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Political Culture and State Behavior: Why Germany Confounds Neorealism

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Abstract

During the past decade, a growing number of scholars have turned to cultural approaches to account for the foreign and security policies of states. Surprisingly, however, these scholars have devoted little attention to the concept that boasts the most venerable tradition in the field of political science, that of political culture, as a possible source of state behavior. This neglect is unjustified. Like other cultural variables, political culture promises to explain phenomena that are enigmatic from the perspective of leading non-cultural theories, such as neorealism. Yet it applies to a broader range of cases than do the many alternative cultural concepts, such as strategic culture and organizational culture, that have been employed. The paper begins by describing an important puzzle in the international relations literature that suggests the need to consider culture as a variable: the failure of neorealist predictions about German security policy after unification. It then assesses the various cultural approaches to explaining state behavior that have been advanced in recent years. After noting their similarities, the paper discusses the important differences that mark them and identifies the reasons for the greater utility of political culture. The final section of the paper illustrates the explanatory power of the political culture approach by applying it to the case of German security policy since 1990.

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Introduction

In July 1994, the German constitutional court resolved a longstanding controversy when it ruled that the German armed forces could, in principle, participate in the full range of collective military actions that might be mounted under U.N. auspices. In December of that year, however, Germany balked when requested by NATO to provide a small number of combat aircraft to help enforce the U.N.-authorized flight ban over Bosnia. To many observers at the time, this inaction seemed inconsistent with Germany's increased relative power status and its heightened responsibility for ensuring peace in Europe following unification and the end of the cold war. How then can it best be explained?

During the past decade, a growing number of scholars have turned to cultural approaches to account for the foreign and security policies of states. This trend can be attributed in large part to dissatisfaction with neorealism and, more generally, the rationalist approaches that had assumed prominence in the 1980s and early 1990s. In particular, a focus on culture promised to account for consequential variations in state preferences, which neorealism and rational models had typically assumed and often treated as homogenous across states.[1]

As a result of this interest in culture, the literature has witnessed a proliferation of specific cultural concepts. Today, it is not uncommon to see references to strategic culture, organizational culture, global or world culture, and political-military culture as well as a number of kindred concepts that go by other names. Surprisingly, however, international relations scholars have devoted little attention to the cultural concept that boasts the most venerable tradition in the field of political science, that of political culture, as a possible source of state

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[1]Legro 1996.

behavior.[2]

This neglect is unjustified. Like other cultural variables, political culture promises to explain phenomena that are puzzling from the perspective of leading non-cultural theories, such as neorealism. Yet it is likely to apply to a broader range of cases than do the alternative cultural concepts that have been employed.

Accordingly, this paper seeks to remedy the previous neglect of political culture in the study of foreign and security policy. It first suggests the need to consider culture as a variable by describing the failure of neorealist predictions about German security policy after unification. The paper then assesses the various cultural approaches to explaining state behavior that have been advanced in recent years. After noting their similarities, it discusses the important differences that mark them and identifies the reasons for the greater utility of political culture in comparison with alternative cultural concepts.

The final section of the paper illustrates the explanatory power of the political culture approach by applying it to the case of German security policy after unification. After describing the anti-militarist and multilateralist sentiments that have been characteristic of German political culture, it shows how these widely-shared attitudes can account for the often otherwise puzzling ways in which Germany has acted toward European security institutions, transformed its armed forces, and responded to out-of-area crises and conflicts in the 1990s. A conclusion offers suggestions for future research on the relationship between political culture and state behavior.

A Puzzle for Neorealist Theory: German Security Policy after Unification

Neorealist theory is one of the leading approaches to the study of international relations.

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[2]Throughout the paper, I will use the term "state behavior" as a short-hand expression for its external aspects, especially foreign and national security policy.

Although neorealism is often described as a theory of international outcomes rather than of state behavior,[3] these two phenomena cannot in fact be so easily separated. Indeed, variants of neorealism have frequently been invoked to explain the foreign and security policies of individual states.[4]

As a theory of state behavior, neorealism emphasizes the causal influence of a state's external environment and its position within the international system, especially its relative power. Consequently, it is not surprising that a number of neorealist theorists as well as many other observers predicted that German foreign and security policy would change significantly as a result of the end of the cold war and German unification.[5] The dissolution of the Soviet bloc and of the Soviet Union itself had swept away many of the external constraints that had strait jacketed German policy during the postwar era, especially the military threat posed by the Warsaw Pact and Germany's consequent security dependence on its Western allies, resulting in much greater freedom of action. At the same time, unification had augmented the Federal

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[3] See especially Waltz 1979, 67-72.

[4] Two leading examples are Posen 1984 and Walt 1987. See also M. Elman 1995 and C. Elman 1996.

[5] I focus on the shortcomings of neorealism in motivating the consideration of cultural approaches for the following reason. Although no one has performed a thorough neorealist analysis of the question and, at this point, no one is likely to do so, Mearsheimer (1990), Layne (1993), Waltz (1993), and others have made a number of inferences about future German behavior on the basis of neorealist premises. In contrast, scholars have rarely attempted to apply explicitly other theories to the subject, and those few attempts that have been made have typically addressed only one aspect of German security policy or another (e.g., Anderson and Goodman 1993, Crawford 1996, Lantis 1996). In any case, neorealism, more than most other theoretical approaches, promises to account for the broad thrust of German behavior.

Republic's already substantial raw power resources[6] and extended its frontiers eastward, thereby further enhancing its opportunities for pursuing influence in Europe and beyond, while the potential for instability in Eastern Europe and actual conflicts in the Balkans generated considerable pressure on Germany to act to ensure its security.

In view of these greatly altered geopolitical circumstances, it was only logical for neorealists to expect that a profound reorientation of German security policy would follow. For example, Germany's existing alliance ties with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Western European Union (WEU) could have weakened or even been allowed to lapse.[7] Concomitantly, Germany could have lost interest in the continued stationing of foreign troops on its soil and might even have actively pressed for their removal. Instead, Germany might well have sought to establish new security relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics, possibly seeking to draw them into a German-dominated sphere of influence.[8] And it might have intervened unilaterally in conflicts in the region, reflecting a more general willingness to use military force as an instrument of policy.[9] To this end, Germany might have developed a significant conventional capability for power projection, and it could even have tried to acquire nuclear weapons.[10] Overall, German security policy might well have been characterized by increased unilateralism and assertiveness as Germany once again sought to

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[6]In the short term, of course, Germany's economic strength may actually have decreased, especially if one considers indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and the balance of payments. See Rittberger 1992.

[7]Indeed, Mearsheimer's analysis of Europe after the cold war (1990) is predicated on this assumption. See also Waltz 1993, 76.

[8]O'Brien 1992/93, 9.

[9]Schwarz 1994, 89.

[10]On this last possibility, see Mearsheimer 1990, 36-38; Layne 1993, 37; and Waltz 1993, 66-67.

play the role of a traditional great power.

In contrast to such expectations, however, German state behavior has been marked by a high degree of moderation and continuity with its record in the postwar era. Far from setting off in adventurist new directions, Germany has exercised considerable restraint and circumspection in its external relations since 1990, as discussed in greater detail below. Above all, it has continued to stress cooperative approaches to security involving a high degree of reliance on international institutions. Germany has assiduously sought to maintain its previous alliance ties while creating and strengthening other European security frameworks that have promised to foster cooperation and stability in the region. In addition, it has continued to emphasize the use of non-military means wherever possible, if not exclusively, to achieve security. Germany has been an outspoken advocate of arms control agreements of all types, and it has done more than any other country to promote political and economic reform in the former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, its overall military capabilities have declined considerably, and German officials have evinced no interest whatsoever in the acquisition of nuclear weapons. In short, notwithstanding initial fears to the contrary, Germany has acted with little more assertiveness and independent-mindedness in the area of national security than it did during the cold war. Indeed, its leaders have expressly forsaken a great power role.

To be sure, a few noteworthy departures have occurred in German security policy since 1990. Germany's altered international circumstances have necessitated some adjustments. Most conspicuously, the Federal Republic has become increasingly involved in international peace missions outside the NATO area. Nevertheless, most if not all of these changes have been highly consistent with Germany's overall approach to security in the postwar era. Thus few if any German actions have provided legitimate grounds for concern, and some developments, such as reductions in the German armed forces, have had the effect of making Germany even less threatening to its neighbors rather than more so.

Cultural Alternatives, But Which?

If neorealism is an inadequate guide, how then might one best account for German security policy since 1990? More generally, how might one explain the many similarly puzzling instances in which states have not altered their behavior, or have done so only with considerable delay, in response to significant shifts in their relative power positions? Declining powers have often been slow to reduce their international commitments and to accept a smaller world role, or have even refused to do so until forced by events. Conversely, rising states have not infrequently failed to expand their external involvements in step with increases in their relative national power.

Perhaps needless to say, scholars have over the years elaborated numerous theoretical alternatives to neorealism, involving variables at the system level, the unit level, or both. Of late, however, students of foreign and security policy have frequently turned to the realm of culture in the search for explanations to puzzles such as this and, as a result, a plethora of cultural variables have been advanced. Most notable among these have been strategic, organizational, political-military, and world culture, while numerous kindred concepts, such as beliefs, ideology, norms, and national character, have also been employed.[11] These seemingly diverse approaches share a

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[11]Relevant works employing the more generic term culture include Chay 1990, Katzenstein 1996b, Kratochwil and Lapid 1996, and Hudson 1997. The concept of strategic culture has been developed and applied in Snyder 1977, Booth 1979, Gray 1981 and 1986, Klein 1991, Zhang 1992, Kupchan 1994, and Johnston 1995a and 1995b. Leading expositions of organizational culture have been Legro 1995 and 1996 and Kier 1997. The concept of political-military culture has been used primarily in Berger 1993, 1996, 1997, and 1998. World or global cultural approaches are discussed in Finnemore 1996b and Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996. On

number of characteristics that collectively distinguish them from materialist theories such as neorealism, and, as will be discussed below, they are especially well-suited for explaining continuity in state behavior. At the same time, however, these approaches are characterized by important differences concerning the unit of analysis, issue-area relevance, and ideational breadth that have thus far gone unremarked. Because of these differences, some cultural approaches, especially political culture, promise to apply to a broader range of cases than do others in the study of state behavior.

What Cultural Approaches Have In Common

Defining Characteristics

Almost every recent application of the concept of culture defines the term differently. Despite the absence of a definitional consensus, however, most of the cultural approaches put forward by students of international relations have a number of features in common. Above all, they treat culture primarily, if not exclusively, as an ideational phenomenon.[12] Whether culture is described in terms of assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, concepts, conceptual models, feelings, ideas, images, knowledge, meanings, mind-sets, norms, orientations, sentiments, symbols, values, world views, or some combination of these concepts, it refers to the recurring patterns of mental activity, or the habits of thought, perception, and feeling, that are common to members of a particular group.

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norms, see Klotz 1995, Finnemore 1996a, Katzenstein 1996a, and Price 1997.

[12]In the field of anthropology as well, where the concept first attained prominence, an ideational conception of culture has been gaining ground in recent years. See Elgström 1994, 293, and Archer 1996, xi.

As such, culture needs to be distinguished from at least two other types of phenomena. One of these is behavior. To be sure, a number of conceptualizations of culture have included a behavioral component.[13] And such definitions are not inherently objectionable. Nevertheless, they do limit the usefulness of culture for explaining state action, which is a primary objective of the recent cultural literature. Consequently, cultural theorists frequently argue that culture should be defined and measured independently of behavior.[14]

In addition, culture should be distinguished from formal institutions that exist external to human actors. As Thomas Berger has noted, "Institutions and culture exist in an interdependent relationship, each relying upon the other in an ongoing way."[15] Accordingly, some cultural theorists have explored the ways in which culture can become institutionalized and the consequences of such institutionalization for state behavior.[16] While institutionalization may be an important mechanism through which culture may work, however, to equate culture with institutions risks overlooking the various ways in which the former, as an ideational phenomenon, can exert a direct influence on state behavior. Moreover, cultural and institutional imperatives need not always be harmonious but can in fact be at odds with one another. Consequently, it is important to maintain the distinction for more than just analytical reasons.

Beyond their common ideational basis, conceptions of culture share three other important characteristics. First, culture is viewed as a property of collectivities rather than simply of the

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[13]See, for example, Tucker 1987, Ebel, Taras, and Cochrane 1991, and the discussions of the early strategic culture literature in Kupchan 1992, 28, and Johnston 1995a, 5-7.

[14]See, for example, Kupchan 1992, 26, and Johnston 1995a, 19.

[15]Berger 1998, 11-12.

[16]Kupchan 1992, esp. 93-95, and Katzenstein 1996a. See also Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 20-24, and Jepperson and Swidler 1994, 362-63. The latter describe institutions as "congealed" culture.

individuals that constitute them. The term implies a focus on the beliefs, values, and feelings, to use three of the most commonly employed descriptors, that are intersubjectively shared by most if not all of the members of a social, political, or organizational unit. As such, "cultures are generally not reducible to individuals," in contrast to belief systems and other concepts based on individual psychology.[17]

Second, cultures are in principle distinctive. The culture of a group is not likely to be identical to that of others, and profound differences may exist from one collectivity to another.[18] This characteristic may be of no concern when one simply seeks to explain state actions that are inconsistent with material imperatives and constraints. But the potential distinctiveness of culture may be important for understanding differences in behavior by states similarly situated within the material structure of the international system.[19]

Third, cultures are relatively stable, especially in comparison with material conditions. Most of the time, culture changes only very slowly, if at all, even in the presence of an evolving material environment. Significant adjustments over short periods usually occur only as a result of dramatic events or traumatic experiences, which are typically required to discredit thoroughly core beliefs and values, and thus are infrequent. Consequently, cultures can be quite autonomous from, rather than merely a subjective reflection of, external conditions, although the latter ultimately place some constraints on the content of the former.[20]

Cultures are resistant to change for a number of reasons. First, the fact that they are

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[17]Legro 1995, 20. See also Elkins and Simeon 1979, 123, 129, and 134; Vertzberger 1990, 267; Johnston 1995a, ix; Kier 1997, 28; and Berger 1998, 9.

[18]Pye 1968, 221, and Elkins and Simeon 1979, 130.

[19]See also Berger 1998, 9.

[20]Lijphart 1980, 42; Eckstein 1988, 792; Risse-Kappen 1994, 209; Johnston 1995a, 258; Legro 1995, 22-25; and Berger 1996, 326.

widely shared means that alternative sets of ideas are relatively few and enjoy little support

within the collectivity, thus limiting the possibility that existing beliefs and values might be

readily replaced. Second, some elements, especially normative and emotional components, are

inherently difficult to disconfirm.[21] Third, even potentially falsifiable empirical elements are

buffered by the psychological phenomenon of consistency seeking. Information that reinforces

existing images and beliefs is readily assimilated, while inconsistent data tend to be ignored,

rejected, or distorted in order to make them compatible with prevailing cognitive structures.[22]

Fourth, evidence that irrefutably contradicts reigning world views is rare in international

relations.[23] And to the degree that cultures become institutionalized, they will be even more

difficult to dislodge, making persistence yet more likely.

The Relationship between Culture and Behavior

To be useful for purposes of explanation, a cultural theory must also postulate causal

mechanisms through which culture has an impact on behavior.[24] The specific explanatory

models that have been advanced by cultural theorists, however, are almost as numerous as the

definitions of culture that they have employed. Nevertheless, one can identify four general ways,

distinct from institutionalization, in which cultures can directly influence the collective behavior

of the groups that hold them. These pathways correspond to the tasks that are intrinsic to all but

[21]See also Berger 1998, 15.

[22]Cognitive consistency is discussed in Jervis 1976, ch. 4; George 1980, 19-20, 56-57, and 61-66; Nisbett and Ross 1980, ch. 8; and Shimko 1992, 28-32.

[23]Larsen 1994, 25.

[24]The importance of identifying causal mechanisms in causal explanations involving ideas is stressed in Yee 1996, 83-84.

the simplest decision-making processes, whether or not these tasks are explicitly stated.[25]

First, culture helps to define the basic goals of the collectivity. From one perspective, a group's culture may be the seat of its social identity, which in turn generates its interests. Many interests "depend on a particular construction of self-identity in relation to the conceived identity of others."[26] Alternatively, one can think of the values embedded within a culture as establishing a range of desirable ends that group action might be designed to achieve. Either way, culture may do much to determine the general policy objectives that are to be pursued.[27]

Second, culture shapes perceptions of the external environment. On the one hand, it conditions the range of issues to which attention is devoted by influencing what people notice. The general effect is to focus attention selectively, causing some phenomena to be overlooked while the importance of others is magnified. On the other hand, culture influences how those features of the surrounding landscape and external events that do register upon people's minds are interpreted and understood. In other words, it defines the situation, including possible challenges to one's interests and opportunities to pursue them, in which action is to take place.[28]

Third, cultures shape the formulation and identification of the behaviors available for

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[25]Khong (1992, 10 and 20-22) has identified a very similar set of tasks. Two other instructive discussions of the various ways in which beliefs can affect policy making are O. Holsti 1976, 33-35, and George 1979, 101-104. It should be stressed that not every cultural theory posits each of the following mechanisms, and some may include only one or two.

[26]Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 60.

[27]Verba 1965, 517; Klein 1991; Kupchan 1992, 6 and 27; Legro 1995, 21; Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 60-62; and Kier 1997, 5, 21, and 38.

[28]Verba 1965, 513 and 516; Rockman 1976, 11; Elkins and Simeon 1979, 128 and 143; Rohrlich 1987, 66; Vertzberger 1990, 271; Legro 1995, 23; Legro 1996, 133, 122; Katzenstein 1996a, 19; and Kier 1997, 28.

advancing or defending the group's interests in a particular context. At a deep level, they delimit the universe of possibilities for action. Cultures condition the types of options that are seen to exist. As a result, some alternatives may not even be conceived of.[29] In addition, cultures define the instruments and tactics that are judged acceptable, appropriate, or legitimate within the broader set of those that are imaginable, thereby placing further limits on the types of the policies that can be proposed, defended, and pursued.[30] In any case, certain options, perhaps even a large number of them, are excluded from consideration.[31]

Fourth, culture can strongly influence the evaluation of the seemingly available options and thus the choices that are made among them. On the one hand, it conditions understandings of the likely outcomes of alternative courses of action. On the other hand, it shapes assessments of the costs and benefits and thus the desirability of the various possible outcomes.[32]

The overall effect of cultures is to predispose collectivities toward certain actions and policies rather than others. Some options will simply not be imagined. Of those that are contemplated, some are more likely to be rejected as inappropriate, ineffective, or counterproductive than others. To be sure, culture is not deterministic. It may not and often does not precisely determine behavior. But it can significantly narrow the range of actions likely

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[29]Elkins and Simeon 1979, 128; Kupchan 1994, 92 and 94; and Kier 1997, 28.

[30]Elkins and Simeon 1979, 131; Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky 1990, 272; Kupchan 1995, 6, 27, and 90; and Katzenstein 1996a, 19. A closely related concept is that of national role conceptions, which are policy makers' definitions of the actions that are suitable to their state and the functions that their state should perform on a continuing basis. See K. Holsti 1970 and Vertzberger 1990, 284-93.

[31]Elkins and Simeon 1979, 143; and Johnston 1995a, 35.

[32]Vertzberger 1990, 272; Johnston 1995a, 37; and Legro 1996, 133. See also George 1979, 101 and 103; George 1980, 45; and Goldstein 1993, 250.

to be adopted in any given set of circumstances.[33]

Going further, one may conclude that culture promotes continuity in behavior. Continuity follows from the relative stability of culture. Even as external circumstances change, decision makers may persist in defining problems in traditional ways, or they may continue to favor familiar approaches in trying to address new concerns. Thus culture promises to be particularly useful for explaining cases of puzzling or unexpected constancy in foreign and security policy.[34]

Criticisms of Cultural Approaches

Attempts to apply cultural concepts to political and other matters have been subjected to heavy criticism over the years.[35] This is no less true of the recent wave of cultural explanations of foreign and security policy.[36] Although many of these criticisms warrant attention as descriptions of potential pitfalls to be avoided, few if any have revealed intrinsic flaws in the concept of culture itself. Rather, they have primarily concerned the problematic ways in which it has often been applied, especially in studies of culture as a determinant of domestic political structures and stability.[37]

One early criticism of the concept of political culture addressed the excessively sweeping and uncritical manner in which it was sometimes employed to account for patterns of behavior in diverse societies. Consequently, cultural approaches to the study of politics, like the work on

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[33]Rockman 1976, 1-4; Elkins and Simeon 1979, 133 and 139; Eckstein 1988, 790; Vertzberger 1990, 267; Johnston 1995a, 35; and Johnston 1995b, 42-45.

[34]See also Eckstein 1988, 790; Berger 1996, 329; and Berger 1998, 18.

[35]For early summaries of the criticisms of political culture, see Kavanagh 1972 and Pye 1973.

[36]Desch 1998.

[37]Pateman 1971, Rogowski 1974, and Barry 1978.

national character that had preceded them, were accused of ethnocentrism.[38] In addition, some

of the earliest work on the concept was criticized as unduly impressionistic and speculative,

being based on intuition, reading, and conversation rather than on hard, replicable facts.[39]

These early criticisms were addressed through the increased use of more systematic

techniques such as sample surveys, quantitative content analysis, and structured interviews.

These new methods in turn raised questions about their ability to capture and measure such an

inherently subjective and potentially multi-dimensional phenomenon as culture, especially in the

context of cross-national comparisons.[40] In response, a number of scholars advocated the use of

more interpretive methods even while taking steps to ensure that their sources were truly

reflective of the cultures under investigation.[41]

Three other commonly voiced criticisms are that culture is merely a residual category to

which scholars turn whenever explanations based on more concrete factors fail;[42] that cultural

explanations are rendered tautological through the derivation of inferences about culture from

behavior;[43] and that the use of the term culture may obscure fundamental differences and

conflicts among the views held by members of the same group.[44] Once again, however, these

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[38]Inkeles 1997.

[39]Almond and Verba 1963.

[40]Pye 1973, 71; Verba 1980, 402-405; and Welch 1993, 43.

[41]Rockman 1976; Aberbach, Chesney, and Rockman 1978, 8; Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981, 33-35; Laitin 1988, 591-93; and Pye 1991, 500-502.

[42]Pye 1973, 67; Pye 1991, 504; and Kupchan 1992, 26.

[43]Pateman 1971; Kavanagh 1972, 9 and 49; and Barry 1978, 89-92. See also Almond and Verba 1963, 50; Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981, 30-31; Kupchan 1992, 26-27; and Berger 1996, 328.

[44]Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1992, 3, and Brightman 1995, 515-18.

criticisms flow not from inherent limitations in the concept of culture but from the manner in which it has been applied. Scholars need not wait to employ cultural variables until all the other possibilities have been exhausted, although the spectacular failure of leading alternatives often provides a compelling motive for turning to culture. Likewise, as suggested above, the danger of tautology can be greatly reduced simply be removing behavior from the definition of culture. And charges of exaggerated cultural homogeneity can be addressed by disaggregating where appropriate the unit in question into relevant subgroups possessing coherent cultures of their own.

Perhaps the most frequent and serious criticism concerns the difficulty of defining, operationalizing, and measuring cultural variables.[45] Definitions of political culture in particular have been criticized for being fuzzy and lacking in clarity. The danger of such ambiguity, of course, is that a wide range of behavior may be construed as consistent with a particular culture. As a result, cultural explanations may be difficult to test and disconfirm.[46] It is not clear, however, whether this difficulty is necessarily any more characteristic of culture than it is of other commonly used concepts, such as power.[47] And as a recent critic of cultural approaches ultimately concedes, "[t]he definitional problem, however, is largely one of application rather than principle, because it is possible to clearly define and operationalize culture."[48]

Choosing Among Cultural Approaches: Why Political Culture Is Likely to Be Most Useful

The biggest challenge facing those who would employ cultural variables to explain state

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[45]Kupchan 1992, 26; Rosen 1995, 13-14; and Desch 1998, 150-52.

[46]Pye 1973, 67-68; Rogowski 1973, 13; and Inkeles 1997, viii.

[47]On power, see, for example, Wohlforth 1993, ch. 1.

[48]Desch 1998, 152 (emphasis added).

behavior, then, may not be that of defending culture against its critics but that of choosing from among the many cultural approaches available. In this section, I argue that political culture is likely to apply to a broader range of cases and thus represents a more useful starting point in the analysis of foreign and security policy than do other cultural concepts. The term political culture has been used to denote the subjective orientations toward and assumptions about the political world that characterize the members of a particular society and that guide and inform their political behavior. Scholars have distinguished three basic components of political culture: the cognitive, which includes empirical and causal beliefs; the evaluative, which consists of values, norms, and moral judgments; and the expressive or affective, which encompasses emotional attachments, patterns of identity and loyalty, and feelings of affinity, aversion, or indifference.[49]

In order to establish the advantages of beginning with a focus on political culture in the study of state behavior, it is helpful to recognize that cultural concepts may differ in at least three respects. One is the nature of the culture-bearing unit. Another is the breadth of the issue-areas to which a particular concept applies. And a third is the comprehensiveness of the concept's ideational content, that is, the range of beliefs, values, and feelings that it embraces. Only when political culture is evaluated against alternative cultural approaches using these distinctions does its greater applicability become clear.

Units of Analysis

Existing cultural theories encompass a wide range of culture-bearing units. At one extreme are global and world cultural approaches in which the relevant unit of analysis is global

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[49]Particularly useful discussions of political culture, from which this definition has been distilled, are Almond and Verba 1963 and 1980, Pye 1965, Verba 1965, Putnam 1973, Rockman 1976, Elkins and Simeon 1979, and Eckstein 1988.

society. These approaches promise to be especially useful for explaining common patterns and trends in state behavior (as well as state structures), since global culture can be hypothesized as having a homogenizing effect.[50] Their principal limitation is that they are unable to account for variations across states, which are, perhaps needless to say, quite common and often at the center of comparative studies of state behavior.

At the other end of the spectrum are approaches that emphasize the cultures of small groups and other units within states.[51] The most frequently employed of these in studies of foreign and security policy is organizational culture. As these studies have shown, organizational culture can have an important influence on certain policies and actions. As a general rule, however, this approach promises to be useful for explaining external state behavior in only a very limited set of circumstances.[52]

In the first place, few governmental organizations may possess a well-defined culture that clearly sets them apart them from other elements of the bureaucracy or even the society at large. The empirical work on the subject to date has focused on military organizations, which by their highly regimented and often isolated natures are those bureaucracies most likely to be characterized by distinct cultures.

Second, only rarely will a single organization be in a position to exert decisive influence over national policy making. More likely, its preferences will be but one of a variety of inputs into the policy process. A specific organizational culture, moreover, will typically be of relevance to only certain aspects of foreign and security policy, primarily those in the formulation or execution of which the organization concerned plays a formal role. In fact, previous applications of the concept to issues such as military doctrine and wartime decisions

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[50]In addition to the sources cited above, see Wendt and Barnett 1993.

[51]Kavanaugh 1970, 20, and Vertzberger 1990, 194-200.

[52]Some of the following limitations also apply to the cultures of other types of sub-state units.

about the use of particular weapons constitute most likely cases for the influence of organizational culture, given that the interests of the military were heavily involved, the military had a near monopoly on expertise, and little time was available for decision making.[53]

Much more often than not, the impact of organizational culture will be highly mediated by other unit-level factors such as the structure of the decision making process, the domestic distribution of power, and the broader political culture of society.[54] Thus even where organizational cultures exist, it is necessary in most cases to integrate them into more complex models that include additional domestic-level variables in order to explain state behavior. This need is only reinforced by the observation that recent studies of organizational culture have actually focused on the subunits of military organizations, thereby further compounding the problem of aggregating unit preferences.[55]

Accordingly, the most promising place to begin the search for cultural sources of state behavior, especially its broad patterns and trends, is at the level of the society represented by the state. Arguably, foreign and security policy, more than other issue-areas, "involve shared national beliefs and values rather than particularistic interests."[56] Even this more restrictive focus, however, leaves several competing conceptual candidates from which to choose, including

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[53]Legro (1995, 26-27) offers a useful framework for determining when organizational culture is likely to be influential.

[54]Kier 1997.

[55]As a leading proponent of the approach acknowledges, "[m]ilitary organizations, in fact, are characterized by several cultures that compete for dominance or cooperate, which gives the organization a multifaceted character" (Legro 1995, 20). For example, Kier (1997, 138ff) identifies distinct subcultures within the British army, which itself forms only a part of the British armed forces.

[56]Vertzberger 1990, 272.

national character, political culture, political-military culture, and strategic culture.

In order to narrow the field yet further, therefore, it is necessary to consider the range of issues to which each approach applies and the comprehensiveness of its ideational content. When this is done, one finds that the remaining alternatives to the political culture approach are either too broad or unduly confining. On the one hand, national character, which is the most general of the cultural concepts at the societal level, is excessively expansive. National character has been defined as "any internal psychological qualities of a nation which are relatively enduring and which may serve to distinguish that nation from others."[57] As such, it includes many elements that are of little or no relevance to political life. In addition, as Lucian Pye has pointed out, the national character approach has failed "to recognize that the political sphere constitutes a distinct subculture with its own rules of conduct and its distinct processes of socialization."[58] Not surprisingly, it has found little application within the field of political science.

Other societal-level cultural concepts, on the other hand, are unduly narrow in scope and applicability. Although it does not use the term culture, a kindred approach is to be found in the burgeoning democratic peace literature, especially the strand that emphasizes the impact of liberal values, norms, and ideologies on state behavior.[59] This approach has proven useful for explaining why liberal democracies do not fight one another. It is far too limited in the range of variables that it considers, however, to serve as a more general theory of state behavior. Indeed, it cannot even account for the many ways in which the foreign and security policies of liberal

[57]Terhune 1971, 204. Other valuable discussions include Inkeles and Levinson 1969; Elgström 1994; and Inkeles 1997.

[58]Pye 1968, 219, and Pye 1973, 68. See also Verba 1965, 523-24.

[59]For an overview of the literature, see Owen 1994.

democracies may differ from one another.

The concepts most closely related to political culture are those of strategic culture and political-military culture.[60]   These concepts have considerable applicability, and of the many cultural approaches, that of strategic culture has perhaps been the most frequently employed in the study of foreign and security policy. Nevertheless, even these alternatives lack the utility of political culture, for two main reasons. First, they have usually been defined in such a way as to preclude their application to the full range of aspects of state behavior that may be of interest. The original definitions of strategic culture concerned military strategy, especially nuclear strategy, and the use of force.[61] Although Iain Johnston has advanced a more general conception that relates to a state's grand strategy, other recent applications have continued to employ much narrower interpretations.[62] Of perhaps somewhat broader applicability is the concept of political-military culture. Yet it, too, might be inadequate for understanding important elements of foreign policy, given its explicit focus on matters of defense, security, and the military.[63]

A second reason is the limited ideational content of strategic culture. Recent definitions of the concept have typically been confined to the cognitive aspects of culture, omitting the normative and affective components that can also have a significant influence on state behavior. For Johnston, the central paradigm of a strategic culture "consists of basic assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment," which he also describes as a "system of symbols."[64] Charles Kupchan restricts the term to refer only to the images and symbols that shape how a

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[60]Berger 1993, 1996, 1997, and 1998.

[61]E.g., Snyder 1977 and Gray 1981.

[62]Klein 1991, Kupchan 1994, and Johnston 1995a and 1995b.

[63]Berger 1998, 15.

[64]Johnston 1995a, 37.

polity conceives of the relationship between empire and national security.[65] Such definitions

unnecessarily truncate the range of potential causal mechanisms through which strategic culture

can exert influence.

Conditions Under Which the Political Culture Approach Is Likely to Apply

In sum, political culture is the most promising starting point for the cultural analysis of

state behavior. It subsumes most alternative societal-level cultural constructs, such as strategic

culture and political-military culture, while remaining focused on political phenomena, in

contrast to national character.[66] Political culture is likely to have the greatest impact on policy

under two conditions. First, its influence will be particular strong when the international setting

is characterized by relatively high levels of complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity. In such

circumstances, the problems a state faces are less clear, and the objective costs and benefits of

different courses of action are less obvious.[67] As a result, decision makers can or must more

readily fall back on their pre-existing world views and notions of the consequences of alternative

policies.

Political culture will also figure more importantly as an explanation when national policy

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[65]Kupchan 1992, 29.

[66]Considerable potential overlap may exist between political culture and the concept of collective

or historical memory, but this relationship has yet to be explored. For applications of the latter to

the explanation of German foreign policy both prior to unification and since, see Banchoff 1996

and Markovits and Reich 1997, respectively.

[67]Gaenslen 1986, 82; Vertzberger 1990, 276; and Gaenslen 1997, 267-70. See also Jacobsen

1995, 293.

is not the exclusive province of only one person or a very small number of decision makers.[68] This condition is more closely approximated in representative democracies than in dictatorships or oligarchies. It is also more likely to obtain if one considers broad patterns and trends in policy rather than specific actions decided hastily and under conditions of high secrecy, such as in wartime.

Despite its potential usefulness, however, political culture is not likely to be an explanatory panacea, even when these two conditions are met. Its ability to account for state behavior may still be highly limited in some circumstances. One reason is that political culture may be vague or incomplete. Consequently, it may offer little or no guidance on certain issues or aspects of policy,[69] In addition, political culture may be internally inconsistent. As a result, it may offer conflicting diagnoses and prescriptions and thus push policy simultaneously in different directions.[70]

Finally, the concept may be of little use if there is no single dominant political culture within a given state. In some cases, societies are divided into groups with competing political subcultures.[71] Thus policy may vary significantly depending on which group controls the relevant positions of state authority. Alternatively, most of the members of a society may share a wide range of beliefs and values but will hold differing attitudes on an important subset of issues. Either way, it may be necessary to identify the relevant cleavages and to consider the policy process in order to achieve a satisfactory account of state behavior.

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[68]Otherwise, individual character and psychology, small group dynamics, or organizational subcultures may provide more satisfactory accounts. For a rich discussion of these alternative models, see Vertzberger 1990.

[69]Verba 1965, 524.

[70]Verba 1965, 520.

[71]Kier 1997, 26-27.

Where a single political culture can be said to exist, and especially where it is detailed, comprehensive, and internally consistent, however, it may exert a strong influence over and thus offer a parsimonious explanation of important aspects of foreign and security policy. Even if there is no comprehensive political culture, moreover, those aspects of relevance to external state behavior may be homogeneous. And even where attitudinal differences go further, political culture may nevertheless place distinct limits on the range of state actions that can be imagined and legitimately discussed. In any case, whether or not a single political culture exists in a given society must be determined empirically and should not simply be assumed.

Political Culture and German Security Policy after Unification

The remainder of the paper seeks to illustrate the usefulness of the political culture approach by applying it to the case of German security policy after unification. Two general tasks must be accomplished. The first is to determine whether Germans indeed share a distinct political culture that is of potential relevance to national security policy and, if so, to specify what that culture is. The second task is to ascertain whether such a political culture has plausibly had a notable impact on German security policy since 1990.

Specifying a country's political culture requires in turn that the investigator answer three questions. How should political culture be dimensionalized into one or more discrete elements that can be represented as operationalizable variables?[72] Where should one look for evidence of the existence and content of a political culture? And how should the values of the components of political culture that are of interest be established? This analysis seeks to locate German political culture on two particularly important dimensions along which attitudes regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of alternative policies can vary: militarism--anti-militarism and unilateralism--multilateralism. It pays particular, although not exclusive, attention to the relevant beliefs and values of German political and administrative elites. And it draws inferences about these elite attitudes from a wide variety of sources, including official documents, public statements, press reports, independent analyses, and confidential interviews. As for the second task, that of discerning the behavioral impact of political culture, the paper places primary emphasis on what Alexander George has termed the "congruence" procedure, which involves looking for a logical correspondence between the dependent and independent variables. These methodological choices are explained in the Appendix.

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[72]Gaenslen 1997, 273.

German Political Culture in the 1990s

Following this approach, I have found that German society as a whole, and German political elites in particular, can be characterized as possessing a distinctive, widely-shared, and rather elaborate set of beliefs and values of potentially great relevance to foreign and national security policy.[73] These attitudes were shaped primarily by two sets of historical experiences. The first was the traumatic and ultimately disastrous experience of the Nazi dictatorship and World War II. These events discredited much of Germany's previous political culture and increased German receptiveness to alternative beliefs and values. Also important was the generally successful and thus positive foreign policy experience of the postwar years, including the German experience with international institutions, which reinforced the newly dominant political orientation that was emerging.[74]

Some observers have wondered whether the end of the cold war and the sudden incorporation of 16 million former East Germans into the Federal Republic might significantly alter or fragment German political culture. Certainly, eastern and western German public opinion on a variety of core security issues has been marked by notable differences, especially in the first years after unification.[75] The significance of these differences should not be exaggerated, however. Former East Germans constitute only 20 percent of the population of united Germany, and their actual influence on security policy has been and is likely to remain disproportionately smaller, at least in the medium term. For the time being, moreover, eastern Germans have shown relatively little interest in matters of foreign policy and national security,

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[73]A more detailed and comprehensive description appears in Duffield 1998.

[74]This paper examines only the effects of German political culture, not its sources. On the latter, see especially Berger 1996, 329-31; Berger 1997, 45-49; and Berger 1998.

[75]See, for example, Asmus 1994.

since, on the whole, they have been "more concerned with everyday issues."[76] Thus unification has had and is likely to have little impact on those aspects of German political culture that are of relevance to external state behavior.[77] To the contrary, the peaceful end to the division of Germany may have affirmed and reinforced them by seemingly vindicating and rewarding postwar policy principles and practices.

Anti-militarism

Where then does German political culture fall along the dimensions of militarism--anti-militarism and unilateralism--multilateralism? One of the most striking aspects of German political culture concerns the military and the use force. Since World War II, anti-militarism and even pacifism have acquired strong roots in Germany.[78] Well before unification took place, most Germans exhibited a "reluctance or, depending on the political camp, an open refusal to consider military means as a legitimate instrument of foreign policy."[79] Indeed, a not insignificant number of Germans have been inclined to consider peace an absolute value, rejecting the use of force even to safeguard or restore other political goals such as justice or international law.[80]

[76]Catherine Kelleher, quoted in U.S. Congress 1992, 36.

[77]See also Katzenstein 1996a, 249.

[78]This theme runs through most of the literature on German security policy. See, for example, Asmus 1992, 6-7; Asmus 1993a, 200-201; Berger 1997 and 1998; Clemens 1993, 234-35; Katzenstein 1996a, 173; Meiers 1995; Müller 1992; Peters 1992, 57; Schlör 1993, 5 and 13-14; and Schweigler 1984, 8-15.

[79]Müller 1992, 162.

[80]See, for example, the critical remarks by former Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg reported in Die Welt, 1 February 1991, 7, and in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 14 March 1991, 4, and

These normative views have been reinforced by shared beliefs about the disutility of force. Many Germans have tended to see only the disadvantages and inefficacy of military action, viewing it as risky and even counterproductive, especially in the absence of a political strategy for achieving a lasting solution to the situation at hand.[81] Although such sentiments moderated somewhat in the 1990s in light of the qualified successes achieved by multilateral military interventions intended to contain and prevent ethnic conflict, especially in the Balkans, Germans continued to regard the direct application of force as a very last resort, one to be employed only in the most compelling circumstances, such as a looming humanitarian catastrophe, and when all other means had proved inadequate.[82]

Consequently, it long ago became conventional wisdom that the functions of the German armed forces, the Bundeswehr, should be limited almost exclusively to national self-defense and that Germany should never again develop a significant power projection capability.[83] This highly restrictive view of Germany's military role, sometimes characterized as an "obliviousness to power,"[84] has been little modified since unification, the principal departure being a new willingness to contribute forces to international peace missions as long as doing so involves little or no risk of combat. Instead, "Germany maintains a strong preference for economic, political, and diplomatic instruments, arms control, and dispute settlement as the preferred means of

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those of former Federal Armed Forces Chief-of-Staff Admiral Dieter Wellershoff reported in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 12 March 1991, 6.

[81]Clemens 1993, 235 and 246; Kelleher 1995, 144; and Josef Joffe in Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1-2 July 1995, 4.

[82]See, for example, the interview with Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in New York Times, 28 January 1999.

[83]See also Asmus 1993a, 145, and Meiers 1995, 82-84.

[84]Schwarz 1985.

security policy."[85] Not surprisingly, non-military instruments have been widely seen as more effective than the use of force, a view that may even have been reinforced by the experience of unification.[86]

Closely related to these attitudes toward the use of force have been deep-seated fears of the potentially pernicious domestic effects of militarism and a consequent distrust of military institutions. Many Germans have continued to be concerned about a possible renewal of military domination of national security decision making, as occurred during the time of the Prussian General Staff. Likewise, they have been wary of the emergence of a professional army that could once again become "a state within the state" that was largely unaccountable to political authorities, as took place during the interwar years.[87] Consequently, most Germans have felt that as long as the Federal Republic must maintain armed forces, they must be integrated into German society to the greatest possible extent.[88]

Multilateralism

Another important set of widely-shared norms that are rooted in Germany's recent past help to locate German political culture along the dimension of unilateralism--multilateralism. Here, a leading imperative has been to avoid acting alone (Alleingänge) or pursuing a special path (Sonderweg). Germans have exhibited a strong distaste for, even an abhorrence of,

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[85]Müller 1992, 162. See also Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik (SzS), no. 11 (November 1993), 9; Kinkel 1994c, 714; Kinkel 1994d, 864; and Federal Ministry of Defence 1994.

[86]Asmus 1993a, 146 and 199, and Herzog 1995, 162.

[87]Kelleher 1985, 85-86; Young 1994; and Katzenstein 1996a, 179.

[88]von Bredow 1992, 291.

unilateralism. Such sentiments have been expressed by virtually all German political leaders.[89]

This norm as well has been reinforced by commonly held cause-effect beliefs. German leaders

have feared the consequences of unilateralism, believing that it can only lead to diplomatic

isolation, insecurity, and conflict.[90]

The previous German penchant for nationalism and unilateralism has been supplanted by

a degree of support for international cooperation and even integration, involving the sacrifice of

national prerogatives, that is unparalleled.[91] German leaders have greatly preferred pursuing

Germany's national interests in close cooperation with other countries over acting alone.[92] To be

sure, multilateralism and integration have also been viewed as serving concrete Germany

objectives.[93] They are useful for reassuring Germany's neighbors, and they are essential for

avoiding diplomatic isolation and future conflicts. Indeed, they may be the only way to address

some foreign and security policy concerns.[94] But multilateralism has not been embraced only for

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[89]See, for example, Kohl 1992, 77-78; Kinkel 1994c, 713; Schröder 1999; the remarks of

Defense Minister Volker Rühe reported in <u>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</u>, 10 September 1993,

12; and Social Democratic Party leader Rudolf Scharping, as quoted in Foreign Broadcast

Information Service, <u>Daily Report: West Europe</u> (cited hereafter as FBIS), 1 June 1994, 22.

[90]See, for example, Kohl 1996, 167; Scharping 1995, 39; and President Richard von Weizsäcker

as cited in <u>The Week in Germany</u>, 1 May 1992, 1.

[91]See also Crawford 1993, 38-40; Kelleher and Fisher 1994, 170-72; Hellmann 1996, 21; and

Katzenstein 1996a, 178.

[92]See, for example, Kohl 1992, 77-78; Kinkel 1995, 4; Kinkel 1996, 3; and Rühe, cited in FBIS,

25 November 1994, 18.

[93]See, for example, Peters 1992, 54-57, and Müller 1992, 132.

[94]See, for example, Kohl 1993a, 610.

instrumental purposes. For many German leaders, it has become a leading goal in and of itself.[95]

A direct corollary of German multilateralism is the importance German political elites have attached to international institutions. German leaders have constantly emphasized the need for Germany to work through and to be anchored firmly within the structures of international cooperation, be they transatlantic, West European, pan-European, or global.[96] At the same time, they have been strongly inclined to abide by the rules that these institutions often embody. This approach, which served Germany so well during the postwar era, has been viewed as being of continued relevance to German policy for the indefinite future.[97]

Also related to the German commitment to multilateralism and international institutions has been the tremendous importance that German leaders have attached to Berechenbarkeit, or calculability, in foreign policy.[98] They have been anxious for their country to be perceived as a reliable, predictable, dependable partner, a concern that they frequently and openly articulate.[99] This imperative "has created a presumption against any government reneging upon, let alone renouncing, the basic substance of established foreign-policy commitments."[100] Not to fulfill Germany's international obligations and responsibilities would undermine the country's credibility in the eyes of its partners. Thus stability and continuity in German security policy have become leading normative guidelines in their own right.

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[95]See also Joffe 1991, 4; Müller 1992, 162; and Schlör 1993, 6-7.

[96]Morgan 1990, 149; Stent 1990-91, 69; Müller 1992, 162; Anderson and Goodman 1993, 24 and 60-61; Kelleher and Fisher 1994, 170-71; and Zeit, 21 September 1990, 1.

[97]Kohl 1993a, 610. See also Asmus 1991, vii, and Linnenkamp 1992, 94.

[98]Schweigler 1984, 86-88; Clemens 1989, 242-43; Müller 1992, 161; and Pond 1996, 25.

[99]Kohl 1993b, 1102; Kohl 1994, 330; Kohl 1996, 167; Klaus Kinkel in The Week in Germany, 22 May 1992, 1; SPD 1993, 8; and Schröder 1999.

[100]Clemens 1989, 242-43.

The widely shared nature of these norms and beliefs has had important potential implications for German state behavior. In particular, it has formed the basis for a high degree of consensus since unification on many basic issues of national security policy. Few if any discernible differences have existed among the ministries and offices of the federal government with responsibilities in this area, including the German military, a situation that suggests the inapplicability of the organizational culture approach.[101] More importantly, this consensus has been shared by elites located across most of the political spectrum. Thus prior to the federal elections of 1994 and 1998, leaders of the opposition of Social Democratic Party (SPD) expressed satisfaction with the fundamental orientation of the government's policy, helping to ensure that national security was perhaps the least disputed issue in either campaign.[102]

The Impact of German Political Culture on German Security Policy

What impact has German political culture in fact had on German state behavior since 1990? This section examines the influence of political culture on three main areas of Germany's security policy after unification: its policy toward Europe's security institutions, the

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[101]Even if the German armed forces were to possess a distinct organizational culture, moreover, their ability to influence German national security policy would be highly limited, since the postwar organizational structure of the government was designed to ensure tight civilian control of the military.

[102]See, for example, Scharping 1994 and Schröder 1998 as well as the campaign platforms adopted by the SPD prior to the two elections (SPD 1994 and 1998). On this security policy consensus, see also Müller 1992, 134; Schlör 1993, 10; and Fischer 1998a. More than a decade ago, Lewis Edinger likewise observed (1986, 180) that distinctions between German governments led by different parties have been "least pronounced in foreign and defense policy."

transformation of the <u>Bundeswehr</u>, and German responses to out-of-area crises and conflicts.[103] I

show that, whereas many German actions appear problematic when viewed through a neorealist

lens, they are highly consistent with the content of German political culture.[104]

German Policy toward European Security Institutions

One area in which German political culture appears to have had a noteworthy impact has

been German policy toward the various institutions of European security. Since unification and

the end of the cold war, Germany has continued to devise and execute its security policy almost

entirely in cooperation with others and within the context of international institutions. Indeed,

Germany, more than most other European countries, has vigorously sought to maintain,

strengthen, and adapt wherever possible the regional security institutions that arose during the

cold war -- and, in some cases, to develop new ones.[105]

Above all, Germany's commitment to NATO, which many doubted at the time of

unification, has not wavered. Rather, German leaders from across the political spectrum have

repeatedly expressed their support for the alliance and the continued presence of allied forces on

German soil.[106] German forces have remained firmly integrated into the alliance's military

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[103]The empirical focus of this analysis concerns the period through the end of 1996, although no

significant departures in German policy have occurred since that date, notwithstanding a change

of government in 1998.

[104]The existence of a distinct, dominant German political culture suggests that there is no need to

consider the possible impact of political subcultures. The principal potential exception concerns

the debate over out-of-area military missions, which is discussed below.

[105]See also Berger 1998, 186-87.

[106]For representative statements, see Kohl 1993b; Kinkel 1994a; Rühe 1993a; Klose 1993;

planning and command structure.[107] And Germany has been a leading participant in the process of adapting NATO to the new European security environment, which has included furthering the degree of military integration in the alliance.[108]

At the same time, Germany has been at the forefront of recent efforts to create a West European security and defense identity (ESDI). Jointly with France, it proposed that the European Community develop a common foreign and security policy (CFSP), provisions for which were included in the Treaty on European Union approved at Maastricht in late 1991.[109] Since unification, moreover, it has worked to increase the mandate and operational capacities of the WEU and to bring that body within the framework of the European Union where it could implement defense-related aspects of the CFSP.[110] And in 1992, Germany and France elaborated plans to expand the existing Franco-German brigade into an integrated "Eurocorps," which other

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Scharping 1994 and 1998; Schröder 1998; and Fischer 1998b.

[107]Those stationed in the new eastern Länder were temporarily under German national command while the withdrawal of former Soviet forces took place.

[108]Interview with General John Galvin, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 16 December 1993.

[109]The key Franco-German proposals were "Gemeinsame Botschaft," Bulletin, no. 144 (11 December 1990), 1513-14; "Gemeinsames deutch-französisches Papier zur sicherheitspolitischen Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen der Gemeinsamen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der Politischen Union," Press Release, German Foreign Ministry, 6 February 1991; and "Botschaft zur gemeinsamen europäischen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik," Bulletin, no. 117 (18 October 1991), 929-31.

[110]Author's interviews with German Foreign Ministry officials, Bonn, 15 July 1993 and 21 June 1994.

WEU members were invited to join.[111] These efforts to give the ESDI a stronger profile continued unabated through the 1990s.[112]

Finally, German policy has emphasized involving the reform states of Central and Eastern Europe in broader institutional security frameworks that include Germany's Western allies rather than establishing new bilateral security ties with the former. Germany has been a principal architect of the many initiatives intended to strengthen the pan-European Conference on (now Organization for) Security and Cooperation in Europe.[113] It was Germany, along with the United States, that proposed in 1991 the creation of a North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) that would include the former Warsaw Pact states.[114] Subsequently, German leaders have worked to strengthen further NATO and WEU links with their country's eastern neighbors and have advocated that these bodies be open to new members, although they have been quick to caution that enlargement should not be allowed to weaken the alliances or strain unduly relations with Russia.[115]

Germany's strong support for European security institutions after unification is clearly difficult to reconcile with the tenets of neorealism. In particular, it clashes with the common

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[111]Washington Post, 17 May 1992, A31, and 23 May 1992, A15; and Ischebeck 1993, 45.

[112]Most recently, see, for example, the attention devoted to the development of the CFSP in Schröder 1999 and "Ziele und Schwerpunkte der deutschen Präsidentschaft im Rat der Europäischen Union"; available from http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/6_archiv/2/p/P981214d.htm; accessed 9 March 1999.

[113]See, for example, Staack 1992, 149-76, and "Gemeinsame deutsch-niederländische Agenda zur Vorbereitung des KSZE-Gipfels in Budapest," Bulletin, no. 46 (20 May 1994), 414.

[114]"US-German Joint Statement on the Transatlantic Community," US Department of State Dispatch (7 October 1991), 736-37.

[115]See, especially, Rühe 1993b.

neorealist assumption that states will seek to maximize their autonomy and avoid external ties wherever possible, especially in view of the Federal Republic's much greater potential freedom of action following the end of the cold war. Even if neorealism could explain Germany's continued involvement in one body or another, it would have great difficulty accounting for the fact that Germany has championed so many different institutional forms simultaneously. This across-the-board approach has sometimes been dysfunctional, as when it has provoked sharp criticism by Germany's partners.[116] German behavior in this regard also stands in contrast to the policies of the other major West European states, which have been much more selective in their support for the various alternative security arrangements.[117]

Instead, this record is much less problematic when viewed in the context of Germany's distinct political culture, especially the pronounced aversion to unilateralism, the equally strong instinctive preference for international cooperation and multilateralism, and the desire to be perceived as a reliable partner that most Germans have shared. These deeply-held attitudes have inclined German leaders to place considerable intrinsic value on European security institutions independently of any careful cost-benefit calculations. They help to explain why German officials have seen no inherent contradictions in promoting all of the major regional bodies simultaneously and thus why they have underestimated the possible conflicts in such an approach. Instead, the importance of creating, maintaining, and strengthening such institutions wherever the opportunity to do so exists has been virtually an article of faith among the German political elite.[118]

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[116]In particular, Germany's efforts to develop a European security and defense identity have been viewed at times as potentially damaging to NATO. See, for example, Menon, Forster, and Wallace 1992.

[117]Of course, the contrast with German policies prior to 1945 is even more striking.

[118]See also Anderson and Goodman 1993, 41.

The Transformation of the Bundeswehr

A second area in which German political culture has arguably had a noticeable impact has been in the German armed forces. Since 1990, the Bundeswehr has been profoundly transformed. Not only have the armed forces been reduced in size by nearly one-third from their cold war maximum -- and by as much as one-half if those of the former German Democratic Republic are included -- but they have been fundamentally restructured. Whereas, during the cold war, virtually all regular Bundeswehr units were maintained at a high level of readiness, the majority are now heavily dependent upon mobilization.[119] These developments can be understood largely as a logical consequence, from a neorealist perspective, of Germany's altered strategic circumstances, especially the sharp decline in the immediate military threat.

Despite the magnitude of these changes, however, the Bundeswehr has failed to adapt optimally to the new strategic environment in at least two respects. First, the German government has made only limited progress toward the development of new national capabilities for exercising operational control of the German armed forces in situations, chiefly UN missions beyond NATO territory, in which they would have to operate outside of the alliance structures on which the Federal Republic has traditionally relied.[120] Second, the government has steadfastly refused to abandon male conscription (Wehrpflicht) despite its increasing dysfunctionality. As a result of the end of the cold war, both the the military usefulness and the political legitimacy of conscription have been regularly called into question, and not only in Germany. Even France,

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[119]For details, see "Konzeptionelle Leitlinie," reprinted in SzS, no. 9 (September 1994), 44-47, and "Anpassung der Streitkräfte, der Territorialen Verwaltung und der Stationierung der Bundeswehr," reprinted in SzS, no. 7 (July 1995), 30-46.

[120]Young 1992 and 1994.

which invented the modern levée en masse, decided in 1996 to follow the lead of alliance partners such as Belgium and the Netherlands in moving to create a professional army, leaving Germany alone among the major Western powers as a practitioner of compulsory military service.[121]

Although troublesome from a neorealist perspective, both of these examples of maladjustment can be readily understood in terms of Germany's postwar political culture, especially the strong strand of anti-militarism that it contains.[122] On the one hand, anti-militarism has lain at the root of widespread popular and, to a lesser extent, elite concerns about the possible reconstitution of a German General Staff that might be unaccountable to German political authorities.[123] Consequently, the government has been forced to proceed with caution in its efforts to enhance Germany's planning and command capabilities, even though such improvements have been necessitated in large part by Germany's multilateral commitments.[124]

On the other hand, anti-militarism has fostered, somewhat paradoxically, a strong, if not universal, attachment to conscription, despite its disadvantages in the circumstances of the post-cold war era. Compulsory military service, elites from across the political spectrum have believed, remains an indispensable link between the Bundeswehr and the German people,[125] even

[121]See, for example, Kohl 1993b, 103, and Federal Ministry of Defence 1994, 86.

[122]In addition, the general trends in the transformation of the Bundeswehr described above are consistent with the decided preference for non-military instruments that characterizes German political culture.

[123]Young 1994, 12 and 16, and Kelleher 1985, 85-86.

[124]Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 26 October 1993, 1, and author's interview with a U.S. Embassy official, Bonn, 13 July 1993.

[125]For the views of government leaders, see Kohl 1991b, 74; Kohl 1991a, 245; and FBIS, 14 March 1991, 23. For those of opposition leaders, see Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18-19 July 1992, 1,

though an increasing number of commentators have observed that Germany had nothing to fear from a professional army.[126] These attitudes have ensured that conscription would be preserved in Germany, even as its neighbors moved to abandon the draft.

German Responses to Out-of-Area Crises and Conflicts

A third major area of German security policy in which German political culture appears to have exerted considerable influence has been the country's responses to out-of-area crises and conflicts since unification. During the cold war, the German armed forces had one overriding military mission: to deter and, if necessary, to defend against a potentially large-scale, Soviet-led Warsaw Pact attack on Germany launched with little or no warning.[127] Almost all military planning and resources were devoted to this primary contingency. Virtually no thought was given to using the Bundeswehr outside of the NATO area or even to defending NATO allies other than Germany's immediate neighbors.[128]

Since 1990, however, Germany has been confronted with a series of international crises and conflicts that have demanded a German response. Not only have some of these, especially the fighting in the former Yugoslavia, threatened to affect Germany directly, but the country has repeatedly come under pressure from the United Nations and its allies to contribute to a wide variety of international actions outside the NATO area intended to keep or restore the peace.

and FBIS, 7 February 1994, 17. See also Berger 1998, 170 and 190.

[126]See, for example, Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 15 February 1991, 3, trans. in FBIS, 9 April 1991, 21; Tagesspiegel, 24 January 1993, 6, trans. in FBIS, 17 February 1993, 11; and Zeit, 19 February 1993, 5.

[127]See, for example, Federal Ministry of Defense 1994, 84.

[128]Kaiser and Becher 1992, 40; Asmus 1993a, 144; and Schlör 1993, 6.

Unlike during the cold war, Germany has no longer been granted the option of remaining aloof from such out-of-area operations in order to concentrate on the defense of its own territory.

Nevertheless, Germany's response to these challenges has been decidedly equivocal. On the one hand, an important shift in German security policy has taken place. Since 1991, Germany has gradually expanded the nature and scope of its involvement in international military operations intended to preserve or restore peace. <u>Bundeswehr</u> units have been dispatched to locations as diverse as the Persian Gulf, Cambodia, Somalia, and the Balkans. Perhaps most striking is the contrast between the tentativeness with which Germany joined the forces monitoring the UN embargo on the former Yugoslavia in 1992 and its unhesitating assumption of an equal role in the NATO Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia four years later. Largely as a result of these actions, a number of observers have spoken of a "normalization" of German foreign and security policy.[129]

On the other hand, Germany's assumption of a growing international military role has been consistently marked by substantial reservations and numerous limitations. Germany has not always offered to make a military contribution to international peace missions, and at other times, it has done so only after considerable debate and with great ambivalence. Moreover, where German forces have deployed outside the NATO area, they have done so only in relatively small numbers, and they have been restricted almost exclusively to roles that have involved no risk of combat.[130]

One cause of this mixed record, at least for the first four years after unification, was the prevailing interpretation of the German Basic Law, which was widely viewed as permitting the armed forces to be used, apart from humanitarian missions, only for the defense of Germany

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[129]See, for example, Gordon 1994.

[130]Duffield 1998, ch. 8. A useful, if now somewhat dated, overview is Müller 1994.

itself and its allies.[131] Consequently, even those political leaders who favored making a more

substantial military contribution to international peace missions were obliged to limit their

advocacy to actions that were not clearly inconsistent with these highly constraining guidelines.

The German government sought to cloak most proposed deployments in the guise of

humanitarian assistance, and Bundeswehr missions clearly at odds with the restrictive

constitutional interpretation were assiduously avoided.

Nevertheless, even the more active responses that government officials would have

preferred to make were typically less forceful and less substantial than Germany's partners would

have wished. And even the lifting of the alleged constitutional restraints in July 1994 failed to

produce any profound reorientation of German policy. To the contrary, it has remained

circumscribed by clear criteria that are unusual for a country of Germany's size and overall

importance in world affairs and that, in any case, have virtually ensured that German

involvement in military operations beyond national and alliance defense would indeed be

infrequent. In fact, German leaders have stressed that their country's contributions to

international efforts to promote peace would continue to be primarily of a political and economic

nature.[132] Thus when confronted with a series of allied requests in late 1994 and 1995 to

contribute forces to the international efforts to bring peace to Bosnia, Germany responded with

some hesitation and imposed numerous conditions on its involvement.[133] And even the much

less qualified nature of the Federal Republic's contribution to the NATO Stabilization Force

(SFOR) in Bosnia since the end of 1996, which for the first time allowed the Bundeswehr to

participate as an equal partner, can be attributed far more to the modesty of its size, the low level

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[131]See, for example, Kaiser and Becher 1992.

[132]See, for example, Kinkel 1994b, 657-58.

[133]See, for example, Washington Post, 1 July 1995, A1; Washington Post, 19 August 1995, A15;

Welt, 4 October 1995, 1; and Spiegel, 16 October 1995, 24-27.

of risk involved, and its primarily non-combat purposes than to any fundamental change of attitude.

Instead, the pattern of German responses to out-of-area crises and conflicts can be fully understood only if one considers German political culture. On the one hand, the "culture of reticence" has inclined many German political leaders to proceed slowly and cautiously, especially on such a controversial and potentially explosive issue.[134] At the same time, as a result of the anti-militarist attitudes that have taken root in Germany since World War II, German leaders from across the political spectrum have insisted that attempts to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts must be given absolute priority, while military means should be employed only as a last resort, if at all. Likewise, they have generally been skeptical about the utility of military force and equally optimistic about the possibility of resolving conflicts through peaceful means.[135]

On the other hand, these inhibitions have been counteracted by other strands in German political culture, which have provided powerful motives for assuming a larger, if still qualified, military role. In particular, the inherent German reluctance to participate in international military operations has collided with the strong German commitment to multilateralism and the concomitant rejection of ever pursuing a separate path. It has also conflicted with the imperative to be a reliable partner. Not to join with Germany's allies and partners would smack of unilateralism, harm its international reputation, and risk leading to isolation. In short, the norms embedded in German political culture, which were mutually reinforcing during the cold war, have offered contradictory prescriptions for how to respond to out-of-area crises and conflicts since unification. As a result, and in marked contrast to the other two aspects of German policy

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[134]The term appears to have been coined by Volker Rühe in mid-1992, although it has since become common currency. For an early appearance, see Zeit, no. 30 (17 July 1992), 1.

[135]For corresponding public opinion data, see Juhász and Rattinger 1992, Table 2.

considered above, German political leaders have consistently had to struggle to find the least unsatisfactory compromise between opposing normative dictates.

The principal exception to Germany's record of cautious and limited responses that one might cite consists of its efforts in late 1991 to secure the diplomatic recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.[136] Yet even this episode did not represent nearly as sharp a departure in German policy as it has commonly been portrayed. Although the German government asserted itself more than on any previous or subsequent occasion, it faced an unusually strong combination of pressures to act, and its behavior was still marked by clear limits that were consistent with German political culture. German leaders went to great lengths to work through multilateral channels in order to achieve an end to the fighting in the former Yugoslavia, and German diplomacy toward the conflict was equally notable for its complete lack of military backing. Subsequent to the recognition decision, moreover, German policy assumed a much lower profile, with German leaders regularly deferring to their Western counterparts on important issues.[137]

Of course, any invocation of German political culture tends to obscure the domestic divisions that have marked the attitudes of German political elites on the out-of-area question. Where the various strands of German political culture have come into conflict with one another, different elite factions have hewn more strongly to one strand than another, resulting in what Harald Müller has described as the deepest rift on a foreign policy issue since the debate over Ostpolitik rent the Federal Republic in the early 1970s.[138] As a general rule, members of the

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[136]The most detailed accounts are Crawford 1993 and 1996.

[137]See, for example, SzS, no. 6 (June 1993), 20.

[138]Müller 1994, 131. This characterization, however, may not do justice to the divisive debate of the early 1980s over the deployment of a new generation of U.S. theater nuclear missiles in Germany.

Union[139] and Free Democratic Party (FDP) have been influenced most of all by multilateralist sentiments and have stressed the importance of showing solidarity with Germany's allies and the international community, assuming greater responsibility, being a reliable partner, and avoiding Germany's isolation. Meanwhile, members of the SPD and Green party have been motivated primary by anti-militarist convictions and thus have emphasized limiting Germany's military role. At times, however, even the government and the parties themselves have been divided.

Yet one should not make too much of these disputes. In particular, they do not necessarily point to the existence of distinct political subcultures. Rather, they are better understood as the product of differences of emphasis rather than of irreconcilable positions. Thus neither major faction has repudiated the values held most dearly by the other. Although few if any members of the Union and the FDP have counted themselves among Germany's many pacifists, they have by and large shared the strong postwar German aversion to reliance on the use of force. Conversely, most members of the SPD and the Greens have been loath to see Germany pursue a separate path. In other words, one can discern a single German political culture that has placed distinct boundaries on the discourse employed by German political leaders and that has clearly proscribed some theoretically possible policy responses.

Nevertheless, the installation of an SDP-Green coalition government in the fall of 1998 inevitably raised questions about the future direction of German security policy. Earlier in the decade, the Green party had advocated German withdrawal from NATO, it had called for the abolition of conscription and the eventually dissolution of the Bundeswehr, and it had opposed German participation in any out-of-area military missions, including UN peacekeeping operations. Over time, however, the official position of the party on these issues and especially

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[139]The Union consists of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Bavaria-based Christian Social Union (CSU), which together form a single parliamentary group in the Bundestag.

the views of members of the pragmatic <u>Realo</u> wing of the party have steadily moderated.[140] In the area of national security, moreover, the coalition agreement hammered out by the two parties clearly bore the stamp of the more centrist SPD.[141] And as 1998 drew to a close, the coalition had announced no significant policy changes. To the contrary, the new government had expressed strong support for NATO even as it sought to reform aspects of the alliance, it had deferred any fundamental restructuring of the <u>Bundeswehr</u> for at least two years, and it had approved limited German participation in possible NATO military actions, should they become unavoidable, in Kosovo.

Through the first months of the NATO air campaign against Serbia the following spring, moreover, SPD and Green leaders sought to strike a careful balance between the contending demands of multilateralism and anti-militarism. On the one hand, the government strongly endorsed the alliance policy of using airstrikes to compel Serbia to withdraw its military and police forces from Kosovo. On the other hand, Germany largely limited its own involvement to the contribution of 14 aircraft intended to provide reconnaissance and to defend NATO bombers against Serb air defenses while playing a leading role in alliance diplomatic efforts to forge a political solution to the crisis that would involve Russia.[142]

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[140]See, most recently, the party program for the 1998 federal election campaign, "Grün ist der Wechsel"; available from http://www.gruene.de/btwahl98/prog/Wahlprog98/i_prog98.htm; accessed 29 December 1998.

[141]"Aufbruch und Erneuerung -- Deutschlands Weg ins 21. Jahrhundert," Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Bonn, 20 October 1998; available from http://www.spd.de/politik/koalition/uebers.html; accessed 28 December 1998.

[142]See "German Contributions to NATO-led Peace Efforts in the Balkans," 28 April 1999; available from http://www.germany-info.org/govern/kosovo_25_03_99.htm; accessed 30 April

Conclusion

This brief case study offers support for the proposition that political culture can be an important source of external state behavior. I have argued that German political elites have shared a set of beliefs and values, or a political culture, of great relevance to national security policy and that this political culture appears to have shaped several central aspects of German security policy after unification. In particular, Germany's policy toward European security institutions, its efforts to transform the Bundeswehr, and its responses to out-of-area crises and conflicts since 1990, although often puzzling from a neorealist perspective, have been highly consistent with the content of German political culture. More generally, this political culture has greatly limited the country's potential for unilateral, assertive, and, especially, aggressive behavior, placing instead a premium on continuity, stability, and restraint, even as the powerful external constraints of the cold war era loosened. Although political culture alone cannot account for all aspects of German security policy, it nevertheless would seem to constitute a necessary component of any satisfactory explanation.[143]

In view of the impact that German political culture has had, moreover, a continuation of German security policy along the lines laid down in the 1990s seems quite likely well into the next century. While acknowledging the difficulty of making specific predictions, it seems safe to say that German policy will continue to be marked by a degree of multilateralism and anti-militarism that is unusual for a country of Germany's size and resources. In particular, one should expect to see strong across-the-board support for European security institutions; the preservation of conscription notwithstanding its disadvantages; no change in Germany's limited

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1999.

[143]Duffield 1998 offers a multivariate analysis that includes both systemic and other domestic-level factors.

capacity for independent military action; a willingness to deploy forces abroad only in conjunction with other states, especially Germany's NATO and EU partners, and in the presence of an international mandate; and relatively limited levels and forms of participation in such multilateral peace missions. Although not all of these actions would clearly disconfirm neorealism, each would be much easier to understand in terms of Germany's political culture than its external environment and relative power position.

The findings of this analysis suggest, at a minimum, the value of further research into the relationship between political culture and state behavior. I do not mean to imply that other cultural approaches are of little or no relevance. To the contrary, they can and often must be drawn upon in order to account for otherwise puzzling instances of state action or inaction. The concept of global culture is potentially useful for understanding commonalities in the policies of states of diverse sizes, locations, and levels of development. The organizational and strategic culture approaches are well-suited for explaining certain aspects of foreign and, especially, security policy. And yet other cultural concepts of value have been advanced. Of all the possible cultural approaches, however, political culture applies to the broadest range of cases and thus represents the most useful starting point for the analysis of foreign and security policy.

A logical first step in the study of political culture, given the limitations of the existing literature, is to conduct additional case studies. Although German security policy after unification is suggestive of the potential influence of political culture, it provides little basis for making generalizations about its effects and its relative importance vis-á-vis other possible external and internal sources of state behavior. As we have seen, the case of Germany since 1990 is characterized by relatively little intertemporal variation in the independent and dependent variables. In addition, Germany is unlikely to be representative of a large number of states, given its size, wealth, degree of involvement in the international community, unique historical experiences, etc. Thus there is still a need for more basic evidence concerning the presence or

absence of distinct political cultures, their content, and their effects on the policies of other states and during different historical periods. It makes little sense to engage in cross-national comparisons of political culture until its existence and its impact have been established in specific instances.[144]

As case studies cumulate, however, scholars should increasingly seek to situate their work in an explicitly comparative framework. Such an approach is necessary to identify the range of values that different elements of political culture may hold. At a minimum, the case of postwar Germany suggests that significant departures can occur from a realpolitik strategic culture that deems the use of force an effective and legitimate policy instrument.[145] In addition, comparative analysis will help to establish the nature and magnitude of the effects of political culture, both in absolute terms and relative to other possible determinants.

Despite its potential usefulness, the concept of political culture has several important limitations as an explanation of state behavior that must be acknowledged. Above, I noted that not every society can be characterized as possessing a distinct political culture, that even where a distinct political culture can be said to exist, it may offer little or no specific guidance for some aspects of foreign and security policy, and that political culture will be of less use for explaining specific decisions than for comprehending broad patterns and trends in policy. As a result, political culture will best account for all aspects of a state's behavior rarely, if ever, and invocation of the concept will sometimes not be at all necessary.

In addition, one must bear in mind that political culture is not forever fixed. Although often highly stable, it can evolve over time, and it can sometimes be profoundly altered in a relatively short period, as evidenced by the transformation that arguably took place as a result of

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[144]See also Johnston 1995b, 54.

[145]Johnston has argued (1995b, 62) that a realpolitik strategic culture may be quite prevalent because it should be a natural result of the process of state formation.

World War II in the German political culture of the first half of the 20th century. Likewise, one should not assume that Germany's current political culture is immune to change. To the contrary, it is possible to imagine several scenarios in which a singularly hostile international environment could force Germany to jettison the post-cold war policies that its elites have preferred and, ultimately, could discredit the widely-shared beliefs and values on which those policies have been based.[146] For example, the re-emergence of an acute military threat in combination with the loss of alliance security guarantees could prompt Germany to strengthen its conventional forces and even to acquire nuclear weapons. External pressures of this magnitude are, however, highly unlikely. Indeed, much of current German policy is intended precisely to forestall the emergence of such conditions.

Nevertheless, these considerations should not obscure a more general point: although political culture can often be treated as an independent variable in the study of state behavior, analysts must also be attentive to possible temporal variations. Ultimately, cultural explanations should be accompanied by a better understanding of the sources and determinants of culture itself, just as structural theories of international relations, such as neorealism, must answer the question of how particular international structures arise in the first place.

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[146]Duffield 1998.

Appendix: Methodological Considerations

Measuring Political Culture

The concept of political culture, although more restrictive than some cultural variables, is still very broad. It contains a potentially large number of elements. To attempt to measure all of them would demand substantial resources and is, in any case, unnecessary. Instead, one should focus on those aspects of greatest relevance to the type of behavior under investigation. Of course, just what these elements are cannot always be specified in advance, since the content of no two cultures is exactly alike. Rather, it may be advisable in some cases to try to identify them empirically rather than imposing an inappropriate conceptual framework.

In order to provide some guidance, however, it is useful as a general rule to begin the process of describing political culture with a working model of its basic structure in mind, even if this is ultimately modified or discarded. Recent research on the structure of American foreign policy beliefs suggests one potentially useful framework with which to start. This framework posits three particularly important dimensions along which beliefs and values regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of alternative policies can vary: isolationism--internationalism, militarism--anti-militarism, and unilateralism--multilateralism.[147] Because of its history, location, and level of economic dependence, however, unified Germany has had little choice but to be deeply engaged in international affairs. Instead, the principal policy alternatives have concerned the nature of that involvement as well as the appropriate geographical scope (regional or global) of Germany's external activities. Consequently, the empirical discussion addresses only the last two dimensions.

As for the question of where to look for culture, this analysis pays particular, although

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[147]Chittick and Billingsley 1989; Wittkopf 1990; and O. Holsti 1992, 449-50.

not exclusive, attention to the relevant beliefs and values of German political and administrative elites. Robert Putnam has concisely defined the political elite "as those who in any society rank toward the top of the (presumably closely intercorrelated) dimensions of interest, involvement, and influence in politics."[148] This choice of focus offers several advantages over an analysis of political culture in German society at large, especially as it may be revealed in public opinion. First, elite political culture is typically easier to describe and measure comprehensively, short of conducting public opinion polls that are sufficiently elaborate to reveal underlying attitudinal structures. Political elites express their views frequently and often in great detail. The relative abundance of information on elite attitudes, moreover, simplifies the task of measuring political culture independently of behavior in order to avoid tautological reasoning.

Second, political culture as revealed in the attitudes of elites is likely to be more elaborate and detailed. Political leaders and policy makers often have quite sophisticated and complex political belief and value systems, which are also usually more coherent and logically consistent than those of ordinary individuals.[149] Consequently, elite political culture is more likely to contain beliefs and values of relevance to a wide range of foreign and security issues and thus to provide meaningful guidance for policy.

Third, as suggested by the definition of political elites, elite attitudes are likely to have a much more immediate bearing on state behavior than will those of the general public. It is political and administrative elites who are directly responsible for making policy, while members of the general public often have little interest in or knowledge about policy issues. In addition, where public opinion is clearly expressed and appears to run counter to what political leaders prefer, they may defy it or seek to reshape it, especially in the areas of foreign and security

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[148]Putnam 1971, 651.

[149]Putnam 1971, 652; Putnam 1976, 87-88; and Kupchan 1994, 43.

policy.[150]

This is not meant to deny that public opinion can serve as an important constraint on or motive force behind policy, as is suggested by the democratic peace literature, or to suggest that elite and mass attitudes of relevance to foreign and security policy often diverge. To the contrary, although one must be attentive to the possibility of such differences, the two are generally consonant with one another in Germany. One reason is the leveling and homogenization of German society that took place after World War II. As a result, most Germans, including political elites, have undergone highly similarly processes of political socialization. Another reason lies in postwar Germany's political institutions, including its large, catch-all political parties and the widespread use of proportional representation. The attitudes of German political elites are unlikely to deviate significantly for long from those of the general public, since the electoral process tends to reward those who hold more similar attitudes, or who at least act as though they do.[151] Instead, elite views are broadly representative of those of German society as a whole.[152] The main differences are likely to lie in the complexity and specificity of elite and mass attitudes rather than in their fundamental orientations.

Nevertheless, even an elite focus cannot eliminate -- and may even exacerbate in some ways -- the basic methodological difficulty of describing political culture, that of "gaining consistent, reliable access to what is inside people's minds."[153] What individuals write and say

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[150]Page and Shapiro 1992, 172 and 283. German expert Elizabeth Pond has argued that German elites are far more willing to disregard public opinion on important issues than are their American counterparts (Pond 1996, 42).

[151]See also Boulding 1956, 121-22.

[152]Hoffmann-Lange 1991 and 1992. On the congruity of elite and mass opinion on security issues in particular, see Schössler and Weede 1978, 74.

[153]Rosen 1995, 14.

does not always accurately reflect what they actually think. Indeed, political leaders may have more reason than most people to dissimulate or to use communications instrumentally rather than to represent their true beliefs and values.[154]

Although this difficulty cannot be definitively resolved, it can be managed in various ways. This study employs several approaches for increasing the validity of its claims about the existence and content of German political culture. First, rather than rely on only one form of data or another, I have sought to identify and analyze a wide range of sources of potential relevance. In addition to surveying the available secondary literature on German security policy, I have examined many of the public statements and writings of German political leaders and drawn upon other available German government and political party documents and publications.[155] In this way, I have been able to ensure that my sources include the views expressed by individuals from a range of political affiliations and before a variety of audiences. Should regularities in these views be found where differences might be expected to appear, then one can have greater confidence in the validity of one's inferences.[156]

Second, I have checked for consistency between what political elites themselves have written and said in potentially instrumental communications and their views as described in

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[154]On the problem of distinguishing between instrumental and representational communications, see Shimko 1992, 52-53, and O. Holsti 1976, 43-44.

[155]For public statements, I have relied primarily upon Bulletin, which is a quasi-daily compilation of important speeches published by the Federal Press and Information Office; the occasional series of statements and speeches distributed by the German Information Center in New York; and Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik, a monthly publication of the Federal Press and Information Office that contains a variety of documents on security issues.

[156]Risse-Kappen 1995, 41, and Foyle 1997, 148.

relatively objective sources, such as press reports and the analyses of independent experts.[157]

Third, I have conducted confidential interviews with German policy makers, party officials, and other close observers of German policy making. These subjects do not represent a random sample of all potential interviewees within the German political and administrative elites. But those interviewed were generally representative of the main political parties and the principal government agencies responsible for the formulation of German security policy (Table 1).[158] Although not fool-proof, the use of confidentiality, by eliciting more candid responses, should in general yield more accurate inferences about the beliefs of interview subjects. Nevertheless, in view of the obvious difficulties associated with the replication of interview-based findings, it should be stressed that none of the inferences in this study are based on interview material alone. Rather, the interviews have served primarily to corroborate information obtained from public sources.

[Table 1 about here]

Determining the Impact of Political Culture on State Behavior

The second general task to be accomplished, that of determining the influence of German political culture on German security policy, is complicated by the fact that this paper considers only a single case, and then only over a relatively brief time span. As a result, there is no cross-

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[157]For press reports, I have drawn upon the extensive clipping files of the Press Documentation Office of the Bundestag and of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation as well as the translations contained in the daily reports of the U.S. government's Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

[158]The principal exception is the absence of interviews with members of the Green party, which was not represented in the German parliament at the time the interviews were conducted.

national and little temporal variation in the independent and dependent variables to provide analytical leverage. In such situations, one can make recourse to two basic methods.[159] Ideally, one would employ what Alexander George has termed the "process-tracing" procedure, which involves investigating and explaining the decision process or causal pathways by which various initial conditions are translated into outcomes.[160]

Given space constraints, however, this paper places primary emphasis here on what George has called the "congruence" procedure.[161] By this method, one seeks simply to establish whether a correspondence exists between the dependent variable and the types of policy outcomes that one would logically expect to find, given the observed values of the various independent variables under consideration. The presence of such a correspondence is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for establishing causality. Thus the paper attempts to establish that several important aspects of German security policy after unification have been inconsistent with the expectations generated, or at least not fully explained, by neorealism, while being congruent with what consideration of German political culture would lead one to predict.

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[159]These methods are described in George 1979, 104-19, and George and McKeown 1985, 29-41.

[160]See also Khong 1992, 64, and Johnston 1995a, 49.

[161]Greater use of process tracing is made in Duffield 1998.

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Table 1

Interview Subjects

German Officials

Government Officials

Chancellory	3
Foreign Ministry	8
Defense Ministry	6
German Embassy, Washington, D.C.	4
German Mission to NATO, Brussels	3

Political Party Officials

Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	2
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	4
Free Democratic Party (FDP)	4

Officials in Party-affiliated Research Institutes

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (CDU)	2
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (SPD)	2

Other Interviews

U.S. Government Officials

      Department of State   2

      Department of Defense   4

      U.S. Embassy, Bonn   2

      U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels   3

NATO Officials   5

Note: Interviews were conducted over a two-year time period spanning two trips to Germany in 1993 and 1994. Several individuals were interviewed twice.