

Annotation

The Master's Thesis "*The Special Relationship, the ESDP and the British National Interest at the Turn of the New Millenium*" analyses the relationship of the United Kingdom to both the United States and the European Union during the premiership of Tony Blair. By using critical discourse analysis and applying three criteria within the framework of the procedural concept of national interest, the work seeks to determine whether the creation and further development of the European Security and Defence Policy was in the British national interest and whether it was compatible with the close UK-US relationship. After having examined the British public political discourse of three main political parties on security and defence, this thesis arrives at the conclusion that for Britain it was essential to keep NATO at the centre of its security, to maintain the close relationship with the US and to improve Britain's position in Europe. The core attitudes of the British political elite remained unchanged in the respected period. On the discourse level, the ESDP was in the British national interest as it was presented as an effort to strengthen the European pillar within NATO. Predicate and metaphor analysis of Blair's speeches unveiled that the British Prime Minister, considered as the initiator of a more powerful EU in the role of a military actor, used the bridge and mediator metaphor in order to legitimise the Government's defence and security policy and to secure the support of his political counterparts. Furthermore, the research suggests that the term *special relationship* was used only very rarely and did not featured significantly in the British political discourse in respect to the illustration of the continuing importance of the UK-US relationship.