe* was to show that there is enough convergence of interest and strategic beliefs in the EU and among Member States to define a common and coherent framework.14 Externally, political actors use their grand strategies to compete with one another. *A Secure Europe in a Better World* was, in part, Europe’s answer to *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* made public in September 2002.

### III Four Grand Strategies for the EU

Two cleavages play an important role in the definitions of the EU’s grand strategy.15 The first cleavage depends on the value placed on the relationship with the United States and ranges from the closest possible relation (as the main concern is abandonment) to a more distant relation (as the main concern is entanglement).16 The second cleavage is based on the value placed on military power and the use of military force, particularly the resort to war. On the one hand, almost any use of

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16 While I focus specifically on the relation with the United States, a case can be made that the relationship with the United States is only one aspect of a broader preference, which depends on the value placed on radical independence of the Euro-polity or on a profound interdependence with the outside world. To put it differently, there is a continuum ranging from isolationism – understood as a grand strategy, which implies the lowest possible level of involvement with the outside world – to internationalism, which implies a profound implication in world affairs. In Europe, the isolationist tradition is close to but not identical with neutralism, understood as a conception of international action that puts the emphasis on the non-participation to certain conflicts (and to peacetime alliances) and to the efforts to treat the belligerent in an impartial way. The notion of neutralism is broader than neutrality, which has a legal connotation and, as a status recognized by international law, which applies in specific circumstances notably international conflict, it implies certain rights and duties.
force in international politics is rejected, or they are shaped by a tight set of normative and institutional conditions. In the most radical position, the only use of force that might be considered legitimate is purely defensive in response to a territorial armed aggression (this position is not pacifism, but it is restrictive about military power). On the other, the use of force, including war, is considered unavoidable and sometimes needed beyond territorial self-defence.

Three characteristics of these cleavages need to be emphasized. First, as Samuels noted in the case of Japan, these cleavages, as well as the main components of the EU’s grand strategy, are not new or original and they are not unique to the EU. The various constraints, like geography, demography, economy, technology, political unity, and the different resources, diplomatic, military, cultural, that shape the security and prosperity of the Euro-polity endure. The EU can, however, respond to these constraints in different ways. Second, these cleavages combine national preferences regarding the foreign policy of one’s polity, ideologies and, more generally, different conceptions of international relations. Finally, these cleavages are shaped by both domestic and international issues and preferences.

Broadly following Posen and Ross, for each grand strategy, I present the following elements: analytical framework, major problem of international politics, main way to insure security, preferred world order, conception of the polity’s interest, regional priorities, position on nuclear proliferation, relation to the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), regional conflict, ethnic conflict, humanitarian intervention, use of force and force posture.

1. Euro-neutralism: Security through Delinking

Euro-neutralism is the first possible grand strategy for the EU, and the Swiss experience both domestically and internationally provides a rich source of ideas and practices to understand its mechanism and characteristics.

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17 Samuels, see n. 15 above, 109.
This grand strategy minimizes the values on both axis: as little relation with the United States and international engagement and as little international uses of force as possible. Euro-neutralists emphasize the greatest possible isolation from world affairs – particularly in the political and security domain – and neutralism as well as a deep reluctance to use force outside of the strict realm of the territorial defence of the Euro-polity. The main objective of Euro-neutralists is to achieve security for the EU and, perhaps more importantly, its Member States and its citizens by avoiding or limiting entanglement in international affairs, especially security and political entanglement, and focusing on and preserving prosperity and the domestic characteristics of European societies.

Euro-neutralism maximizes internal unity: since many foreign enterprises and projects are likely to be divisive for the EU – particularly in the political/security sphere – it is best to avoid them. Because they reject foreign entanglements, neo-neutralists also reject the prospect of any further EU enlargement. The EU has not yet digested past waves of enlargement, and in their view, there is no point in adding further costly and paralyzing challenges of that kind.

For the Euro-neutralist grand strategy, the world order is made of distant balance of power where great powers compete, rise, and fall. At the present time, these great powers are not tightly connected to one another, and their potential rivalries should not be a major concern for the EU. However, the EU being in the geographical vicinity of Russia, it should focus on potential territorial threats originating from that country. Since a direct territorial aggression is a less tangible threat, the priority should be terrorism, organized crime, uncontrolled immigration (including radical Islam), as well as economic fears about the costs of globalization and European integration.20

Regarding the United Nations (UN), the Euro-neutralist grand strategy would scale back the EU’s involvement with the UN and keep only a limited engagement. Since Euro-neutralists are suspicious of the United States and, specifically, of NATO, they would prefer that the EU Member States should withdraw from NATO or at least minimize their commitment. Euro-neutralists prefer that the EU avoid any implication in regional and ethnic conflict and keep a neutral attitude vis-à-vis the parties in conflict. The EU should not participate in sanctions of any kind and should not get involved in arms proliferation, arms control, or international non-proliferation regimes. Most of the time, humanitarian interventions should be avoided or remain as limited as possible, as civilian as possible, and fundamentally based on neutrality and the impartiality principle. The reason is straightforward: most of the Third World is irrelevant to European security and intervening waste resources and lives in a futile effort to influence domestic developments in other polities. Nuclear proliferation is not perceived as a major concern and the EU, or the EU3, should not get involved in any non-proliferation initiative, like with Iran, for example.

20 Schori Liang, see n. 19 above, 1.
From a diplomatic standpoint, however, Euro-neutralism does not imply a complete absence of international activity. The EU can provide good offices missions, especially when countries break off diplomatic relations, mostly quiet, bilateral, and technical in nature and without involving actual mediation. Good offices with a humanitarian dimension, like the protection of military and civilian victims in wartime, like the International Committee of the Red Cross, would also be an aspect of this grand strategy. Brussels, like Geneva, can become a site for diplomatic conferences. Finally, in the Euro-neutralist grand strategy, the use of force is conceivable but mainly in self-defence (this would be a territory-based armed neutralism).

Overall, the Euro-neutralist grand strategy does not belong to the elite mainstream of the EU, it is not part of the ‘Brussels beltway’ thinking, and it is largely alien to the outlook of the foreign policy orientation of the so-called big Member States, be they the United Kingdom, France, Germany, or Italy. In part because of this reason, this grand strategic conception is rarely explicitly presented and examined as such, which is paradoxical because a mild version of Euro-neutralism (but not its most radical version) might be the closest description of what the EU actually does (but does not say) in world affairs. The EU is often walking the walk of a sort of Euro-neutralism without talking the talk. In fact, some vocal critics of the EU have been making precisely that point, complaining that the EU ‘cannot continue to be a giant Switzerland’.21

In the EU, some aspects of the Euro-neutralist grand strategy can be found among traditionally neutral Member States, like Ireland, Austria, Finland, and Sweden (keeping in mind that the notion of ‘neutralism’ in those countries has evolved over time). This grand strategic conception, with different emphasis, is also widespread in the populist radical right throughout Europe.22 This is significant because radical right parties have been moving from the margins to the mainstream and have a stronger influence on public debates and national policies.

Euro-neutralism assessed. For its proponents, the Euro-neutralist grand strategy is the most realistic grand strategic option for the EU given the specific and quite unique characteristics of the Euro-polity.23 First, there are diverse long-standing foreign policy traditions among EU Member States. This includes differences about the very notion that a polity has, and should have, a clearly defined and identified foreign policy. Second, cultural and linguistic divisions maintain a number of underlying differences and tensions within the EU. Third, the institutional decision-making procedures within the EU are ill adapted to strategic thinking and foreign affairs. In fact, Euro-neutralists see these legal and institutional impediments in a positive light: they are welcomed checks on initiative that, because they would be divisive and sometimes ill conceived, would be detrimental to the EU.

22 Schori Liang, see n. 19 above, 1.
23 Blondel, see n. 19 above, 203–227.
Finally, the current mood vis-à-vis the EU in Europe is passive at best and increasingly Euro-sceptic, which makes it difficult to legitimize any bold grand strategy.

Choosing a Euro-neutralist grand strategy means preserving peace within Europe, a hard-won unity among divided peoples in Europe, as well as a complex and fragile set of EU’s internal institutions, which help scientific, technical, and economic modernization. The Euro-neutralist grand strategy has, therefore, an internal function: preserving the coexistence of the EU’s various component parts. This implies an interesting and disturbing reversal of the often-repeated argument that the EU necessarily benefits from Member States’ unity in foreign affairs: in this case, more unity within does not imply more clout outside but less. Unity internally comes at the price of external political abstention and/or bland, balanced, and often relatively toothless resolutions and actions. The EU position on the conflict between Georgia and Russia is a good illustration of such a balancing act.

As a critical appraisal of the Euro-neutralist grand strategy, one can highlight four main limits. First, there is too much of a gap between the sheer size of the EU (territory, population, wealth) and the Euro-neutralist grand strategy, which is usually designed for much smaller polities. It would be a considerable endeavour and potentially a costly one to reduce the EU’s exposure to international affairs. The proponents of this grand strategy would probably agree since they usually are sceptical of large political units and critical of the European integration project as such. Still, they have to face the fact that if the EU is taken seriously as the political unit of analysis, then a grand strategy originally conceived for much smaller political unit might not fit.

Second, the neo-neutralist grand strategy seems out of tune with the international environment characterized by a growing interconnectedness of the international system (globalization), unipolarity, and trends towards transnationalism, multilateralism, and integration. Moreover, the boundaries between ‘low politics’ and ‘high politics’ are increasingly blurred, which makes it increasingly difficult to be, for example, global in the area of trade and intellectual exchanges and purely local in matters of politics and security.

Third, while the neo-neutralists are right that the EU is currently quite secure from a territorial integrity standpoint, it is unclear that a disengagement and a more isolationist grand strategy would make the EU more secure. In fact, it could make matters worse. Finally, the cost in terms of loss in international influence, potential unintended consequences, and perhaps US abandonment in face of blatant free riding would have to be carefully assessed.

2. Euro-Atlanticism: Security through American Preponderance

The second EU grand strategy is Euro-Atlanticism. This grand strategy maximizes the values on both axis: as much international engagement as possible especially within the framework of the Atlantic alliance and in support of US hegemony and
as much uses of force as needed within the framework of the US-EU relation. This grand strategy emphasizes a deep international involvement of the EU, including in the political and security domains, within a strong relation with the United States. This grand strategy is also based on the acceptance of the uses of force, including power projection, in support of US action.

The main objective of Euro-Atlanticism is to provide security to the EU by a deep engagement in international affairs in support of US hegemony. Being a follower to the US leadership requires a genuine grand strategy. The only way to preserve the prosperity, well-being, values, and internal characteristics of the EU, advocates of Euro-Atlanticism argue, lies in this closeness with the United States. The EU is de facto, and indeed should be, involved in international affairs, it is sufficiently wealthy to be a strong and reliable partner of the United States, which is easy and straightforward since Americans and Europeans have a long-standing history of close cooperation and identical values. The conception of the world order that underlies this grand strategy is unipolarity and hegemony, and the definition of the EU’s interests largely depends on the ways in which US policymakers define both the US national interest and the ways they see European interests. Most of the time, this is not a significant issue since the two are often aligned.

The global war on terror or the rise of a peer competitor to the United States is a problem of international politics for the EU as well. The geographical scope of this grand strategy is global, and currently, the major threat is global, radical, terrorism. The global war on terror (the ‘long war’) concerns the EU just as much as it concerns the United States. In this grand strategy, the UN might play a role – particularly the Security Council – but a reform of the UN is needed and only an effective multilateralism would provide a workable set of options to manage global affairs. Overall, however, in a moderate variant of this grand strategy, the EU would prefer to privilege a reformed, more efficient, UN over a league of democracies. This being said, in the most extreme form of the Euro-Atlanticist grand strategy, if the notion that the UN is definitely passé takes hold in the United States, a league of democracy would ultimately be accepted by Europeans as well.

The Euro-Atlanticist grand strategy is not without problems or areas of contention between the EU and the United States, however. NATO might be one of them. On the one hand, from the perspective of the EU, NATO would remain crucial and relevant but, first and foremost, for military purposes and territorial defence. The EU and EU Member States might go along with the notion that NATO should go global (as a lesser evil compared to a complete US withdrawal from Europe), but they are unlikely to be enthusiastic about this perspective. They would rather keep NATO as a military alliance with its territorial focus. At the end of the day, Euro-Atlanticists emphasize that there is no alternative to NATO.

Regarding regional conflict and humanitarian intervention, the EU would be ready to intervene but in a discriminate way, when transatlantic interests are at stake or when there is a need for a division of labour between the United States and the EU. Regarding nuclear proliferation, in this grand strategy, the EU shares
the US interest in an indiscriminate prevention, as well illustrated by the joint effort of the EU3 regarding Iran. Advocates of this grand strategy are in favour of a stronger EU military capability, including a projection capability and a capacity to fight in mid- to high-intensity warfare with a strong interoperability with US troops. This implies to raise defence budgets at least to the 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) level, if not more, and to spend on actual defence capability not on programs that have only an indirect or limited defence advantage. This grand strategy implies that Europeans fully shoulder the risks and costs of their common security with the United States.

Euro-Atlanticism assessed. The advocates of Euro-Atlanticism – particularly influential in the United Kingdom, Denmark, the Netherlands, as well Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – underline that the links between Europe and the United States are strong historically, economically, and culturally and that such a grand strategy would equalize the Atlantic alliance. The EU would continue to benefit from US security guarantee while shouldering a greater share of the burden. Its security would increase both because it would spend more on defence and benefit from the US security guarantee. Better equipped and more credible, the proponents of this grand strategy suggest, the EU could gain some leverage and influence the overall direction of US foreign policy. This grand strategy is also in tune with the unipolar distribution of power in the international system and recognizes that it would be best for the EU to focus on those bilateral ties to bolster their international involvement.

In fact, a number of analysts, like Mohammed Ayoob or former Singaporean diplomat Kishore Mahbubani, have been quick to emphasize that the Euro-Atlanticist grand strategy is largely what the EU actually does in international politics and that the claims of Transatlantic differences had been exaggerated.24 Others have emphasized that the EU’s economic and institutional systems are subordinate to the US structural power.25

Sceptics, on the other hand, are concerned about the dangers of the entanglement with the United States that this grand strategy implies. When US foreign policy becomes controversial and divisive, this grand strategy might prove detrimental to the EU and could even diminish European security. Participating in the US-led ‘global war on terror’ when the endeavour appears dangerous and misconceived is not something that Europeans find appealing. Such a grand strategy would also alienate Europe’s most difficult neighbours, the Islamic world (within

and outside Europe) and Russia, as well as China, and ultimately reinforce situations of security dilemma.

Critics also point out that there is an ambiguity in this grand strategy. The EU might be tempted by a lighter, less costly, version of this grand strategy, ultimately free riding on US power. If taken seriously, The Euro-Atlanticist grand strategy would imply significant costs, especially regarding the defence sector, and it is unclear that Europeans are ready to devote enough resources to make it work.

This grand strategy also presupposes that the United States really need and want an EU follower and would respect its allies by acting within the constraints of multilateral institutions, which the experience of the Bush administration put into question. Euro-Atlanticism might also appear out of tune with current social and ideological trends in Europe, which seems to include more criticism of the United States and a greater and wider anti-Americanism, especially following the Iraq war.26

Finally, it is not clear that Euro-Atlanticism can really be a viable grand strategy for the EU as such. Different conceptions of sovereignty now separate the United States and the EU, which make it increasingly difficult to understand one another and to act together.27 In the end, a major asymmetrical dependence between the United States and the EU is hardly a solid foundation for such a grand strategy.

3. Superpower EU: Security through Independence and Strength

The third EU grand strategy, based on traditional balance of power realism, is the Superpower EU.28 This grand strategy emphasizes a preference for autonomy and independence for the EU with the acceptance of the uses of force, including power projection, but in the exclusive interest of the Euro-polity. This grand strategy, grounded on a broad view of the EU’s interests, implies an active involvement in international affairs but based on an autonomous EU set of positions. It might lead to balancing US power, but this is not a foregone conclusion at all. US-EU relations would not necessarily be adversarial, and transatlantic cooperation might continue to flourish.

In this grand strategy, the world order is based on the balance of power and the main issue in international politics is the problem of peace among great powers. The conception of the EU’s interests is based on the quest for autonomy through strength. The regional priority is industrial Eurasia and the rise of great powers,

and the potential threat stems both from a situation of complete hegemony and from the problem of power transition when new great powers rise.

The advocates of a superpower EU note that the UN is important but mostly as a concert of great powers. While getting a mandate from the UN’s Security Council would be perceived as preferable, in this grand strategy, it is not a prerequisite to launch a military operation. NATO should be progressively replaced by Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Intervention in regional and ethnic conflicts, as well as humanitarian interventions, is possible but selectively and based on ends-means calculations more than normative claims.

Similarly, nuclear proliferation is envisioned on a case-by-case basis: it might be destabilizing and call for non-proliferation measure in some situations but not in others. The force posture of this grand strategy is a fairly robust capacity geared toward mid- to high-intensity warfare but with a focus on European intelligence, means of projection, weapon systems, and command and control capability. The all-European chain of command would be capable to bypass NATO altogether. Ultimately, autonomy of military decision is considered in this grand strategy a first-order priority.

Superpower Europe assessed. The advocates of the Superpower Europe grand strategy emphasize that this is the best way for the EU to become autonomous and responsible for its own security in the current and upcoming international environment. It is only with this grand strategy that the EU can genuinely provide security for Europeans. It would be less vulnerable to the power of centralized sovereign states, and it would not depend on others to be secure. As Nick Witney, the former Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency, explained: ‘the Europeans will increasingly find themselves having to speak with one voice and act as one body in the wider world, if only because a globalized world will not allow them the luxury of doing anything else’. With this grand strategy, the EU can build-up a modern military capability and develop its international influence, in the region and beyond.

While Europeans might not consider this grand strategy very likely (at least in the short term and in its more radical version) and while their reasons for supporting it might not be fully compatible with one another, they favour the kind of more salient European stance that this grand strategy implies. The trend toward more international activity, more capability, and more coherence, which is also actively and explicitly supported by the EU administrative and political elites, is compatible with this grand strategy, particularly its focus on more independence and autonomy for the EU and its ambition to include traditional high politics ends

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and means. Moreover, since an important aspect of this grand strategy is a quest for autonomy from American preponderance – which does not automatically translate in soft balancing nor in a forerunner of future soft and hard balancing – it is fuelled by the higher degree of anti-Americanisms, which have been increasing influential in Europe since 2002–2003.

The sceptics respond that this grand strategy is overambitious for the EU and likely to remain a longer term project.31

First, the institutional changes needed to make it function – reduction of actors involved, clarification of competences, etc. – appear to be out of reach and are only partially addressed by the Lisbon Treaty. Furthermore, by losing these checks on ambitious foreign policy schemes, the EU might become more error prone and ultimately worse off. Second, the cost of this grand strategy would be significant, especially regarding defence since the EU would ensure its own security and would take on more international responsibilities. And yet, these funding needs seem out of proportion with what Europeans are ready to allocate to foreign and defence policy.

Third, this grand strategy is less amenable (than the Civilian power EU grand strategy, for example) to a slow motion, largely incremental, below the news level, process: it is bolder, more visible, and, therefore, potentially more controversial and divisive within Europe. Since a mixture of Euro-scepticisms and anti-Brussels moods currently prevail, it is unlikely to be politically viable to push for such a grand strategy. It can even be detrimental to the EU. Fourth, the key aspect of this grand strategy, autonomy from the United States, is also its weakest point: at the end of the day in times of strong disagreements for high-stake issues, many European countries would likely consider aligning with the United States as their best possible option. This choice is not confined to the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom nor to the new Member States of the EU. Italy’s foreign policy, for example, remains characterized by a careful balance between its European and Atlantic dimensions.32

Finally, such a grand strategy presupposes a stronger sense of belonging between societies and citizens in the EU that does not exist and is difficult to engineer, despite the fact that German and French philosophers Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida described European anti-war protests during the Iraqi crisis as the birth of a ‘European public consciousness’. Such a grand strategy would also entail a deliberate return to power politics on a global scale. This shift might alienate the United States and fuel a great power competition in which the alignments with Russia and China might change. The EU’s international stand might

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generate or reinforce the security dilemma, which might ultimately jeopardize the EU’s security.

4. Civilian Power EU: Security through a Cosmopolitan Legal Order

With the Civilian power grand strategy, the main goal of the EU is to ensure peace and stability through the promotion of democratic and egalitarian norms and a progressive erosion of national sovereignty on a global scale. A combination of liberal ideas and constructivist conceptions of international processes underlies this grand strategy. The EU’s preferred world order is a dense web of multilateral and regional institutions, like the International Criminal Court and the World Trade Organization, that would progressively modify international relations. This grand strategy implies a strong involvement of the EU in international affairs but within multilateral frameworks and with at its core the observance and development of international law. This way, Europeans encourage, by their own example, different regions of the world to embrace post-sovereignty and bolster trust and transparency.

It is through prosperity and post-sovereign norm promotion that the EU can really seek prestige and influence in international politics. The salient characteristics of world order are globalization, international law, and transnational regulation in a variety of domains, like criminal justice, environment, and trade. The conception of the EU interests is based on transnational good governance. The neighbourhood of the EU is significant, but this grand strategy has global characteristics and implications. Indeed, the EU would be heavily involved in the management of the international order, through trade, foreign policing and peacekeeping, foreign aid, reconstruction, etc.

This grand strategy puts the emphasis on the application and confirmation of existing multilateral rules, notably in international economic law (like World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement) and international humanitarian law. It also commits the EU to supporting international criminal justice showing a willingness to hand over important powers to new international institutions. Similarly, in areas like disarmament and the environment or in its bilateral relations, the EU’s action underlines the importance of international law for its action and identity.

Advocates of the Civilian power EU grand strategy point to the threats derived from anarchy, instability, and breaches of international law. For the EU and its Member States, the UN remains an indispensable source of legitimacy. In this grand strategy, NATO would persist but shift to a broad risk management institution. The EU should intervene in regional and ethnic conflict as well as humanitarian

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intervention but only with a UN Security Council mandate and with the overriding goal of protecting as many civilians as possible. By demanding the UN approval, the EU reaffirms the importance of international institutions and international law, which are the cornerstone of the Civilian power grand strategy. Non-military conflict management/peacekeeping activity is, allegedly, Europe’s greatest strength and comparative advantage and should be reinforced.\(^{34}\) Broadly following a ‘human security’ perspective, these interventions really are police operations with a strong civilian component, not traditional combat-oriented military operations.\(^ {35}\) In short, the EU would use military power frequently but systematically under a UN authorization and legal framework, with humanitarian motive and under the form of peace operations. As a consequence, the force posture would be a limited, crisis management force, with law enforcement, rather than war fighting, as its main raison d’être. Reconnaissance satellites might be an important asset to quickly identify impeding humanitarian disasters and react quickly.

**Civilian power EU assessed.** The advocates of the Civilian power grand strategy argue that this grand strategy really is the EU’s comparative advantage. It is ambitious since it seeks ultimately to remake or at least to significantly alter the international system, and it fits the distinctive EU’s identity and its norms.\(^ {36}\) The main security concern of the EU polity has to do with security threats that endanger the supremacy of international law globally. The EU should pursue a cosmopolitan project, based on human security and linked to the promotion of its values.\(^ {37}\) Instead of spending on defence, it should develop its capacity for non-military crisis management, which is what it does best. This focus can only benefit Transatlantic relations since there would be a genuine division of labour and the EU would do what NATO cannot do as well when it faces complex emergencies. The civilian power EU grand strategy also preserves and perhaps strengthens the EU’s political cohesion by focusing on areas of broad consensus. The European Commission would also become stronger with such a grand strategy. Overall, the Civilian power grand strategy is much less likely to fuel disagreement than the grand strategies that, one way or the other, put the emphasis on military power.

Critics respond that this idealist, and perhaps moralist, grand strategy might end up being much less benign than it sounds. A key component of this grand strategy would be interventions that will be major, costly, and demanding foreign

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policy initiatives that could end up in wars anyway. Since the cost of numerous interventions might appear ultimately prohibitive, this grand strategy is open to the devastating criticism of hypocrisis as well as different forms of normative coercion.

Moreover, the Civilian Power EU grand strategy is only viable in the shadow of the US presence, domination, and military power, a key point well identified long ago by Hedley Bull.38 The civilian power grand strategy does not see US hegemony as a serious problem and accepts the fact that the EU remains a junior partner to the United States.39 It remains unable to provide the EU with enough autonomy to ensure its security. It is also unclear that an unstoppable trend towards an ever-stronger multilateral regime would ultimately be sufficient to secure Europe. In a unipolar international system and in an era of rising great power and difficulty to reform international institution, basing a grand strategy on multilateralism appears problematic. Finally, the effectiveness of the most ambitious aims of this grand strategy is open to question precisely because of the mixed government and post-sovereign characteristics that it is supposed to mirror and exemplify.40

IV Conclusion

The current grand strategy of the EU is an uneasy mix of these four grand strategies with the dominant note being at the intersection between Civilian power EU and Euro-Atlanticism. Still, Euro-neutralism is having a significant influence despite the fact that few mainstream academics, bureaucrats, or politicians would openly support such a grand strategy for the EU. It sets significant boundary conditions to the EU’s international action. Finally, the Superpower EU grand strategy might not be a short-term contender, but policymakers and citizens who favour either a strong version of Civilian power EU or Euro-neutralism might see the Superpower EU grand strategy as their end point.

These grand strategic options, which attempt to define the purpose that the EU should have in international affairs, are distinct from the institutional characteristics of the Euro-polity and from the ‘finality’ of the European integration project. Still, there are potentially interesting relations between these grand strategies and different types of European political integration.41 The Euro-neutralist grand strategy, with its preference for a minimal EU role, is in tune with a conception of Europe of nation-states with probably a diminished or limited EU. The superpower EU grand strategy fits the notion of a unitary, federal, European state. The Euro-Atlantist grand strategy is based on the notion of the EU is a semi-sovereign polity

40 Morgan, see n. 29 above, 132.
41 On this debate, see in particular, Morgan, see n. 29 above.
embedded in Transatlantic economic and cultural relations. Finally, the Civilian power grand strategy relies on a conception of post-sovereign Europe with multi-level governance, an influential European Commission, as well as transnational links, embedded in multilateral institutions. While several combinations are possible, ultimately the grand strategy of the EU is linked to the characteristics and limits of the European integration project itself.
AIMS
The aim of the Review is to consider the external posture of the European Union in its relations with the rest of the world. Therefore the Review will focus on the political, legal and economic aspects of the Union’s external relations. The Review will function as an interdisciplinary medium for the understanding and analysis of foreign affairs issues which are of relevance to the European Union and its Member States on the one hand and its international partners on the other. The Review will aim at meeting the needs of both the academic and the practitioner. In doing so the Review will provide a public forum for the discussion and development of European external policy interests and strategies, addressing issues from the points of view of political science and policy-making, law or economics. These issues should be discussed by authors drawn from around the world while maintaining a European focus.

EDITORIAL POLICY
The editors will consider for publication unsolicited manuscripts in English as well as commissioned articles. Authors should ensure that their contributions will be apparent also to readers outside their specific expertise. Articles may deal with general policy questions as well as with more specialized topics. Articles will be subjected to a review procedure, and manuscripts will be edited, if necessary, to improve the effectiveness of communication. It is intended to establish and maintain a high standard in order to attain international recognition.

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