BUILDING EUROPE’S STRATEGIC CULTURE THROUGH SECURITIZATION

Operation Atalanta and the European Union’s Maritime Security Strategy
Cover photo © “Dutch EU Naval Force frigate HNLMS De Ruyter dispatching its boarding teams - Feb 13” by EU Naval Force Media and Public Information Office, used under Creative Commons license. Adapted by adding EU stars, additional foreground, logo’s and text. Dated February 19th, 2013, accessed July 28th, 2014. Accessible through: https://www.flickr.com/photos/90840517@N06/8491556323/in/photolist-dWnrRv-dWnoYi-dWnsp8-dWt6b1-dXZarQ-e81wjt-dWnseR-e81xHF-dWnpat-dWnp4p-ehT5jC-e87d47
Building Europe’s strategic culture through securitization:
Operation Atalanta and the European Union
Maritime Security Strategy

By
Nicander van Duijn

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“Getting the initial attention of governments and making them appreciate the scale of the crisis, and demonstrating that isolated incidents were escalating into a situation that threatened the safety of thousands of ships and seafarers, with the result that a vast and strategically vital area of the Indian Ocean, including major trade lanes, had become a virtual ‘no go’ area to merchant shipping”

– International Chamber of Shipping

“Lessons identified from Somali piracy” (2013)

“This Strategy aims to:
- Enhance the role of the EU as a global actor and security provider, taking its responsibilities in conflict prevention and crisis response and management in the areas of interest, at sea and from the sea, and achieving stability and peace through comprehensive and long-term EU action”

– Council of the European Union


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Operation Atalanta and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy
Executive summary

This thesis analyses the processes of securitization that led to the European Union’s decision to establish Operation Atalanta as an anti-piracy measure, and the affects of this mission on the European strategic culture. This thesis is inspired by a desire to understand and explore the role of interests groups on the conduct and development of European Union foreign policy. The central research question of this thesis is “To what extent is Operation Atalanta the result of a process of securitization, and what effect has Operation Atalanta had on the development of the European Union’s strategic culture, as evidenced by the European Union Maritime Security Strategy?”.

In this thesis I argue two major points. Firstly I argue that securitizing speech acts by the international shipping industry have led to the successful securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, eventually leading to the establishment of Operation Atalanta, the EU’s anti-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa. Secondly I argue that Operation Atalanta has played a major role in shaping the EU’s strategic culture. Atalanta’s lasting impact on EU security thinking can be found in the EU’s latest strategic culture document, the EU Maritime Security Strategy (2014).
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Third and final I want to thank my parents and sister for proofreading this document and offering their valuable criticisms. Thank you for being there for me.
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALDE</td>
<td>Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (EU party)</td>
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<td>AVPD</td>
<td>Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment</td>
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<td>BIMCO</td>
<td>Baltic and International Maritime Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
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<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
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<td>CMC</td>
<td>Crisis Management Concept</td>
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<td>COPRI</td>
<td>Copenhagen Peace Research Institute</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Copenhagen School</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Communities</td>
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<td>ECAP</td>
<td>European Capability Action Plan</td>
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<td>ECSA</td>
<td>European Community Shipowners’ Association</td>
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<td>ECSC</td>
<td>European Coal and Steel Community</td>
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<td>EDA</td>
<td>European Defence Agency</td>
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<td>EDC</td>
<td>European Defence Community</td>
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<td>EEAS</td>
<td>European External Action Service</td>
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<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<td>EPP</td>
<td>European People’s Party (EU party)</td>
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<td>ESDP</td>
<td>European Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>ESS</td>
<td>European Security Strategy</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUFOR</td>
<td>European Union Force</td>
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<td>EUMSS</td>
<td>European Union Maritime Security Strategy</td>
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<td>EUNAVCO</td>
<td>European Union Naval Cooperation</td>
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<td>EUNAVFOR</td>
<td>European Naval Force</td>
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<td>EUROMARFOR</td>
<td>European Union Maritime Force</td>
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<td>FNFA</td>
<td>Force Navale France-Allemande</td>
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<td>GoA</td>
<td>Gulf of Aden</td>
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<td>GT</td>
<td>Grounded Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>High Representative for the CFSP</td>
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<td>ICISS</td>
<td>International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty</td>
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<td>ICS</td>
<td>International Chamber of Shipping</td>
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<td>IMB</td>
<td>International Maritime Bureau</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Maritime Organization</td>
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<td>IMP</td>
<td>Integrated Maritime Policy</td>
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<td>IRESS</td>
<td>Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy</td>
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<td>ITWF</td>
<td>International Transport Worker’s Federation</td>
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<td>MEP</td>
<td>Member of European Parliament</td>
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<td>MRRM</td>
<td>Maritime Rapid Response Mechanism</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
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<td>PDA</td>
<td>Political Discourse Analysis</td>
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<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to Protect</td>
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<tr>
<td>S&amp;D</td>
<td>Socialists &amp; Democrats (EU party)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRSG</td>
<td>Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCLOS</td>
<td>United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea</td>
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<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEU</td>
<td>Western European Union</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WWII</td>
<td>World War II</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale and objective

On the morning of May 11th, 2012 the Dutch frigate HNLMS van Amstel freed seventeen Iranian fishermen who had been taken hostage by a group of eleven suspected Somali pirates. The Iranian’s fishing dhow was pirated off the coast of Oman and used as a mothership in the (unsuccessful) attack against the MV Super Lady, a crude oil tanker with a gross tonnage of 56,204 tonnes, en route to Europe. Acting within the framework of a European Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), the HNLMS van Amstel was part of the anti-piracy Operation Atalanta that currently deploys five European Union warships in the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean. The efforts of EUNAVFOR Atalanta are part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which in turn is part of the larger framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that covers parts of the European Union’s foreign policy.

The fact that the Netherlands undertakes such anti-piracy operations within a wider European Union framework is much less obvious than it might seem. Decision-making in the European Union (EU) is a complex matter, which is unsurprising in an organization of twenty-eight member states that is neither supranational nor intergovernmental and spanning a diverse set of cultures and nationalities. This is especially true for the areas of defence and security, interests that traditionally lie at the heart of the nation-state. Despite challenges inherent to the organization, since the 1990s the European Union has made considerable headway into developing a comprehensive common defence and security policy. One of the most remarkable products of this progress is maritime Operation Atalanta, which was established in 2008 and aimed at combating piracy off the coast of Somalia. Besides being a testament to the increased importance of the maritime domain as well as progress in the Union’s internal decision-making processes in the field of security and defence, I argue in this thesis that Operation Atalanta has also shown that the Union’s security agenda is co-determined by influential non-state actors.

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3 The Treaty of Lisbon renamed the ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) to CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) in 2009, but as this thesis sometimes switches between before and after the transformation, the two terms will be used interchangeably.
The research objective of this thesis is twofold: to analyse the processes that led to the EU’s decision to deploy Operation Atalanta into Somali waters*, and to analyse what affects this mission has had on the security strategy and culture of the European Union. This thesis is inspired by a desire to understand and explore the role of interests groups on the conduct and development of European Union foreign policy. It is this desire that led to the choice of approaching the first objective through the theory of securitization. This theory can shed light on the EU’s decision to deploy military assets to the waters around the Horn of Africa in order to deter and repress acts of piracy. The aim here is to show how elements of securitization could be observed in a threat assessment of the issue of Somali piracy in particular, and maritime security in general. I contend that the presentation of piracy as a maritime threat against the political, economic and societal interests of the Union was imperative for the decision to deploy maritime assets off the Horn of Africa. The theory of securitization can help answer questions on the strategic construction of piracy as an existential threat and on the processes that led to the deployment of military assets.

To approach the second objective, the strategic culture theory is employed. Strategic culture theory attempts to create a framework for studying the strategic decisions of states and international organizations, in order to understand how these actors interpret, predict and react to international events. Strategic culture theory can help us understand how the European Union feels about security and defence matters, for example in regards to operationalizing EU naval force Atalanta. It is not only relevant to understand Europe’s strategic culture at the time of establishing Operation Atalanta; one of the main objectives of this thesis is to understand how Operation Atalanta has affected the Union’s current ideas about the use of military means.

Together the theory of securitization and strategic culture form the theoretical framework on which this thesis hinges. The theory of strategic culture is closely related to the theory of securitization; strategic culture can help explain the way in which issues are securitized – or not. The level of acceptance of a securitizing move depends – inter alia – on the strategic cultures of the targeted audiences. This thesis found that processes of securitization can affect or shape the strategic culture of a state or organization.

These observations are composed in the following central research question that will be used throughout this thesis: “To what extent is Operation Atalanta the result of a process of securitization, and what effect has Operation Atalanta had on the development of the European Union’s strategic culture, as evidenced by the European Union Maritime Security Strategy?”

In this thesis I argue two major points. Firstly I argue that securitizing speech acts by the international shipping industry have led to the successful securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, eventually leading to the

* In this thesis the terms “off the coast of Somalia”, “The Gulf of Aden” and “Somali waters” and “the waters around the Horn of Africa” all refer to the larger geographical area in which Somali pirates are active.
establishment of Operation Atalanta, the EU’s anti-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa. Secondly I argue that Operation Atalanta has played a major role in shaping the EU’s strategic culture. Atalanta’s lasting impact on EU security thinking can be found in the EU’s latest strategic culture document, the EU Maritime Security Strategy (2014).

1.2. Methodology

A mixture of qualitative methods is used to investigate and analyse the research objectives and questions. In this study a critical analysis of both securitizing discourse, as well as strategic culture discourse will be made by means of the method of political discourse analysis (PDA).

Securitization theory and strategic culture theory are constructivist concepts. Both of them, but especially the theory of securitization, lean on the broader ‘turn to language’ movement. The linguistic turn has inspired methods and theories based on discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a valuable method for comparing different sources vis-à-vis each other in order to understand variations between them. As one of the aims of this study is to investigate how securitizing speech acts have affected the European Union’s strategic culture discourse, the method of discourse analysis is ideally suited for such an investigation. Securitization theory is founded upon to analysis of discourse and speech acts. According to Buzan et al. (1998): “The way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations: When does an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed?” Similarly, a comparative analysis of the strategy discourse in key EU documents will provide the means to analyse changes in Europe’s strategic culture. We can analyse whether or not securitizing moves on the issue of piracy have been accepted by identifying new or altered discourses by European decision-makers.

As we want to analyse how securitizing speech acts have shaped Europe’s strategic culture – which in turn shapes and influences European foreign policy – this study will employ the method of political discourse analysis (PDA). Discourse analysis spans a diverse set of methods and does not have a single methodology; this is also true for PDA. Political Discourse Analysis can be described as ‘ambiguous’, as it can both mean that PDA focuses on the analysis of political discourse, as well as a political approach to discourse analysis, i.e. more akin to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). PDA is perhaps best understood as a hybrid form, being both about political discourse as well as a critical perspective on discourse. This critical perspective is based on the Foucaultian notion of discourse as power. Foucault defines power not in the

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narrow sense, but broadly: “Power produces; it produces reality”. As power also creates inequalities, the goal of discourse analysis is to examine how power operates. This is also reflected by Blommaert (2005): “Discourse is an instrument of power, of increasing importance in contemporary societies. The way this instrument of power works is often hard to understand, and critical discourse analysis aims to make it more visible and transparent”. This critical approach is relevant in this thesis because it can be used to analyse the implicit power relation between the EU and its member states on the subject of foreign policy and strategic culture.

Political Discourse Analysis as focused on ‘political discourse’ also needs clarification. Political discourse is not just defined by the character of its author or originator, i.e. politicians; the general public, the audience and the media are all part of the domain of politics. Van Dijk (1997) makes a comprehensive analysis of the political domain for political discourse, including the societal domain, political systems, values, ideologies and institutions, as well as political actors, relations, processes, action and cognition. Political discourse spans all these facets of the political domain, and is not merely reserved for (career) politicians.

Some discourse analysis approaches are focused on micro-level detail explanations of discourse, restricting discourse analysis to a quantitative matter. This study follows a different, qualitative method, based on the Schutt’s (2012) techniques of qualitative data analysis. According to him, there are five steps shared by most approaches to qualitative data analysis:

1. Documentation of the data and the process of data collection;
2. Organization/categorization of the data into concepts;
3. Connection of the data to show how one concept may influence another;
4. Corroboration/legitimization, by evaluating alternative explanations;
5. Representing the account (reporting the findings).

The first step – data collection – is crucial in the process of conceptualizing a hypothesis. The empirical materials for the political discourse analysis are derived from a wide range of sources. Firstly this analysis relies heavily on three key European Union documents in which the European Union sets out its security strategy. These documents are the ‘European Security Strategy’ (2003), the ‘Report of the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World’ (2008) and finally the ‘European Union Maritime Security Strategy’ (2014). These documents are of major significance for this study, as they constitute the European Union’s thinking on security strategy. As

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12 Ibid.
I will argue in the chapter on the theoretical framework, they therefore represent the strategic culture of the European Union. The discourse in the three strategic documents will be analysed and compared on three points: threat assessment, strategic objectives, and policy implications. The three documents are ideally suited for a discourse analysis and comparison, as they are Europe’s primary security strategies. All three documents have been adopted by the European Council, and all three documents share the same rationale: to define global challenges and key threats in order to advance the Union’s security and core values.

Secondly this study is based on official sources such as government reports, transcripts of parliamentary hearings, and joint council decisions. Secondary open sources, such as newspapers articles, op-eds, speeches and a single radio-interview are also used, since, as Mak (2006) put it, “securitization discourse or speech acts cannot be ‘imposed’ and there is ‘some need to argue one’s case’ in the public domain”14. Finally, six interviews were conducted with various European Union officials, including a Commission aide, a Member of Parliament and EU Military Staff officials, as well as an interview with an official of the Royal Netherlands Navy. The interviews were conducted on the basis of anonymity and took place in The Hague, the Netherlands and in Brussels, Belgium in June and August 2014.

Additionally, statistics gathered by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) are used to contribute data on acts of piracy off the Horn of Africa. Here it is important to point out that there are several objections to be raised against the usage of IMB statistics. First of all, I argue that the International Maritime Bureau is part of the shipping industry that aimed to securitize the issue of Somali piracy. The IMB therefore might be considered as biased in reporting acts of piracy. Secondly the IMB’s definition of piracy differs from the legal definition by the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which is problematic for several reasons. However, I choose to employ the IMB’s statistics in this analysis, for the reason that they are the statistics that are most frequently used in media reports and public debates.

It is also important to detail how these documents, statistics, and secondary sources have been collected. Many official documents refer to each other, as well as to parliamentary hearings, secondary legislation and institutional decisions. Other were selected after recommendations of interviewees or peers and colleagues. After collecting and reading initial sources on the subjects of this thesis, I perceived a discrepancy between the threat of Somali piracy and the European Union’s reaction to this phenomenon. I decided to explore this subject in detail, gathering and analysing additional sources, continually revising and developing this initial premise. This served as the foundation of this thesis and led to the decision to compare the EU’s discourse on security strategy in order to find developments, variations and contrasts between them. In a way, the materials and sources for this thesis, as well as its hypothesis,

were gathered and devised in a way much akin to Grounded Theory (GT) research, in which data is collected, coded and categorized, before giving rise to theory. First explored by Glaser & Strauss (1965)\(^\text{15}\), Grounded Theory contradicts the traditional model of doing research by first formulating a theoretical framework and hypothesis, before applying those to the subject of the study\(^\text{16}\). Employing this method allowed me to weigh and compare the strategic discourses of different sources on an exploratory basis. The insights and data produced from the initial sources led to a development of the thesis, which in turn led to the exploration of additional sources and further refinement of the theory. This phase also served as an opportunity to evaluate the research process, corroborate and verify the (preliminary) findings and connect them to the theoretical framework. Here it is crucial to clarify the relationship between the primary sources used in this thesis (Europe’s three security strategies – the ESS, IRESS and EUMSS) and the secondary sources. While the secondary sources are often of an official nature (such as government reports, transcripts of parliamentary hearings, and joint council decisions), they are used “informally” as an indication of Europe’s strategic culture. Although they are not used for a direct comparison, as is done with Europe’s three security strategies, they are of crucial importance for providing context, to deduct information from and to paint a narrative of the EU’s continually developing strategic culture. Although these secondary sources occupy a different position relative to the three primary sources, they are nonetheless of key importance for the findings of this thesis. The secondary literature on the topic offered inspiration and critical insights, which was crucial for the second step in Schutt’s roadmap of qualitative research, coding the data.

Coding and categorizing of data signifies the second step in Schutt’s roadmap of qualitative research. In studying the different sources I identified several key concepts, such as threat assessment, threat perception, and policy implications, finding similarities and differences in discourse between sources. The secondary literature collected was crucial for the purpose of identifying categories and themes in the primary sources, supporting the analysis of various discourse strands. This leads to Schutt’s third and fourth step\(^\text{17}\). The similarities and differences of the sources – in particular Europe’s three strategic documents – are compared to find recurrent themes between them and provide context, as well as corroborate the findings. Having compared the discourses of Europe’s security strategies at the end of chapter 3, chapter 4 and 5 are concerned with explaining how the discrepancies and differences found between the documents have originated, drawing upon a case study of Operation Atalanta. The fifth and final step, reporting the findings of the analysis, is satisfied in the conclusion, which will evaluate the findings and

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summarize the research process. Several suggestions for further research are also made.

Finally, a note on the limitations of this study. While political discourse analysis is a powerful tool for the analysis of political discourse and content, it would be a mistake to claim that this analysis provides irrefutable representation of the opinions and attitudes of Europe’s elite decision-makers, let alone its citizens. It is important to realise that the discourse of the European Union is political by nature, serving interests and functions that might not be immediately apparent. In the case of the EU, it is also important to realise that the political discourse is more often than not the result of a political compromise. Also, it is important to note that this research found that Operation Atalanta has contributed to the emphasis on economic interests in the EU’s latest security strategy; it is not the only cause of the inclusion of economic interests, for which the deployment of military means is an option.

1.3. Actor mapping

In order to avoid confusion and pre-empt misunderstanding it is important to include a section defining two actors of importance in this study. Besides the International Maritime Bureau, several other actors are featured in this analysis. In regards to the securitizing actors, I identify several large organizations that serve to represent the shipping industry, most notably the European Community Shipowners’ Association (ECSA), and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS). Several other large shipping companies have actively contributed to the securitizing of piracy campaign and include the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), the International Transport Worker’s Federation (ITWF), Intertanko and Intercargo. The ICS, IMB, ECSA and the aforementioned organizations frequently work together to speak in a unified voice. The chosen organizations represent the majority of the international shipping industry on the account of their memberships; the IMB is included on the account of its Piracy Reporting Centre and its authoritative position in the piracy debate.

For the purpose of this thesis, the European Union is to be regarded as a unitary actor. Foreign policy decision-making in the EU is a complex matter, not least because of the different institutions (Council, Commission and Parliament) and ever-growing number of member states, but also because of special legislative procedures and co-decision constructions. In regards to Operation Atalanta however, the European institutions were all in favour of an EU naval force mission. The Union can therefore be regarded as a unitary actor in this instance\textsuperscript{18}. It is important to note that strategic decisions are products of complex processes between the EU’s institutions and its member states. Decisions to deploy military means under the EU flag are consensus based and thus subject to compromises. When talking about official declarations and publications, EU texts such as the European Security Strategy only outline the

1.4. Academic and societal relevance
The analysis holds academic and societal relevance for several reasons. Operation Atalanta has received a reasonable amount of scientific attention due to it being the first empirical realization of the autonomous concept of peacekeeping at sea\(^\text{19}\). This study however goes beyond the concept of peacekeeping at sea and analyses its effects on security thinking, a facet that so far has been under addressed. More importantly, this thesis entails a discourse analysis of the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) from June 2014. As this official security strategy has only been published very recently, it has not yet been subjected to any type of academic research or comparison. This thesis can help contribute to the theoretical debate on the development and nature of a European strategic culture, for example by analysing how influential non-state actors influence the strategic culture of international organizations.

Additionally, this thesis holds societal relevance because it shows how the nature of the European strategic culture has changed, and what this might mean for future European foreign policy engagements. The actions and inactions of the European Union within the (maritime) security domain influence the global security balance, which in turn have an effect on the standing of the EU in the world and the society we live in. As the European Union is increasingly profiling itself as a strategic actor, understanding the direction of this development is highly relevant from a societal point of view, as this development is occupied with decisions to go to war or deploy military measures. The deployment of military means has direct effects on the societies we live in, influencing the political, economic and social spheres on a range of levels. Not only the national level is affected; for some, such as those with closer ties to the military- or shipping industries for example, decisions on the deployment of military means might have direct consequences for the local or personal spheres. It is therefore relevant to conduct research in this field, for the consequences

1.5. Structure
This thesis first presents an overview of the academic debates concerning the theories of securitization and strategic culture. In chapter 2, I will outline the two theoretical approaches that are utilized by this thesis to frame the answers to the questions above. The aim here is to familiarize the reader with the theoretical framework, to share my understanding of the theories and to establish a working definition for the purpose of this study. The first theoretical

approach to be employed in this thesis is the theory of securitization. First an overview of the origins of this theory will be given. This part of the theoretical framework will focus on the work done by the Copenhagen School, which has assumed a leading role in the securitization debate. This is followed by an analysis of the most significant contributions to the theory. The second theoretical approach concerns the theory of strategic culture. In a similar fashion as with the securitization theory, this section will start with an overview of the origins of strategic culture theory, after which the debate on how the strategic culture approach can be utilized for practical purposes will be analysed.

Chapter 3 is concerned with detailing the development of European strategic culture. Included in this chapter is a special focus on the emergence of a clear maritime dimension of security thinking. This is essential for understanding the characteristics of the European security cooperation, and to provide the foundation on which the rest of this thesis is based. The chapter starts by placing the Union’s defence policy in a historical context in order to illustrate how the EU developed the hard power capabilities to complement her traditional soft power instruments, shaping its strategic culture along the way.

Chapter 4 is concerned with analysing the political security discourse of Europe’s three premiere security strategies: the European Security Strategy (ESS, 2003), the Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy (IRESS, 2008) and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS, 2014). The discourse in the three strategic documents will be analysed and compared on several points: threat assessment, strategic objectives, and policy implications. By employing political discourse analysis we can compare the EU’s strategic culture documents and understand variations between them.

 Chapters 5 and 6 are concerned with the application of the theoretical approaches of strategic culture and securitization on the case of Operation Atalanta. The aim here is to connect the previous chapters so that a well-balanced argument can be presented on the research question of this thesis.

Chapter 5 sees the application of the theory of securitization. It is crucial to understand how Somali piracy became such an important threat to the European Union, to be dealt with by military force. This chapter analyses the process of securitization that has contributed to the EU decision to go into Somali waters. The theory of securitization will be applied on the case study: who were the actors that called for the extraordinary approach of deploying military assets? How did the process of securitizing Somali piracy occur? And how was the securitizing move accepted by the European Union? I found that it was the international shipping industry that put the issue of Somali piracy on the European security agenda, leading not only to the deployment of Operation Atalanta, but also to a change in European strategic culture.

Chapter 6 finds that Operation Atalanta represents a significant departure from the previous pattern of CSDP missions, a crucial point in this thesis. Having detailed this point, the next part of the chapter is concerned with the impact of Operation Atalanta on the strategic culture of the European Union, as evidenced by the European Union Maritime Security Strategy. I contend that
Operation Atalanta influenced the EUMSS, marking a new era in EU strategic culture, as the reasons for implementing this mission have found their way – after six years of running the mission – into the official EU security strategy.

The findings of this thesis, as well as concluding remarks, will be presented in the conclusion.
2. Theoretical framework: securitization theory and strategic culture

The research objective of this thesis is twofold: to analyse the processes that led to the EU’s decision to deploy Operation Atalanta into Somali waters, and to analyse what affects this mission has had on the security strategy of the European Union. To approach these objectives this chapter is concerned with the theoretical frameworks that will be applied to the case study. First the theory of securitization will be analysed, as it can shed light on the EU’s decision to deploy military assets to the waters around the Horn of Africa in order to deter and repress acts of piracy. The aim here is to understand the process of securitization, in order to show how processes of securitization were applied to the issue of Somali piracy. The theory of securitization can help answer questions on the strategic construction of piracy and on the processes that led to the deployment of military assets. An overview of the origins of this theory will be given, followed by an analysis of the most significant contributions to this theory. This section will focus on the work done by the Copenhagen School, which has assumed a leading role in the securitization debate. To present both sides of the debate, several critics of the Copenhagen School and their particular views of securitization will be analysed. This section will be largely based on the critical writings of Balzacq (2005) and Stritzel (2007), amongst others whose contributions to the theory of securitization have been valuable. Afterwards I will establish my personal understanding of securitization, and detail how this theory will be applied in this thesis.

Following the analysis of the theory of securitization is an overview of the theory of strategic culture, with a special focus on the notion of a European strategic culture. Strategic culture theory attempts to create a framework for studying the strategic decisions of states and international organizations, in order to understand how these actors interpret, predict and react to international events. Strategic culture theory can help us understand how the European Union feels about security and defence matters, for example in regards to operationalizing EU naval force Atalanta. This theory is employed as it is highly compatible with the theory of securitization: strategic culture can help explain why the securitization of certain issues is accepted – or not. In a similar fashion as with the securitization theory, this section will start with an overview of the origins of strategic culture theory, after which the debate on how the strategic culture approach can be utilized for practical purposes will be analysed. The so-called Johnston-Gray debate focuses on whether strategic culture theory can be used to ‘explain’ or to ‘understand’ strategic decision-making. Afterwards the question of whether the European Union can have a strategic culture will be dealt with. Finally I will explain my personal understanding of strategic culture theory, and the way the theory will be used in this thesis.
2.1. Securitization theory and the Copenhagen School

To approach the topic of maritime security and strategic decision-making in the European Union, this study utilizes the securitization theory as formulated by the Copenhagen School. Securitization theory is a radically constructivist approach within international relations theory in which threats to security are explained as social constructs, shaped and influenced by one’s perceptions. The aim of securitization studies is “to gain an increasingly precise understanding of who securitizes, on what issue (threats), for whom (referent objects), why, with what results, and, not least, under what conditions”. Securitizing refers to declaring an issue to be threatening the very existence of a particular referent object. This legitimizes an actor to lift an issue above the normal realm of politics, in order to legitimize the adoption of extreme measures. The issue of piracy off the Horn of Africa, I argue in this thesis, was securitized. The shipping industry contended that piracy was threatening international trade, which – once accepted – enabled the European Union to adopt ‘extreme measures’: employing warships in the regional waters.

Central to the theory of securitization is the Copenhagen School (CS), a term first used to refer to the theoretical work of a group of researchers connected with the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI), of which Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde were amongst the most influential. Their work ‘Security: a new framework for analysis’ (1998) qualifies as a normative work in security studies. The main objective of the authors was to reconcile the ‘wide’ versus ‘narrow’ debate in security studies by presenting a new wide framework, incorporating notions of the narrow or traditionalist position. The ‘wide’ versus ‘narrow’ debate refers to a discussion on the applicability of security studies on a range of issues. Whereas the ‘narrow’ camp advocated the confinement of security studies to issues that included threats and/or use of force, the ‘wider’ advocates – as the name suggests – favoured the application of security studies on a more comprehensive range of issues, including economic, social and environmental ones. The wide versus narrow debate is a very interesting concept that will also be applied to European Union security thinking, further on in this analysis.

The Copenhagen School aimed to extend security studies further than the Cold War’s security default security issue of superpower nuclear war. The narrow or traditionalist side was concerned with the muddying of the term causing intellectual incoherence. Widening the term would run the risk of ‘security’ becoming so broad that its meaning would be lost. The authors state they adhere to a wide view, contradicting the traditionalist view that the core of security studies should be only concerned with war and military force. Retreating back to a military core is neither the only, nor the best way to deal with the intellectual incoherence that a widened interpretation of the notion of security brings. Instead the authors aim to overcome the problem of incoherency by “exploring the logic of security itself”. By establishing a new

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1 Buzan & Waever & de Wilde (1998) p. 31-32.
framework for the analysis of security, the authors mean to break free from the debate on narrow-wide approaches to security. In the new approach, what is defined as security is based on a demanding criterion, namely that an issue needs to be presented as an existential threat, meaning that it trumps all other issues in regards to priority. If the security issue that poses an existential threat is not addressed as such, “everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our way)”.

Securitization theory analyses the processes that highlight an issue as an existential threat to the security of a designated referent object, such as the state, society, or concept. The issue of piracy was securitized by declaring it an existential threat to a number of referent objects: international shipping, the world economy, the lives of seafarers and the environment, amongst others. As an issue is now considered a threat against the very existence of the object, the use of extraordinary measures is legitimized. Within international relations, extraordinary measures equal the application of military force. What constitutes an existential threat depends on the level and sector of analysis. In the political sector an existential threat might be a threat to the sovereignty or ideology of the state; in the environmental sector it might be the survival of an individual species, or the maintenance of biodiversity; in the economic sector an existential threat could be a new law that prevents a firm from producing and selling their products.

Securitization theory places an issue on a scale ranging from non-politicized (meaning that the issue is not an issue of public debate), to politicized (when an issue is put on the political agenda, warranting communal governance), to securitized (when an issue is presented as an existential threat, voiding normal political procedures and necessitating extraordinary measures). A securitized issue resides on a level above the politicized one: it goes beyond politicization. As Åtland & ven Bruusgaard (2009) illustrate, an issue might also be depoliticized before it can be securitized, as well as being desecuritized after it is perceived as no longer posing an existential threat to security (see figure 1, page 30). They also show that actors may deliberately choose to not securitize an issue. The step between the politicization and securitization of an issue usually faces a form of resistance: as the rules of communal governance are violated in the name of security, the audience has to tolerate such an infraction. It is important to underline the role of the audience in the process of securitization. An issue is securitized “only if and when the audience accepts it as such”.

As I will show in the chapter on the securitization of Somali piracy, the EU by and large accepted the securitizing move by the shipping industry.

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5 Ibid., p. 22-24.
The act of securitization is done through speech acts, or specific rhetorical structure.

“In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labelling it as security, an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means. […] The task is not to assess some objective threats that “really” endanger some object to be defended or secured; rather it is to understand the processes of constructing a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat. The process of securitization is what in language theory is called a speech act. […] It is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done”.

‘The words’ do not refer to a pre-defined set of words or sentences; it is the designation of an issue as an existential threat. Which actors are in a position to securitize an issue hinges on their position of authority on the subject. Buzan et al. exemplify this by saying that being the “generally accepted voice of security” puts an actor in a position to securitize. Such a position is never absolute however, as the audience plays an important role in the process of securitization. By an audience’s rejection of a bid to securitize an issue, an actor’s position of authority is challenged. Securitizing actors do not have to be states or international organizations; in the thesis I contend that it is the shipping industry who, through securitization, helped co-determine the EU’s security agenda and with it, its strategic culture. Actors may also compete against one another in putting their priority on top of the security agenda.

Taureck (2006) provides an apt summary of securitization theory according to the Copenhagen School:

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“The main argument of securitization theory is that security is a (illocutionary) speech act, that solely by uttering ‘security’ something is being done. ‘It is by labeling something a security issue that it becomes one’ (Wæver 2004: 13). By stating that a particular referent object is threatened in its existence, a securitizing actor claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object’s survival. The issue is then moved out of the sphere of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policy-making. For security this means that it no longer has any given (pre-existing) meaning but that it can be anything a securitizing actor says it is. Security is a social and intersubjective construction”\(^\text{i1}\).

2.2. Critiques of the Copenhagen School

2.2.1. General critiques

The Copenhagen’s School theory on securitization has been subject to scrutiny from other scholars. Several shortcomings of the theory are identified by Caballero-Anthony & Emmers (2006) such as not addressing why securitization occurs, the insufficient use of empirical research, the Copenhagen School’s euro-centric approach, and finally being unconcerned with the policy effectiveness of (de)securitization\(^\text{i2}\). Their modified framework involves asking the why and how questions of securitization, to provide a more systematic approach to study non-traditional security challenges. In order to do so, the issue area, securitizing actors, security concept, the degree of securitization, impact on the threat, the conditions affecting securitization and linkages between security issues are examined, as well as the domestic political systems, international norms and the role of powerful actors\(^\text{i3}\).

One part of the Copenhagen School’s theory that is frequently held to light is the speech act mechanism. An issue is securitized “only if and when the audience accepts it as such”\(^\text{i4}\). But what happens if there is more than one target audience, or if the target audience is comprised of several groups – for example EU member states – of which some accept the securitizing move when others do not? Mak (2006) argues that threats are subject to re-construction and re-interpretation by the target audiences\(^\text{i5}\), just as much as they are by the securitizing actor themselves. This can lead to the securitization of issues that differ wildly from what the original securitizing actor set out to do. Speech acts can therefore not only fail or succeed, but also succeed partially. Speech acts are not a “simple, straightforward diatribe between actor and audience”, but instead are

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\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 6-8.


subject to the influence of other actors, elites and multiple audiences in a complex social environment, all of which can affect the securitizing discourse\textsuperscript{16}.

Bigo (2002) altogether refutes the point of a securitization as an idea of exceptionalization through the speech act mechanism. Instead he views securitization as going beyond the speech act, viewing securitization as a process achieved through everyday technologies and practice:

"Securitization is not usefully characterized as a discursive practice creating "exceptionalization", even though it may find its origins in this practice. Authors like Buzan have little sense of the routines, the day-to-day practices, of the bureaucracies that are necessary to understand how discourses work in practice. Securitization works through everyday technologies, through the effects of power that are continuous rather than exceptional, through political struggles, and especially through institutional competition within the professional security field in which the most trivial interests are at stake".

The Copenhagen School formulates security as a level above ‘normal’ politics. Bigo argues that focusing on securitization as a political process underestimates the role of modernized, technological professionalized bureaucratic “management of unease”\textsuperscript{17}.

2.2.2. Balzacq

Balzacq (2005) also criticizes the speech act approach. His argument is that the speech act mechanism does not proficiently translate to reality, or: “the speech act view of security does not provide adequate grounding upon which to examine security practices in ‘real situations’”\textsuperscript{18}. Balzacq finds that the Copenhagen School’s securitization framework leads to a sense of securitization that has a fixed code of practice, namely the speech act. The presumption that a process of securitization is permanent and unchanging reduces the process to a ‘conventional procedure’. Instead, Balzacq argues, securitization is better understood as a strategic practice. This practice occurs within a comprehensive interplay between all actors within the process:

“Securitization is better understood as a strategic (pragmatic) practice that occurs within, and as part of, a configuration of circumstances, including the context, the psycho-cultural disposition of the audience, and the power that both speaker and listener bring to the interaction”\textsuperscript{19}.

Balzacq continues to argue that this conceptualization of speech act securitization differs from the CS’s theory in an essential manner. Whereas the

\textsuperscript{16} Mak (2006) p. 68.


\textsuperscript{19} Balzacq (2005) p. 172.
strategic action of discourse operates on the level of persuasion (employing lies, emotions, metaphors, stereotypes, silences, et cetera), the CS’s speech act “seeks to establish universal principles of communication”, functional regardless of context, authority or culture. The CS speech act model proposes the idea that securitization is a sustained practice aimed at convincing an audience to accept that an issue needs extraordinary measures to solve it, suspending normal political procedures. Balzacq aims to recast this model by emphasizing the strategic purposes that may underlie this process. This approach “elevates securitization above its normative setting and, in so doing, ensconces it in the social context, a field of power struggles in which securitizing actors align on a security issue to swing the audience’s support toward a policy or course of action.” While the difference might seem small (paralleled with the difference between pragmatics and universal pragmatics), the idea that securitizing an issue happens as a strategic practice is valuable nonetheless, especially when examining the securitization of piracy by the international shipping industry, which have a clear strategic incentive for doing so.

Balzacq challenges the CS’s theory on one other assumption. According to him the nature and status of the audience remain unaccounted in the CS theory, except for that the audience must be significant. Balzacq defends the idea that “the audience, political agency and context are crucial, if overlooked, aspects of securitization that should guide the analysis of the linguistic manufacture of threats in world politics.”

Gladstone (2010) places doubts over Balzacq’s second challenge by questioning how Balzacq understands the CS’s concept of audience. He argues that Balzacq understands the concept to mean the public, while the audience does not have to be the general public; it could be the power elite or a group of fundamentalists, as shown by Vuori (2008). Balzacq’s argument – underlining the power of the listeners – can be tied to Mak’s (2006) argument that threats are subject to re-construction and re-interpretation by the target audiences.

2.2.3. Stritzel

Another important work testing the Copenhagen’s School theory of securitization is by the hand of Stritzel (2007). In his article ‘Towards a theory of securitization: Copenhagen and beyond’ Stritzel criticizes the CS’s perspective on several accounts. The Copenhagen School’s theory rests, according to Stritzel, on two central concepts, namely the speech act – securitizing actor – audience trilogy, and the ‘facilitating conditions’ that are needed for successful

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21 Ibid., p. 173.
22 Ibid., p. 173.
23 Gladstone (2010) “Private security companies and the securitization of piracy in Southeast Asia”, University of St. Andrews, p. 34.
securitization. He finds that the theory is theoretically underdeveloped around these two “centers of gravity”:

“The first understanding concentrates on the speech act event and is grounded in the concept of performativity (or ‘textuality’). This understanding would correspond with an ‘internalist’ […] reading of securitization and is by now only articulated in a rudimentary form in the concept of ‘illocution’. […] The second understanding theorizes the process of securitization, based on, I would suggest, the central idea of embeddedness. This understanding would correspond with an ‘externalist’, more constructivist reading of securitization”.

Stritzel comprehends the Copenhagen School’s understanding of the speech act to have an “indeterminate force of its own that is not related to features of an existing context”. This suggests an internalist centre of gravity in the CS’s thinking. This internalist position becomes problematic when the ‘facilitating conditions’ are introduced. According to Buzan et al.:

“Among the internal conditions of the speech act, the most important is to follow the security form, the grammar of security, and construct a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return and a possible way out – the general grammar of security as such plus the particular dialects of the different sectors […]. The external aspect of a speech act has two main conditions. One is social capital of the enunciator, the securitizing actor, who must be in a position of authority, although this should not be defined as official authority. The other external condition has to do with threat. It is more likely that one can conjure a security threat if certain objects can be referred to that are generally held to be threatening – be it tanks, hostile sentiments, or polluted waters. In themselves, these objects never make for necessary securitization, but they are definitely facilitating conditions”.

More comprehensible, Stritzel defines the facilitating conditions as the “demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security, the social conditions regarding the position of authority for the securitizing actor, and the features of alleged threats that either facilitate or impede securitization”. The existence of facilitating conditions contradicts the internalist position of the speech being “a force of its own that is not related to features of an existing context”. Arguing in favour of a more externalist reading of securitization, Stritzel claims the security articulations and the broader discursive contexts – from which both actor and speech gain their power – need to be related.

Another one of Stritzel’s critiques relates to the Copenhagen School taking the “realist understanding of security as the intellectual starting point”. The strong

30 Ibid., p. 360.
realist emphasis on the exceptionality of a threat would be considered by many scholars to be empirically inadequate, and perhaps – perhaps even more important – ethically unwanted, according to Stritzel\textsuperscript{31}.

To remedy these deficiencies Stritzel proposes an alternative framework to study securitizations systematically through adding externalism. His proposal conceptualizes a dynamic three-layered triangle of text, context and positional power to come to a more embedded, or externalist understanding of securitization\textsuperscript{32}. He proposes to solve the problem of unhindered illocution (the act of speaking or writing which in itself effects or constitutes the intended action, e.g. ordering, warning, or promising; securitizing) and facilitating conditions by making a distinction between the socio-linguistic and socio-political dimensions of context. The socio-linguistic dimension is essential to understand a speech act. The socio-political dimension concerns the social and political dynamics that lend actors credibility and put them in a position of power\textsuperscript{33}. It is this dimension that influences the success of the speech act. Stritzel’s framework for analysis reflects this by creating three layers with corresponding forces of securitization: “(1) the performative force of articulated threat texts, (2) their embeddedness in existing discourses and (3) the positional power of actors who influence the process of defining meaning”\textsuperscript{34}. In his framework, the concept of text goes beyond speech and includes symbolic language, and visuals. The meaning of threat is generated, instead of given, by means of a complex, dynamic social process. This is an important difference between Stritzel’s framework of analysis and the Copenhagen School’s. Mak’s (2006) research on the securitization of piracy in Southeast Asia also underwrites this finding of a ‘generated’, externalist understanding of a threat, instead of a threat being given\textsuperscript{35}. From an externalist perspective, textual structures are always temporally and spatially constituted. Textual structures cannot be isolated from their embeddedness in social and linguistic contexts\textsuperscript{36}.

\textbf{2.3. Interpreting securitization theory}

Having presented a general overview of the Copenhagen School’s theory of securitization, including criticisms and contributions to the theory by other scholars, it is now important to detail my personal perspective of the theory. In order to apply the theory to Operation Atalanta and the issue of piracy, I will present a personal understanding of the Copenhagen School’s theory that is a consolidated interpretation of the debate detailed above.

Starting from the base of the CS’s theory, I find strong merit in Stritzel’s externalist argument that the speech act cannot be an “indeterminate force of its

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 368.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 369.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p. 370.
\textsuperscript{35} Mak (2006) p. 68.
own that is not related to features of an existing context"\textsuperscript{37}, because of the facilitating conditions also incorporated by the Copenhagen School. The speech act cannot and should not be seen in isolation from the existing context: the security articulations and the broader discursive contexts – from which both actor and speech gain their power – need to be related\textsuperscript{38}. This means that I agree with a more externalist, embedded understanding of securitization.

I also find merit in Mak’s argument that threats are subject to re-construction and re-interpretation by the target audiences. Speech acts are subject to the influence of other actors and audiences, all operating in a complex context\textsuperscript{39}. This is an especially important argument in the case of the securitization of piracy and Operation Atalanta, as multiple actors and audiences were involved, influencing the securitization of the issue. Here it is important to detail my understanding of the role of audiences in securitization. ‘The audience’ consists of multiple parts; there is the target audience and the general audience (or: the public). A securitizing actor uses speech acts to declare an issue an existential threat, targeting a specific audience who has the power to undertake extraordinary measures. The target audience can then accept the issue as a threat in order to take extraordinary measures, thus completing the securitizing move. However, the securitizing actors’ initial threat assessment may also end up convincing the general public, or part thereof, who, while they do not have the direct power to sanction extraordinary measures can in turn support the move to securitize the issue. In this case, the audience becomes part of the securitizing actors. Similarly, if the target audience completes the securitization of an issue by accepting the securitizing actors’ move, they can in turn become part of the original securitizing actors. This idea corresponds with Balzacq’s conclusion that the public’s moral and formal support is vital for the successful securitization of an issue:

“Securitizing agents always strive to convince as broad an audience as possible because they need to maintain a social relationship with the target individual group. . . . Political officials are responsive to the fact that winning formal support while breaking social bonds with constituencies can wreck their credibility. That explains why, while seeking formal acquiescence, political officials also cloak security arguments in the semantic repertoire of the national audience in order to win support\textsuperscript{40}.

Crucially, ‘acceptance’ of a speech act does not have to be passive. It can be passive in the sense that the audience merely tolerates the infraction on the rules of communal governance (as normal political procedure is voided) and leaves it at that. Acceptance of a speech act can also be pro-active, as the audience can accept the securitizing move, and actively helps securitize the issue through the use of speech acts. This point is best illustrated in a diagram.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 360.
\textsuperscript{39} Caballero-Anthony & Emmers (2006) p. 10.
\textsuperscript{40} Balzacq (2005) p. 185.
In the first diagram the audience is passive, whether or not accepting the securitizing move. The second diagram shows a pro-active audience that not only accepts the securitizing move, but indeed actively supports it by copying the original securitizing actors in trying to convince the other part of the audience of the existential threat posed by an issue.

Diagram 1

**Passive/active securitization**

In the case of the securitization of the issue of piracy, I argue that it is the international shipping industry that is declaring piracy an existential threat, to be countered by military force. As it is the European elite decision-makers who have the power to sanction such extraordinary measures, they are the shipping industry’s target audience. I argue that EU decision-makers, after having accepted the securitizing move by the international shipping industry, pro-actively supported the securitization of piracy, thus joining forces with the original securitizing actors. This is not exceptional in the sense that democratic governments need to legitimize the use of force to their respective constituents. It is important however in understanding the process of securitization of piracy.

In regards to Caballero-Anthony & Emmers’ (2006) perspective to the CS theory, I find their contributions worthwhile. By providing a more systematic approach to study non-traditional security challenges, they have constructed a methodology for the study of the processes of (de)securitization. Asking the why and how questions of securitization is one of the objectives of this thesis. Their modified framework offers a valuable contribution for the empirical research of securitization processes, more so than for securitization theory itself.

I agree with Balzacq’s interpretation of securitization as a strategic (pragmatic) practice. By emphasizing the strategic dimension and the level of persuasion in securitizing speech acts, Balzacq shows that the speech act is not a conventional procedure. As this thesis aims to research the motives and incentives behind the securitization of the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia by various actors, the contribution of securitizing as a strategic practice is valuable. Balzacq’s other challenge regarding the unaccounted nature and status of the audience in the CS theory will also be part of my understanding of securitization theory, as addressed above.
2.4. The concept and definition of strategic culture

In order to approach the topic of maritime security and strategic decision-making in the European Union, and in order to answer questions on the European Union’s security policy, we must examine the mechanisms of strategic decision-making by international actors. One method of doing this is by applying the concept of strategic culture to, in this case, the European Union. Strategic culture theory attempts to create a framework for studying the strategic decisions of states and international organizations, in order to understand how these actors “interpret, predict and react” to international events. Why are certain policy options pursued by states, instead of others? How can we explain the continuity and change in security policies? The concept of strategic culture attempts to shed light on these questions by employing a constructivist approach to international relations. By doing this it challenges the (neo)realist framework exclusively based on rationality. While not outright rejecting rationality for analysing strategic choices, strategic culture theory confronts “the ahistorical, non-cultural neorealist framework”. I choose to utilize the concept of strategic culture because of ‘its logic’ as defined by Longhurst (2000): I believe that “collective ideas and values about the use of force are important constitutive factors in the design and execution of states’ security policies”.

The term strategic culture was first coined by Snyder (1977) in an attempt to explain the Soviet approach to strategic thinking, especially with regards to nuclear policy. Snyder found that in Soviet society “a set of general beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral patterns with regard to nuclear strategy has achieved a state of semi-permanence that places them on the level of “culture” rather than mere “policy”. […] New problems are not assessed objectively. Rather, they are seen through the perceptual lens provided by the strategic culture”. He continues to warn against projecting one’s own strategic rationality on others: “It would be dangerous to assume that Soviet crisis decision-makers will tailor their behavior to American notions of strategic rationality”. By doing this he dismisses the usage of a number of rational-actor paradigms such as realism and game theoretical modelling to assess strategic decision-making. Snyder realized that every state and organization reserved its own ways to handle, analyse and react to strategic events. Like the theory of securitization, Snyder’s concept of strategic culture

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offered a constructivist framework of analysis for international relations. Strategic culture is defined by Snyder as:

“The sum of 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 […]”

Besides Snyder’s definition, other scholars have come up with their own definitions of what denotes strategic culture. With them the notion of strategic culture evolved into three main generations of strategic culture thinking. One of the leading, first generation figures here is Gray (1999), according to whom strategic culture can be defined as:

“The persisting (though not eternal) socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions, habits of mind, and preferred methods of operation that are more or less specific to a particularly geographically based security community that has had a necessarily unique historical experience”

With inclusion of the notion of “not eternal” Gray, as well as other first generation scholars, realized that strategic cultures evolved, albeit slowly, in light of new experiences or international events. Another notable difference from Snyder’s definition is that Gray replaces “national” with “geographically based” security communities. This opens up the possibility to discuss the strategic culture of the European Union. The first generation suggested that strategic culture could help us understand strategic policy behaviour. However, how to objectively define a culture remained problematic. According to Margaras (2009) cultures were “characterized by a certain amount of national stereotypes, unfounded assumptions and problematic methodology”. Second-generation scholars were critical of this approach. They argued that, when studying official strategic discourses, it was necessary to make a distinction between what a state or an organization says it does, and what it actually does. Reading between the lines of official documentation to find the ‘real language’ became an important aim, similar to this study’s objective. With the second and third generation of strategic culture thinkers, the focus shifted from a narrow Cold War focus, pre-occupied with nuclear strategy, to a broader understanding of conflict and war. Biava et al. (2011) characterize strategic culture as “the set of beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, norms, world views and patterns of habitual behavior held by strategic decision-makers regarding the political objectives

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2.5. Johnston-Gray debate

The third generation in strategic culture thinking is characterized by a critical stance towards the all-encompassing notion of culture. In order to utilize the strategic culture approach for practical purposes, it is imperative to understand how the theoretical instrument operates. The so-called Johnston-Gray debate focuses on whether culture can be used to ‘explain’ or to ‘understand’ strategic decision-making. The distinction between explaining and understanding is also understood as the question between ‘determining’ or ‘shaping’: does (strategic) culture determine the strategic decision-making of states, or does it merely shape those decisions? Johnston utilizes a limited definition of culture by stating “culture consists of shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of the relationship to their social, organizational or political environment”. This is an explaining, or deterministic standpoint. Johnston argues that cultural, ideational and normative influences can be used to explain, as well as predict state behaviour.

Gray, on the other hand, argues that strategic culture merely shapes strategic policy; it does not determine it. He suggests that strategic culture “provides context for understanding, rather than explanatory causality for behavior”. That strategic culture is merely shaping state behaviour (together with for example physical geography and the economic balance of power) does not detract from its importance. “Strategic behavior cannot be without culture”, because culture is everywhere; everything a security community does, is shaped by culture. This approach to strategic culture is too wide, too all-encompassing for Johnston, as it cannot be falsified or tested and thus problematic for conducting scientific research. To be able to falsify strategic culture it needs to be an independent variable, distinguishable from other non-cultural variables. This however poses similar problems to Gray’s all-

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50 Göler (2011) “Strategic culture and the CSDP: the case of Libya”, University of Passau, p. 3.
encompassing nature of culture: cultural variables are amongst the hardest notions to observe, qualify, and operationalize.

Gray earlier noted that strategic cultures, although persistent, are not eternal: they are subject to change. Similarly, Longhurst argues that strategic cultures change:

“gradually over time, through a unique and protracted historical process. A strategic culture is persistent over time, tending to outlast the era of its inception, although it is not a permanent or static feature. It is shaped and influenced by formative periods and can alter, either fundamentally or piecemeal, at critical junctures in that collective’s experiences.”

Meyer (2005) identifies three types of learning mechanisms that can shape or influence strategic cultures: changing threat perceptions, institutional socializing, and mediated crisis learning. In this thesis I argue that especially the changed threat perception of piracy has brought about a change in the European strategic culture.

2.6. The contested notion of a European strategic culture

Whereas strategic culture theory was originally developed to analyse the strategic behaviour of states, the theory has also been applied to other entities such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and geographical regions such as Latin America, the Scandinavian countries and the European Union. The notion of a European Union strategic culture is not undisputed however. Due to disparities between the national strategic decisions, it is argued that the EU approach is not coherent enough to qualify as a strategic culture. The foremost argument in favour for this viewpoint is the notion that the strategic culture approach is exclusively applicable on nation states. As long as the EU does not evolve into a supranational federation, it cannot develop a strategic culture of her own. However, I would argue that although the European Union is not a state as such, through institutionalizing decision-making and pursuing an independent foreign policy, the Union has fostered a European strategic framework. EU strategic culture is not merely the sum of the national strategic cultures of its member states; rather, the EU has prompted the national strategic cultures to converge towards a pan-European strategic

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culture. By increasing the competences of the Union’s institutions, the EU has shaped a pan-European strategic framework.

It is my view that we can go beyond merely speaking of the European Union as ‘having’ a strategic culture: I argue that this strategic culture can be found in several key European Union documents in which the European Union sets out its security strategy. For the purpose of this study, I regard three EU documents as holding the official European strategic culture. These documents are the ‘European Security Strategy’ (2003), the ‘Report of the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World’ (2008) and finally the ‘European Union Maritime Security Strategy’ (2014), the three main documents on security published by the Union. These three documents constitute the European Union’s thinking on security strategy. They therefore represent the strategic culture of the European Union.

2.7. Interpreting strategic culture

Having presented a general overview of the strategic culture theory, as well as several debates and questions surrounding the theory, it is now important to detail how the theory will be utilized in the thesis. I understand strategic culture as one of many independent variables that influence strategic decision-making. While perhaps hard to operationalize in a framework for analysis, I think it is important to be able to falsify any variable. An all-encompassing notion of culture runs the risk of lacking depth of analysis. Here I side with Johnston.

Ongoing debate exists over the question of who influences strategic culture. Should the norms and values of the use of military means solely be analysed by the attitudes of strategic decision-makers or by the attitudes of the general public as well? In this thesis I contend that the EU’s security agenda is co-determined by influential non-state actors, who subsequently have an impact on the EU’s strategic culture. Furthermore, while the public in Europe does not have a determining say in the deployment of military missions, modern democratic societies are expected to be able to influence elite beliefs through voting. To what extent the public opinion factor influences strategic decision-makers cannot be measured. This becomes only more problematic in undemocratic societies. As this thesis is occupied with the strategic culture of the European Union however, I will assume only a moderate influence of the public opinion on strategic decision-makers.

As for the question on whether the European Union, in not being a supranational state entity, can have a strategic culture of its own, I am confident that the subject of this thesis explains my position on this topic. The sizeable amount of scientific literature on the subject acts as a foundation for this perspective (see for example Hadfield 2004:9, Burgess 2005:1 and Rynning 2003:11). Furthermore, Gray (1999) already expanded on Snyder’s initial definition of strategic culture by replacing “national security communities” with “geographically based security communities”. I agree with this

64 Göler (2011) “Strategic culture and the CSDP: the case of Libya”, University of Passau, p. 3.
refinement; the strategic culture approach is applicable to security communities, regardless whether they are from nation states or international organizations. For the purpose of this study, the contents of the European strategic culture can be found in three official EU documents that set out the Europe’s thinking on security and strategy. Here I go beyond the notion of strategic culture being a theoretical concept. I find the contents of the European strategic culture in the aforementioned documents. This is an important point, as it allows us to perform comparative discourse analysis to track changes in the European strategic culture, a major objective of this study.

The question of how the European strategic culture has changed in light of Operation Atalanta and the securitization of the issue of piracy, is reserved for the next chapters.
3. European strategic culture

This chapter covers the development of European security cooperation and the emergence of a European strategic culture. This chapter holds a special focus on the emergence of a maritime dimension of European security. It starts by placing the Union’s defence policy in a historical context in order to illustrate how the EU developed the hard power capabilities to complement her traditional soft power instruments. What developments did the Union go through in order to arrive at the current strategic culture? Who were the drivers and shapers of this development?

It is important to detail the developments of European security cooperation for two reasons. First of all it will provide the foundation on which the rest of this thesis is based. To pre-empt misunderstanding, one must specify which meaning one is using, as terms and concepts mean different things to different people. This is important for a clear understanding of European thinking in regards to security and defence. Without a solid perception of the development security thinking in the EU has gone through, it is impossible to place the theory of strategic culture in the European context. Secondly, as one of the objectives of this study is to analyse changes in the security strategy discourse of the European Union after the deployment of Operation Atalanta in 2008, a deeper comprehension of the Union’s strategic culture before 2008 can help us understand how the European Union felt, and feels about security and defence matters, threats and assumptions.

3.1. European conflict resolution

The European Union can be regarded as one of the most successful peace projects in history. On a continent that served as the theatre for several of the most destructive conflicts in the recent history of mankind, war between the member states of the Union is nowadays nothing less than inconceivable. Whereas France and Great Britain fought against Germany merely seventy years ago, Europe’s largest and most populous countries are now intertwined in a way few would have imagined even possible. Conflict resolution is the Union’s raison d’être, and its prioritization within the EU’s foreign policy is therefore not surprising. Cooperation between European states on the issues of conflict and security has undergone a long development that started at the beginning of European supranational cooperation, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

The ECSC was the result of a plan by French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet, director of the post-war French Modernization Plan, to place “the whole of Franco-German coal and steel production under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of

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other countries of Europe”\(^3\). By pooling basic production of coal and steel – the primary materials for waging war at the time – the plan aimed to provide national security for France and economic recovery for Germany. Cooperation in production of coal and steel would mean that “any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible”\(^4\). The plan was induced by Monnet’s realization that “if states re-establish themselves on the basis of national sovereignty”, there would be no peace in Europe\(^5\). Instead national sovereignty would need to be delegated to supranational institutions in order to prevent mistrust and promote reconciliation. These visionary words still hold true in the world of today.

Ultimately, the ECSC was an economic construction to enhance the security of its members against the scourge of nationalism and related militarism and expansionism. In the post WWII years the elite decision-makers of Europe’s newly created supranational organization were keen to further enhance measures of security and defence. Despite their negotiation efforts however, the ECSC was restricted to soft power instruments for security after the plan to create the European Defence Community turned out to be stillborn. The plan, which aimed to remilitarize Germany and pool military resources in order to create a Western European military force to unite against the perceived threat of the Soviet Union, failed to obtain ratification in the French parliament in 1954\(^6\). Although its alternative the Western European Union (WEU) – established in 1954 and consisting of the ECSC-6 and Great Britain – included a mutual defence clause, the newly established North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) superseded the WEU in both size and military capacity and thus, relevance. Although the goal of integrating the Federal Republic of Germany into NATO succeeded, the idea of a pan-European defence community had to be shelved.

It was only thirty-five years later, when the Cold War was winding to an end, that the wish of a European Defence Community was resurrected. Before that time the European project started to develop every aspect of the organization, as well as going through several enlargements and name changes. The ECSC evolved into the European Economic Community (EEC, 1958), which later became the European Communities (EC, 1967). All that time NATO remained the preferred vehicle for military cooperation, even though not all European member states were part of the Alliance. As the Europe was firmly locked in the mechanisms of the Cold War, it is no surprise that the ideas about developing independent military capabilities outside of the NATO framework gained little traction. Europe instead focused on soft power capabilities, described as the power to induce cooperation and – in case of the EU – might

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\(^6\) Dinan (2005) p. 28.
include diplomacy, trade preferences, financial or technical assistance, investments, security guarantees, development aid, integration, recognition or membership of international organizations\textsuperscript{7}, and successfully so.

3.2. Post Cold War developments

Indeed it took until the end of the Cold War and major international and institutional developments (the most important one yet: from European Communities to European Union) for the European member states to start thinking about developing a framework for the application of hard power independent from NATO. The wish of providing Europe’s security independent of the United States and NATO was guided by several events, including the Balkan Wars and new approaches of security, freedoms and rights.

The most significant development of the 1990s was without a doubt the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the ‘triumph’ of the West\textsuperscript{8}. This heralded the emergence of a new world order and the start of United Nations multilateralism under US aegis\textsuperscript{9}. As an affect of the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, NATO was left without a main adversary, prompting a strategic-re-evaluation of its purpose\textsuperscript{10}. With NATO trying to re-invent itself in a bid to remain relevant, this was the opportune moment for Europe to reassess its independent security wishes. The long-standing wish found expression in President of the European Commission Jacques Delors’ speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, 1991, exposing the Community’s lack of capabilities to muster credible, independent action. He questioned the Community’s leaders on their intents:

“...In the last resort, security means the ability to defend oneself by force of arms. If the Community is to contribute to the new world order, it must accept that this presupposes participation, where necessary, in forces which are given the task of ensuring respect for international law, when all other attempts to create a basis of understanding and cooperation between nations have failed. It has to be admitted that wars happen, despite our best endeavours. [...] When it became obvious that [the Gulf crisis, NvD] would have to be resolved by armed combat, the Community had neither


the institutional machinery nor the military force which would have allowed it to act as a Community. Are the Twelve prepared to learn from this experience?“\(^{11}\).

His wish found fertile soil in most of the European capitals and the idea of defence cooperation sprouted during the negotiations on the soon-to-be established European Union. Independent European defence and security were enshrined in the Treaty on European Union signed in Maastricht in 1992. Besides establishing the European Union and the Euro, the Treaty introduced the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as one of the three pillars in the EU structure, a new domain for the European Council. Article 24.1 of the Treaty states: “The Union’s competence in matters of Common Foreign and Security Policy shall cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union’s security, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy that might lead to a common defence”\(^{12}\). Especially important is the last part of the clause, hinting at the future establishment of a common defence mechanism in Europe. The words ‘might lead’ reveal that this part was subject to a compromise between the Treaty negotiators: not all of Europe’s Twelve were as enamoured to the provision of common European defence as much as the European Commission was. The notion of the CFSP as one of the Union’s pillars was however merely a first step. It would take several years for Europe’s leaders to grasp the need and capabilities of the policy they had signed into effect. The CFSP’s inclusion in the Treaty did not ensure that the Union was immediately ready to take on the foreign challenges as envisaged, as Delors had to admit:

> “The Community needs to be more aware than it is today of the problems of peace and security in a turbulent world. It needs the political will to confront the dangers and the determination to acquire the necessary institutional and financial resources. The common foreign and security policy in itself will change nothing but it will provide a political framework in which we can define our common interests and defend them together”\(^{13}\).

The CFSP’s deficiencies of political will, determination and coherence were painfully exposed during the Balkan Wars. While a humanitarian catastrophe was unfolding in the former Yugoslavia, Europe was unable to intervene in its own backyard. It took determined action by the United States and NATO to bring an end to the immediate bloodshed\(^{14}\). The legacy of the Balkan Wars left deep scars across Europe. The monstrosities of ethnic cleansing, genocide and

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grave violations of human rights were no longer confined to the far-away ex-European colonies in Africa and Asia; they’d been brought to Europe’s very own doorstep. Appalled and embarrassed, Europe and its leaders vowed to begin working on the issue of defence and security in earnest. Another development around this time was the emergence of the human security paradigm, replacing the traditional state-centered paradigm with a more humanitarian one (see box 1).

**Box 1: Human Security paradigm**

Around the same time in the 1990’s another development took place that affected the European notion of security. In 1994 the United Nations published the Human Development Report, often regarded as a milestone of the human security paradigm. In the traditional state-centered security paradigm the concept of security was limited to the potential for conflict between states, focusing on threats to borders and the deployment of military assets to negate these threats. This corresponds to a ‘narrow’ view of security. After the tragedies in Somalia, Rwanda and former Yugoslavia, a new perspective emerged in which the scope of security was broadened to include economic, food, health, environmental personal, community and political security, widening the perspective on security. Two major components underlie the paradigm of human security: freedom from fear and freedom from want. The paradigm was widely recognized by Europe’s elite decision-makers and has had a lasting effect on European crisis management and strategic thinking.

A further institutional development concerning European defence and security was the Treaty of Amsterdam, signed in 1997. Amending the Treaty of European Union, most importantly on the field of defence and security, the Treaty introduced the position of High Representative for the CFSP (HR) and laid the groundwork for the establishment of the ESDP, European Security and Defence Policy. As a part of the CFSP, the ESDP marks a development towards greater cooperation between EU member states. Furthermore the Treaty incorporated the so-called Petersberg tasks into the European Union structure. Originating from a Western European Union summit in 1992, the Petersberg tasks are a definition of military and security priorities and consist of

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humanitarian- and rescue tasks, peacekeeping, crisis management and peacemaking. The Petersberg tasks are hugely significant for the study of the EU’s strategic culture: they represent Europe’s shared values, attitudes and beliefs in regards to military and security priorities. As such they embody the first concrete step to institutionalizing the European Union’s strategic culture. For the first time, European Union’s member states codified collective ideas and values about the use of force. It is worthwhile to note that this first step of developing an EU-wide strategic culture were taken when the EU consisted of just twelve member states, as opposed to the twenty-eight of today.

The Petersberg tasks provide a fundament for the EU’s common security strategy and show a clear direction in which the progress of the ESDP is headed. This formulation of the Petersberg tasks can be placed in the ‘golden age’ of peacekeeping missions, coinciding with the UN’s leading role on the global stage due to the decline of superpower rivalry after the Cold War. The tasks fit in the framework of a new generation of peacekeeping and multilateral initiatives, characterized by optimism. Establishing the post of High Representative was meant to stimulate the CFSP by giving it a face. Javier Solana, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Spain and former Secretary-General of NATO, filled the post. Additionally, the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam introduced ‘constructive abstention’ as a new decision-making format. As the field of security and defence were still sensitive to the nation state, member states were now able to abstain from voting on CFSP and ESDP issues, without obstructing a decision that would otherwise need unanimous approval.

3.3. Towards a European strategic culture

As a result of the changing geopolitical balance of power, European institutional developments, a new security paradigm and a deep European trauma regarding to the Balkans, European set to transform rhetorical ambition into policy. In 1998 then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair brought the issue to the limelight once more by stating:

“A common foreign and security policy for the European Union is necessary, it is overdue, it is needed and it is high time we got on with trying to engage with formulating it, and I think that people were pleased that Britain came to this with an open mind and was willing to participate in the debate, and I think it is important that we do that.”

His statement was significant as the British have historically been amongst the most vocal opponents of deeper European integration, as the second part of his statement alludes to. The British have especially been reluctant to grant the EU more powers on the matter of defence and security, preferring NATO as a vehicle for security. Blair’s statement was dubbed the ‘sea change’, referring to the United Kingdom’s change in attitude of reluctance towards autonomous defence capacities of the European Union. It marks an important development in the emergence of a European strategic culture. The British change in attitude is best shown by the outcome of the Franco-British summit of 1998. The Saint Malo Declaration by France and the United Kingdom marked the first concrete step of Europe’s new perspective and executive action on defence and security. In the joint declaration the governments of France and the United Kingdom agreed that the European Council would have to take on the responsibility to decide on a common defence policy in the framework of the CFSP. By ‘making a reality’ of the Treaty of Amsterdam, the European Union would be in a position to assume her responsibility on the international stage. Most importantly it added “to this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises”. Crucially, the Saint Malo Declaration envisioned the possibility of deployment of military forces outside of the NATO framework: “In order for the European Union to take decisive decisions and approve military action where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged, the Union must be given appropriate structures and capacity (…)”. The Saint Malo Declaration marked the beginning of a serious development in European security strategy, as evidenced by the seminal work by Rutten (2001), compiling thirty-four (joint) declarations, presidency conclusions, action plans and communiqués from European leaders from just two years between Saint Malo (1998) and the Treaty of Nice (2001). These developments acquiesced the Union with a strategic responsibility in international crisis management – a revolution previously unthinkable – representing a step towards a European strategic culture and increasing the Union’s credibility as an international actor. These conclusions were adopted by the other European member states at the European Council summit in Cologne, 1999. The Council agreed on making the necessary arrangements in the field of security and

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29 St. Malo Declaration (1998), paragraphs 1, 2.
30 St. Malo Declaration (1998), paragraph 3.
defence policy “in order to ensure political control and strategic direction of EU-led Petersberg operation, so that the EU can decide and conduct such operations effectively”. This declaration laid the groundwork for the establishment of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as an integral part of the CFSP33. To this end the Council set up a series of new bodies, including the Political and Security Committee, the EU Military Committee to advise it, an EU Military Staff, as well as the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)34.

A following concrete step came at the European Council summit in Helsinki at the end of the century. Building on the European Council summit at Cologne six months earlier, the summit established the so-called Helsinki Headline Goal for 2003. The European Council underlined its determination to perform EU-led military operations autonomous of the NATO framework and to that end agreed that through voluntary cooperation, EU member states should be able to deploy by 2003, within sixty days for at least a year up to 50.000-60.000 military forces capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks35. This is a clear indication of an emergent strategic culture of the European Union. The European Capability Action Plan (ECAP) subsequently identified capability shortfalls and made recommendations to address them. The ECAP however remained voluntary, without central leadership and responsibility for the implementation of its recommendations, which severely hampered its implementation36. Establishing a 60.000 strong European force proved to be a little too much, too fast, too ambitious.

The EU’s high-flying rhetoric was overtaken by reality. First of all, the Cold War had ended and with it the need for large, interstate warfare capabilities. Conflicts had become predominantly intrastate, calling for an adaption of the means to address them37. The EU’s ambition of fielding a 60.000 strong army alludes to Cold War strategic thinking. The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 served as a wake-up call for the strategic decision-makers and military staff in Europe and the United States. There was no longer a need for army’s of 60.000 souls: it was soon understood that terrorism couldn’t be fought by conventional methods. The EU therefore soon abandoned this course, focusing instead on civil-military and rapid deployment capacity. Europe’s first ESDP

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missions made clear that the nature of Europe’s assumed security environment called for a qualitative and comprehensive focus, instead of a quantitative one.38

3.4. The European Security Strategy

The qualitative focus arrived with the 2003 European Security Strategy ‘A secure Europe in a better world’ (ESS) which, after a series of declarations, council conclusions and treaties described above, acted as the first comprehensive document on the European security environment. Crucially, the ESS sets out Europe’s strategic culture. It represents the collective ideas and values about the use of force in EU security policy. The ESS contains the “set of beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, norms, world views and patterns of habitual behavior.”40 In other words: The ESS contains Europe’s strategic culture. The document identifies five key threats: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime, defining Europe’s ambition as a global power.41 It provides the conceptual framework for CFSP/ESDP operations, heralding an important milestone in the development of European security policy. Within the framework of security set out by the ESS, an important role is assigned to preventive engagement to smother conflicts before they escalate. This was to be done through the EU’s neighbourhood policy and by strengthening multilateralism: by political, social and economic means. Crucially though, for the first time the EU emphasizes the need to be more active in pursuing its strategic objectives, making use of the full spectrum of instruments for crisis management and conflict prevention, including military means.42

The strongest argument in favour of regarding the ESS as Europe’s de facto strategic culture is that the arrival of the ESS on the European stage marks the creation of an additional form of European external engagement: through security means. This form of engagement was expressed in the ESDP missions undertaken by the Union from this point in time. The EU developed and deployed peacekeeping missions, civilian policing and rule of law missions, as well as border monitoring and civilian support and assistance missions. Europe wanted to prove itself on the world stage as a global actor, independent from the United States. Not only did the EU feel the desire to prove itself to foreign actors, but the ESS was also meant to capability and coherence towards the citizens of the Union. The European Union understood that publishing the ESS was just the first step towards fostering a strategic culture. The characteristics and contents of a European strategic culture were clearly defined in the new

* For an overview of EU missions, see table 1 on page 98.
document. Now it became important to further the notion of the European strategic culture through the instrument of the ESDP: “We need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention”\(^{43}\), which was duly incorporated in the Headline Goal 2010 (2004).

The timing of Europe’s very own security strategy was not by coincidence\(^ {44}\). In 2003 the United States chose to conduct military operations against Iraq in order to remove Saddam Hussein from power. As the United Nations Security Council did not provide a mandate for military operation against Iraq, European member states were divided over the legality and legitimacy of the Iraq invasion. The ESS served as an instrument to enhance internal cohesion on the field of security and defence\(^ {45}\). It must be said that the ESS does not mark a departure from the NATO framework; it mentions the strategic partnership of the EU-NATO as irreplaceable, reflecting the common determination of tackling challenges of security. In order to have a balanced and effective transatlantic partnership, it is imperative for the Union to develop its own capabilities and increase coherence. This vision was not always shared by the United States. The official reaction of the United States to the St. Malo Declaration and the Helsinki Headline Goal is termed as ‘cautiously welcoming’\(^ {46}\) (see box 2).

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**Box 2: The NATO-EU security nexus**

The United States, as the most important member of the NATO, an organization whose primary aim is the collective defence of its member states, was cautious in welcoming the European Security Strategy of 2003. While NATO means to enhance the security of its member states, at the same time the EU (of which, in 2003, many members were also NATO members) was warned by then US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to avoid the “3D’s”: duplication, discrimination and decoupling of NATO efforts, as to not diminish the role of NATO\(^ {47}\). To this end in 2003, the same year as the ESS was drafted, the Berlin Plus Agreement was signed, consisting of a set of arrangements between the EU and NATO that covered access to planning capabilities, assets and intelligence. The overlap of membership of the different defence organizations (EU, NATO and WEU) called for a formal agreement on cooperation to avoid Albright’s “3D’s”. The Berlin Plus Agreement helped to facilitate the launch of European Union Force (EUFOR) Concordia in the former


Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia-Hercegovina, which both saw the European Union take over NATO operations\textsuperscript{48}.

It has become more and more clear that we can speak of another arrangement between the EU and NATO, albeit an unofficial one. Since the infamous episode of peacekeeping-gone-wrong in Somalia in 1991\textsuperscript{49}, US willingness to intervene in Africa with boots on the ground can be described as ‘reluctant’ and ‘reserved’\textsuperscript{50}. The unofficial agreement holds that the European Union, instead of NATO, focuses its attention on the African continent. The Berlin Plus Agreement foresees in the sharing of assets between NATO and the EU, with the understanding that this enables the EU to intervene in those places where NATO cannot go due to US reluctance\textsuperscript{51}.

Moving away from preparing a large-scale war apparatus fit for occupation purposes, and armed with a comprehensive security strategy, the now revised Headline Goal 2010 (2004) moved the focus towards smaller-scale crisis management operations, as foreseen in the Petersberg tasks. The Union, formulating its ideas on European strategic security culture in increasingly stronger terms, consequently set the goal of being able by 2010 to:

“Respond with rapid and decisive action applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty on European Union. […] The EU must be able to act before a crisis occurs and preventive engagement can avoid that a situation deteriorates. […] The EU must retain the ability to conduct concurrent operations thus sustaining several operations simultaneously at different levels of engagement. The Union will thus need forces, which are more flexible, mobile and interoperable, making better use of available resources by pooling and sharing assets, where appropriate, and increasing the responsiveness of multinational forces”\textsuperscript{52}.

The Headline Goal 2010 did not just call for the capability of performing rapid and decisive action: it also defined how this concept was to be implemented. The concept of rapid reaction forces – a “European priority” – first surfaced during the Franco-British summit in Le Touquet in 2003, after which it was defined at the curiously titled Franco-British-German ‘Food for Thought’ paper before making its way into the Headline Goal 2010\textsuperscript{53}. They proposed the Battlegroup (BG) concept, intended to encompass:

\textsuperscript{49} MacQueen (2006) “Peacekeeping and the international system”, Routledge, New York, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{50} Personal interview with European Union Military Staff (EUMS) official, June 2014, Brussels.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
- “Coherent, credible battle-group size force packages (around 1,500 troops strong) including appropriate supporting elements together with necessary strategic lift, sustainability, and debarkation capability”.
- “Designed specifically (but not exclusively) to be used in response to a request from the UN and capable of participating in an autonomous operation under a Chapter VII mandate”.
- “Appropriate for, but not limited to, use in failed or failing states (of which most are in Africa)”.
- “Capable of deploying within 15 days to respond to a crisis”.

Battlegroups are “the minimum military effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package of stand-alone operations.” The Battlegroup concept became a key element of the 2010 Headline Goal, and was thus adapted from a Franco-British-German idea to an EU-wide concept, first employed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (see box 3). The EU member states stated the ambition to be able to launch military decision-making procedures within five days of approval of the European Council; military operations would have to be able to follow ten days afterwards. To put this concept into practice, the EU aimed to apply a systematic approach in order to create synergies between the armed forces of member states. This approach is based on member states voluntarily transforming their forces to achieve interoperability vis-à-vis each other, “both at technical, procedural and conceptual levels”. Another primary objective is to coordinate a coherent development of member states military capabilities. To this end the European Defence Agency (EDA) was set up in 2004, to assist in coordination efforts and promote research and technology investments.

Box 3: The Battlegroup concept and Operation Artemis (2003)

The Battlegroup concept is largely modelled on Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003, the European Union’s first military peace restoration/enforcement operation independent of NATO. The Operation was launched within two weeks of the United Nations Security Council request for a military intervention. European forces – approximately 2,000 personnel strong – were charged with stabilizing the security condition so that the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO) would have more

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time to find additional resources and to negotiate and pass a stronger mandate for MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping mission in the Congo\textsuperscript{60}. France acted as the framework nation and bore the brunt of the military operation, which lasted three months. As the Headline Goal 2010 shows, the mission has clearly set the precedent for future EU autonomous operations\textsuperscript{61}. The mission was widely regarded as a success and the European Union was rightfully content with the positive impact of Operation Artemis on both the conflict in the Congo and the United Nations peacekeeping mission. Operation Artemis marks the first time that EU forces went into combat together: it is the operationalization of the concept of European, autonomous security and defence operations.

3.5. Rapid ESDP expansion

Experience gained during those first, all-important missions turned out to be crucial for the rapid development of the ESDP. In the first three years, from 2003 to 2005, the EU deployed no less than fifteen civil and military operations within the framework of European security and defence. Although most were modest in terms of human resources (averaging 225 personnel\textsuperscript{62}), the rapid expansion showed that the European Union was increasingly comfortable with the idea of cooperation in the field of security, embracing its ever-developing strategic culture as set out in the 2003 European Security Strategy. The member states of the Union had clearly found a sweet spot between the supply and demand of security missions\textsuperscript{63}. Despite its image of economic, soft power, the EU was now occupied with developing hard power capabilities. Although still shy of a standing army, the newly developed ESDP arrangements seemed to fulfil Europe’s ambition on the international stage.

Europe’s new experiences in the field of hard power conflict resolution called for an update on the Union’s strategic strategy. Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy was tasked with examining the implementation of the ESS. The result was the Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy (IRESS) ‘Providing security in a changing world’, adopted by the Council in 2008\textsuperscript{64}. Starting by complimenting the state of the ESDP, it cites the increasingly complex threats of Iranian nuclear ambitions, state failure, terrorism, piracy and organized crime. It also mentions more general threats to the Union such as global warming, environmental degradation and financial turmoil.

\textsuperscript{60} Lindstrom (2007) p. 10.
\textsuperscript{63} Germond & Smith (2009) p. 574-575.
“Over the last decade, the European Security and Defence Policy, as an integral part of our Common Foreign and Security Policy, has grown in experience and capability, with over twenty missions deployed in response to crises [...]. These achievements are the results of a distinctive European approach to foreign and security policy. [...] Sovereign governments must take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and hold a shared responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. [...] The EU has made substantial progress over the last five years. We are recognised as an important contributor to a better world. But, despite all that has been achieved, implementation of the ESS remains work in progress. For our full potential to be realised we need to be still more capable, more coherent and more active [...]. We must strengthen our own coherence, through better institutional co-ordination and more strategic decision-making.”

Coherency and capabilities are meant to be increased through mutual collaboration and burden-sharing agreements. A “competitive and robust defence industry across Europe”, led by the European Defence Agency, can support these efforts. Without using the term European strategic culture, the document crucially refers to “a distinctive European approach” and “strategic decision-making”. It represents another crucial step in detailing the beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, norms and patterns of habitual behaviour of the European Union in the field of strategic security and defence. Like the 2003 ESS, the Implementation Report can be regarded as containing Europe’s strategic culture.

The report’s mentions of “shared responsibility to protect populations” and “sovereign governments must take responsibility” are based on the concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), a term established by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2001. The Commission’s mandate was to find a consensus on the provisions of peacekeeping, intervention and sovereignty. In her final report the Commission presented the fundamental principle that state sovereignty implies a primary responsibility of the state for the protection of its peoples, assisted by the international community. When a state is unable or unwilling to protect its peoples from mass atrocities, the responsibility of protecting civilians yields to the international community. Mass atrocities are defined as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. The ICISS report further

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* These provisions can be found in paragraphs 138 & 139 of the World Summit Outcome, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005: “138. Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility [...].”
Operation Atalanta and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy

expands on the principles for intervention, where it names six criteria for military intervention: just cause, right intention, final resort, legitimate authority, proportional means, and reasonable prospects\(^\text{67}\).

The concept of R2P has been named the most significant normative shift in international relations since the founding of the United Nations\(^\text{68}\). The concept is the latest major theoretical development within the peacekeeping sector. It remains however, a concept. In spite of adoption of the provision by the General Assembly, R2P is not uncontroversial. Concerns and challenges include the infringement of sovereignty, the misuse of military intervention, violation of the principal of non-interference, as well as selective use of the term. Additionally, states have been willing to deflate or undermine the norm to suit their national interests\(^\text{69}\). Finally, partly due to the political implications, interpretation of terms such as genocide and crimes against humanity differ widely.

Since its adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2005, the norm of Responsibility to Protect has gained traction within the European Union. R2P was named for the first time in the European Consensus on Development 2006, in which the EU states to strongly support the norm\(^\text{70}\). In the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid from 2008, the EU reiterates the commitments made at the World Summit, confirming the preparedness of the international community to take collective action\(^\text{71}\). In the context of the implementation report of the European security strategy, above, the concept of R2P is cited a work in progress, which the “EU should continue to advance”\(^\text{72}\). These references to the concept show that the concept of R2P has assumed a prominent role within European security thinking.

Another development in the progression of Europe’s security identity and strategic culture is the Union’s latest institutional development, the Treaty of Lisbon, which was signed in 2007. The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was renamed Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), but this


\(^{68}\) Orford (2011) “International authority and the responsibility to protect”, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 34.


\(^{70}\) The European Consensus on Development (2006) 2006/C46/01, Title 6, paragraph 37.

\(^{71}\) The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2008) 2008/C25/01, Title 2, paragraph 17.

change was merely cosmetically. The Treaty introduces the function of President of the European Council and expands the function of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, ending the rotating presidencies. While these functions do not (yet) provide a definitive answer to Kissinger’s rhetorical question*, they do provide the Union with a more unified voice on the issue of foreign and security policy. The Treaty also introduces a mutual defence clause and solidarity clause, which obliges member states to aid and assist other member states “by all means in their power”, including military means, when a member state is the victim of armed aggression (including terrorism), or in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Furthermore it provides for ‘permanent structured cooperation’ in the field of defence for member states that wish to cooperate on a higher level, as well as the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) to coordinate foreign diplomatic actions of member states. Also crucially, the Lisbon Treaty expands on the Petersberg tasks that define the scope of European external civil and military intervention, and lie at the heart of the European strategic culture:

“[The Petersberg tasks, NoD], in the course of which the Union may use civilian and military means, shall include 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.”

There are several reasons why Europe’s leaders decided the Union was in need of a new treaty in regards to security and defence. One factor that contributed to this was the EU support mission to the African Union Mission in Sudan/Darfur (AMIS) that ran from 2005 to 2007. This mission required from the EU military and assistance tasks, which had previously not been part of the traditional Petersberg tasks. The Lisbon Treaty amended the provisions in which civilian and military means could be used. Additionally, the EEAS was meant to achieve a “degree of mingling and contamination between the old ‘pillars’”. Doing away with the pillar structure of the Treaty of Maastricht was one of the main objectives of the Treaty of Lisbon. Experiences from Iraq and Afghanistan had shown that a comprehensive approach was warranted: international crisis management requires coordination and synthesis, instead of compartmentalized approaches from different pillars. By far the most

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* Of whom to call to get Europe on the phone.
76 Personal interview with European Union Military Staff (EUMS) official, June 2014, Brussels.
important reason was of course the need for a new institutional framework to accommodate a Union of 27 (now 28) instead of 15, a reason that stretches beyond the field of defence and security.

3.6. The maritime dimension of European security and defence cooperation

Having detailed the emergence and strengthening of the European strategic culture, we have laid a foundation of understanding on which the rest of this thesis builds. Europe’s strategic culture up to 2009 is detailed in two strategic security documents: the European Security Strategy of 2003 (ESS) and the 2008 Implementation Report (IRESS). These documents contain the Union’s ideas, norms and beliefs concerning security and defence, progressively modelled on Europe’s first ESDP experiences abroad.

It is now essential to detail the emergence of what this thesis is most concerned with: the maritime dimension of European security culture. To find out how the European Union went from relative disregard for maritime security strategy to a full-fledged naval operation off the Horn of Africa, the emergence and development of the maritime dimension of security of Europe’s strategic culture must be specified. The EU’s maritime concerns exceed the realm of security: long before the Union’s military strategists set about detailing and incorporating the maritime dimension into the framework of the CFSP, the maritime dimension had become a hotly debated topic within other ministries of the EU. Competition and jobs in the shipping industry, fisheries regulation, marine pollution and other related marine topics had become part of everyday life in the Union. This makes the lack of attention of a maritime dimension within the early ESDP rather intriguing, especially if one realizes that the so-called “new threats” the Union faces are likely to include a maritime dimension. The nature of the maritime milieu, according to Germond (2006):

“makes it particularly prone to the proliferation of the so-called “new threats”. Indeed, the sea, an uninhabitable space, is in addition inoccupable in a classical military manner, and therefore the public power can hardly control it. […] Undoubtedly, compared to the land, the sea is fundamentally a zone of liberty, due to the compromise between a territorialization of the sea near the coast and a close to total freedom on the high seas. Thus some non-state actors profit from this relative absence of legal constraints, all the more since maritime frontiers are porous, thus increasing this liberty. Hence the criminal non-state actors, such as terrorists, smugglers, illegal fishers, clandestine migrants (as victims of smugglers) and finally actors of “incivilities” (such as oil discharges or chartering out of age tankers) can proliferate at sea”78.

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The relative absence of maritime strategic thinking during the early developments of the EU strategic culture can be explained by several factors. First of all during the emergence of European independent strategic thinking the notion of the navy as an expeditionary force (as opposed to the escort navy) was seen by policymakers as a classic product of Cold War power projection. Similar to battle tanks, the disappearance of a clearly recognizable enemy with comparable military assets heralded an era in which policymakers saw less use for power projection capabilities at distant shores or remote waters. The Mahanist notion of “navies as a measure of hierarchy and as instruments of state competition” was increasingly out-dated and questioned. Instead, the navy was to perform constabulary and low-intensity operations (also known as naval peacekeeping) closer to home.

Additionally, the first ESDP operations in the Balkans and Africa were limited in size and did not call for the involvement of a naval component. As the ESDP was progressively modelled on the first European experiences, the maritime dimension was left out of focus. Finally, while its raison d’être was to obtain a degree of independence from the United States and NATO, the maritime dimension of European security was still regarded as a primary NATO task. Naval competences for the EU were thought to automatically undermine NATO capacities, which was – as detailed earlier – a sensitive issue in the transatlantic relationship.

Box 4: European maritime cooperation initiatives

Europe’s first experience with naval cooperation came not attached to the ESDP framework, but through bi- and multilateral cooperation between the member states of the Union. The best example of this is EUROMARFOR, a multilateral maritime force comprised of French, Italian, Spanish and

82 Personal interview with European Union Military Staff (EUMS) official, June 2014, Brussels.
83 This is also reflected in the ‘explanation of vote’ statement of member of the European parliament van Orden, on the European Parliament resolution of October 23rd, 2008 on piracy at sea: “The British Conservative Delegation supports strong international naval action against piracy, but we do not believe this is an area where the EU can, or indeed should, be involved. We therefore abstained on the Resolution. A NATO Naval Maritime Group is already being deployed against piracy in the seas off the Horn of Africa. The EU Member States that would have to contribute warships to the ‘EU naval force’ are already contributing to the NATO response. The EU has no additional assets. It brings no added value, only complexity, confusion and duplication, when the situation demands coherence, an unambiguous chain of command and political control, and robust rules of engagement. This is a job for NATO. We also object to references to ‘EU fishing vessels’, ‘EU fishermen’ ‘Community fishing, merchant and passenger vessels’. The EU possesses no ships and none are flagged EU”. Dated October 23rd, 2008, accessed May 29th, 2014. Accessible through: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20081023&secondRef=ITEM-010&language=EN&ring=B6-2008-0537#4-151; The Defence Committee (2008) “The future of NATO and European defence. Ninth report of session 07-08”, House of Commons, The Stationary Office Limited, London, p. 15.
Portuguese forces. Established in 1995, the aim was to advance the emerging European strategic culture. EUROMARFOR intended to: “contribute to the development of the European Security and Defence Identity and strengthen Europe’s own military capabilities for operations conducted pursuant to the Petersberg Declaration”\(^{84}\). The group has participated in both UN and NATO operations and now through Atalanta, also in EU operations.

Another example of maritime cooperation outside the CSDP framework is the ‘Force Navale France-Allemande’ (FNFA), a Franco-German initiative. It must be noted that although these initiatives are pre-structured and used to cooperate together, they are not permanent. Another development in naval cooperation came during the Franco-Dutch summit at The Hague in 2000, where the ministers of defence of both countries discussed the European development strategic maritime transport capabilities:

“Pour donner corps au volet naval des objectifs globaux fixés à Helsinki, nous sommes convenus de proposer à nos partenaires de l’Union européenne de réfléchir ensemble aux capacité maritimes de transport stratégique nécessaires pour la projection des forces. Nous allons pouvoir soumettre à nos collègues notre proposition pour un ‘objectif global’ en matière maritime en un démarche aboutissant à une cellule de coordination lors de la réunion informelle qui se tiendra au Portugal, à la fin du mois.”\(^{85}\)

The declaration was subsequently welcomed and supported at the European Council meeting in Lisbon of March 2000.

One of the first mentions of maritime security in an official publication of the EU came in the European Security Strategy of 2003. Before this time the only mention of a maritime dimension was in regards to the scale of effort of the Helsinki Headline Goal, which required “appropriate maritime elements”\(^{86}\). In the ESS under the heading of organized crime – one of the five identified new threats – maritime piracy is named as a new dimension that will merit further action\(^{87}\). “Further action” is however not specified. While also detailing Europe’s increased dependence and thus vulnerability on an interconnected infrastructure for transport and energy – fields of operation with a clear

\(^{84}\) Western European Union (1995) “Lisbon Declaration”, Title 1, paragraph 5.

\(^{85}\) “To give substance to the naval component of the general objectives in Helsinki, we have agreed to propose our partners in the European Union to reflect together on the maritime strategic lift capabilities required for force projection. We will be able to submit our proposal to our colleagues for a ‘global goal’ in regards to maritime matters, in a process towards the instalment of a coordination cell once the informal meeting will be held in Portugal at the end of the month” (personal translation, NvD). Cited from: Franco-Dutch summit (2000) “Joint declaration by the French and Dutch defence ministers MM. Alain Richard and Frank de Grave”, in: Rutten (ed.) (2001) “From St. Malo to Nice. European Defence: core documents”, Chaillot Paper 47, Institute for Security Studies Western European Union, Paris.


maritime dimension – the document says nothing about strengthening or protecting the global supply chain. Maritime security is not specifically mentioned in the 2010 Headline Goal, which focuses primarily on rapid response capabilities through the Battlegroup concept.

It was only after the first ESDP missions were concluded that the member states’ interest in utilizing their maritime assets in a European framework surfaced. One of the reasons for this development was the EU enlargement process of 2004, which gave the Union intensified contact with both the Baltic and Black Seas, as well as with the Union’s former adversary, the Russian Federation. The maritime dimension is increasingly linked to the frontier zone of the EU, the periphery: “with the new threats, the first line of defence will often be abroad”88. The Council thus requested a EU Maritime Dimension Study, to explore where maritime military capabilities could make a contribution to the ESDP, to investigate the use of EU maritime forces in a rapid response crisis management situations and to analyse the effects of the Headline Goal 2010 on the future structure of maritime forces of the EU’s member states89. The study, recognizing the importance of the maritime domain to Europe and acknowledging threats thereto, concluded that:

“In the preliminary stages of an emerging crisis, where timely influence, deterrence, coercion or military intervention may help to prevent deterioration into conflict or mitigate the effects of a disaster, the early presence of a maritime force can be a significant factor in providing the necessary political and/or military leverage”90.

The study explored the option of a Maritime Rapid Response Mechanism (MRRM), which would provide the EU with the possibility of mission tailoring. The study identified a precondition for MRRM success, being that it is dependent on rapid and transparent decision-making. Here the EU Military Staff refers to the emerging ‘framework nation concept’, in which one of the member states acts as the clear leader of an operation. Amongst the member states however, there are few who could perform this role in a maritime setting. The study therefore also recognizes multinational naval forces, such as EUROMARFOR and ‘Force Navale France-Allemande’ (FNFA), as being able to enrich maritime security operations (see box 4, page 62).

Spurred on by the study on maritime security, in 2007 the Commission published the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) for the European Union, “based on the clear recognition that all matters relating to Europe’s oceans and seas are interlinked, and that sea-related policies must develop in a joined-up way if we are to

reap the desired results”. The IMP (or Blue Book) promised to change the decision-making process and develop a multitude of secondary legislation to govern the European maritime domain. To explain its rationale, the IMP argued that many maritime activities and threats thereto are transnational in nature, requiring the enforcement of several enforcement agencies. By achieving an integrated maritime network, results from scarce resources can be maximized. One of the objectives of the Commission is to promote Europe’s leadership in international maritime affairs. Access to international markets and the fight against illegal activities in international waters are amongst the external priorities of the IMP, providing a hint of things to come. The IMP is a comprehensive, cross-sectoral approach, putting the maritime domain firmly on the agenda of the EU, helping to pave the way for Operation Atalanta. While the IMP approaches security issues from an economic perspective, it argued that “the EU has always implicitly recognized a fundamental link between its economic, political, and security objectives”. The IMP confirms that the EU now recognizes the crucial importance of the maritime domain for the security of the Union. The maritime dimension of European security encompasses not just military threats from conventional actors: environmental, societal, economic and political dimensions are also covered.

The development of Europe’s very own Blue Book set in motion a new way of thinking about Europe’s maritime ambitions. This new maritime perspective can be characterized as the realization that:

“The EU’s maritime frontiers are hybrid spaces, which legally are situated outside of the EU, but which functionally lie inside its strategic zone of interest, and whose stability is essential. They therefore represent an emerging public space that the Europeans can use in order to project security outside, but also a space that has to be secured and protected against transnational threats, of which piracy has now become significant”.

In other words, the EU’s maritime frontiers as a ‘space’ are to be incorporated in the European strategic framework. The maritime dimension – as a distinctive domain – is starting to become part of Europe’s security strategy and with it, its strategic culture.

3.7. The European Union’s Maritime Security Strategy

The EUMSS is the result of the (ongoing) process that started with the European Security Strategy, and also included the 2008 Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy, as well as the EU’s Blue Book. Although the EUMSS is particularly styled towards the maritime dimension of security, the document holds valuable clues on the Europe’s strategic thinking and culture in

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Building Europe’s Strategic Culture through Securitization

general. As the maritime domain is a key domain for the European Union because of its many maritime borders and dependency on maritime trade, it can also be argued that it is de facto the most essential domain for European security culture. It is therefore no surprise that the maritime dimension of security is amongst the main issues identified by Europe’s first official security strategy publication since the start of Operation Atalanta, the 2008 implementation report of the ESS ‘Providing security in a changing world’:

“The ESS highlighted piracy as a new dimension of organized crime. It is also a result of state failure. [...] Piracy in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden has made this issue more pressing in recent months, and affected delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia. The EU has responded, including with ATALANTA, our first maritime ESDP mission, to deter piracy off the Somali coast [...] We must continue to strengthen our efforts on capabilities, as well as mutual collaboration and burden-sharing arrangements. Experience has shown the need to do more, particularly over key capabilities such as strategic airlift, helicopters, space assets, and maritime surveillance [...] These efforts must be supported by a competitive and robust defence industry across Europe, with greater investment in research and development”.

Due to the developments described above (as well as Operation Atalanta, which will be discussed further on), maritime security was now firmly on the strategic security agenda of the EU. As the Council of the European Union recognized the need to keep the momentum going after the publication of the Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy (IRESS) and the IMP, maritime security was again debated during its meeting in Luxembourg in April 2010. The Council asked the High Representative rather cautiously “to undertake work with a view to preparing options for the possible elaboration of a Security Strategy for the global maritime domain, including the possible establishment of a Task Force”. The request was reiterated more forcefully at the end of European Council’s first thematic debate on defence in December 2013, when the Council called for a EU Maritime Security Strategy by June 2014. Part of the reiteration of this request was the fact that the EU was moving towards a comprehensive maritime approach by the establishment of EUCAP Nestor in 2010, which aims to support the development of maritime security (including maritime governance and counter-piracy) in five East-African countries.

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* Those countries being Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and the Seychelles.
Another such development is the ‘Strategic framework for the Horn of Africa’, adopted by the Council in November 2011, in which maritime security was identified as an important requirement to mitigate the effects on insecurity in the region. Finally, the African Union launched ‘2050: Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy’ (2050 AIM strategy) in 2012. The European Union, who had actively supported the African Union’s strategy, could not stay behind. In practice, the Union was developing a comprehensive approach to maritime security. A theory underpinning and combining these practices however, was still lacking.

The Commission published elements of the requested strategy in March 2014. In the joint communication ‘For an open and secure global maritime domain: elements for a European Union maritime security strategy’ the European Commission and the High Representative set out a first draft of a comprehensive European approach to maritime security. The joint communication document contains only ‘elements’ as security and defence issues are still firmly member states’ prerogatives. The actual European Union Maritime Security Strategy was adopted three months later, in June 2014.

The rationale behind the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) is that it can provide the basis for concrete actions in the strategic domain, as well as connect the various EU actions to come to a holistic approach. A European common framework for the furtherance of national and international policies can provide coherence and cooperation between all maritime actors. In the words of the Commission, “the ambition is that the EU can become more resilient in addressing threats and risks […], and as such it would be more capable at safeguarding its values, strategic maritime interests and promoting multilateral cooperation and maritime governance”. As such, the EUMSS can be regarded as a highly strategic document, heralding a new official publication in regards to Europe’s strategic culture.

3.8. The state of the Union’s strategic culture

In order to provide a solid foundation on which to base the research objective of this thesis, this chapter has detailed the development of, what can now be called, a European strategic culture. It aimed to describe the development of European thinking in regards to security and defence cooperation. It can be concluded that Europe has developed a distinctive approach to security, coinciding with the Union’s steps towards a comprehensive security strategy.

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100 Personal interview with Member of European Union Parliament, ALDE faction, August 2014, Brussels.
Building Europe’s Strategic Culture through Securitization

Culture as a subject is notoriously hard to define. Culture is constituted of interpretations, collective ideas and values, behavioural patterns, conditioned emotional responses, and attitudes. It is therefore not possible to define a specific moment in time that marks the sudden existence of a clearly distinct notion of European strategic culture. The codification of the Petersberg tasks into the European Union treaties was of major importance for this development; but so was the end of the Cold War, Europe’s failure during the Balkan Wars, the St. Malo Declaration, and the European Security Strategy. Likewise, the concepts of Human Security and the Responsibility to Protect also influenced European security thinking. All these developments culminated in a European strategic culture and the CSDP, through which to date thirty-four civilian and military missions have been deployed. Rather, the strategic culture of the Union should be regarded as a fluid concept, one that changes as the result of internal and external developments. As I will argue further on in this thesis, the strategic culture of the European Union has changed in character with the advent of the EU Maritime Security Strategy.

The following timeline illustrates the point: the smaller circles represent some of the most important events in the development of the European strategic culture (diagram 2). The larger circles represent the key documents in which these events have been consolidated, and in which the official strategic culture of the European can be found.

Diagram 2

Key documents in the development of the EU strategic culture

Recapping, the Treaty on European Union (1993) created the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the first step towards an independent European security policy; the Treaty of Amsterdam incorporated the Petersberg tasks into the European Union framework. The St. Malo declaration represented the British ‘sea change’, envisioning the possibility of deployment of European military forces outside the NATO framework. Europe voiced its ambitions loud and clear in the Helsinki Headline Goal of 1999, taking stock of European military capabilities and witnessing the genesis of the ESDP. The European Security Strategy of 2003 was the first comprehensive document that detailed how the European Union aimed to interpret, predict and react to international
challenges, representing the European strategic culture. The Headline Goal 2010 introduced the EU Battlegroup concept as a minimum effective force package with rapid deployment capabilities. This concept made its debut during one of the first missions under the European Security and Defence Policy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003. The Integrated Maritime Policy of 2007 opened the door for a comprehensive maritime dimension of security and defence in the EU. The Implementation Report of 2008 served as an update of the European Security Strategy and the EU’s strategic culture. Insights of five years of ESDP missions led the Union to expand on its beliefs, attitudes and proposed patterns of habitual behaviour. The Treaty of Lisbon gave the strategic culture of the Union a new impetus by introducing the post of High Representative and expanding on the Petersberg tasks that define the scope of European external civil and military intervention. The third of the three key European documents on the Union’s strategic culture is the EU Maritime Security Strategy (2014), with which the following chapter will be occupied.

It is revealing that the notion of Battlegroups was first developed during the Franco-British summit at Le Touquet in 2003; likewise, it was at the Franco-British summit in Saint Malo in 1998 that the possibility of the deployment of European forces outside of the NATO framework was envisioned. The two military powerhouses of Europe can be clearly seen as the drivers behind the European military security project, even during times of military disagreement over the 2003 Iraq war (or perhaps, because of it). Taken into account the sizeable military resources of both countries, Britain and France are undoubtedly able to go it alone. Why then, is there a need for an EU-wide strategic culture and security policy? It can be argued that the EU “has the potential to bring greater benefits to the host country than a unilateral operation could”\(^\text{101}\). The EU is able to muster broader participation from its member states: not only military but also political, economic and social engagement. With the modern-day realization that conflict resolution warrants a comprehensive approach, the involvement of a community of 28 – constituting the strongest economic bloc in the world – is surely beneficial for the resolving of conflict.

Likewise, political legitimacy and multilateralism are important factors in the reasoning of both countries to support a distinct European strategic culture. Especially after the United States circumvented the United Nations Security Council to confront Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq in 2003, did the European powers realize that multilateralism could greatly enhance political legitimacy in the field of security and foreign policy. Another argument for an EU-wide security policy does not relate to conflict, but to the European Union itself. The EU has a need for independent security capabilities not only vis-à-vis other international actors, but also to its own population.

Europe’s current civilian and military missions under the CSDP mark further vital steps in the ever-developing European strategic culture. Ever since the founding father’s failed attempt to form the European Defence Community in 1954, the Union has been searching for a way to reconcile the national

security interests of its member states with the realization that modern-day security issues are transnational in nature. Knowing that the new threats Europe faces are primarily non-military and transnational, the Union has recognized that answers to these threats cannot be implemented in purely national frameworks. The European strategic culture is however not merely the sum of the national strategic cultures of its member states; rather, the EU has prompted the national strategic cultures to converge towards a pan-European strategic culture. It is sign of an ever closer union, in a field that is “probably the one which least lends itself to a collective European approach”\textsuperscript{102}.

The European strategic culture is characterized by a focus on humanitarian issues. The EU’s focus lies with conflict prevention and peacebuilding, instead of peace enforcement\textsuperscript{103}. The EU stresses the importance of multilateralism and cooperation with the UN and other regional security organizations\textsuperscript{104}. The European Union is successfully transforming itself from a soft-only power into a global actor in the field of security. Debate consists on the assessment of this transformation: terms to describe the European Union range from “ethical actor”, “tragic actor”, “normative empire”, “transformative power” and “regional normative hegemon” to “small power” and “global actor”\textsuperscript{105}. Perhaps the European Union deserves its own category. In the words of Germond (2010): “Venus has learned geopolitics, but she has nonetheless kept her distinctiveness”\textsuperscript{106}.


\textsuperscript{103} Dembinski & Reinold (2011) p. 18-19.


\textsuperscript{105} Hagemann (2010) “Strategic planning for comprehensive security in the European Union’s military operations: EUFOR RD Congo, EUFOR TCHAD/RCA and EUNAVFOR Atalanta”, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, p. 5-6.

4. Analysing European Union strategic discourse

Having detailed the development of the European Union strategic culture in order to provide a foundation on which to build this thesis, it is now time to turn to the heart of the matter: changes in the EU’s security strategy and strategic culture discourse. What follows is a comparative analysis of the discourses of Europe’s three main security strategies: the European Security Strategy (ESS, 2003)\(^1\), the Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy (IRESS, 2008)\(^2\) and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS, 2014)\(^3\), in order to understand how Europe’s strategic culture has changed. I found that the EU’s strategic culture is increasingly characterized and occupied with strategic objectives.

The discourse in the three strategic documents will be analysed and compared on several points: threat assessment, strategic objectives, and policy implications. By employing political discourse analysis we can compare the EU’s strategic culture documents and understand variations between them. In other words: a comparative analysis of the discourse in key EU documents will provide the means to analyse changes in Europe’s strategic culture. This chapter attempts to satisfy the third and fourth step of Schutt’s five-step methodology on qualitative research\(^4\). The similarities and differences of the three EU security strategies are compared to find recurrent themes between the documents, corroborate the findings and show how concepts might influence each other.

The three documents are ideally suited for a discourse analysis and comparison, as they are Europe’s primary security strategies. All three documents have been adopted by the European Council, and all three documents share the same rationale: to define global challenges and key threats in order to advance the Union’s security and core values.

4.1. Threat assessment

Threat assessment is objectively the first and most important step of any strategic document. Without a comprehensive and correct assessment of the challenges and threats one faces, a strategy to address certain issues will fail to be successful. The European Security Strategy from 2003 identifies five key threats: terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime (p. 3-5). The most recent wave of global terrorism, the ESS states, is linked to violent religious extremism. Its

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causes are plural and include the pressures of modernisation, the alienation of young people living in foreign societies, and cultural, social and political crises. Weapons of mass destruction and the terrorism threat are closely connected. However, the threat of weapons of mass destruction also includes the potential dangers of a nuclear arms race and the proliferation of missile technology, which are concerns mostly on a state level, instead of a globalized terrorism level. The third identified threat, regional conflicts, is included because it has the potential to lead to the proliferation of the other threats: state failure, organized crime, extremism and terrorism (p. 4). Similarly, state failure is associated with undermining global governance, adding to regional instability and organised crime and terrorism. Finally, organised crime is the only internal threat to European security, albeit with an external dimension (p. 4-5).

Five years onwards sees the Implementation Report of the European Security Strategy (IRESS, 2008) re-evaluate these global challenges and key threats. The IRESS opens with stating the threats and challenges as formulated in the ESS have not gone away; the IRESS does not replace the ESS, but instead enforces it (p. 3). Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is still emphasized as one of the greatest threats to European security. While the ESS only mentioned the Middle East in connection to an arms race, the IRESS specifically names Iran and North Korea as undeserving of the international community’s trust on this issue (p. 3). The combined threats of terrorism and organised crime “remains a major threat to our livelihoods”, whereas organised crime “continues to menace our societies” (p. 4). Here we notice the first important changes in discourse between the ESS and IRESS: the global threats of regional conflict and state failure are omitted. Instead the Implementation Report identifies cyber security, energy security and climate change as the largest threats to the European Union (p. 5). Energy security can be threatened by instability in source countries, as well as high dependence. Climate change is included on the basis of being a ‘threat multiplier’, exacerbating conflict, poverty, and political stability.

The European Union Maritime Security Strategy (2014), while focusing more on the maritime dimension of security, nonetheless incorporates global challenges and threats to the European Union in a similar way as the ESS and IRESS do. However, the EUMSS discourse on the types of threats the Union faces changes compared to the strategy’s predecessors. Like the Union previous security strategies, the EUMSS identifies organized criminal networks and terrorism as the largest threat to the Union (p. 8). The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and climate change are included as well (p. 8). However, the most significant addition to the EUMSS is new discourse on a dimension that both previous strategies lacked: the economic dimension. The EUMSS states clearly that the second most important threat to the European Union and its citizens is the security of its economic interests (p. 7). Freedom of navigation and the obstruction of sea-lanes, both strongly connected to the economic dimension, are other new threats identified (p. 8). The Union’s economic interests are threatened by “external aggression […], threats to member states’
sovereign rights or armed conflict”. The economic interests of the Union are defined as:

d) The preservation of freedom of navigation, the protection of the EU global supply chain and maritime trade [...];
e) The protection of economic interests, including the safeguarding of maritime energy resources, the sustainable exploitation of natural and maritime resources [...], the control of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, the security of Member States’ fishing fleets and the delimitation of maritime zones, such as the exclusive economic zone, which presents a potential for growth and jobs”.

In other words, gas, oil, fish, natural resources and the EU’s supply chain have now become strategic interests of the European Union, for which the EU can deploy its military instruments (p. 9). Such strong discourse has not featured in any other threat analysis of the Union, signifying a new development in the discourse on threats.

4.2. Strategic objectives

Besides a threat assessment, all three documents share a section on the Union’s strategic objectives in order to address the identified challenges. To defend its security and promote its values, the ESS has three strategic objectives: actively addressing the threats, building security in the European neighbourhood, and effective multilateralism. Examples of actively addressing the threats include the adoption of a European Arrest Warrant and steps to attack terrorist financing after 9/11/2001, strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency to address the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and mediated in regional conflicts with the aim of promoting good governance, in order to save states and institutions from collapsing and enabling local authorities to combat organised crime (p. 6). Building security in the European neighbourhood has been primarily attempted through enlargement, the neighbourhood policy and the Barcelona Process, and by supporting international mediation efforts (p. 7-8). The objective of effective multilateralism is supported through commitment to international law. Multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, NATO, as well as the WTO, OSCE and ASEAN are of particular significance to the European Union in this regard (p. 9).

The IRESS’ strategic objectives to address the threats identified, are largely similar to the European Security Strategy’s. The discourse on the objectives of ‘greater engagement with our neighbourhood’ and ‘partnerships for effective multilateralism’ has not changed with respect to the previous strategy (p. 10-11). The objective of ‘actively addressing the threats’ has been replaced with a section on ‘a more effective and capable Europe’, but in essence the discourse on these topics has not transformed. Whereas the ESS planned to address the threats to the Union by means of soft power policies (arrest warrants, strengthening international institutions and mediation), the IRESS foresees to address the same objective through better institutional coordination, preventing
threats from becoming sources of conflict early on, dialogue and mediation efforts, and through supporting civil society and NGO’s (p. 9-10). Enlargement, the European Neighbourhood Policy and civilian ESDP mission are also presented as ways to address the threats Europe faces. Although a mention is made of military crisis management as one of many instruments the Union can employ, the way to address the identified threats stays very much in the realm of soft power.

The EUMSS strategic objectives to address the threats identified also include multilateralism and promoting cooperation within the European neighbourhood (p. 11). These two measures are expounded as promoting dispute settlement through the UN, namely the UNCLOS and Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and promoting political dialogues between the EU and third countries and regional organisations. Close cooperation is foreseen on the issues of maritime security, governance and criminal justice, internationally agreed standards and combatting illegal fishing. However, just as the discourse on the threat assessment was altered between the ESS and IRESS on the one hand, and the EUMSS on the other, so too does the discourse on strategic objectives to counter the identified threats change. Whereas Europe’s first two security strategies planned to address the threats to the Union by making use of soft power instruments, the EUMSS plans to respond with “a wide array of policies and tools, including the Common Security and Defence Policy. The Union stresses the importance of assuming increased responsibilities as a global security provider, at the international level and in particular the neighbourhood, thereby enhancing its own security and its role as a strategic global actor”. Armed forces and military CSDP actions as a solution to the identified threats feature heavily in the security strategy: they are “to play a strategic role” and provide global reach and flexibility (p. 10). The sustained presence of member states’ armed forces is needed “to support freedom of navigation”, as well as to deter, prevent and counter unlawful and illicit activities (p. 10). Military CSDP actions are now an instrument at the disposal of the European Union to counter threats to its interests.

4.3. Policy implications

After identifying the challenges Europe faces and detailing the strategic objectives to address these, the ESS discourse offers insight into the EU’s plans for future policy to ensure effective crisis management. The EU wants to make a contribution that matches its potential, and be more active, coherent, and capable (p. 11). Preventative engagement is a key competence for the EU, which identified the “need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary robust intervention”. Capabilities are transforming military forces to be more mobile and flexible, stronger diplomatic capabilities, stronger civilian resources and common threat assessments (p. 12). Increased coherency must be achieved through bringing together the different European instruments and capabilities, as well as increased coordination between institutions, for example between external action and Justice and Home affairs (p. 13).
The IRESS discourse on policy implications is similar to that of the ESS. The Implementation Report identifies the need to strengthen its own coherence, through better institutional coordination and more strategic decision-making, to be achieved through the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (p. 9). Preventative engagement, for example through poverty reduction and peacebuilding, is touted as essential. Effective command structures are another facet that needs to be addressed by future policy, as well as human rights issues (p. 9).

On the area of policy implications, the EUMSS makes a case for a cross-sectoral approach, deeper integrating the navies, armed forces and military authorities in the larger European framework (p. 4), stimulating cooperation between the different actors. Curiously, the shipping industry is also mentioned as an actor that is stimulated to cooperate better in the larger framework (p. 4). Additionally, it foresees the need for a more consistent approach in supporting surveillance and in the planning and conduct of CSDP missions (p. 12). Capabilities are to be enhanced through greater sharing of best practices (p. 13), promoting mutual understanding between security actors, as well as greater cooperation for crisis response, and planning for security contingencies in relation to defined security threats (p. 14).

4.4. Changing discourses

The analysis above paints a picture of changing political discourse from a normative view of European security to an interest-based one. Whereas the ESS and IRESS emphasized the protection of European values as the most important objective to be protected, the EUMSS states a list of interests that are to be guarded, with military means if necessary, a prime example of securitization. This is a remarkable change to earlier publications in which the EU set out its security strategy. This change in thinking is perhaps best illustrated by a statement from 2010 by Horst Köhler, then President of Germany:

“Meine Einschätzung ist aber, dass insgesamt wir auf dem Wege sind, doch auch in der Breite der Gesellschaft zu verstehen, dass ein Land unserer Größe mit dieser Außenhandelsorientierung und damit auch Außenhandelsabhängigkeit auch wissen muss, dass im Zweifel, im Notfall auch militärischer Einsatz notwendig ist, um unsere Interessen zu wahren, zum Beispiel freie Handelswege, zum Beispiel ganze regionale Instabilitäten zu verhindern, die mit Sicherheit dann auch auf unsere Chancen zurückschlagen negativ durch Handel, Arbeitsplätze und Einkommen”.

5 “In my estimation, though, we – including the society as a whole – are coming to the general understanding that, given this focus and corresponding dependency on exports, a country of our size needs to be aware that where called for or in an emergency, military deployment, as well, is necessary if we are to protect our interests such as ensuring free trade routes or preventing regional instabilities which are also certain to negatively impact our ability to safeguard trade, jobs and income” (personal translation, NvD). Cited from: Deutschlandradio Kultur (2010) “Köhler: Mehr Respekt für Deutsche Soldaten in Afghanistan”. Dated May 22nd, 2010, accessed August 15th, 2014. Accessible through: http://www.deutschlandradiokultur.de/koehler-mehr-respekt-fuer-deutsche-soldaten-in-afghanistan.1008.de.html?dram:article_id=163260
While president Köhler spoke on behalf of Germany, his comments can be understood as a shared European vision, as Germany’s armed forces in principle operate in EU context, besides contributing to UN missions. What caused this change of discourse after the last EU security strategy, the IRESS of 2008? What happened that made the European Union decide to put emphasis on protecting its economic interests in its latest official document on security strategy? While this question is too broad and too extensive to provide a comprehensive, definitive answer to, this thesis finds a part of the answer in the securitization of the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, and the subsequent deployment of EU naval force Atalanta. The successful securitization of this issue altered the EU’s threat perception of its economic interests, eventually contributing to the emphasis on economic interests in the EU’s latest security strategy.

The inclusion of economic interests to be guarded by military force is a prime example of securitization. By including the bloc’s economic interests in its security strategy, the EU employs a speech act in order to present them as an issue of supreme priority. By labelling it as security, the EU has claimed the right for it to treat it by extraordinary means; the deployment of military means. Securitization is the process of constructing “a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat”⁶. What the EU has done is declared the issues of freedom of navigation, maritime trade and the EU global supply chain as ‘under threat’, reserving the right to protect them with extraordinary measures. In such actions we can see changes in the set of beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, norms, world views, and patterns of habitual behaviour held by strategic decision-makers⁷: in other words, we can find changes the European strategic culture. The next chapters aim to explore two issues that I found have contributed to this change in strategic culture of the European Union: the securitization of piracy off the coast of Somalia and the subsequent deployment of Operation Atalanta. Both of them have played a role, I found, in the EU’s changing discourses on security and strategy. The objectives that formed the basis for the operationalization of Operation Atalanta have found their way – after six years of running the mission – into the EU official security strategy. In this instance, the action happened before the policy had been made. I found that the mission represents a clear departure from previous missions in the CSDP framework, offering key insights in the Union’s changing strategic culture.

5. Securitizing Somali piracy

Having detailed the development of the European Union strategic culture, as well as analysed the changes in European strategic security discourse in order to provide a foundation on which to build this thesis, it is now time to turn to the heart of the matter: changes in the EU’s strategic culture due to altered threat perceptions. It is crucial to understand how Somali piracy became such an important issue to the European Union, to be dealt with by military force. What led the European Union to deploy such extraordinary measures? This chapter analyses the process of securitization that has contributed to the EU decision to go into Somali waters. For this the theory of securitization will be used. This chapter aims to answer questions on the strategic construction of piracy as a threat, securitizing actors and the acceptance of the securitizing move by the European Union. I argue that securitizing speech acts by the international shipping industry have led to the successful securitization of the issue of Somali piracy. The securitizing move was accepted by the European Union, eventually leading to the establishment of Operation Atalanta.

5.1. The case of Somali piracy

Piracy ‘is reputed to be a serious problem’\(^1\) in Somali waters, including the Gulf of Aden, which serves as a crucial sea line of communication for the European Union\(^2\). The problem of piracy was perceived by the European Union to be grave enough to warrant a military intervention to protect EU interests. How did the issue of piracy become to be perceived as an issue to be solved through military means?

Within a decade, the issue of piracy has been transformed from a criminal nuisance to the shipping industry to an international security problem\(^3\). As demonstrated earlier the 2003 European Security Strategy merely mentioned the growth in maritime piracy as “a new dimension of organised crime which will merit further attention”\(^4\). Piracy is not a new phenomenon in the waters around the Horn of Africa. According to IMB statistics there were 21 acts of piracy in 2003 (actual or attempted), 10 in 2004, 45 in 2005, 20 in 2006 and 44 in 2007\(^5\). Up until 2008 the EU had never been overtly concerned with the issue of piracy and it was certainly not perceived as an existential threat, evidenced by the lack of attention for piracy in the Union’s strategic documents.

The years before the establishment of Operation Atalanta saw several major developments in regards with Somali piracy however, which have helped

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\(^1\) Mak (2006) p. 66.  
putting the issue on the international security agenda. Firstly the number of attacks by Somali pirates increased; secondly, instead of seizing cargoes, the pirates’ modus operandi changed to hostage taking and demanding increasingly higher ransoms. Thirdly, the operational range of pirates increased far beyond the national boundaries of Somali waters; attacks have been reported as far south as Madagascar and as far east as the Maldives. Fourth and finally, pirates successfully managed to capture even the largest ships traversing the Gulf of Aden. High-sided oil tankers had never been targeted before and were thought to be immune from piracy attacks. This preconception had to be adjusted after the remarkable hijacking of the *Sirius Star*, carrying no less than two million barrels of crude, the largest vessel ever hijacked.

However these developments – the upturn of Somali pirates’ range, the increased number of attacks, the evolution of the vessels targeted, and a different modus operandi – cannot explain why the European Union would change its threat perception of Somali piracy in such a way that warranted the deployment of military means, simply because of the numbers of vessels targeted. Piracy is statistically insignificant. According to IMB figures, in 2006 20 vessels were the victim of an *actual or attempted* piracy attack in the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and Somali waters; these numbers increased to 44 in 2007 and 111 in 2008. With an estimated 25,000 vessels traversing these waters per annum, these numbers equate to 0.08%, 0.17% and 0.44% of maritime traffic in the area, respectively. The number of actually pirated ships never peaked above 0.2 percent of total traffic (0.18% in 2010). Estimates of the ransoms paid to pirates range between 30 and 150 million.

While the increase in numbers might be seen as remarkable, it is not enough to explain a sudden change of heart by the European Union to start considering Somali piracy as an existential threat to be countered by the navies of the

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* Seemingly the common order of events during piracy attacks in the Strait of Malacca and the Gulf of Guinea, other piracy hotspots. This practice is also captured under the term ‘armed robbery at sea’.
Union. On the face of it, piracy activities neither threatened a closure of the Gulf of Aden sea line of communication, nor other vital economic interests. Furthermore, while it cannot be denied that piracy has led to additional costs, it is unclear why these costs are to be passed on to the European Union, instead of the shipping companies or their insurers footing the bill. The final report (2008) of the International Expert Group in Piracy off the Somali coast, commissioned by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (SRSG) contends: “Most international shipping companies have insurance, which covers ransom payments and loss of profit. If as a result of the levels of pirate activity in the Gulf of Aden ship owners choose or are forced to order their ships to sail from Asia to Europe around South Africa (rather than through the Suez Canal) then the longer durations for each voyage will create a market shortage of ships which will result in increased freight rates and therefore revenue for ship owners. The effect of increased freight rates on retail consumer costs is likely to be small”.

5.2. The securitization of Somali piracy

To answer the question of how the European Union became to perceive the threat of piracy as one to be resisted by military efforts we must turn to the theory of securitization, in which threats to security are explained as social constructs, shaped and influenced by one’s perceptions. Securitizing refers to declaring an issue to be threatening the very existence of a particular referent object: “In order to turn piracy into a threat, hence, a convincing case needs to be made that survival of a referent object or presents a substantive danger to it”.

This legitimizes an actor to lift the issue above the normal realm of politics, in order to deal with the threat by adoption of extreme measures such as military involvement. When examining the Somali piracy case study, it is evident that there are clear securitizing actors that use speech acts, aimed at a specific audience, in order to securitize a specific referent object.

Not surprisingly, the actors most explicitly calling for extraordinary measures such as the deployment and maintenance of military means have been the ones facing the largest risk from acts of piracy: the global shipping and fishing industries. For the purpose of this research these industries are represented by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), the European Community Shipowners’ Association (ECSA), and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS). The IMB is an international NGO, established to “act as a focal

* Several other large shipping companies have actively contributed to the securitizing of piracy campaign and include the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), the International Transport Worker’s Federation (ITWF), Intertanko and Intercargo. The ICS, IMB, ECSA and the
point in the fight against all types of maritime crime and malpractice”¹⁵, the ECSA a trade association representing the national shipowners associations of the EU, and the ICS an international trade association for the shipping industry. Here they represent the shipping industry on the account that all three are the de facto authority on issues of piracy connected to the European Union; the IMB by virtue of its Piracy Reporting Centre – the only one of its kind – and the ECSA and ICS by virtue of representation of the European Economic Area, and international fleet, respectively. The ICS’ members operate over 80% the world’s merchant tonnage¹⁶, ECSA’s members comprise 99% of the European fleet¹⁷.

The way the IMB, ECSA and ICS are engaging in speech acts is by issuing reports and statements to highlight the threat of piracy in the media, in order to pressure states to undertake action. The referent objects range from seafarers, national and international economies, ‘people dependent on humanitarian aid’, free passage at sea, maritime trade and indeed the “needs of the nations and peoples of the world”. Repressive action or a military solution is legitimized because of the existential threat piracy poses to these referent objects. The shipping industry is certainly aware of its role in the securitization of piracy off the coast of Somalia. In its 2014 annual review, the International Chamber of Shipping states that its objectives is to take “every opportunity to deliver a coherent message to politicians that the current level of military presence continues to be necessary”¹⁸. Similarly, in a moment of reflection the ICS identified lessons from the Somali piracy ‘crisis’, which included “Getting the initial attention of governments and making them appreciate the scale of the crisis, and demonstrating that isolated incidents were escalating into a situation that threatened the safety of thousands of ships and seafarers, with the result that a vast and strategically vital area of the Indian Ocean, including major trade lanes, had become a virtual ‘no go’ area to merchant shipping”¹⁹.

One of the clearest examples of a securitizing speech act is the statement by Alfons Guinier, then secretary-general of the ECSA: “We’re asking not just for more escorts but for repressive action”²⁰. The ICS, in a joint open letter to all aforementioned organizations frequently work together to speak in a unified voice. See also page 22.

governments, stated: “These waters [off the Horn of Africa, NoD] are strategically important for world trade; safe and unhindered passage of innocent merchant ships is essential if the needs of the nations and peoples of the world are to be safeguarded. […] It is our view that immediate and decisive action is required to strike at the very heart of the armed and organized gangs that appear to be operating in the region almost with impunity. […] Governments are urged to commit sufficient numbers of warships, military aircraft and surveillance assets to the region and to coordinate their command and control under the auspices of a United Nations mandate; […] We request that these actions and any others that may be appropriate be given the most urgent priority. Any further delay is bound to fuel a descent into ever deeper lawlessness.”21 Another press release by the global shipping industry focused on international responsibility:

“The international shipping industry (represented by BIMCO, ICS/ISF, INTERCARGO and INTERTANKO and the International Transport Workers’ Federation) is dismayed by recent comments, attributed to leaders of the Coalition Task Force operating in the Gulf of Aden, that it is not the job of navy forces to protect merchant ships and their crews from increasingly frequent attacks from pirates operating out of Somalia. […] The shipping industry is utterly amazed that the world’s leading nations, with the naval resources at their disposal, are unable to maintain the security of one of the world’s most strategically important seaways, linking Europe to Asia via the Red Sea/Suez Canal. […] But the international shipping industry, in the strongest possible way, urges governments to commit the necessary navy vessels now, and to ensure they have the freedom to engage forcefully against any act of piracy in the Gulf of Aden.”22

Speaking on behalf of the aforementioned shipping companies, Mr. Polemis, president of the International Shipping Federation commented: “Governments must really wake up to the enormity of the problem, as the number of pirates continues to increase in the knowledge they can act with virtual impunity, potentially closing a large section of the Indian Ocean to the movement of global trade, almost all of which is carried by sea.”23

The shipping industry was not only campaigning for the initial deployment of military means, but also for its maintenance once deployed. One example is the ‘Save our Seafarers’ campaign, supported by the ICS and IMB. This campaign claims that “the success of the entire global economy rests on unhindered and efficient sea transportation” and that “1.5 million seafarers are humanity’s

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emphasizing the need for the continuation of naval efforts. Somali pirates, in their view, through the disruption of world shipping, are “hijacking the global economy.” This view was also propagated in half-page advertisements in leading newspapers. Another instance of a securitizing speech act is the ‘End piracy now’ petition, supported by the same organizations, which argues that:

- “Almost every day seafarers are being kidnapped and exposed to an increasing risk of injury and even death;
- Every day seafarers transport the world’s goods through areas where the risk of pirate attacks are increasing;
- Every day seafarers’ families are suffering worry and uncertainty;
- Every day the chances of attracting people to jobs at sea – on which all our economies rely – are shrinking;
- Every day shipping companies and their insurers have to pay for increasing anti-piracy measures, extra fuel and ransoms – costs that are eventually passed on to the consumer;
- Every day the risk of a major ecological disaster due to an oil spill caused by pirates increases;
- Every day the chances of a recovery in the world economy are being jeopardised by this threat to world trade.”

The petition was actively promoted by the ECSA and gathered nearly a million signatures before being presented to governments worldwide as well as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the specialized United Nations agency responsible for maritime safety and security. As evidenced by the petition’s points, the anti-piracy campaign moves past humanitarian security arguments; the economic sphere is presented as the one most under threat from acts of piracy. Piracy, the petitioners argue, undermines the world economy, leads to job losses and incurs additional costs. Moreover, nothing less than the “needs of the nations and peoples of the world” are threatened and need safeguarding. This heavy focus on the economic perspective might even have hurt the anti-piracy campaign, according to Bueger (2012). The environmental sphere is also referenced as under threat from Somali piracy: “Well over 25,000

vessels on international shipping routes pass through the area at high risk of piracy each year, in addition to the substantial Indian Ocean tuna fishing fleet and local fishing and cargo vessels. Ships are regularly fired upon and damaged. Many ships taken hostage are chemical carriers or ships carrying oil or hazardous materials, adding to the potential for an environmental disaster.  

Suggesting that piracy could potentially lead to grave environmental and economic problems can be seen as scenario painting, a strategy that the IMB had previously used to securitize the issue of piracy in the Malacca Strait, as shown by Mak (2006). Another such a strategy utilized by the IMB to securitize the issue of piracy in the Malacca Strait in the 1990s was the linking of piracy and terrorism. Whilst all evidence indicates that Somalia’s main terrorist group Al Shabaab is opposed to the act of piracy (which they view as un-Islamic) and does not tolerate piracy in areas under its control, the mere mention of a possible link between piracy and terrorism functions as a securitizing move. According to Buzan et al.: “It is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done.”

Besides the above examples of the shipping industry clearly engaging in speech acts to securitize the issue of piracy, I argue that the IMB’s very definition of piracy is in itself a speech act aimed at the securitizing piracy. The IMB’s definition of piracy is broader than the legal definition by the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea. A broader definition “is likely to lead through press and other reports to greater attention being taken by coastal states as well as regional and international organization to the existence of a problem, and if such attention results in action against piracy it is in the interests of both shipowners and marine insurers.” Defining the act of piracy to include activities that it is legally in order to frame it as a threat is a prime example of a speech act and securitizing move.

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It is clear that the shipping industry is actively engaged in the securitization of the issue of Somali piracy. The issue is dramatized and presented as a grave threat to the world economy, international trade, the environment and the lives of seafarers. By presenting piracy as an existential threat to public, most notably the European audience, the shipping industry has constructed a “shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat”\(^\text{36}\).

### 5.3. European acceptance of speech acts

The securitization of an issue is made up of two parts: the securitizing move (by an actor with authority, through speech acts) and the move’s subsequent acceptance by the target audience:

> “A discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat does not by itself create securitization – this is a securitizing move, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it as such”\(^\text{37}\).

In order to understand if and how the shipping industry’s securitizing move has contributed to the EU’s decision to go into Somali waters, we must measure the move’s acceptance by Europe’s decision-makers. For example the Dutch government, who substantiated its decision to provide warships for Operation Atalanta by citing, amongst others, the major threat that piracy poses to commercial sea transports, largely accepted the shipping industry’s securitizing move. Freedom of navigation and safe transport routes – reputed to be under threat from piracy – are of prime economic and strategic importance to the Netherlands, partly due to relative large amount of vessels that carry the Dutch flag\(^\text{38}\). Similarly, in a report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, piracy is concluded to be a “major concern for the UK. The threat is not primarily to UK ships as very few have been captured. Rather, the threat is to the UK’s economy and security. Piracy affects the UK’s banking, insurance and shipping industries, and threatens the large volume of goods which are transported to the UK by sea. In light of these concerns, and as a state whose strengths and vulnerabilities are distinctly maritime, the UK should play a leading role in the international response to piracy”\(^\text{39}\). The report draws heavily on the maritime shipping industry. Intertanko, the Chamber of Shipping, Nautilus International, the Baltic Exchange, and the International Transport Workers Federation, all of


which are maritime associations or unions, are recorded as sources for the report\textsuperscript{40}.

On behalf of the European Union, the European Parliament by and large accepted the securitizing move by the shipping industry, referring to international trade and commerce as existentially threatened by acts of piracy. The European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2008 on piracy at sea begins by noting the negative impact on international trade and the plight of European shipping and fishing industry:

\textbf{“C. whereas the continuing conflict and political instability in Somalia have given rise to acts of piracy and armed robbery,}

\textbf{D. whereas in the last year criminal assaults against Community fishing, merchant and passenger vessels in international waters near the African coasts have increased in number and frequency, posing a risk to the lives of the crew and having a significant negative impact on international trade,}

\textbf{E. whereas the unhindered passage of vessels plying their trade legally on the high seas is an absolute precondition for international commerce,}

\textbf{F. whereas such piracy is an immediate threat to mariners, whose livelihood depends on the safe and lawful exercise of their trade and profession at sea,}

\textbf{G. whereas EU fishermen on the high seas have been targeted by pirates and the threat of piracy has led a significant number of EU fishing vessels to withdraw from seas hundreds of kilometers from the Somali coast or to reduce their fishing activity in the region”}\textsuperscript{41}.

It is telling that it was the Parliament’s Transport Committee that took the initiative for the resolution\textsuperscript{42}. Similarly, Joe Borg, the European Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs stated in a speech in 2009 that “the European Union takes piracy on the high seas, armed robbery in internal waters and other forms of organised crime at sea very seriously – not least because maritime transport carries 90% of world trade and 40% of the world’s merchant fleet is owned or operated by EU interests”\textsuperscript{43}. Member of the European Parliament Said El

\textsuperscript{40} House of Commons (2012) “Piracy off the coast of Somalia”, Foreign Affairs Committee, chapter 2, paragraphs 14, 16-17, 19. Dated January 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2012, accessed August 18\textsuperscript{th}, 2014. Accessible through: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmfaff/1318/131806.htm#note22


Kh德拉oui (S&D, Netherlands) noted in a debate “[Atalanta’s, NvD] efforts are very important, because the accessibility of this zone is crucial for international trade and goods transport. Our wish is that both the seamen on board merchant ships and the fishermen who work in the region will be able to carry out their jobs in safety. We think this is essential”. MEP Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE, Spain) called for fishing vessels to receive the same protection as merchant vessels, namely military escorts. Filip Kaczmarek (EPP, Poland) mirrored this sentiment: “I cannot understand why certain fellow Members do not want to protect fishermen. Since we are protecting commercial and tourist shipping, as well as ships carrying food aid, we should also do everything possible to enable fishermen to do their work in safety”. Finally, Dominique Bussereau (President-in-Office of the Council, France) stated he believes “that piracy is a form of terrorism and it is taking on uncontrolled proportions. The truth is that if nothing is done, the freedom of circulation for shipping in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia may well disappear entirely, with the massive consequences that would of course ensue”. The shipping industry’s securitizing move has clearly found resonance in Europe’s capitals and among its elite decision-makers, completing the process of securitization.

The level of acceptance by EU member states of the securitizing move can also be judged from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1816, which legitimized the use of all means necessary to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery. UNSC resolution 1816 was the first resolution that explicitly expressed its grave concern over the threat of piracy to the safety of commercial maritime routes and to international navigation; similarly it referred to the “grave dangers [piracy] poses to vessels, crews, passengers and cargo”. The emphasis of the resolution has clearly shifted towards fighting the scourge of piracy instead of escorting World Food Programme (WFP) vessels. Economic strategic arguments weigh in above the humanitarian ones. The resolution was drafted and submitted by no less than eight European Union member states. The provisions included in the draft resolution prove a high degree of acceptance European decision-makers of the securitizing move.

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The reason for the European Union to go into Somali waters is however not singular. Here it must be said that the shipping industry’s securitizing move’s main referent objects – freedom of transportation, commercial shipping, international trade – are not the only objects under threat from the perspective of the European Union. Humanitarian efforts are also consistently mentioned as an important reason to go into Somali waters. This argument is presented to the public as the main objective for Operation Atalanta. It is by decision of the Council that the mandate’s first and foremost objective is to provide protection to WFP vessels; merchant vessels and maritime traffic only feature afterwards. The argument that Operation Atalanta is a humanitarian mission first and foremost however, is weak and lacks evidence. An estimated three to four shipments are made by the World Food Programme every month; a single navy ship is adequate to protect these. As the number of ships deployed under Atalanta has ranged from four to ten, with up to seven reconnaissance aircraft, one can wonder for which purpose the other vessels are present. It seems that the objective of protecting WFP vessels is part of the European mission, but not the most important one. This is also evident from the fact that since mid 2012 “some WFP vessels have been protected by an Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment (AVPD), with the EU Naval Force providing an armed security team on board” in order to deploy Atalanta’s warships elsewhere in the Gulf of Aden. This reasoning was confirmed in interviews with EU officials. An EU Military Staff official said “Protecting aid shipments is relatively easy. The real work is in the patrols outside of the shipping corridors” A junior official working for the Commission said the protection of WFP vessels was “the prime aim to establish Operation Atalanta. There was however a strong will to also protect the merchant and fishing fleet”.

By means of concluding this chapter, I contend that it was the shipping industry that played an instrumental role in the securitization of the issue of Somali piracy. Through analysing speech acts the shipping industry moved to securitize piracy off the Horn of Africa. The securitizing move was accepted by the European Union, who indeed believed that piracy posed an existential economic threat, to be countered through military intervention. The Union then supported the move to legitimize the use of force in the Gulf of Aden, joining the original securitizing actors, as illustrated in diagram 3:

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52 Personal interview with European Union Military Staff (EUMS) official, August 2014, Brussels.
53 Personal interview with a Commission official, August 2014, Brussels.
Diagram 3
Active securitization, EU support for the original securitizing actors’ move

This shows that the European Union’s security agenda is not only determined by the Union itself; there are influential non-state actors that contribute to shaping the EU’s strategic culture⁵⁴.

6. Operation Atalanta and Europe’s changing strategic culture

Having argued that securitizing speech acts by the international shipping industry have led to the successful securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, and that the securitizing move was subsequently accepted by the European Union, this chapter focuses on the establishment of Operation Atalanta. This chapter is also concerned with the changing nature of the European strategic culture as a result of the Operation. Operation Atalanta represents a significant departure from earlier CSDP missions, based on the objectives of the mission and Europe’s security interests (being the first ESDP mission that actively addresses direct threats to the Union), the type of force, as well as the scope, size and duration of Europe’s involvement.

This chapter aims to answer questions on whether Operation Atalanta has marked a new era in the EU’s strategic culture, in which the EU is increasingly concerned with strategic objectives. I argue that Operation Atalanta has played a major role in shaping the EU’s strategic culture. This lasting impact on EU security thinking can be found in the EU’s latest strategic culture document, the EU Maritime Security Strategy (2014) as shown in chapter 4. I found that the EU’s strategic culture has been broadened to include strategic economic interests, partially as a result of the securitization of piracy and Operation Atalanta.

6.1. EUNAVFOR Atalanta: a departure

Having detailed the emergence of the European security thinking including its maritime dimension, as well as the securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, I will now show how Operation Atalanta has influenced Europe’s security policy, contributing to a change in Europe’s strategic discourse and culture.

In order to do this we must start with the conception of Operation Atalanta, by far the most significant step in the development of a maritime dimension of the European Union strategic culture. The concept of a European-wide maritime security framework was operationalized in September 2008 with the establishment of European Union Naval Cooperation (EUNAVCO). This process began by drafting of a Crisis Management Concept (CMC) by the EU Military Staff on request of the Council, to be passed on the EU Military Committee, the Political and Security Committee, and finally the Council. The CMC, which is generally seen as a significant step towards external action, was approved by the Council at the beginning of August. The Council of the European Union then decided, acting on Security Council Resolution 1816 (2008) that the EU would conduct a military coordination action with the aim of supporting member states that were deploying military assets to the Gulf of Aden, particularly by setting up a coordination cell. The coordination cell was

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to act as a focal point between EU navies and shipping companies and other
stakeholders, and to facilitate support for humanitarian convoys. Judged to be
insufficient, EU NAVCO was quickly remoulded into EUNAVFOR Atalanta,
the EU’s first naval mission. By decision of the Council:

“The European Union shall conduct a military operation in support of Resolutions
(UNSC) [...], hereinafter called ‘Atalanta’ in order to contribute to the protection of
vessels of the WFP delivering food aid to displaced persons in Somalia [...], [as well as]
the protection of vulnerable vessels cruising off the Somali coast, and the deterrence,
prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast [...].
Atalanta shall [...]:

a. Provide protection to vessels chartered by the WFP, including by means of the
presence on board those vessels of armed units of Atalanta, in particular when
cruising in Somali territorial waters;
b. Provide protection, based on a case-by-case evaluation of needs, to merchant
vessels cruising in the areas where it is deployed;
c. Keep watch over areas off the Somali coast, including Somalia’s territorial
waters, in which there are dangers to maritime activities, in particular to
maritime traffic;
d. Take the necessary measures, including the use of force, to deter, prevent and
intervene in order to bring to an end acts of piracy and armed robbery which
may be committed in the areas where it is present;
e. In view of prosecutions potentially being brought by the relevant States under
the conditions in Article 12, arrest, detain and transfer persons who have
committed, or are suspected of having committed, acts of piracy or armed
robbery in the areas where it is present and seize the vessels of the pirates or
armed robbers or the vessels caught following an act of piracy or an armed
robbery and which are in the hands of the pirates, as well as the goods on
board;
f. Liaise with organizations and entities, as well as States, working in the region
to combat acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast, in particular
the ‘Combined Task Force 150’ maritime force which operates within the
framework of ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’.”

EUNAVFOR Atalanta is the first naval mission within the framework of the
CSDP and offers key insights on the Union’s changing strategic culture. Summarizing
the mission’s mandate, the EU states to take the necessary measures to deter, prevent and repress piracy, including forceful intervention. It is clear that the EU, besides providing protection to vessels chartered by the World Food Programme (WFP), cares greatly about the protection of merchant vessels and maritime traffic, as stated in points B and C, and as shown in the previous chapter on the securitization of Somali piracy. These tasks go beyond

4 Council Joint Action (2008) “On a European Union military operation to contribute to the deterrence,
prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast”, 2008/851/CFSP,
the Petersberg tasks, Europe’s self-proclaimed tasks in which the Union may use civilian and military means. Going back to the Petersberg tasks, these “shall include 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”5. Escorting WFP vessels falls under the humanitarian tasks, but keeping watch over maritime traffic and the protection of merchant vessels do not qualify for either of the above tasks. Pirates are most definitely not terrorists.

While the EU is not legally limited to these tasks, Operation Atalanta marks the first time that an EU mission is deployed with objectives that lie outside the Petersberg tasks. According to Germond & Smith (2009) Operation Atalanta “exercises a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence on the high seas and within another state’s territorial waters in order to protect the EU’s and its member states’ own interests […]”6. This is a crucial change from earlier EU strategic and security involvements.

Operation Atalanta represents another clear departure from previous CSDP missions, especially in regards to Europe’s independent security interests, the use of military force, as well as the type of force (see table 1, page 98). EUNAVFOR Atalanta is the first CSDP mission that actively addresses direct threats to European security. The Union’s other military missions up until Operation Atalanta have been deployed in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2003), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2003, 2006), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2004), Darfur/Sudan (2005), the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic (2008). Those missions in Africa have not come forth out of a perception of direct threats to European security interests; it can be argued that neither did those in the Balkans7. Instead, these missions were driven by Europe’s desire to contribute to peace and international security, as well as its wish to become a strategic actor in its own right. Without a doubt other incentives will have played a role in Europe’s decision to execute military missions (such incentives might include international standing, trade relations, upholding international law, moral obligations, et cetera), but it is my view that direct threats to the European Union were not part of Europe’s reasoning to intervene in the above conflicts. While Europe might have faced indirect consequences of the conflicts it sought to address, for example through refugee flows or the proliferation of arms, European security interests were not directly threatened. EUNAVFOR Atalanta is the first CSDP mission that aims to actively address direct threats to European Union’s wellbeing.

7 Ibid., p. 576.
Table 1
ESDP/CSDP missions, 2003-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission, location</th>
<th>Mission type</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Personnel*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. EUMM, former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Civilian monitoring</td>
<td>2003-2007</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. EUPM, Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2003-2012</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Concordia, Macedonia</td>
<td>Military peacekeeping</td>
<td>2003 March-December</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Artemis, DR Congo</td>
<td>Military peacekeeping</td>
<td>2003 June-September</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. EUPOL Proxima, Macedonia</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2003-2005</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. EUJUST Themis, Georgia</td>
<td>Civilian rule of law</td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. EUFOR Althea, Bosnia Hrzg.</td>
<td>Military peacekeeping</td>
<td>2004-present</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. EUPOL Kinshasa, DR Congo</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2005-2007</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. EUSEC, DR Congo</td>
<td>Military support/assistance</td>
<td>2005-present</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. EUJUST LEX, Iraq</td>
<td>Civilian rule of law</td>
<td>2005-2013</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. EU AMIS, Darfur</td>
<td>Military support/assistance</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. AMM, Aceh</td>
<td>Civilian monitoring</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. EUSR BST, Georgia</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2005-2011</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. EUBAM Rafah</td>
<td>Border monitoring</td>
<td>2005-present</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. EUBAM Ukraine/Moldova</td>
<td>Border monitoring</td>
<td>2005-present</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. EU POL COPPS, Palestine</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2006-present</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. EU PAT, Macedonia</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. EUPT, Kosovo</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2006-2008</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. EUFOR, DR Congo</td>
<td>Military peacekeeping</td>
<td>2006 July-November</td>
<td>300+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. EU POL, DR Congo</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2007-present</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. EUPOL, Afghanistan</td>
<td>Civilian policing</td>
<td>2007-present</td>
<td>678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. EUFOR Chad/RCA</td>
<td>Military bridging operation</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. EUSSR, Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. EULEX, Kosovo</td>
<td>Civilian rule of law</td>
<td>2008-present</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. EUMM, Georgia</td>
<td>Monitoring mission</td>
<td>2008-present</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. EUNAVFOR Atalanta, Somalia</td>
<td>Military operation</td>
<td>2008-present</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. EUTM, Somalia</td>
<td>Military training mission</td>
<td>2010-present</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. EU CAP Sahel, Niger</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2012-present</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. EU CAP Nestor, Horn of Africa</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2012-present</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. EUAVSEC, South Sudan</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2012-2014</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. EUTM, Mali</td>
<td>Military training mission</td>
<td>2013-present</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. EUBAM, Libya</td>
<td>Border monitoring</td>
<td>2013-present</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. EU FOR, RCA</td>
<td>Military peacekeeping</td>
<td>2014-present</td>
<td>600+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. EU CAP Sahel, Mali</td>
<td>Civilian support/assistance</td>
<td>2014-present</td>
<td>(tbd)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another departure from earlier CSDP mission is that Europe’s previous military missions were generally limited in scope, size and duration. Operation Concordia (no. 3), Artemis (no. 4) and EUFOR Congo (no. 19) deployed between 300 and 900 personnel, all for less than ten months. EUFOR Chad/RCA (no. 22) can be considered large in EU mission terms, but was

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*Note: personnel figures include both EU and non-EU personnel. Personnel figures often change throughout a mission. The displayed figures are the latest approximates.

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limited in duration as it ran for just over a year. EUNAVFOR Atalanta has now been deployed for over five years (2014), approaching its sixth anniversary. Currently deploying five warships and approximately 1200 personnel, at the height of the mission more than twenty warships and maritime patrol aircraft and 2000 personnel were involved. The only mission that somewhat relates to Operation Atalanta in terms of duration is EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina (no. 7), as it is still in operation since its inception in 2004. However, this mission involved a takeover of NATO command and can thus not be seen as an independent European mission. EUNAVFOR is therefore one of the largest, as well as longest military missions undertaken by the European Union.

6.2. Influencing security strategy and culture

Having shown that Operation Atalanta represents a significant departure from earlier CSDP missions, as based on the objectives of the mission and Europe’s security interests. This observation, together with the securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, suggest that the EU is increasingly concerned with strategic objectives. Where Europe’s security and defence policy up until Operation Atalanta ran parallel to the Petersberg tasks, focusing on humanitarian assistance and conflict prevention tasks, the EU’s first major security strategy since Atalanta now explicitly states that the bloc’s economic interests – Atalanta primary motive, as shown in chapter 5 – are an additional reason to deploy armed forces. The securitization of piracy by the global shipping industry has affected the EU’s threat perception, leading to a change in its strategic culture and security discourse. Operation Atalanta’s departure from earlier CSDP missions turned out to be not just a fluke; the reasons for implementing this mission have found their way – after six years of running the mission – into the official EU security strategy.

What does this mean for the future of EU security and defence policy? Operation Atalanta and the EUMSS signify a broadening of the scope of potential CSDP action. Whereas the CSDP’s scope for potential missions was more narrowly defined alongside the Petersberg tasks, we now see a broadening of the scope to include strategic economic interests. Within the CSDP, Operation Atalanta has put an emphasis on European security, as opposed to human security in general, mostly abroad. This paves the way for a similar EU reaction the next time the EU judges its strategic or economic interests threatened. The EU has underlined its existence as a strategic actor in its own right. The EU has demonstrated that the CSDP framework is no longer merely reserved for humanitarian operations, but also for the EU’s geopolitical ambitions. Operation Atalanta may have set a precedent for future EU security and defence policy. It also shows that the European Union’s security agenda is not only determined by the Union itself; there is an ever-growing number of influential non-state, commercial actors that contributes in shaping it.

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7. Conclusion

This thesis is the result of a desire to understand and explore the roles of interests groups on the development of EU foreign policy. In this thesis I have attempted to shed light on the processes and motives that underlie the EU’s anti-piracy naval force mission. In order to do so I have applied the theories of securitization and strategic culture to the case study of Operation Atalanta. In addition to this, I have analysed the changes of the security discourses of three of Europe’s premiere security strategies.

This thesis set out with two objectives. The first objective was to analyse the processes that led to the EU’s decision to establish Operation Atalanta in Somali waters. To approach this objective I have employed the theory of securitization. This theory, pioneered by the Copenhagen School, describes how actors can place an issue at the top of the security agenda by labelling the issue an existential threat, claiming the right to treat it by extraordinary means. I found that the global shipping industry has actively engaged in speech acts in order to securitize piracy off the Horn of Africa. The way this was done was by international campaigning, engaging in policy debates and through publishing joint statements and press releases. According to the global shipping industry, piracy off the Horn of Africa poses an existential threat to the global economy and international trade, in addition to international seafarers and the environment.

A securitizing move on itself, however, is not enough for the successful securitization of an issue. For an issue to be securitized completely the securitizing move has to be accepted by the audience: in this thesis’ case study, the European decision-makers. I found that the European decision-makers, who in this instance acted as a unitary actor, by and large accepted the securitizing move. This is evidenced in official documents of the European Union such as the Council decisions, European Parliament debates and resolutions and personal interviews with EU officials, as well as by the published motivations of national governments. Concluding, the global shipping industry successfully securitized the issue of Somali piracy by convincing the European Union that piracy posed an existential economic threat, to be countered by military means.

The second objective was to analyse what affects Operation Atalanta has had on the strategic culture of the European Union. To approach this objective I have employed the theory of strategic culture. In order to understand any effects of changes in the strategic culture of the Union, it is imperative to first understand the character of the EU’s strategic culture before Operation Atalanta. I have attempted to give a concise yet detailed history of the development of the European strategic culture in order place it into a historical context and to build a foundation upon which any changes can be analysed. I found that Europe’s strategic culture was characterized by a focus on humanitarian issues, pre-occupied with conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Union has successfully transformed itself from a soft power to a global actor with hard power capabilities. The Union’s Common Foreign and Security
Policy has developed significantly in the past twenty-five years since the end of the Cold War. The EU’s strategic culture is not just the sum of the national strategic cultures of its member states; rather, the EU has prompted the national strategic cultures to converge towards a pan-European strategic culture. It is sign of an ever-closer union. The EU’s strategic culture is represented by the three official strategic security documents, namely the European Security Strategy (2003), the Implementation Report (2008) and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (2014).

In order to analyse what affects Operation Atalanta has had on the strategic culture of the European Union, I have compared and analysed the discourse of the three official security strategy documents. I found that in its latest strategic security document, the EU Maritime Security Strategy of 2014, the EU detailed several strategic interests that had not been included in earlier security strategies. These provisions are concerned with the protection of the EU’s economic interests: maritime trade and the EU global supply chain, as well as the safeguarding of maritime and natural (energy) resources. The EU has elevated the above provisions to strategic interests, for which a plethora of instruments can be deployed; including military means. It is a remarkable change from earlier publications and a prime example of securitization, clearly linked to the securitized threat of piracy and Operation Atalanta.

This thesis set out to answer the following central research question: “To what extent is Operation Atalanta the result of a process of securitization, and what effect has Operation Atalanta had on the development of the European Union’s strategic culture, as evidenced by the European Union Maritime Security Strategy?” By means of a conclusion, the answer it as follows: Operation Atalanta is the result of a process of securitization in as much as the mission was established after the successful securitization of the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia by the global shipping industry. I found that the securitizing speech acts by the international shipping industry have led to the successful securitization of the issue of Somali piracy, which eventually led to the establishment of Operation Atalanta. The effect that Operation Atalanta has contributed to the development of the European strategic culture is that the European Union Maritime Security Strategy, the Union’s latest document representing its strategic culture, contains several new provisions focusing on economic trade and maritime resources. These interests have now been declared of strategic interest, opening up the possibility for armed intervention. In addition to the humanitarian focus, the EU security strategy now also contains a focus on European strategic interests. This signifies a broadening of the scope of potential CSDP action. The EU has demonstrated that the CSDP framework is no longer merely reserved for humanitarian operations, but also for the EU’s geopolitical ambitions. It is also a testimony to the notion that the EU’s security agenda is co-determined by other, commercial non-state actors.

This thesis has been occupied with the theory of securitization and strategic culture. An interesting query in regards to the European Union and strategic
culture theory that has received little to none scientific attention, is what effect
Europe’s continuing enlargements might have had on the EU’s strategic
culture. Especially Europe’s 2004 enlargement, when the Union expanded from
15 to 25 member states, deserves academic attention. In regards to the theory of
securitization I propose additional exploration on the question whether, and
how, other commercial non-state actors have influenced the security agenda of
multilateral organizations or states. Future research on the co-determination of
security agenda can help us better grasp the role multinational organizations
perform in this world.
8. Bibliography and References


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