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Analyzing President Macron's Speeches: Shaping a European Narrative of "Europe de la Défense" amidst the war in Ukraine

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Abstract:

"Europe de la Défense"; a concept invented by the French, for Europe, but in the French way? This thesis aims to explore the meaning of this concept used by the President Emmanuel Macron in order to understand where its French-driven dimension stops and its European begins. By analyzing Macron's speeches on defense matters since his first mandate in 2017, this study is divided in two by a breaking point in Macron's foreign policy. The latter is a change in the President's approach towards Russia in defense policy for the support of Ukraine in the context of the full-scale war. Thus, the first part will analyze the speeches before, and the second part, after. This study can provide an answer, a clarification of France's intentions and in the creation of a "Europe de la Défense". Perceived as serving only French interest, analyzing the speeches to see if it is and if a change occurs, could contribute to the understanding of this concept at the European level in a political context where defense matters are given increasing importance. Utilizing a post-structuralist approach the thesis will implement Fairclough's three-dimensional framework as a method. It relies on a definition of discourse as a social practice, allowing the construction of a meaning thanks to speeches and their environment. In light of the analysis conducted, a shift toward a more European narrative of "Europe de la Défense" has been observed, portraying the President abandoning some national interest's narrative in favor of a more common European one. Although France's place is still promoted as a leader in defense matters, Macron is proposing a more attentive dialogue towards his European counterparts.

Keywords: Europe de la Défense, France, Security, Leadership, War in Ukraine

Abstract:

„Europa de la Défense"; koncepcja wymyślona przez Francuzów dla Europy, ale na francuski sposób? Niniejsza praca ma na celu zbadanie znaczenia tej koncepcji użytej przez Prezydenta Emmanuela Macrona, aby zrozumieć, gdzie kończy się jej wymiar francuski, a zaczyna europejski. Analizując przemówienia Macrona na tematy obronne od czasu jego pierwszej kadencji w 2017 r., niniejsze badanie dzieli się na dwie części ze względu na przełom w polityce zagranicznej Macrona. To drugie oznacza zmianę podejścia Prezydenta do Rosji w polityce obronnej na rzecz wsparcia Ukrainy w kontekście wojny na pełną skalę. Zatem w pierwszej części omówione zostaną wystąpienia przed, a w drugiej – po. Badanie to może dostarczyć

odpowiedzi, wyjaśnienia intencji Francji i stworzenia „Europy de la Défense". Postrzegana jako służąca wyłącznie interesom Francji, analiza przemówień pod kątem tego, czy tak jest i czy nastąpi zmiana, mogłaby przyczynić się do zrozumienia tej koncepcji na poziomie europejskim w kontekście politycznym, w którym kwestie obronności zyskują coraz większe znaczenie. W ramach podejścia poststrukturalistycznego, w pracy zastospowana zostałatrójwymiarowa struktura Fairc||ougha. Praca opiera się na założeniu, że dyskurs jest praktyką społeczną, umożliwiającą konstruowanie znaczeń dzięki przemówieniom i ich otoczeniu. W świetle przeprowadzonej analizy zaobserwowano zwrot w kierunku bardziej europejskiej narracji „Europy de la Défense", przedstawiającej Prezydenta porzucającego narrację dotyczącą jakiegoś interesu narodowego na rzecz bardziej powszechnej narracji europejskiej. Choć nadal promuje się miejsce Francji jako lidera w kwestiach obronnych, Macron proponuje bardziej uważny dialog ze swoimi europejskimi odpowiednikami.

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1 Introduction

"What is missing the most for Europe today, this "Europe de la Défense", is a common strategic culture" (Macron, 2017).

Emmanuel Macron at La Sorbonne in September 2017 stated the directives of his upcoming five-year mandate for foreign policy with the European Union. In the matter of Defense and Security, some scholars would argue that he took his role as the heir of the V Republic (Chopin, 2023), as an "entrepreneur for Europe" (Chopin, 2023; Faure, 2020), by advocating for a sovereign Europe (Bora and Schramm, 2023). Indeed, by wanting to impose himself as a strong president from the beginning of his term, Emmanuel Macron decided to continue the French defense narrative on the need for a "Europe de la Défense", a concept already paved by his predecessors (Maulny, 2019). To recover the lost *grandeur* (Rieker, 2017) France had at one time, the consecutive French presidents of the V Republic started by de Gaulle supported the idea of a strong Europe capable of being a global power in the same way as the United-States and USSR (Bozo, 2016). In doing so, the advocating of a powerful Europe by French elites implied a proactive foreign policy that could challenge the bipolar order of the cold war, and where these matters should be led by France (Grossman, 2008).

The concept of "Europe de la Défense" employed by President Macron has thus a broader historical background, intertwined with the idea of a sovereign Europe capable of defending itself on its own driven by France ambitions. This stance led other European countries being distrustful over French elites, seen as only concerned to preserve their own interests and take the lead without considering other states interests (Charillon, 2007). However, in his discourse at La Sorbonne, Macron invited greater collaboration by building a "common strategic culture" (Macron, 2017). He explained this term to create a common culture in several fields but insisted on defense; from the preparation and training to diplomacy to be able to act, to be convincing together and credible as Europeans (Macron, 2017). Indeed, the European defense concept of Macron writes itself in the French context of being able to stand beside the United States as allies but not as aligned by fear of being dependent or under the hegemony of the country (Bozo, 2016). Moreover, the Trump administration and the specter for an upcoming one in January 2025 reinsures Macron's position in the emergency of not needing to rely solely on the US in case of a major military threat (Pruchnicka, 2022).

The war in Ukraine lays the context for this thesis. Indeed, as stated above in the explanation of the concept of "Europe de la Défense", the overall discourse on advocating for a European defense lies on the need to be ready to protect Europe from future possible threats. The war Russia started in Ukraine on February 24th, 2022, gave birth to the reality of military threats which provoked a shock - a wakeup call - for NATO and European countries (Timofeev and Zueva, 2023). Chopin (2023) argued this war was an indicator of French strategic ambiguity. He explains the dialogue between Macron and Putin at the beginning of the war undermined French relations with Central and Eastern European countries which confused them in the real intentions of the French President. Indeed, by presenting himself as the official mediator to Putin, led other European countries to believe France would want to replace the role of the US as the leader in defense, thus not really advocating for a European project, but a French one (Chopin, 2023).

The war in Ukraine shows a real necessity for better cooperation in defense matters. Whereas the first attempts of Emmanuel Macron on his way of dealing with Russia sparked controversy by putting himself as a mediator, which failed, stressing the need to "not humiliate Russia" (Ricard, 2022), the shift in his foreign policy towards Russia sparked interest in Europe. Starting 2023, Macron hardened his position towards Russia, became rough, engaged more with Central and Eastern Europe, and played with "strategic ambiguity" (Gatinois et. al., 2024). Behind this concept, he advocates ambiguity to not let Putin know his real intentions, thus showing a more defensive side of his politics. This shift in his foreign policy leaves one to wonder if it also means a conceptualization of "Europe de la Défense" more European than what scholars might say concerning Macron, distinguishing him from his predecessors. The aim of this work is to analyze if through his speeches President Macron really builds a European narrative of "Europe de la Défense", or on the contrary stays in line with his predecessors and advocates only for French purposes.

Thus, we will ask ourselves; *Is President Macron building a European narrative on the concept of "Europe de la Défense" through his discourses on European Foreign Policy? And is he successful in doing so, or is he merely constructing a narrative based on French interests?*

This analysis aligns with the problem-oriented nature of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which will be used as a method, through the lens of post-structuralist theory. Post-structuralism sees discourse as a social practice where it is not simply a way to communicate but sees it as a place of power relations where ideologies, norms, values and identities are

constructed through the language, thus contributing to the establishment of knowledge and social reality (Hansen, 2016). As the question raises the issue of whether President Macron's narrative is based on French interests or is inclusive of broader European interests, it allows for an examination of power dynamics and ideological position within the discourse, thus explaining the use of post-structuralist theory. Critical Discourse Analysis enables the use of post-structuralist theories in the method as it follows the perception of discourse being a social practice and examines the underlying power and ideologies present in the text (Fairclough, 2013). Moreover, it interrogates how discourses serve to maintain or challenge existing power structures which aligns with our question on whether President Macron positions himself and France in the discourse on European defense, whether as dominant as a leader, powerful, or not. Power dynamics in defense matters in Europe follow historical legacies and political ideologies that Post-structuralism and CDA allows to explore in the discourses. The analysis will use Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the three-dimensional framework, enabling the analysis of the text as a discourse practice and a social practice.

This analysis is a selection of twelve speeches of Emmanuel Macron, from his first mention of the "Europe de la Défense" in 2017 at La Sorbonne, to his last speech to date for this thesis, from April 2024 at La Sorbonne. The study will be divided into two parts to be able to compare the difference before and after President Macron's change of policy towards Russia due to the full-scale war in Ukraine.

2   Background

2.1   Europe de la Défense and Strategic Autonomy

When President Macron talked about the concept of "Europe de la Défense" in 2017 at La Sorbonne, it sparked off a debate on what meaning the French President was building from this concept. Indeed, the idea is not so new as it emerged at the end of the Second World War, and evolved as the want and need for a unified and peaceful Europe met the first external threats with the beginning of the Cold War (Ministère des Armées, 2022). The Soviet threat combined with the willingness to avoid at all costs further wars between France and Germany motivated Robert Schuman and announced by Rene Pleven, the French minister of foreign affairs, to initiate the European Defense Community (EDC) project that was signed as the Paris Treaty in May 1952 (IHEDN, 2023). However, it the ratification was rejected by French National Assembly as the worldwide political tension went down with the death of Jozef Stalin, the armistice in Korea, and the end of the war in Indochina a few years later (IHEDN, 2023). The birth of this idea of "Europe de la Défense" to prepare Europe to defend itself died quickly as the formation of NATO assured the security of the continent during the Cold War (Chauvancy, 2019). The Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 marked the creation of the European Union where a part was dedicated to give Europe a diplomatic and strategic capacity; the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), but the military dimension was only mentioned as a possible next step (IHEDN, 2023). Then, the concept of "Europe de la Défense" reappeared after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 when the EU implemented new organs such as the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and started to deploy missions in its neighborhood such as in North Macedonia (IHEDN, 2023). However, the assets used in these operations heavily relied on NATO capabilities (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). On the contrary, France tried with the concept of "Europe de la Défense" to advocate for an independent European Defense, capable of acting on its own, by having a strategic autonomy (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). However, a misunderstanding that persists today is that "Europe de la Défense" does not advocate for a replacement of NATO, but as the French Permanent Representation stated, it is tightly linked to the institution, acting as a pillar of support of the institution (Représentation en France, 2022).

The concept of Europe de la Défense employed by President Macron carries its history but lacks explanation of its meaning. Jean-Jacques Roche, a professor at Paris Panthéon-Assas

and director of the *Institut Supérieur de l'armement et de la défense*, argues that nobody really knows what this "Europe de la Défense" should be (2024). By taking the famous quote of Kissinger "Europe, what number?", or the former Belgian Prime Minister Marc Eyskens' definition of Europe as an "economic giant, political dwarf and military worm", the professor highlights how defense and Europe are hardly compatible as Member States sovereignty would get in the way of a greater integration (Roche, 2024). While Nicolas Gros-Verheyde defends "L'Europe de la Défense" as a political project that aims to strengthen and maintain the place of Europe in the world and to be able to intervene on its own (Gros-Verheyde, 2018), Roche refers to the accumulation of texts and treaties on defense, each of them being more ambitious than the other, to show the absence of a real projection in the matter of defense (Roche, 2024). Indeed, the author asserts the two conceptions of European defense prevent us from going further in the matter. The German conception being about the defense of the European Union, heavily relying on the cooperation of national armies to defend common interests, does not align with the French conception being about "Europe de la Défense" which is more integrative with the idea that defense matters would leave the national level to be European (Roche, 2024). Thus, Professor Roche emphasizes the different understandings of what should be a European defense, and how the French concept finds itself in disagreement with other European States, preventing a clear understanding of the concept and a progress in its implementation. Nonetheless, the researcher Pierre Haroche argued in an interview for the French Ministry of Armies that "l'Europe de la défense only makes progress when a crisis happens" (2022), which was revealed to be the case after the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine in 2022. While some criticism around the meaning of the concept exists, projects and implementations based on Emmanuel Macron's "Europe de la Défense" appeared such as the Strategic Compass that aims to build a quick reaction force with 5000 men to be able to lead interventions soon from 2025-2027 (Lagarve-Jérôme, 2024). However, Roche's statements around the different meanings of European defense validate the freeze of further implementations on more specific matters such as the creation of a European army, or nuclear cooperation (Roche, 2024). As an example, he took Chancellor Olaf Scholz' statement that it was still not time for a nuclear nor a common army discussion (2024).

This blurriness around the meaning of "Europe de la Défense" is also due to the way traditional French politicians tend to propose a French concept for a European solution, thus leading countries to wonder how far the French national interest lies in these definitions. "Europe de la Défense" is one of several concepts that are directly linked to French national priorities such as the concept of European Strategic Autonomy, that directly comes from

France's national "Autonomie Stratégique" (Ribeiro et. al., 2024). Mentioned in the National Strategic Review on Defense and Security, strategic autonomy is considered as a French national priority, defined as the "capacity to decide and act alone to defend its interests" (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2017). By assessing the French national definition of this concept, we can notice its importance in the national narrative as "autonomy" is deeply anchored in French foreign policy, perceived as one of the directive principles (David, 2022). Sent at the European level by President Macron, he evoked this term to describe how Europe should act (David, 2022). As the French Commander André Lanata argued in the National defense Review, strategic autonomy and defense are interconnected and go head in head, explaining the inclusion of autonomy in the concept of "Europe de la Défense" (Lanata et. al., 2023). However, the French Euro deputy Nathalie Loiseau in the same review, explicitly decided to talk about "Défense Européenne" and not "Europe de la Défense" to include all Europeans in the process (Lanata et. al., 2023). Indeed, she justified the use of "Défense Européenne" by emphasizing that this project should be built by Europeans, which might not end up as the one planned, but should not be a simple "copy-pasted" of French thoughts and ideas (Lanata et. al., 2023). This example shows how the use of "Europe de la Défense" comes with a French history of putting national interests in national concepts brought at the European level. Christian Lequesne (2024), professor at Science Po Paris, argued that through European defense, France could see an opportunity to maximize its national interest and have a leadership role, thus leading to wonder how Emmanuel Macron uses this concept of "Europe de la Défense".

2.2   French foreign policy on defense in Europe

Scholars have done extensive literature on French foreign policy of defense since the end of the second world war and consensus was made that beneath France's vision for European defense lies the French willingness to push their national interests through the use of concepts like "Europe de la Défense", created by them (Bozo, 2016; Grossman 2008). Driven by the aspiration of his country to play a role of great power on the international stage, General de Gaulle knew that France after the Second World War was not a global power anymore, at least at the international level, and thus needed Europe as a vector, as a means, for his ambitions (Bozo, 2016). Schmidt (2007, p. 6) argued the Gaullist era of foreign policy set the French vision of Europe as a multiplier of power, to strengthen France influence and interests, where

General de Gaulle emphasized on national sovereignty, seeing Europe as a "Europe des Patries", meaning "Europe of nations". Thus, putting aside the idea of a federal Europe and the possible consequences of a loss of sovereignty in several domains. The author would go even further by stating that de Gaulle successors got "trapped" by the General discourse on the need to protect French sovereignty from the European Union and advocating France's influence on the institutions, while European integration got deeper and France's leadership and influence declined over the years and through the several enlargements (Schmidt, 2007, pp. 1-4).

Emmanuel Macron inherited from the "gaullo-mitterrandiste" position in terms of foreign policy (Faure, 2020), highlighting the nationalist vision of de Gaulle and the willingness for deeper European integration on certain areas such as economy from former president Mitterrand (Chopin, 2023). Whilst the French president shares a national sovereignty vision on defense matters, he believes in the construction of a European sovereignty with an intergovernmental conception of European politics, thus following de Gaulle's position. But, as Chopin would argue (2023), Emmanuel Macron also places interest in supranational institutions and deeper integration between European states. Contrary to his predecessors, Emmanuel Macron shows a shift in defense policy as he heads towards Europe as the future of defense, something unthinkable for his predecessors (Maulny, 2019). As a first example the implementation of the European Intervention Initiative (EII), marking the elaboration of cooperation in defense matters outside NATO, and even European Institutions, is setting the stage for a common European strategic culture (Maulny, 2019). Although this European vision still heavily relies on countries sovereignty, taking the form of intergovernmental alliance rather than supranational one, it is worth noticing the readiness of President Macron to involve with other European states on common defense policy.

This need for European capability on defense, or as the French would say "strategic autonomy" (Faure, 2020), shows the willingness from President Macron to be able to decide and act alone if a major threat would appear without the need from external, non-European, actors to help. Moreover, the motive for strategic autonomy, which is also a French concept first used at the national level to be then brought at the European level, is to create a complementary organ from NATO on defense and industry for Europe to be able to act on its own (Bora and Schramm, 2023). The ambiguity surrounding a possible competition with NATO has been discussed among politicians and scholars but the French President himself argued that the concept would only be a complementary organ working hand in hand with NATO (Faure, 2020). Even though NATO-French relationships have known ups and downs, with De Gaulle leaving the integrated military organization, Nicolas Sarkozy rejoining it,

François Holland removing French troops from Afghanistan or President Macron stating the brain death of NATO (Pruchnicka, 2022), scholars emphasized on President Macron's current positive – but also ambiguous – opinion on the organization by believing in its functioning and military efficiency but pointing out strategic and political issues (Faure, 2020).

The beginning of the War in Ukraine in February 2022 brought several changes in the ways European states were perceiving the field of defense, by investing and focusing more on the matter (Timofeev and Zueva, 2023). The European Union quickly adopted several packages of sanctions to isolate Russia and reduce the country's economic link with Europe, and euro-transatlantic relations strengthened in the matter of defense spending and cooperation (Timofeev and Zueva, 2023). The war in Ukraine and its geopolitical consequences in Europe showed the limitations of the French identity of Carolingian Europe carried out since the Cold War, where the core of Europe surrounded by France would be the driving motor of policies and decision, as the current geopolitical situation leads the European construction and its policies towards the East (Chopin, 2023). Thus, the ambiguity President Macron plays by both advocating for "Europe de la Défense" by trying to gather European member states for better cooperation and the not-so-clear objectives of this concept, if it is to promote French interests mainly, is the main reason for the distrust by other European States. Indeed, Chopin (2023) and Faure (2020) share a common understanding of Emmanuel Macron foreign policy by stating that he has a "certain idea of France" but an "uncertain idea of Europe".

However, a shift in President Macron's public speeches occurred early summer 2023 in his address at the GLOBSEC Summit on May 31st, 2023, when he publicly acknowledged the lack of interest and attention France brought to Central and Eastern European countries in the past and stated to go now hand in hand in the process of common defense (Macron, 2023). Indeed, Tulmets and Cadier (2014) argued that while French politicians advocated for deeper cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries after their integration into NATO and the European Union, in practice they put little attention to the members. The authors claimed the presence of France in the region in matters of culture, transports, and services, but deplored bilateral cooperations being fragilized by political divergences and values such as in Hungary (Tulmets & Cadier, 2014). In early 2024, during the conference in support of Ukraine on February 26th, 2024, the French President highlighted again on the need to do more to support Ukraine, and to not exclude any measures, even sending troops (Macron, 2024). This readiness in President Macron's speeches depicts a change in his narrative on managing the conflict in Ukraine from advocating for negotiations and imposing himself as the official mediator, to playing a strategic ambiguity with Russia by talking about hard power retaliation, such as troops

(Minic, 2024). As the researcher Héloïse Fayet from *L'Institut Français des Relations Internationales* (IFRI) highlighted, President Macron reintroduced the term of strategic ambiguity where she defines it as way to not clearly reveal your intention to your rival, making him doubt of the consequences of their actions, and thus showing strength to the adversary (Fayet & Faure, 2024). This graduating involvement and pro-European stance on defense matters is increasing as the war in Ukraine is evolving and confirms Chopin's argument on Emmanuel Macron's policy advocating for a European governance rather than a strictly national-based decision-taking process (Chopin, 2023). An evolution in President Macron's foreign policy on defense has been noticed since the start of the war in Ukraine, with an acknowledgement for a need for a more inclusive decision-making process and discussions on defense. Thus, it is to wonder if the concept of "Europe de la Défense" took a broader European narrative along President Macron's changes in foreign policy.

3 Post-structuralism in Discourse Analysis

Analyzing President Macron's speeches on the construction of the concept of "Europe de la Défense" requires looking at the discursive practices of the speeches as the primary goal is to understand the meanings, the values, norms and identities created with this concept to know whether President Macron builds a European narrative or a French narrative of European defense. Clarifying President Macron's speeches to understand if he talks about European identity or French identity can impact how such a concept like "Europe de la Défense" could be implemented at the European level.

3.1 Discourse as a practice

To analyze the speeches, post-structuralism theory will be used. Post-structuralists scholars agree that language is a practice and not a transparent medium, the latter signifying that language reflects entirely the reality of what one thinks and does (Hansen, 2016). Indeed, Hansen argues that discourse analysis through the lens of post-structuralism is not to wonder if the statements are true or false, but rather ask us which identities, norms and values are created with them (2016). James Williams in his book *Understanding Poststructuralism* (2005) goes back on Derrida's definition of post-structuralism as a deconstruction of structuralism's absolute truths. As an example, Derrida (1997) emphasizes that no text nor discourse can be separated from its context as they together participate in the construction of a meaning, contrasting with structuralism's focus on uncovering structures independent of specific contexts. Williams, through Derrida's work explains how post-structuralism should be thought of as a deconstruction of structuralism thought, not the opposite thought, but an opened up and transformed one (Williams, 2005).

Language as practice in post-structuralist theory emphasizes that language does not only describe but actively shapes the social world. Drawing from Foucault's notion of discourse in *L'Archéologie du Savoir* (1969), where he defines it as a set of statements and practices that produce knowledge and shape social reality, Larsen (2016) adds that language is seen as a dynamic force that constructs forms of knowledge, social relations, and identities within specific historical and cultural contexts. Thus, this perspective acknowledges that discourses are specific and tied to a particular time and place and that they do not only describe but also

produce reality. Indeed, post-structuralists such as Derrida (1997) challenge the notion of fixed meanings in language, highlighting the idea that meaning is contingent upon context and interpretation. The author criticizes structuralist logocentrism which is the idea that there is a point of reference in discourse, for example truth, that gives coherence to the overall system. But Derrida argues that meanings, or truth, are not fixed, there is not one truth for example, but differ depending on the context and highlights how logocentrism prevents authors such as Saussure from determining "the integral and concrete object of linguistics" (Derrida, 1997, p. 43). Derrida's critique also enables us to dismiss constructivism as an appropriate theory for this thesis. While Alexander Wendt in *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999) argued that constructivism presumes identities, norms and interests are not given or fixed but are socially constructed by shared ideas, Campbell (1992) criticized the theory for assuming that these social structures, such as norms, are relatively stable. These assumptions can make constructivism a bit rigid because it implies that changes in International Relations happen slowly, which does not capture the ever-changing nature of social reality post-structuralism advocates with discourse as a practice.

Post-structuralism historically comes from French theorists such as Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard, but precisely is issued from Saussure's structuralist ideas that meanings reside in the signs and nowhere else (Belsey, 2002). In his development, signs could be words, gestures, expressions but also traffic lights (Belsey, 2002). Saussure distinguishes the difference between the signifier: the sound or the visual appearance of a word for example, and the signified: its meaning. Indeed, the author makes the distinction between a word and its different possible meanings depending on the context, thus stating the ground for post-structuralism, while his work has been categorized as the foundation of structuralism (Waterman, 1956). Foucault, Derrida and Lacan differentiated themselves from structuralism by pointing out key differences (Miller, 1998). Contrary to structuralism that sees discourse as an atemporal and synchronic system, post-structuralism sees it as being historically specific and contestable (Miller, 1998). Structuralism aims to create comprehensive systems of abstract possibilities, also called structures, to explain concrete practice with concepts such as logocentrism (Derrida, 1997). Post-structuralism rejects the idea of totalization. In other words, it does not try to encompass all signifiers within a system by categorizing or defining human culture and behavior rigidly but focuses on specific and local contexts and thus explores the boundaries and limitations of those categories, examining how they are constructed, challenged, and deconstructed depending on the context (Miller, 1998).

In the context of discourse analysis, unlike structuralist perspectives, which suggest that language reflects pre-existing reality, post-structuralism argues that language is fluid and subject to interpretation, with meanings constantly shifting depending on social, historical and cultural contexts (Jorgensen, 2002). Derrida's sentence "there is nothing outside the text" (1997, p. 158), could resume how post-structuralists see discourse as the key to access the social world. In other words, discourse provides a certain meaning of the perceived world and gives knowledge on how people exist socially, thus concluding that both the world perceived and the social world –meaning our society – are created together and are intertwined (Carta, 2016). Belsey (2022) highlights how post-structuralists argue that language mediates the relationship between humans and their world, actively producing meaning and symbols that shape identities. This view suggests that language is not simply a tool for communication but a fundamental aspect of how individuals understand themselves and their social reality. Identities are not given or fixed but are modeled by the language that will construct them. In relation to Emmanuel Macron's speeches, the primary goal is to analyze which identity, norms, and values he advocates to understand what narrative he is building, European or French-centered, when talking about "Europe de la Défense". Post-structuralism aligns with the aim of the thesis as it provides a theoretical framework where the object studied, President Macron Speeches, is contributing to the production of values, ideas, and identities in a context of power relations.

In contrast, as Campbell (1992) stated, the constructivist vision, that social structures and norms that influence state behavior are stable, would emphasize on the existing norms and identities that President Macron's speeches reflect. As a result, it would undermine how the speeches might reshape and challenge these norms and identities. Richard Ashley (1989) highlighted how post-structuralism fits with the assumption that meanings and identities are fluid and subject to constant reinterpretation contrary to constructivism that tends to focus on how they are constructed and maintained. Moreover, in the context of the thesis where political landscapes change rapidly due to the war in Ukraine, the identities, norms and values that President Macron's speeches construct are not maintained but are continuously evolving in response to the context. Therefore, post-structuralism provides a more nuanced understanding of his rhetorical strategies and the way they are shaping political reality.

3.2   Ideologies and power relations in discourse

Post-structuralists also pinpoint that language has political power in discourses as it is a medium of communication and shapes knowledge, social practices, and identities (Hansen, 2016). In the field of foreign policy, which is where Emmanuel Macron's speeches stand as they are about European defense cooperation with other countries, post-structuralism made its apparition in the 1980s following the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union (Hansen, 2016). Scholars in security studies were concerned with the politics of nuclear deterrence and argued Reagan's description of the Soviet Union as "evil" showed how discursive representations had power in the building of an ideology, an identity against a common enemy (Hansen, 2016). Cynthia Weber in *Simulating Sovereignty* (1995), used post-structuralist theory to examine the symbolic and performative nature of sovereignty and state power. Through this theoretical framework she challenged the field of International Relations by arguing that sovereignty was an effect of symbolic practices, such as discourses and actions, rather than an inherent quality of a state, thus providing other insights into the mechanisms of power in international politics (Weber, 1995). Foreign policy adopted post-structuralism as it enables theorists to discover and underly power relations through discourse practices. Another example is Jennifer Milliken in her work *The Social Construction of the Korean War: Conflict and Its Possibilities* (2001), who applied post-structuralism to analyze how the Korean War was discursively constructed. By analyzing official speeches of governments, media, and international organizations, the author demonstrated how these discourses shaped the perception of the conflict, the stakes at play and the actors involved. She used post-structuralist theories to show the war's meaning was not inherent but created through language and narrative which highlighted the power of discourse in shaping political realities (Miliken, 2001).

Power in post-structuralist theory plays an important role as according to scholars language is used to maintain power relations. Barnett and Duvall (2005), stated that it differs from the realist point of view where power is understood as a control over others, implying that a state will advance its interests in opposition to the interest of another. Post-structuralism denies this antagonism where you can only be with or against the other and sees power as 'productive power' where all social subjects exert a hold over others, with various social powers through their knowledge and their discourses (Hansen, 2016). Subjects are interrelated and influence each other in the post-structuralist theory. The ever presence of power in discourse from the post-structuralist point of view, as it sees all subjects being able to influence one another, confirms the importance to study power relations within the framework. It is even more necessary in the case of our thesis as the discourses are from a head of state as he possesses a certain amount of legitimate power and authority due to his position. This is also where post-

structuralism differs from constructivism as the latter focuses on how power relations are established and maintained by social structures (Hansen, 2016). The Constructivist's vision of power is in accordance with the post-structuralist theory that power is not just about material capabilities but also about the ability to shape social reality through ideas and interactions (Wendt, 1999). However, post-structuralism goes further as it argues that discourse itself is a form of power, whereas constructivism would argue that the discourses reflect the power of norms and identities (Hansen, 2016).

Post-structuralist theory critiques the use of binary oppositions such as inside/outside politics or humans being rational/irrational which are commonly found in other theoretical perspectives like realism. These binary pairs are not inherent or natural, but socially constructed categories that serve to reinforce power dynamics and hierarchical relations within society (Bleiker and Campbell, 2016). As an example, whereas realism would assume that human nature is egoistic and self-interest motivates political behavior, post-structuralism would agree that politics is driven by interest, but they would state that interests are constituted in discourse and not by policy actors (Hansen, 2016). The duality of irrationality/rationality and egoistic/altruistic in realism, where a subject is either one or the other, doesn't exist in post-structuralism. In the field of International Relations and foreign policy, Bleiker and Campbell (2016), argued that post-structuralism was questioning how realism was seeing the state as the only important actor, marking the border between inside politics and outside politics without considering transnational actors. Thus, this vision undermines the political and historical context of state foreign policy where this binary opposition is not impervious and fixed but is socially constructed. On a broader scale, this refers to post-structuralism viewing language as performative, signifying that it does not only describe reality, but also create it (Jorgensen, 2002). In the field of foreign policy, the analysis of President Macron speeches from the post-structuralist theory do not only allows us to describe what is "Europe de la Défense", but also help us to understand how he creates "Europe de la Défense", which is what our goal is; to understand what he means by that concept, what identity he constructs with this concept.

3.3 Intertextuality in political discourse

Intertextuality, a concept central to post-structuralist theory, is particularly relevant for analyzing Emmanuel Macron's speeches. It explores the connection between the discourses and

how meaning is produced through the reference of previous texts or cultural contexts (Fairclough, 1992). Developed by Julia Kristeva in her book *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1984), intertextuality emphasizes on the importance of connection between the texts as they influence each other and together shape the meaning of texts or discourses. Fairclough (1992) suggests that intertextuality operates in two main ways: retrospectively and prospectively. Retrospective intertextuality involves responding to previous texts or cultural references, while prospective intertextuality anticipates potential responses to the text being analyzed. The construction of an interconnected network of texts in post-structuralist theory enables one to have a stronger and better meaning of the norms, identities and values shaped by the overall discourse (Fairclough, 1992). Lene Hansen in *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (2006) argued the significance of intertextuality in foreign policy, highlighting that texts are situated within and against each other. In her work, she used intertextuality to examine how the discourse around the Bosnian War was constructed through references to historical events, media coverage, and international diplomatic communications. The use of this concept showed how these texts interacted to produce specific understandings of security and identity, and demonstrated the importance of intertextuality in comprehending how security discourses are formed and function to shape political and social realities (Hansen, 2006). Similarly, David Campbell in *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (1992), used intertextuality to assess how U.S. foreign policy texts create and sustain national identity by referencing or even reinterpreting historical documents, cultural texts, and speeches. The author showed the importance of the concept as the discourse is produced intertextually and highlighted how these constructions rely on intertextual references to shape identities (Campbell, 1992).

Constructivism, however, does not inherently use intertextuality as a concept but focuses on the broader social context and shared understandings that shape behavior and does not typically delve into the detailed intertextual analysis of texts, and their interrelationships as post-structuralism does (Hansen, 2006). Therefore, the post-structuralist theory prevails over the constructivist one for the aim of this thesis as intertextuality will be a key element in the analysis process.

In relation to the project of the thesis, intertextuality represents an important theoretical tool as the analysis of President Macron's discourses will span several years, from the beginning of his mandate in 2017, to the latest speeches concerning "Europe de la Défense" in April 2024. By employing intertextuality, the thesis will examine how President Macron's speeches reference previous statements, historical contexts, and cultural narratives, and how these

references interact to produce specific meanings and identities. Moreover, since intertextuality also includes the context in which the discourses are made (Fairclough, 1992), it will be used to analyze how President Macron's speeches have evolved before and after the shift in his position on the management of the war in Ukraine. This approach will reveal how President Macron's discourse on "Europe de la Défense" is constructed, reinterpreted over time, providing a comprehensive understanding of the values and identities he aims to build and promote.

Hansen (2016) acknowledged criticism over post-structuralism and described two common misunderstandings in the field. The first one is that post-structuralism disregards materiality in its approach. The author argues that post-structuralism thinks that materiality is important, but the latter is constructed through discourse. By taking the example of someone holding a nuclear weapon, in contrast to realism that would be defined as danger, post-structuralism stands by the fact that the meaning of this information would be constructed differently if that person is an allied state or a terrorist group (Hansen, 2016). Indeed, post-structuralism assumes that materiality cannot simply generate its foreign policy effects by its military assets or its acts but also how its identity is represented in texts and discourses. The second misunderstanding post-structuralism faces is that it takes language to be transparent or truthful. Hansen (2016) replies that post-structuralism highlights that one should not assume language is a transparent medium that reflects reality as foreign policy actors don't always say the truth or the real motivation of their policies. However, post-structuralist theorists use language as the medium to make their policies appear necessary, legitimate and realistic to their audience which could leave one wondering to what extent the audience should accept their policies (Hansen, 2016).

Therefore, post-structuralism provides a nuanced framework for analyzing President Macron's speeches on "Europe de la Défense", emphasizing the fluid and dynamic nature of discourse and its role in constructing social reality. This theoretical approach allows us to investigate how President Macron's language shapes and reshapes the concept of "Europe de la Défense", revealing the underlying power dynamics, values, and identities at play. By understanding these discursive practices, we gain insights into the broader implications of President Macron's rhetoric for European defense policy and identity construction.

3.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

In alignment with post-structuralism, the thesis will follow a qualitative critical discourse analysis as a research method, more specifically Fairclough's Three-dimensional Framework. By arguing that discourse is a social practice, Fairclough's (1983) critical discourse analysis aligns with post-structuralist theories. Moreover, the use and importance of intertextuality in both post-structuralism and Fairclough's discourse analysis justifies the use of this method with the post-structuralist theory.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), has been first conceptualized by Norman Fairclough where he would define discourse seen as a form of social practice, signifying that language use is not a neutral means of communication but rather a site where social, cultural and political dynamics are enacted and reproduced (Fairclough, 2013). According to the author, critical discourse analysis aims to analyze the use of language in common cases and its relation between texts and their extended social and cultural structures (Fairclough, 1992). Through this assertion, he intends to study the interrelations between the text, the discourse and the engendering thoughts, the ideology, and cultural background, thus the relation between the discourse and the society. Moreover, an important aspect of CDA would be that it analyzes discourses under the circumstance of unbalanced and inequality of social powers (Fairclough, 1992). Indeed, he drew inspiration from Foucault's work on how society is constructed in a relation of power and domination (Fairclough, 2013). He and other significant scholars in the field (Wodak and Meyer, 2001; van Dijk, 1993) argued that CDA helps to examine interrelationships between power, ideology and discourse.

Wodak and Meyer on their book *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (2001), emphasized on how CDA was particularly interested in linguistic manifestations of power, and van Dijk (1993) argued on how the exercise of power could influence knowledge, understandings, ideologies, norms, attitudes, values and that CDA was seeking to detect implicit or hidden power relations in discourses. The author stated that power could be exercised through syntax, rhetoric, tone, hesitations, and forms of address (van Dijk, 1993). Thus, by putting into the context of the thesis, this method could help unveil and identify how President Macron employs discursive strategies such as framing and lexical choices that could uncover underlying power relations and ideological positions in his speeches which would help to situate Macron's overall narrative. Van Dijk's research on the use of rhetoric to construct a meaning and shape social realities could help to identify the President's Macron use of rhetorical strategies to advance his narrative on "Europe de la Défense".

The authors highlighted the ideological effect of discursive practices in the way they produce unequal power relations which signify that they can influence and shape the beliefs and values of an individual or group (Wodak and Meyer, 2001). Van Dijk (1993) stated the relationship between discourse and dominance falls into two major dimensions. On the one hand, the direct exercise of dominance in text and talk in a said context, and on the other hand the indirect use of discourse to influence others' minds. This approach to discourse would be interesting in the study of the thesis as the insights into the discursive construction of power relations can inform the analysis of how President Macron positions himself and France in his discourse, which could be useful to understand if he builds a European narrative or conducts a French one. Moreover, the power relations dimension will help to understand if the President uses his power directly and/or indirectly to advocate or convince for a "Europe de la Défense".

Another important dimension CDA enables us to do is contextualizing the discourse within its broader socio-political context (Fairclough, 1992). Indeed, the author pointed out that texts and discourses are shaped by prior discourses. They respond to each other either retrospectively, to the previous texts, or/and prospectively to the anticipated next texts or discourses (Fairclough, 1992). The use of Intertextuality is also prominent in the CDA method and follows post-structuralist theory. Thus, the author emphasized how the socio-political context influences the discourses and how the interrelationships of discourses influence each other (1992). This framework will help to analyze how external events influence the discursive construction of President Macron's concept of "Europe de la Défense", and how discourses chosen for the analysis respond and are linked to other discourses and the broader context. Critical Discourse Analysis enables a critical approach to discourse analysis by underlying the importance of the context and power relations situated within the language. However, CDA holds several methods depending on the text analysis chosen such as the Feminist approach of Lazar where she analyzes how ideologies and power relations in discourses maintain the social order of genre (2007).
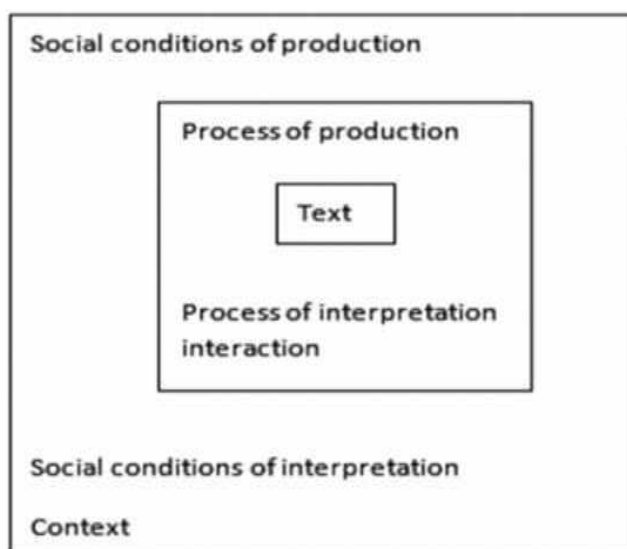
The method chosen for this analysis is Fairclough's three-dimensional framework based on an analysis on three levels. Hence, this comprehensive approach will enable a nuanced analysis of Macron's speeches, examining the content, structure, and language; the production, distribution, and consumption of texts; and the broader social and cultural context. This method will provide critical insights into the norms, identities, and power relations embedded in Macron's discourse on "Europe de la Défense".

4   Methodology

4.1   Fairclough's three-dimensional framework

Fairclough's three-dimensional framework method was chosen because it offers a nuanced approach as it is an analysis in three steps that can bring a complete understanding of President Macron's speeches on "Europe de la Défense" within their socio-political context. Fairclough's three-dimensional framework (1989) relies on the author's view of discourses having three levels of analysis; a text analysis; a discursive practice involving the production and the consumption of texts, in other words, a processing analysis; and a sociocultural analysis (see figure 1). Each level corresponds to a stage of critical discourse analysis: description for the text analysis, interpretation for the discursive practice, and explanation for the social practice. Indeed, Fairclough stated that a discourse analysis is a unity of context, interaction and text, where the text is the result of interaction. Moreover, the process of production and interpretation relies on the context where the discourse has been made. Thus, the three-dimensional framework agrees that language is not a neutral means of communication, but a place where socio-political dynamics are happening which aligns with President Macron's speeches on "Europe de la Défense" as they are part of a broader social, political and cultural context. Thus, this methodology provides the right methodological tools for analysis.

Figure 1. Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Framework

Social conditions of production

Process of production

Text

Process of interpretation
interaction

Social conditions of interpretation

Context

from: *Language and Power*, 1989.

This approach allows a comprehensive view of how external events and audience expectations influence his rhetorical strategies, ensuring a strong analysis of the discursive construction of "Europe de la Défense". While studies on discourse analysis of President Macron have been done, the focus on his speeches about the concept of 'Europe de la Defense' using critical discourse analysis enables to give fresh insights into the linguistic strategies and ideological positions of a key European leader. Given the increasing interests on European security and defense integration, the study of one of the terms used to advocate a common European defense provides a perspective on how political discourse is used to advance and legitimize these initiatives and could contribute to the broader understanding of European integration and defense policy. This thesis goes beyond surface-level content to uncover implicit power dynamics and ideological underpinnings, offering a nuanced discernment of political communication.

Data Collection

The primary data for this study consists of a selection of President Macron's speeches where he mentions and argues the need for a "Europe de la Défense" delivered between 2017 and 2024. These speeches were obtained from the official government website of the Palais de L'Élysée where the videos and official written transcriptions are available. Twelve speeches have been chosen throughout Macron's career as a French President. As this thesis is focusing on the building of the President's meaning of "Europe de la Défense" concept throughout his mandate, the choice was made to pick six relevant speeches tackling about European defense from the first mention of "Europe de la Défense" at La Sorbonne in 2017 until his change of foreign policy towards Russia at the GLOBSEC Summit in May 2023, and 6 speeches since May 2023. The choice to cover such a broad temporal range was to allow the analysis of the evolution of President Macron's discourse on "Europe de la Défense". Moreover, the speeches tackling European defense were scarce up until the beginning of the war, especially in 2020 and 2021 due to the focus of the President on the Covid-19 pandemic. The war in Ukraine brought foreign defense and security policy back to the forefront of the national agenda in 2022 and strengthened even more in the second half of 2023.

The discourses have been chosen based on several criteria (see Table 1). The first criterion was the person addressing the discourse. President Macron was chosen as in the French constitution foreign policy is the President's "domaine réservé", meaning that it has the overall

power and final say in this field. He is also the Head of the Army ("Chef des Armées"), putting him at a great advantage and in a powerful position when it comes to official discourses and national defense decisions as he can alone send troops, missiles or make any declaration. The second criterion was the topic of the speech which had to be about European foreign policy and where President Macron was advocating for a "Europe de la Défense". The third criterion was the context. It was chosen to focus on before and after the shift of Macron's foreign policy discourse towards Russia and defense matters due to the war in Ukraine to compare if there is a change in the narrative constructed by the president. The fourth criterion, the audience varies depending on the conference, from the French population to the Europeans at a broader scale. The decision was taken to not consider only the European audience as the French President on national arena talks about European defense and emphasizes that French people are also Europeans and that his message is about Europe, for Europe and for Europeans. Moreover, analyzing both audiences might enlighten how Macron could change his speech and narrative to suit better the expectation of the said audience.

Table 1. Speeches chosen for the analysis and their criterias for collection.

Name of the speech	Date	Speaker	Topic	Context	Audience
Initiative Pour l'Europe - Discours d'Emmanuel Macron pour une Europe souveraine, unie, démocratique.	26/09/2017	Emmanuel Macron	For a sovereign Europe	Beginning of his 1st Presidential Mandate, bringing his vision of Europe	French government, French population, European governments
Discours du Président de la République à la conférence des Ambassadeurs.	27/08/2018	Emmanuel Macron	reaffirm France's European will, vision and project	Ambassadors conference	Fench Ambassadors, French government, French population
Discours à la Conférence de Munich sur la sécurité 2020	15/02/2020	Emmanuel Macron	Macron's vision for Europe in 10 years	Annual conference of Munich on Security	European governments, Businesses, European Population
Interview du Président Emmanuel Macron à la revue Le Grand Continent.	12/11/2020	Emmanuel Macron	What is his vision for the rest of the mandate? What does he mean by Europe de la Défense ?	In the middle of the second national lockdown due to Covid, the management of the Covid Crisis and Terrorism by Europe	French population
Le Président Emmanuel Macron inaugure le salon Eurosatory 2022, évènement mondial de la Défense et de la Sécurité terrestres et aéroterrestres.	13/06/2022	Emmanuel Macron	For a stronger and sovereign Europe	Official opening of the Eurosatory event on Defense and Security, after 4 months since the beginning of the war in Ukraine	Business, European Population, Head of states and governments, governments
Discours du Président de la République lors de la Conférence de Munich sur la Sécurité.	17/02/2023	Emmanuel Macron	The war in Ukraine and European defense	Annual conference of Munich on Security. 1 year since the beginning of the war, assessment of success and failures	European governments, Businesses, European Population
Discours de clôture du Président de la République du Sommet de GLOBSEC.	31/05/2023	Emmanuel Macron	For a sovereign and stronger Europe	GLOBSEC Summit. War in Ukraine, consequences and difficulties on the front	European population
Sommet de l'OTAN à Vilnius	12/07/2023	Emmanuel Macron	NATO security, European security and unity	NATO Summit, War in Ukraine, consequences and difficulties on the frontWar in Ukraine, consequences and difficulties on the front, Ukraine accession to NATO	European head of states, European population, NATO community
Discours du Président de la République à la communauté de défense en Suède	30/01/2024	Emmanuel Macron	For European sovereignty, security and defense	Integration of Sweden in NATO, War in Ukraine, Difficulties on the front	European head of states, Europen governments, ambassadors, European population
Conférence de soutien à l'Ukraine.	26/02/2024	Emmanuel Macron	Helping Ukraine to win the war, as a unified and strong Europe	2 years sicne the beginning of the War in Ukraine	European population, French population
20h : l'interview du Président Emmanuel Macron sur TF1 et France 2.	12/03/2024	Emmanuel Macron	explaining the need to support Ukraine, justifying his actions to the French population	Response to the conference on the Support of Ukraine, after Macron mentionned the possibility of sending troops in Ukraine	French Population
Discours du Président de la République sur l'Europe à la Sorbonne.	25/04/2024	Emmanuel Macron	For a stronger and independent Europe	7 years after the first speech at La Sorbonne, assessment of what has been done and his vision. War in Ukraine	French, government, French population

Sources: from my own interpretation.

Data Analysis

The method consists of following the three levels of analysis. The first one, being the text, corresponds to the descriptive stage. In this part, linguistic features such as choices in vocabulary, grammar, and text structure are analyzed. This step is used to understand the "formal properties of the text" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26). Thus, the language used in the discourse is explored and described. In this process, Fairclough asks ten key questions (see annex) to lead the analysis on the vocabulary used (ex: What expressive values do words have? What metaphors are used?), on the grammar (ex: Are sentences active or passive? Positive or negative?) and textual structures (ex: What interactional conventions are used?) (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 110-111). In the context of our analysis, this stage is a detailed examination of the linguistic features of the text, including vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. Specific attention is given to the use of metaphors, lexical fields, and pronouns, to understand how President Macron constructs "Europe de la Défense". Sentences related to "Europe de la Défense" are the subject of this analysis. Phrases related to the term with either the name of the concept or keywords such as defense, security, European cooperation, and sovereignty will be identified and analyzed to uncover underlying themes and ideological positions. The use of rhetorical devices such as repetition, euphemism, exaggeration, or generalization will be identified to understand how President Macron describes, emphasizes or denigrates certain points. This step of the analysis will describe how President Macron portrays "Europe de la Défense", through how he positions himself, his allies, his adversaries and their ideas through the identification of the vocabulary and grammar exposed just above. The compilation of sentences with noticeable similarities in the use of the same grammar and vocabulary will highlight the overall depiction of the concept. Indeed, if the lexical fields of dominance and leadership are systematically found with the word "France" and is repeated several times, it would describe how President Macron constructs the narrative around France as being the leader in European defense policy for example. A table summarizing the key elements to analyze can be found below.

Table 2. Questions asked in sentences and sample of answers

Questions asked	sentence
Is the sentence related to "Europe de la Défense"? What key word(s)?	defense, security
Who/what is the subject? (person, country, region)	Macron
What pronoun is used?	we/us
Which lexical field (s)?	field of strength, responsibility,
Rhetorical device?	repetition
What grammatical feature? Imperative, negative, active, passive, interrogative sentence?	imperative

Source from my own elaboration.

The second level of analysis corresponds to the discursive practice, being the interpretation of the relationship between the discourse, its production and its consumption. Here emphasis is put on discourse as a practice, where it is "a product of a process of production and as a recourse in the process of interpretation" (1989, p.26). In the case of our analysis, it involves examining the context, the production and the consumption in which the speeches were delivered. For the context, the analysis involves asking where and when it was delivered, Was the event formal? Was it a conference or an interview? What is the main message or objective of the speech? This step also involves looking at the intended audience: Is it a specific or a broader group? Finally, it also allows us to analyze the distribution; how is the speech shared with the audience? Are there partners involved in the broadcasting or sharing the speech? When is the speech released to the public? Is it live? A table could be found below to resume the key aspects of this part of the method.

The discursive practice step encompasses the use of Intertextuality. The speeches are analyzed with other political texts and discourses, including references to historical events, previous speeches by President Macron or other European leaders, and citations of international agreements or policies. The study also investigates how Macron frames his arguments and recontextualizes issues related to European defense with broader political and social narratives such as how he positions France and Europe in the global context and addresses contemporary security challenges. This will be possible thanks to the coding of the text analysis, giving us insights on the practices used.

Table 3. Sample of information needed to study with the text and interpret it.

Name of the Speech	Date	Location	Format	Reason for this speech	What is the audience?	Availability of the speech
Discours à la Conférence de Munich sur la Sécurité	15/02/2020	Munich	Conference followed by questions by the public	Answering the question: What kind of Europe do you envisage for the next 10 years?	diplomats, head of state, scholars, members of government, businessman	At Palais de l'Elysée website, on Youtube, on 15/02/2019

Source: from my own elaboration.

The third level of analysis, the social practice, is the explanation stage. This part "is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation, and their social effects" (1989, p.26). The last level of analysis places discourse as a social-cultural practice and involves investigating the underlying power dynamics and ideologies present in the discourse. Two contexts are used: institutional context and societal context. The former relies on the history, values and norms in which the discourse is built, and the latter refers to the ideology and the overall culture of the people that are practicing the discourse. Connected to our analysis, this final dimension of the analysis examines how the speeches construct identities, legitimize certain actions, and marginalize alternative viewpoints. It also explores the ideologies presented in President Macron's discourse on "Europe de la Défense" by analyzing the language choices, lexical fields, that contribute to build a certain vision of European unity and security. It will allow us to assess if these conceptions align or challenge power structures and ideologies within European defense. Finally, the socio-political context in which the speeches were delivered is considered comprising the domestic political pressures, the geopolitical landscape and public opinion. This last stage takes from the findings of both the descriptive analysis of the text and the discursive analysis, where the identification of key actors, the vocabulary, lexical fields, metaphors, the production and consumption of the text would lead to provide an explanation of the speeches of President Macron.

The analysis method of Fairclough might be in three steps, they obviously are interrelated to each other and are part of one full analysis. For reasons of cohesion and understandability, the analysis section of this thesis will not be divided according to the different steps of analysis, as they are intertwined with each other.

Concerning the validity and reliability of the sources chosen, they are all available on the official French Government's website of the Palais de l'Élysée, with an official video recording of the speech and subtitles. In all cases, the videos were also available on YouTube under the official website of the Palais de l'Élysée. In some cases, when the speech was in a special place or an interview with broadcast channels, videos were also to be found on their pages or YouTube channels. I found an official written transcription for every speech selected except one, so I had the task to transcribe it by using MAXQDA transcription tool that can transfer and transcribe the content of the video. However, as the transcription was mainly based on the subtitles, I had to fact-check by watching the video and place the punctuation and correct the grammar. I then processed the speeches into the system of MAXQDA to do the text analysis that will serve throughout the study. I coded the speeches with the help of MAXQDA tools.

4.2   Limitations and biases

The availability of official speeches concerning Emmanuel Macron is abundant, and the ones chosen were deemed to be the most reliable with the most content to analyze according to the criteria I had. However, the limitation to twelve speeches by President Macron implies that some other speeches dealing with European Defense may be found and bring different or more insights into the study. While the twelve speeches were carefully chosen and considered the most relevant for this thesis, there could be other relevant speeches or statements not included in this analysis. While extensive literature exists on "Europe de la Défense" and has been brought to light in the background chapter, my focus on speeches only comprises elements with President Macron from 2017 to 2024 so I may miss historical perspective by not analyzing before 2017. Moreover, the focus on President Macron, while pertinent, can shade other prominent actors in the field such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Being a French citizen, biases and assumptions of my knowledge and understanding of Macron's overall policy, may influence the analysis and shape the interpretation of his discourses. But it also enables me to better understand the social and political context in which the speeches have been made, making the third level of analysis from Faircough's three-dimensional framework easier than if I was not French or speaking French. Even though I am a native French speaker and have bilingual status in English, some nuances in language and meaning might be lost or altered in translation. CDA involves interpretative analysis, which can be subjective, thus unconscious biases in the interpretation of speeches may happen and

reflexivity throughout the process would be crucial to maintain a methodological rigor and minimize potential distortions in the findings.

External factors such as the war in Ukraine and the Covid-19 pandemic are considered in the analysis, but the full impact on the discourse and public perception may be complex, making it difficult to attribute changes in discourse solely to these factors. Finally, this thesis focuses on the production and content of Macron's speeches, but it does not extensively analyze how these speeches are received by the audience, or their actual impact on public perception and opinion of the concept "Europe de la Défense".

5   Empirical Findings and Discussion

Our analysis will be divided into two. The first part will analyze President Macron's speeches until his change of foreign policy towards Russia, and the second part will analyze the speeches after it. As a reminder, the shift corresponds to President Macron's hardening foreign policy towards Russia with the installment of a "war rhetoric" in his discourse (Vignal, 2024). This change is accompanied by a demand for a stronger long term European cooperation to avoid at any cost Russia's victory and especially beyond the conflict.

5.1   Macron's construction of "Europe de la Défense" before the hardening of his foreign policy towards Russia

As the first six texts analyzed are spanning a rather wide period, from 2017 to 2023, it is worth mentioning the context in which they have been made changed drastically. However, the narrative around the concept of "Europe de la Défense" shows similarities and some stability in the way Macron constructed it. The quotations have been translated from French to English for a better understanding.

5.1.1   France as a leader

To capture the building of the concept of "Europe de la Défense", it is important to understand how President Macron portrays the concept through different actors, how they are linked, and perceived within this concept. Considering the central place France holds in the President's discourse, it is worth mentioning that Emmanuel Macron portrays the country as the leader in his narrative around "Europe de la Défense". In line with the leadership position President Macron endorses for France, he uses the country as a comparison with Europe to show its legitimacy and strength in the matter of defense. He puts forward how France is already in the work to improve its national defense, *"what I wish for Europe, France already started doing it" (Macron Sorbonne 2017).* And as both examples above and below show, he uses France defense and security model as an example to follow for other countries in the construction of defense, *"I believe by the way that the historical strength of the French model, had inspired a lot of our European partners, allies, and all over the world, and it strengthened us" (Macron Even Defense, 2022).* More than just a leader in the defense field, Macron

advocates France is a country that proposes by referencing his older speeches on the initiatives he has taken in the field of defense, *"and concluding with eight other member States the Intervention European Initiative that I proposed in September 2017 to favor a spirit of defense between Europeans are great unprecedented progress" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. A sentiment of pride is also perceived as he says that he succeeded in implementing the discourse on "Europe de la Défense" in Europe, *"When I inaugurated this idea (Europe de la Défense) during the Sorbonne speech, a lot said: He will never succeed, it is a French caprice" (Macron, Grand Continent, 2020)*. Is it?

When talking to the French population, Macron reassures dominance and power in his foreign policies over Europe, proving that France has the power to pursue its interests through it. It is very visible in the speech for the ambassadors, which makes sense as the promotion of France is their goal, *"I recalled the importance of Europe, whether for security, refound the international order or promote our own interests" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*, and in the interview with the Grand Continent, which is mostly directed towards the French population *"In Europe, these ideas imposed themselves" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*.

While the lexical fields of leadership and power are present when President Macron talks about France, cooperation is still a key element in his discourse as he acknowledges the necessity of Europe to achieve greater security and defense, *"Talking about our (French) security, we are also talking about European security with regard to external risks" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. Depending on the context and location of his speeches he would tailor his vision of European cooperation. In 2017 at La Sorbonne, at the beginning of his first mandate, he states that France does not hold power over Europe and don't wish this to happen, *"The time where France pretended to decide for Europe could have existed, this is not what I wish to do" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. By stressing that France was not at the command of Europe to pursue its own interests, he follows this statement by saying that now France is proposing *"The time where France proposes is back, I will propose to anyone who agrees for this sovereign Europe" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. But proposing for the ones who agree with them, thus not reaching out to everyone, and trying to find a consensus, or negotiate the idea. A first paradox has been found in his speeches. Again in 2018, Macron admits that some European countries have been overlooked "*We sometimes forgot some countries, Europe is not made in Brussels, Paris, Berlin: it is built in the diffusion of our ideas, projects, and not hegemonic" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. Being a pro-European President in a country where the rising far-right advocated for a "Frexit" after the Brexit, the main goal of Emmanuel Macron in his speeches to the French population is to reaffirm his stance on the need for more Europe. He wants to

convince the population it would not undermine France's autonomy, interests, and leverage in the region which could explain him positioning France as a leader in defense. His discourse changes in Munich, Germany in 2020, while arguing that the European dynamic needs to be achieved with everyone, he stresses the importance of France and Germany to come to an agreement first. In front of a European audience, he will underline the vitality of the Franco-German leadership, which is almost absent in his discourse to the French population. Even though the definitions President Macron brings are not the opposite ideas, they still trigger some reflection between what he proposes, what he would discuss with Germany, who will follow, if only the one who agrees, and would they have a possibility to negotiate or modify the proposal, or only follow the agreement made by France and Germany based on French proposals?

President Macron follows this ambiguity by implying a certain responsibility for France in the field of European defense which goes against the narrative of France not deciding for Europe. In this matter, responsibility often comes with the need to take care of or be the referent in the field of defense. By bringing up the nuclear power, he stresses the capacity of the country to respond and protect Europe, *"French dissuasion occupies a specific place that contributes to Europe, as well as the one from the U.K., of the strengthening of the Alliance security" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. In the same vein, Macron takes the big brother role on proposing to teach and train them on nuclear dissuasion, *"I would like to reiterate my offer from L'Ecole de guerre in February 2020, for a dialog with willing European partners on French nuclear dissuasion and the conception that France has on the European dimension of its vital interests" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. This proposition could be seen to share knowledge on a topic only France has in continental Europe, but it also follows the pattern of cooperating in the French way, with their ideas and conception of defense, thus not giving space for others.

Emmanuel Macron carries this project of "Europe de la Défense" and brings with him the entire country he represents to construct this narrative on how and why Europe needs it. After three years of promoting this concept, during his speech in Munich he generalizes his conviction with the French one, whereas nationally his speeches are filled with him trying to convince the French population on a "Europe de la Défense", *"the step we are now at the European level, it's to say "France believes in Europe de la Défense"" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. Thus, we can notice the duality Macron experiences by both advocating for more Europe nationally where Euroscepticism is high by stressing on France's leadership, and for more European collaboration reduced at the Franco-German lead at the European level.

5.1.2 Macron's rhetoric against "the other"

President Macron uses an antagonist figure against Europe and its values to advocate for "Europe de la Défense". However, the latter is not fixed, is rarely named, and takes several forms: ideologies, political parties, or countries. Classified as "the other" in the research, Macron delegitimizes their thoughts and ideas by employing negative sentences in their regard *"I will leave nothing, nothing to those who promise hatred, division, or isolationism. I will leave no proposition" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. Mostly aimed at Eurosceptics in his speeches to the French population, Macron blames them for spreading the disease of nationalism in Europe by blinding the people with fear and disinformation about Europe, *"To all of you that fell into the trap of those that hate Europe, go interview farmers that suffer today, they could tell you: "Europe, I don't want it anymore"" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. The president challenges the ongoing protectionism occurring in the Western world with the Trump administration and aims to carry and represent European values of collaboration. He will use repetitions and the war in Ukraine to validate his argument throughout his speeches that "Europe de la Défense" is key and the others are weak and in denial, *"When we all say "we need to rearm, to protect ourselves, war is coming back in Europe", I hear voices that throw doubt by saying the sector is complicated, that taxonomy is not favorable and that it is not a good idea to invest in the defense sector" (Macron Even Defense, 2022)*. His rhetoric aims to reinforce a narrative of urgency and necessity for unified European defense strategy.

It is interesting to notice that "the other" changes depending on the context of each speech. While the first ones are mostly directed to nationalists, protectionists and Eurosceptics, speeches after 2020 are more aimed towards the United-States and Russia. These countries present another kind of threat for Macron, which doesn't describe them as one, but more as the reason to advocate for a "Europe de la Défense". Indeed, Macron emphasizes on the chance to have the United-States as an ally, but also pinpoints the danger of being under their hegemony, *"The U.S., with another administration (Trump), deciding to withdraw from treaties that the Russian, for decades, didn't respect anymore, that concerned our soil without us being involved in" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. By using the Trump administration to prove that the country doesn't act in the European interest, he rejects being affiliated with the United-States to show the necessity for our own security, *"Europe can no longer entrust its security to the United-States alone" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. Once again, he references his previous speeches

and uses repetition to prove his point, *"I am taking the example of disarmament in Europe: we have never been as exposed by the Russian non-respect first, then by the American decision to withdraw from the programs" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*.

Macron compares Europe and the United States to show their differences in terms of geography, values and priorities, *"However, I am sure of one thing: we are not the United-States" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020), "Europe is the way to project our values, our collective preferences that of course have a lot in common with the United-States, but that is not exactly the United-States" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. By doing so, he stresses the importance of greater autonomy and justifies his position in seeking "Europe de la Défense". In a context where most European countries rely on the United States in the field of defense, his speeches in Munich show his willingness to differ from his European counterparts by advocating for more independence, putting him as an actor of change and possibilities. He is helped by the Trump administration in his speeches from 2017 to 2020 that advocates for more isolationism which favors Macron's stance to be more independent. The French President argues this position of the United States is not proper to Trump himself but is part of broader American policy on lesser involvement in Europe that started before and continues now, *"There is an American policy that started several years, ago, not only under this administration, which is a relative isolationism, a reconsideration of the relationship between Europe that we have to face" (Macron Munich, 2020)*.

Going back to the United States being one of the reasons for the need of "Europe de la Défense" in Macron's narrative, the President stresses how our ally reduces his presence and cooperation with us Europeans, obligating the need for our own defense. In this matter, he chooses a different direction from his European partners and promotes the French vision on the United States, being the skepticism towards their hegemony on defense. On the other hand, he emphasizes on the need to be perceived as credible in the eyes of our allies to cooperate even more on defense matters with them and being their equal, *"I sincerely don't believe that today China or the United-States think that Europe is a power with a strategic autonomy comparable to theirs. I don't believe it" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. The way Macron depicts the United-States is singular as he does not perceive them directly as a threat, but they can be a reason why countries would not align with a "Europe de la Défense" if they are present defense-wise. The speeches show how Macron reproduces the division between a pro-Atlantic Europe and France, advocating for a more independent Europe. By differentiating the United States from Europe, we noticed that he engages in the deterioration of the cooperation between the two powers which can feed the perception of France disregarding the United States. In this regard, Macron

confirms the French position promoted by his predecessors and the power plays present in French politics on the place of France as a global power. He accentuates the cleavage present in Europe concerning defense and questions the legitimacy of the ones that think differently than him.

Russia plays a polarizing role in Macron's discourse. Despite the time frame for this first analysis encompassing the first year of the full-scale war in Ukraine, cooperation appears to be Macron's main message and argument towards the country. Before the war, Macron argues the importance of including Russia on European cooperation at all levels *"I wish to start a reflection on these topics with all European partners at the broader scale, including Russia" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. Even though he doesn't advocate and doesn't want a common defense with Russia, he stresses the importance of building a strategic relationship with the country instead of rejecting it as it is a part of our neighborhood. *"We need to build a strategic partnership that is not the European Union, but a strategic partnership with Russia and Turkey, because they are two important powers for our collective security, because we must link them to Europe, because the history of these people was made with Europe and we must build our future together" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*.

However, this construction of common European identity and greater collaboration is counterbalanced in his reasoning as he acknowledges Russia as an adversary. An adversary not to fight against, but to compete with. Macron uses this duality of Russia being in the neighborhood as a potential partner and as an adversary to emphasize on the need for stronger and unified Europe. Indeed, he stresses that a stronger and unified Europe would have much leverage and credibility before Russia, *"that is why we need to re-engage in a strategy which consists of saying: "We, united, we can have an approach with Russia that builds something, even if we have disagreements on values and functioning"" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. He re-engages with this narrative of common history and culture in 2020 to prove the necessity of acting together, as unified states towards Russia, instead of 27 divided, to build relations with the country. Macron uses a comparison to underline the differences between Europe and the United-States concerning Russia on the geographical level to justify the need for different policies toward the country, *"the big difference we (Europe) have with the United-States when we talk about Russia, is that we share a same space, we don't have an ocean in between, in the end, it doesn't make a policy" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. Unity is one argument that Macron uses to promote "Europe de la Défense", being stronger together to not be destabilized by Russia, but he also uses fear. During his interview with *Grand Continent*, the President shows how France managed to convince countries from the East, Estonia, to intervene in Mali because they

see a reason for a common European defense as they fear Russia, *"Our best partner in Mali, it's Estonia, yes Estonia, because they were convinced by this concept of strategic autonomy, because they fear Russia, because they've seen their interest." (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*. In this speech addressed to the French population, Macron highlights his power of conviction towards Europe by using their regional fears to convince on the need for collaborative approaches, which shed lights on the underlying power and legitimacy France holds in Europe as a leader.

The last speech, from Munich 2023 shows the effects of the war in Ukraine in President Macron's tone. Towards Russia the sentences are more imperative, but he retakes the narrative he left in 2020 about the need to acknowledge our geographic proximity with the country and the importance of dialog to find lasting solutions, *"But our dilemma is that there will be no lasting and complete peace on our continent without us knowing how to embrace the Russian question, but in a lucid manner, without any complacency and this is a reality. And it is in that spirit that we must continue to move forward, without ease" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. The President's position on Russia differs from a majority of European countries, especially the Central and Eastern Europe ones who perceive Russia as a threat. This stance challenges Macron's idea to create a common culture as he portrays his willingness to engage more with Russia to show credibility and strength but fails to acknowledge other Europeans perspectives. By using "the other" to rally around the European flag, Macron tries to create a common European identity on defense, with common objectives and interests.

5.1.3 "Europe de la Défense": a solution to counter Europe's weakness

There is no "Europe de la Défense" without Europe. Europe is the main topic and the main subject of this study. Even though it is important to analyze how Macron portrays different actors and uses them in the construction of "Europe de la Défense", the President lingers on building a certain Europe by pointing out its strengths and weaknesses, and where he proposes solutions.

Throughout the six speeches, Macron stresses the weakness of Europe. A qualification that was not found when talking about France but is present in detail and generalized to the whole functioning of Europe, *"I am saying it today with intact conviction: the Europe that we know is too weak, too slow, too inefficient" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. Macron emphasizes this weakness by continuously repeating it in his speeches and pointing out that we (Europe) must

acknowledge it, *"We are paying for several decades of a Europe which, we must face it, has sometimes faded, weakened, which has perhaps not always proposed enough" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. Indeed, he establishes himself as the clear-sighted person that draws attention to the problem when others would deny it, *"But we (Europe) let that happen, because we wanted to install the idea that Europe had become a powerless bureaucracy" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*.

Not only does he acknowledge Europe has weaknesses, but he also identifies them. The President uses the lexical fields of denial and resignation to recall why Europe finds itself in a weak position. He calls out the passivity the continent had over existential debates, tensions, threats that were arising in the world, near its border and within itself, *"Too long, we believed with certainty that the past would not return, we thought the lesson had been learned, we thought we could settle into languor, habit, abandon a little of that ambition, of that hope that Europe had to carry since it became like an evidence of which we would have lost track" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. Macron appears to admit the wrongdoing of Europe and its neglect on fields such as security and defense and even goes further a few minutes later in the same speech by stating that Europe too acknowledges its weaknesses, *"Europe, in these fields (security and defense), finally became aware of its fragilities" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. The President uses the fragility of Europe as a fuel to feed the necessity to strengthen the cooperation and "Europe de la Défense" even more, *"Europe has a lot of unthoughts" (Macron Grand Continent, 2018)*, *"I think Europe has a lot of unthoughts concerning military power" (Macron Munich, 2020)*, *"Everyone, over the past year, has been able to measure the importance of one of the things left unsaid about this conflict, and I dare say sometimes by some one of the things said too much about this conflict, nuclear weapons" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. In the last example, the use of the political context of the war in Ukraine really helped Macron to call out for a need to establish a dialogue about the military and nuclear weapons in Europe.

By establishing the weakness of Europe and pointing out the denial and the resignation of the continent towards its security, Macron sets the stone to build a narrative around "Europe de la Défense". Employed for the first time at La Sorbonne, the concept appeared in the speech just after the President presented Europe as weakened. Targeted to a skeptic French audience on sharing in defense matters, Macron emphasizes the greater strength France would have through Europe. He uses the strategy to show the flaws to then arrive with the solution. Building on this, Macron defends the project as a means to act stronger in Europeans, *"Europe must therefore be equipped with a common intervention force, a common defense budget and a common doctrine to act" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. Throughout his speeches he advocates the

necessity of Europe to act, respond and have a presence in dialogues that concerns itself as a unified, strong and independent entity, *"Then, Europe must take its place at the table in future negotiations on this type of instruments (the United-States withdrawing from a treaty concerning our security towards Russia)" (Macron Munich, 2023)*, *"obviously, Europe must be at the heart of the discussion" (Macron Munich, 2023)*.

5.1.4 "Europe de la Défense": an opportunity for stronger cooperation

To support his argument on the need for a stronger Europe, Macron brings Africa as a key for European sovereignty and security. Given the political and social context at the time of the speeches and the history of France, Macron presented Africa to build his narrative on "Europe de la Défense". When the first speeches were produced, in 2017, 2018, 2020, France was still experiencing the consequences from the terrorist attacks since 2015 where terrorist groups were in Africa (Hecker, 2018). Moreover, the country had the active Barkhane operation ongoing in the Sahel region to fight terrorism (Institut Montaigne, 2023). In this regard, the President argues on the necessity for European sovereignty and security to strengthen ties and cooperate with Africa to limit threats, *"this refoundation must be based on a Europe that is much more geopolitically united and which involves Africa as a partner, in a completely equal manner" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*. The linguistic choice perceiving Africa as an equal reflects his strategy to create a mutual dependency and partnership with the continent. Moreover, Africa is a strategic economic partner for France, explaining the strong commitment on securing this area of the world. In his argument, he states that both continents' futures are linked, *"Europe will not succeed (peace and security) if Africa does not succeed" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*. France's historical and economic interests in the region are threatened by other international powers such as China and Russia, and the President wants to prevent this from happening, *"If Europe does not seize this opportunity, others will and if no one does, Europe alone will suffer all the consequences" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. The mention of Africa is more present in speeches directed towards the French population as he knows the population is concerned about this region representing opportunities, but also threats and the question of migration, very close to the French people. But Macron also lingers in this topic with the more European audience, which is less concerned with the topic. By focusing on Africa and trying to convince other States on its relevance for European security, Macron advocates a vision of European defense based on French interests and tries to implement it in the European

political context. In this regard, Macron invokes the necessity to involve other European States, so they see what interests Europe has there, *"I think that we have to engage Eastern Europe fully in this policy" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020)*. This underlines the power dynamics in his speeches, as the narrative on Africa will benefit France.

In mentioning Europe, Macron argues for greater cooperation between the states. Contrary to his focus on Africa as a key element in the process of a "Europe de la Défense" which is driven only on French interests, the President shows his willingness to be inclusive towards its European counterparts. Indeed, he stresses his objective to visit every member state in Europe, *"I wanted to mark the first summer with a tour of central and eastern Europe, and tomorrow I will be in Denmark, where no state visit has taken place for thirty-six years, then in Finland" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*. With this act, it underscores his commitment to engage with all European nations in a context where these countries were not visited by French leaders, which reflects an attempt to build trust and bilateral cooperations. When talking to a more European audience, Macron takes a collaborative role to find common solutions and gives up the leadership position he might have taken when talking about France, *"And the question in relation to our European adventure, this reunification of Europe that we have now been experiencing for fifteen year with our partners from Central and Eastern Europe, is the question of how we rethink our security together, and therefore the common trust" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. He invokes a collective European identity and culture to foster a narrative of unity and shared strategic interests. At the same time his approach aims to strengthen the notion of common European strategic culture and attempts to erase past divisions and sentiments of exclusion.

Macron praises the benefits of the collaboration already established in the field of defense, *"Europe has never advanced so quickly in terms of defense" (Macron Ambassador, 2018)*, and repeats the need to pursue in this direction, *"I believe very deeply that we need to have a stronger Europe de la Défense" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. His choice of language such as "advanced so quickly" or "stronger Europe de la Défense" frames the collaboration as essential and effective which reinforces a collective European identity and seeks to advocate a sense of shared purpose among European states.

5.1.5 "Europe de la Défense": A French-driven interest?

A paradox has been found in the way he describes Europe. In an effort to promote European cooperation and the need for inclusion, Macron states in 2020 *"I don't think that*

there is a difference between these two Europe" (Macron Grand Continent, 2020), by mentioning the west and the east, erasing a possible distinction between them. By talking about Eastern Europe and Western Europe, Macron references the former conception of Europe during the Cold War and the Iron curtain, separating Europe in two, the West capitalist, also called as old Europe due to the Carolingian idea of Europe that still persists in France, and the East, under communism. He attempts to put this reference behind, in the past, to show unity and advocate a common Europe. However, while promoting for enhanced cooperation in Europe, the President does not per se distinguish a Western Europe and Eastern Europe, but advocates for a two-speed Europe, with several circles of integration, *"Then we must assume, accept, carry the fact that this Europe will be a Europe of several circles, because this is already the case and therefore we must accept that there is a broad Europe" (Macron Ambassador, 2018), "And so I see this Europe, according to the choices of sovereign countries, in several circles: a much more integrated heart which, on the key functions that I mentioned (defense), decides to put together much more" (Macron Munich, 2020)*. It is interesting to notice the paradox between his inclusive approach toward a "Europe de la Défense" created in common, but then acknowledges the fatality of having a more integrated part of Europe which recalls Macron's stance on cooperating with the ones that agree with his proposition, *"The time where France proposes is back, I will propose to anyone who agrees for this sovereign Europe" (Macron Sorbonne, 2017)*. The call to get together and construct a common European defense is undermined by Macron's acknowledgement of a two-speed Europe as it leaves countries on the sideline. It also pursues the narrative on "Europe de la Défense" being for those who will follow France and recalls the power dynamics in Europe as having more powerful states making decisions and the others following them, contradicting a collaborative approach, and profiting France.

To prove that this "Europe de la Défense" is not just a French caprice, Macron explains extensively his position and the relation between the concept and NATO. While he urges Europeans to stop thinking defense through the lenses of NATO, and to start thinking through the lenses of Europe, *"On the geostrategic level, we had forgotten to think because we thought through NATO about our geopolitical relations, let's be clear" (Macron, Grand Continent, 2020)*, the President rectifies that he is not against NATO nor doubts its necessity for Europeans. Whether the speech is directed towards French people or Europeans, Macron's rhetoric is very clear on this stance and repeats himself to prove that the goal of "Europe de la Défense" is to complement NATO. He calls out several times politicians, journalists and oppositions that portrayed him as being anti-NATO to re-establish his position, *"Sometimes*

this has been misinterpreted or misunderstood. This is not a project that is against NATO, or alternative to NATO, but as I said, for me, European collective security has two pillars: NATO and Europe de la Défense" (Macron Munich, 2020). In this effort, he builds a coherent narrative and retakes the control of it in order to reassure his European counterparts. In 2023, he uses the socio-political context of the war in Ukraine to show "Europe de la Défense" is a common project in cooperation and in line with NATO and its partners, *"I believe that these last months have shown that all those who believed that a stronger Europe de la Défense, that a strengthening of the European defense pillar was a threat to NATO understood that it only strengthened our transatlantic alliance because all this was done in perfect intelligence with Americans, Canadians and partners" (Macron Munich, 2023)*. By clarifying this, Macron aims to reconcile hesitant countries, parties, and governments with the idea of "Europe de la Défense" to prove that in no way does it mean leaving NATO or the United-States.

Through this first part of the analysis, we portrayed a French President that builds the narrative of Europe de la Défense and dedicates most of his speeches trying to convince the benefits of the latter. He defends the concept towards misunderstandings and uses the social and political context to prove its necessity whether in front of a French or European audience. Taking a leading role in this matter, he argues to the French audience that this concept would not undermine the interests of the state, but on the contrary would enable to strengthen the capacity of the operations the country leads by taking the example of Africa. To the broader European audience, he advocates for a stronger cooperation that should benefit all. By picturing adversaries, threats and insecurity in the European neighborhood, he invokes "Europe de la Défense" as the sole solution. Even though he advocates collective action, the priorities mentioned for this common defense are mainly driven by national interests with Africa as a perfect example, thus failing to contribute to a real European vision. Moreover, the acknowledgement of a two-speed Europe disregards a real willingness to build in common.

5.2 Macron's construction of "Europe de la Défense" after the hardening of his foreign policy towards Russia

The second part of the analysis covers a much shorter time span; from May 2023 until April 2024 as the conferences about European defense and security multiplied with the

intensification of the war in Ukraine and some difficulties encountered on the front by Ukraine. This second analysis will enable us to identify changes in President Macron's narrative on building "Europe de la Défense".

5.2.1 France as a collaborative leader

Throughout these six speeches, the war in Ukraine plays a central part in the discussion by either being the reason for the speech, or one of the main topics discussed. Emmanuel Macron draws from the consequences of the war to build his narrative of "Europe de la Défense". When talking about France, he praises the role his country has in the support of the war and the accomplishments made due to its strong military capacity, *"France, for example, is leading this coalition for artillery with real results and a war economy has been organized" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. The lexical field of leadership is commonly found with the one of power in his speeches. He portrays France as a military power capable of supporting Ukraine, *"France has fully played its role in this regard (military aid)" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. He continuously repeats that this level of involvement and capacity is due because of France's military industry preparation, *"France did not wait for this war" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*, *"We have been doing it in France for two years" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*, *"From the start we have been preparing" (Macron TF1/France 2, 2024)*. He also praises himself and legitimates his actions from the past for the increasing of the national budget on defense to prove the necessity to invest in defense, *"we are ready, this is what I decided from my first mandate and from the start an important increase in the budget of our armies" (Macron TF1/France 2, 2024)*. Macron depicts France that is ready, operational, strong on defense matters and congratulates himself for that. He compares the country to Europe to show the independence of France in security and at the same time calls out the mistakes other countries made in the past, *"And as I said earlier, everything strategic in our world, we delegated a little: our energy to Russia, our security for several partner: not France, but several to the United-States" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*.

However, the President pursues a policy of cooperation with European states. By acknowledging the military power of his country, Macron continues to propose cooperation in defense at different levels, even on nuclear, *"And I speak as a loyal partner, a military power with a robust expeditionary capability and a nuclear armed state whose vital interests have a European dimension. And we proposed a specific dialogue on this" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*.

When the proposition on the first analysis about nuclear power was an exhibition of French nuclear weapons and strategy, Macron now calls for a dialogue which shows a more collaborative approach. Throughout these six speeches, the president engages in dialogues with European states and confirms their mutual support, and the need to go hand in hand for a "Europe de la Défense". Instead of taking a dominant position or proposing for the ones who agree with him, he shows a more collaborative role. He also emphasizes on the need for everyone to cooperate enhancing the sentiment of belonging to a European community, present in his speeches, *"I also know that France will be able to count on all of you so that we can build together a stronger, more sovereign Europe, more capable of ensuring its security. And we will not do it by one, two or three. We will do it at 27 and even more, including in this strategic debate all those who will be with us tomorrow" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. The conference on support for Ukraine enabled Macron to highlight that "Europe de la Défense" is not only a French concept by bringing up propositions made by Estonia and the Czech Republic, *"the initiatives that we have launched, France; several other, supplemented by the proposal from the Czech Republic, which moreover overlap, will all be put around the table" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. The war in Ukraine brought back the conversation on defense at the European level and the negotiations for the country's support are a great example to show the pattern that exists between more willing states and more reserved ones in defense matters. It is in this framework that Emmanuel Macron engages Europe by putting them in front of the evidence of deeper cooperation. The social context in which the speech is presented gives even more power and legitimacy to Macron's words as the conference to support Ukraine happened in Paris and was organized by him. This position of power is reflected in the way he uses the pronoun "we" to refer to both France's achievements, and Europe's duty to enhance its efforts, which reinforce his position of leader in defense matters.

A sentiment of responsibility is also present in Macron's way of talking about France. The President acknowledges the responsibility of detaining nuclear weapons and being the only one in continental Europe to have it. He perceives this asset to be a safety for Europe but also lets people think the weapon could be at Europe's service which is uncommon given the history of French Presidents keeping the weapon as a national asset, *"And with the partnership, from our defense industry to our nuclear energy, our research, etc., we are building a more solid cooperation, in the service of a stronger and more sovereign Europe" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*. Macron goes further in "Europe de la Défense" than his predecessors by advocating for a greater integration of a European defense with possibly nuclear. It is interesting to point out that this question of responsibility was brought up during the interview with the French broadcast

channels TF1 and France 2. Directly talking to the French population in this interview, Macron answers by saying that possessing the nuclear weapon was first a safety, and second gives France the responsibility to not escalate, *"it gives us a responsibility, that of being a power equipped with this weapon and therefore never escalating either verbally or obviously in fact"* *(Macron TF1/France 2, 2024)*. Responsibility is therefore a central concept to understand the way Macron portrays France in "Europe de la Défense", as having this deterrent force and willing to cooperate with others. In these speeches the President uses the war in Ukraine to show a more collaborative approach on defense, mentioning others' initiatives, but builds a certain responsibility over France due to its nuclear power.

5.2.2 Russia and Ukraine : example that "Europe de la Défense » is possible

Responsibility is present in all parts of Macron's speeches. In this part of the analysis Macron takes a turn on his policies towards Russia and invokes the country's responsibility for the war in Ukraine and its consequences, *"As we speak, there are women and men dying in Ukraine at the hands of President Putin"* *(Macron TF1/France 2, 2024)*, *"If the war were to spread in Europe, it would be Russia's only choice and responsibility"* *(Macron TF1/France, 2, 2024)*. Seen as a threat and as a power that destabilizes the European order, Macron depicts Russia as the reason to strengthen our "Europe de la Défense". He emphasizes on Russia's willingness to divide the continent and justifies the need for stronger response from Europe, *"And if Russia persists in wanting to destabilize Europe, it must be prepared to pay the geopolitical price"* *(Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. A difference is noticeable between the speeches from the first analysis where Macron would portray Russia as partner and adversary, and now where the country became an adversary we fear. Indeed, whether talking to Europeans or the French population, he evokes the dire consequences if Russia was to win the war: the loss of our security, *"So the cost, the real cost, of a Russian victory in the short and long term is too high for all of us"* *(Macron Sweden, 2024)*, *"but there will be no security for the French if there is no peace there"* *(Macron TF1/France, 2, 2024)*. Macron builds urgency by using repetitions throughout his speeches: *"Russia cannot and must not win the war"* *(Macron TF1/France, 2, 2024)*. In the context of the speeches, the war has been ongoing for two years and no signs of victory is present, and Ukraine faces difficulty at the front (Audrand et. al., 2024). Nationally, the French far-right party led by Marine Le Pen is well known for its ties with Russian autocrats. Strongly supporting Ukraine differentiates himself from her which is

needed in the specter of the European parliamentary elections of June which put the *Rassemblement National* in the lead (Vignal, 2024). Combining the situation nationally and in Ukraine, the President defines the consequences for the French population if Russia wins, underscores the changes that already occurred because of this war such as the inflation. He builds up the necessity to protect ourselves against an entity that could take our security away. Talking to the French population or Europe, he advocates and creates a common European identity around the need to unify, to cooperate for our future. However, in his last speech, he acknowledges the necessity to think for after the war and argues the benefits of constructing a common security to build relations with Russia after, *"And it is this security framework which will allow us, the after too, to build neighborly relations with Russia" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. Even though Macron does not qualify Russia as a partner in his speeches, he mentions the fact that after all, it will have to be as it is in the neighborhood, and that the only way to cooperate with the country is to be strong together.

While Macron identifies Russia as the adversary Europe must rally against, he presents Ukraine as a proof that unity is possible. Through the actions made by Europe to support Ukraine during the first years of the war, Macron highlights the unity Europe has in making resolutions and in the wish to go further in terms of defense, *"So I believe that the second thing alongside the strength of the alliance that we must remember from these last months has been the unity, the ideological clarification of our European Union" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. With the war in Ukraine, the President justifies to the French population why it is important to act and act together as Europe, *"What is at stake in Ukraine is a war which is existential for our Europe and for France" (Macron TF1/France 2)*. The interview of Macron by the two main broadcast channels is a direct response to the French population's questioning of Macron's declaration to not rule out the possibility of sending troops in Ukraine. This declaration confused the population that understood Macron wanted to start a war with Russia (Gatinois et. al., 2024). In this interview, the President aims to justify his declaration by first ruling out the want to declare war against Russia. Second, he explains the importance of acting in Ukraine for our own security and the need to not exclude any option. Third, he maintains his strategic ambiguity. Macron used strategic ambiguity in the conference to support Ukraine, *"But I told you very clearly what France will maintain its position on, which is a strategic ambiguity that I assume. Nothing must be excluded to pursue our objective; Russia cannot and must not win this war" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. In the interview, he explains this concept by stating *"I will not give visibility to someone who doesn't give it to me" (Macron TF1/France 2)*,

justifying that he will not tell what France's limit and plan is on helping Ukraine so that Russia will know and cross it. With strategic autonomy, Macron uses his power as a French President with an operational army to show his influence and capacity in defense matters to the population, reaffirming the power dynamic of France in Europe. This interview enables Macron to create a European narrative to the French population by identifying Ukraine as one of us, as European, and linking its future to our future in matters of security.

When speaking to the broader European audience, Macron praises the European unity in their support to Ukraine and asks for even more, *"Today we must help Ukraine by all means to carry out an effective counter-offensive, it is essential" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. The use of imperative such as "must" further enlightens the urge the President has been showing in his discourses. President also takes advantage from the war effort to support Ukraine to point out the benefits engendered by them and thus, stressing for a continuation to be able to define our own defense mechanisms, "*In the end, what is at stake today is obviously, on the one hand, the possibility for Ukraine to resist any new Russian offensive, but also the possibility for Europeans to define their own collective security" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. Using the geopolitical context, Macron identifies a tangible reason that resonates with European states to pursue a stronger "Europe de la Défense", more cooperative, independent, and united. By this means he also marginalizes authoritarian regimes or far-right parties in his conception of Europe and continues their delegitimization.

5.2.3 "Europe de la Défense": counter the death of Europe

Europe occupies the central thinking of Emmanuel Macron who emphasizes on the continent's responsibility to secure its neighborhood, *"Managing our neighborhood is not just about our eastern flank. It is the Mediterranean, and the new spaces of conflict: cyber, space and maritime" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. He broadens the necessity to control Europe's borders everywhere and, in all aspects, bringing the discussion of security out of the sole situation in Ukraine. Macron's discursive strategy involves leveraging the war in Ukraine to highlight his broader security narrative. By presenting the conflict as a determinant factor for Europe's security, he crafts his speeches to shift the perception of "Europe de la Défense" from a theoretical concept to an urgent need, *"our future, and if we consider that this war determines our future, which I deeply believe, because our security as European is at stake here" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. This way, he aims to mobilize political will at the conference hosting

European leaders, for a more autonomous and cohesive defense strategy. In the context of these speeches, Ukraine faces difficulties on the front and is experiencing shortages in weapons and increasing aggressivity from Russia (Audrand et. al., 2024). Therefore, Macron strengthens his stance on Europe's responsibility to act in this war, for Ukraine, and for Europe, *"we clearly see that we are at a critical moment in the conflict which requires us (Europe) to take the initiative" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. Talking to Europeans, Macron describes the war in a way that that makes them concerned personally, where challenges defy the borders of countries. The President wants to put Europe as a leader in this war, in security matters in general, and does this by pushing for more independent decision-making coming from Europe for Europe, *"I believe we have to be part of it (decisions) to decide for ourselves when it comes to the European Peace Facility, when it comes to deployments, when it comes to arms control, today and tomorrow. When it comes to designing our security architecture, it's up to us" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*.

To stress the necessity for this independence, cooperation and European strength, Macron identifies Europe as being in danger. He uses imperative sentences and rhetorical questions to show that there is no other way to either manage and solve the war, and protect Europe from present and future threats, *"And if Russia wins this war Europe's credibility will be reduced to zero. What would be the credibility on our soil as the European Union, its member States, who would have allowed this to happen? What would the security of Europeans be?" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. He insists on cooperating with all Europeans in this matter as he continuously repeats that European security is at play in this war and it is not only about helping Ukraine but defining Europe's future, *"And so very clearly, lucidity is there and the collective observation is that, fundamentally our security for all is at stake today" (Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*. The President uses the communist past of Central and Eastern Europe to prove the danger Europe faces, *"We will not let Europe be kidnapped a second time" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2024)*. Macron calls back traumatic experiences for these countries to create a common understanding of what could happen. He also shows his willingness to prevent it from happening, forming a unity between European countries.

Macron goes deeper in the emotions, personifications and metaphors. In his last speech, he use a hyperbole and personifies Europe to claim its death if stronger actions are not taken, *"Yes, we are at the tipping point, and our Europe is deadly. It simply depends on us. And this is done on very simple observations to document the seriousness of my remarks" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. The President is in a haste for greater collaboration and tries to convince the danger increasing at the border threatens Europe in its core, its culture, its norms and values.

He uses the imagery of disappearance to express the gravity of the situation, *"I think it is through power, prosperity and humanism that we give a sort of content to this European sovereignty and that we will allow Europe to be a continent that does not disappear, a project policy that is taking place in this world and at this time when it is threatened more than ever"* *(Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. Macron has the strong conviction that the geopolitical situation favors the construction of a "Europe de la Défense" and takes the war in Ukraine as an example of what a unified, strong and independent Europe in the defense sector could be. A way to advocate for this concept is to believe in it, which is what he does, *"Me, I believe in Europe, I believe in a Europe de la Défense"* *(Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)*.

In parallel to picturing the danger, Macron also portrays the wrongdoings of Europe. From its relative absence of treaties that concerned its soil, *"Europe was absent from treaties like the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty or the New Start Treaty, while its security was at stake"* *(Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*, to the permissiveness of the region towards Russia, *"We have not gotten out of dependencies which we continued to strengthen with regard to Russia"* *(Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*, he points out the flaws of Europe. He continues his narrative on Europe being resigned to letting the great superpowers handle security matters for its own territory, *"Everything about our territory was decided by the big bosses in the room, not by the Europeans themselves. And it seems we were quite happy with this situation"* *(Macron Sweden, 2024)*. It is interesting to notice here that he employs "we" to refer to Europe and does not exclude France which is a small indication that he also blames himself for mistakes. To continue his portrayal of an ill Europe, he quotes himself from the first speech at La Sorbonne stating that Europe was not proposing anymore and references the scholar Peter Sloterdijk, *"Europe conceives its decline, doubts itself"* *(Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. By perceiving Europe as suicidal and anxious, Macron establishes a sentiment of insecurity and uncertainty that would favor a need to get stronger and take decisions. The President delves more into the reasons why a "Europe de la Défense" is important and acknowledges the state of geopolitical minority Europeans still face in the world, *"I have been struck in recent years, to see that we Europeans have not left the state of geopolitical minority. It's very hard for a French President to say that in such a blunt way. It produces irritation, annoyance"* *(Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. By recognizing the difficulty for a French President not to be considered as a great power, Macron shows transparency in his motivation to promote "Europe de la Défense", to recover a position of leadership in defense matters. Talking to Europeans in this conference, especially Central and Eastern Europe, Macron's franchise depicts a President ready to assume his flaws to engage

in a collaborative and transparent way which signals a true willingness to start this trust process evoked in the first part of the analysis.

5.2.4   "Europe de la Défense": already a partial success

Compared to the first part of the analysis, Macron counterbalances Europe's fragility by praising it for its awakening and enhanced contribution to the war effort and strengthened collaboration, *"We were able to invent together, produce something new on munitions, tremendous progress to help Ukraine" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. He shows that in circumstances like a war in the neighborhood, unity can be achieved, *"500 days after the start of the war in Ukraine, Allies showed their unity against Russia's actions" (Macron Vilnius, 2023)*. The president takes the opportunity to shut down the voices that could have doubted the possibility of a European cooperation on defense matters, *"And the defense, who would have bet on European unity from the first day of Russian aggression in Ukraine and on massive military support from the European Union? and we did it" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. Macron constructs a European pride for the accomplishments made by the States and shows that cooperation in defense matters is possible. To the European audience as well as the French one, he follows the same narrative on seeking to inspire the audience from past achievement to believe in "Europe de la Défense". He also acknowledges that this is because of this fast and efficient cooperation that Ukraine still stands today, *"And I believe it is very important at this moment to bear in mind that it is because of our current involvement that we can put ourselves in a position to prevent any victory for Russia" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*. To prove the success of a "Europe de la Défense" out of the context of the war in Ukraine, the president stresses the bilateral cooperation done with several countries in the past few years, *"We have also launched major projects with Germany, the tank of the future, the air combat system of the future. And with our Dutch friends on submarines, there too, structuring initiatives" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. By enumerating these successful collaborations, Macron shows the possibility of more cooperation and stresses that Europe's weakness depends on Europeans and that solutions exist. The President's stance on the matter follows the general will from European countries to support Ukraine in the war, thus comforting his European counterparts in his intentions and positioning him as a part of the European community, and less than a leader.

By building on the success of the operations led by Europe and showing the unity the continent is having, Macron takes these achievements as examples of what a "Europe de la

Défense" could be in the long term. He takes the European Initiative Intervention as an example of tools that must be strengthened, *"it must be strengthened and deepened in the upcoming months and years to have a much more European operational approach, and the interoperability based on NATO experience is an asset" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*. He shows that "Europe de la Défense" is already taking place with the collaborations done in support of Ukraine and emphasizes on the necessity of cooperation with NATO. In the context of the war in Ukraine, Macron praises the help of the Americans and the necessity to continue the cooperation with, *"to have the chance to have the Americans on our side, and to help and accompany" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. While he doesn't explain himself anymore on the fact that "Europe de la Défense" does not mean no NATO, he continues to advocate for a detachment of European decisions from NATO. Macron argues NATO should be an ally but should not determine European security, *"In terms of energy, mobility, security, strategy: build common solutions without (...) being reduced to a NATO approach" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. In relation to this demand for greater independent decision-making, the President implicitly mentions the possible change the United-States might face with the upcoming presidential election of November 2024. He uses the fear of having Trump Back to promote European-based decision-making, *"At the same time, I believe that we must clearly follow the strengthening of this effort, the strengthening of production, be ready to take a national and European decision and to pre-empt any American decision not to be dependent of any change whatsoever" (Macron Sweden, 2024)*. In using the socio-political contexts of the achievements of the war in Ukraine, the tensions the latter faces on the front, and the possible comeback of Donald Trump, Macron builds a strong case to believe in a "Europe de la Défense" which brings him more legitimacy when promoting it than in 2017 or 2020 when his main argument was only theoretical with no current threats.

In this part of the analysis, Macron publicly acknowledges the lack of cooperation and consideration France and more generally Western Europe had over Central and Eastern European countries. The speech at the GLOBSEC Summit starts with a French President that apologizes for the condescension that could have occurred and assures to not make that mistake again, *"Some people told you that you were losing opportunities to remain silent. I also believe that we have sometimes lost opportunities to listen. This time is over and today this voice must be the voice of us all" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. This speech resonates even more symbolically as it was the first time a French President was coming at the GLOBSEC Summit which adds another sign of France acknowledging Central and Eastern European countries. The speech directed to Central and Eastern European countries mainly, brings change in Macron's

rhetoric as he questions his wrongdoings, and include the countries in the narrative. He also erased the comparison between Western Europe and Eastern Europe, *"this would perpetuate the artificial border imposed for decades by the Soviet Union. There is only one Europe" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*. This recognition is significant in the construction of the narrative of a "Europe de la Défense", as it shows a French President going in Central Europe to apologize and ask to build a defense together. It enables him to build a common European identity by acknowledging the past and moving forward. In this regard, his speeches lean towards greater cooperation with all European states. The war in Ukraine shifted the gravity center of Europe towards the east, meaning that attention is brought to these countries and their ideologies (Millière, 2023). Thus, a recognition from a Western European President such as France confirms this change in European power relations, demonstrating a more balanced one. Macron's visit in Slovakia proves the growing interest in the region and the President's speech challenges the vision of a two-speed Europe and enables him to build a common European identity. When talking about further cooperation on defense, Macron emphasizes on propositions made by other member States to strengthen European industries, *"we must succeed in building a European preference, succeed in building European industrial programs, and assume additional financing, including the most innovative, such as idea of a European loan proposed by Prime Minister Kaja Kallas" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. Macron advocates for more European solutions in his concept of "Europe de la Défense" with an increased independence with other stakeholders. He proposes a deeper cooperation with European armies to strengthen their capacities and operations, *"Beyond this profound essential paradigm shift for our Europe, it is a question of creating a real strategic intimacy between the European armies" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024)*. In building the narrative on "Europe de la Défense" Macron highlights the goal is not to undermine each country's national power over one more powerful, but to create a common understanding to be more efficient together using "our Europe" to emphasize on the shared project that it is. He doesn't advocate for a common European Army with a disintegration of national power, but a cooperation between them. In this matter, he engages European countries to cooperate, *"I think that it is a broad, powerful Europe, with countries like yours, like Poland and many others which must take their part in this Europe de la Défense, but which increasingly assumes its own security and its neighborhood issues" (Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)*.

In his last speech at La Sorbonne, Macron evokes his longer-term vision for "Europe de la Défense" by taking the opportunity of the current cyber defense and cybersecurity development to cooperate as Europeans from the beginning, *"And even though we are all*

starting to build these capabilities for our own armies, this is an unprecedented opportunity to immediately build European cooperation and act as Europeans facing these risks" (Macron Sorbonne, 2024). By sharing his vision, Macron shows his engagement, willingness, and readiness as a European leader to implement and share knowledge with other European countries, stressing his pro-European position and positioning him as a leader.

This second part of the analysis depicts a French President taking advantage of the war in Ukraine to promote "Europe de la Défense". The French interests are much less visible than on the first part as the examples taken concern all Europe and speak to the population. While Macron still praises France's capabilities and compares them to Europe, he takes a more collaborative stance in the solutions he mentions. Africa, which is primarily France's prime interest in external action, is only mentioned in the need to strengthen the border with the Mediterranean Sea. In building what sort of cooperation a "Europe de la Défense" might be, Macron did not advocate for a two-speed Europe, nor proposed this project for those who agree, but went to Central and Eastern Europe to make amends on the non-consideration his country and Western Europe had towards them. While the lexical field of responsibility was much more present in this part of the analysis, he strongly emphasizes on France readiness to cooperate in sensitive unsaid things, the nuclear. Overall, he showed haste and impatience in his way of urging Europe to cooperate more by pointing out facts on the success made by the continent when needed. Talking to the French audience, Macron aimed to construct a European narrative where Ukraine's security would define Europe's security, letting him to justify his collaborative work on defense with Europe. To the broader European audience, Macron encourages his counterparts to pursue the collaboration for Ukraine, and for after Ukraine.

6 Conclusion

The study aimed to analyze whether President Macron's narrative of "Europe de la Défense" was driven by French interests and if this stance changed to a more European one when Macron shifted his foreign policy towards Russia in the context of the full-scale war in Ukraine. We can notice a sensible change in Macron's discourse, taking a more European-centric stance, but still with a French-led initiative. The first part of the analysis gives us insights into the construction of Macron's narrative on "Europe de la Défense" since his first mandate as the French President. From the first speech at La Sorbonne in 2017, Macron has used France as a benchmark and model for other European countries to follow. The attempts to include Europe in the narrative and exclude the idea of a "French caprice" are noticeable by mentioning progress and projects done at the European level. But this first part of the analysis shows a French-driven narrative of "Europe de la Défense" France is positioned as a leader, an example, and as the core of European integration.

The second part of the analysis encompasses several changes. First, we can acknowledge that the location of the speeches is more diverse. Reduced to France and Germany in the first analysis, the second has one in Bratislava, and one in Stockholm. This change shows two things, the eagerness of President Macron to reach a broader European audience, and that the speeches will be constructed in a way that differs from Western-European centric vision. While Macron does highlight France's leadership and contributions, his speeches are more nuanced and less French-driven, as he uses the war in Ukraine to create a common European identity and culture, thus a common reason and objective for a "Europe de la Défense".

Drawing from these results, it confirms the use of Fairclough's three-dimensional framework analysis. Through the first dimension, the descriptive part showed how Macron portrayed the concept of "Europe de la Défense" in its environment. By using the lexical fields of threats and weaknesses to show the lack of "Europe de la Défense", and the lexical fields of leadership, cooperation, and independence to explain what it could mean for Europe to have, the textual analysis also stressed the importance Macron puts in the urgency of the situation. While in the first part of the analysis we noticed the president trying to justify himself for this concept by using example of what it could mean to have it, the second part saw Macron proving the efficiency of this concept with the war in Ukraine. The text analysis also unveiled an urge in Macron's language with the use of repetitions, imperative sentences, personification of an ill, then dead Europe which is thus coupled to a hyperbole. This first step set the stone for putting into context Macron's ambitions and emotions.

The second analysis, the discursive practice of Macron, enabled to detect the relations between the text, Macron, and his audience. Through official statements, conferences, and interviews in direct, these speeches showed the difference of the speech between the audience. We noticed that talking to the French audience, Macron emphasized more on the place of France in Europe and its leadership position. The second part of the analysis showed the President building a common narrative between France and Ukraine, by tying the countries future together, to explain and justify his choice to strengthen the presence in Ukraine. Towards the more European audience, Macron opted in the first part of the analysis to advocate for a "Europe de la Défense" rather personal by the different integration circles of Europe for example. The acknowledgement of Germany's cooperation is also mentioned during his speeches in Munich but does not stand out elsewhere. The second part of the analysis showed Macron's willingness to be more inclusive in both audiences with the example of the GLOBSEC Summit demonstrating the President's eagerness to go forward by admitting his faults. The second stage of analysis also enables the use of intertextuality which the President used a lot in relation to his older speeches. Generally to express pride, the president referred his speeches to advocate his achievements or Europe's success, creating a legitimacy to his sayings and vision.

The third step, the social practice, enabled us to understand the overall context in which the speeches were given and how they reflect a continuation to current ideologies and power relations or shows a rupture. The first analysis highlighted Macron's use of the political context to advocate for "Europe de la Défense". His narrative around the United States for example enlightens how his speeches finds themselves in a continuous French understanding of Europe – United States relations, and the use of the Trump administration to advocate for this understanding at the European level. This use of the context promoted the French vision of Europe which fed the power dynamics in Europe with France promoting its own interests at the European level, thus asserting itself as a leader. The focus on Africa highlights how this third stage of analysis in necessary to understand the underlying meanings behind the mention of this continent in the speech. The second part of the analysis covers a much more uniform social context, the war in Ukraine, explaining the little differences between the speeches. This context that concerns all European enabled Macron to use it to engage into the promotion of "Europe de la Défense" by marginalizing Russia as a threat and promoting Europe for its achievements. The GLOBSEC summit speech also confirmed a push for greater inclusivity and consideration of Central and Eastern European countries from Macron which follows the change in power dynamics in Europe with having greater collaboration with them.

This analysis shed light on the evolution of Macron's discourse in the advocacy for a "Europe de la Défense" with a tendency to join a more European position in his speeches. Further research on other countries' positions on the construction of a "Europe de la Défense", could highlight a possible rapprochement with the concept, facilitating its further establishment. A comparative discourse analysis between the different understandings and conceptions of European governments could provide insights into the diversity of perspectives, and enable a broader understanding for the implementation, or not, of "Europe de la Défense".

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8 Annex

1. Fairclough's 10 key Questions

Analytical Step	Key Questions
Vocabulary	1. What experiential values do words/images have? What classification schemes are drawn upon? Are there words which are ideologically contested? Is there rewording and overwording? What ideologically significant meaning relations (synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy) are there between words?
	2. What relational values do words/images have? Are there euphemistic expressions? Are there markedly formal or informal words?
	3. What expressive values do words/images have?
	4. What metaphors are used?
Grammar	5. What experiential values do grammatical features have? What types of processes and participants predominate? Is agency unclear? Are processes what they seem? Are nominalisations used? Are sentences active or passive? Are sentences positive or negative?
	6. What relational values do grammatical features have? What modes (declarative, grammatical question, imperative) are used? Are there important features or relational modality? Are the pronouns we and you used, and if so, how?
	7. What expressive values do grammatical features have? Are there important features of expressive modality?
	8. How are sentences linked together? What logical connectors are used? Are complex sentences characterized by coordination or subordination? What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?
Textual Structures	9. What interactional conventions are used? Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others?
	10. What larger - scale structures does the text have?

Source: from *Language and Power*, 1989.

2. In-text references used to cite Emmanuel Macron's statement in the section Empirical Findings and Discussion.

Speech	Reference
Initiative Pour l'Europe - Discours d'Emmanuel Macron pour une Europe souveraine, unie, démocratique.	(Macron Sorbonne, 2017)
Discours du Président de la République à la conférence des Ambassadeurs.	(Macron Ambassador, 2018)
Discours à la Conférence de Munich sur la sécurité 2020	(Macron Munich, 2020)
Interview du Président Emmanuel Macron à la revue Le Grand Continent.	(Macron Grand Continent, 2020)
Le Président Emmanuel Macron inaugure le salon Eurosatory 2022, évènement mondial de la Défense et de la Sécurité terrestres et aéroterrestres.	(Macron Event Defense, 2022)
Discours du Président de la République lors de la Conférence de Munich sur la Sécurité.	(Macron Munich, 2023)
Discours de clôture du Président de la République du Sommet de GLOBSEC.	(Macron GLOBSEC, 2023)
Sommet de l'OTAN à Vilnius	(Macron Vilnius, 2023)
Discours du Président de la République à la communauté de défense en Suède	(Macron Sweden, 2024)
Conférence de soutien à l'Ukraine.	(Macron Support Ukraine, 2024)
20h : l'interview du Président Emmanuel Macron sur TF1 et France 2.	(Macron TF1/France 2, 2024)
Discours du Président de la Republique sur l'Europe à la Sorbonne.	(Macron Sorbonne, 2024)

Source: from my own elaboration.