

France's military leverage and EU defence

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„(Defense) Industrial Policy‘ for
,Peace‘?“

**Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung,
Berlin, 20-21 June, 2019**

Objective of the paper

- Provide an analytical framework to understand the role of France in EU defence developments
- Not a lecture, neither a summary of my report, but a few hypothesis to be discussed.

Three basic hypothesis

- 1) The world space is shaped by the intertwining of capital accumulation dynamics and the international state system.
- The concrete modalities of their relations change over time and contribute to delineate distinct historical conjunctures.
- The *unity* of these two components – that can at some point be contradictory – is performed by capital as a social relation *politically* built and *territorially* bounded.

Three basic hypothesis

- 2) The international positioning of any country in the world hierarchy depends on two categories of resources, economic 'competitiveness' and military might.
- Two remarks :
 - the world space constitutes the conceptual starting point to understand countries' concrete practices. (France's two singularities)
 - For any country, the *internal* interaction between economic and military components is deeply affected by the transformations of its *external* environment constituted by the world space.

Three basic hypothesis

- 3) Since the end of the last decade, a new international conjuncture emerged:
 - The ‘2008 moment’ was created by the conjunction of drastic changes in the economic and geopolitical setting.
 - Major feature of the ‘2008 moment’ : economic and military power **became closer with each other** at the world level, as reflected in the centrality of ‘National security’ agenda in most powerful countries
 - Exit the 1990s Peace-Democracy-Free Markets (PDF)
 - format globalization set in by the ‘Washington Consensus’ after the collapse of USSR

A concrete 'concentration of multiple determinations' : France's case

- A double singularity of France social relations :
 - Long history,
 - But fundamental turning point with the Gaullist 5th Republic (1958)
- France's international positioning
 - France is with the USA the western country where economic and politico-military powers are the most interwoven in the shaping of their international position. Obviously, France and the USA are not competing in the same league

France's military surge in the '2008 moment'

- Four evidence :
 - acceleration of military foreign operations,
 - strong increase in military budgets,
 - successful export marketing of 'combat-proven weapons, and
 - Strengthening of the internal security apparatus blurring the boundaries between defence and security

France's military as a competitive advantage

- International positioning relies ALSO on military might
- Military surge results from a combination of *internal* and *external* drivers :
 - Internal : centrality of political AND economic military interests
 - External :
 - impact of geopolitical and economic changes on France positioning
 - Growing imbalance in EU and centrality of EU for France's economic interests
- Military leverage to compensate for France's positioning decline on the world space and in EU governance

Eu as a *genuine* and hybrid configuration

- Three drivers 'less' one to EU institutional developments
- Continued relevance of Nation-states : like a 'freemasonnery' (according to Marx's capitalists)
- Developments of parastate institutions
- ...but defence is not money (need to seriously work on state institutions...)

Thank you for your attention