

Abstract

In connection with its foreign policy, the European Union was until 2003 often seen as an actor lacking basically any „hard“ power and it was often labeled as a „normative“ power, „civilian“ power etc. However, a group of scholars led by Ian Manners has been claiming that in connection with the adoption of the European Security Strategy in December 2003 the EU has lost its „soft“ characteristics and has moved closer towards a traditional military actor. The master thesis deals with this issue of the alleged militarization of the Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) after 2003/2004 while focusing on one particular area of the CFSP – the policy of restrictive measures or sanctions. This area is unique because of its special characteristic: on one hand, sanctions as such represent a “hard”, coercive foreign policy tool and on the other, the EU has been autonomously using them already since the 1980s. The question therefore is what the frequent use of sanctions implies about the character of the EU and whether does the policy of restrictive measures stand, as a matter of principle, in opposition to being a “soft” power. By means of discourse analysis of the official EU sanction documents and by using the case of Burma (which represents a “typical case”), the thesis attempts to demonstrate, which of the selected types of power (i.e. normative, civilian and military) most appropriately reflect the character of the EU as an actor on the sanctions scene in the period 1993–2011 and whether there was any change in this character over time.