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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 UN 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 UN-authorized flight ban over Bosnia. To many observers at the time, Germany's response seemed inconsistent with its 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 Germany's behavior 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 became prominent 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 international relations 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 at-

   1. Legro 1996.

tention 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 behavior.[2] This neglect is unjustified. Like other cultural variables, political culture promises to explain phenomena that are puzzling from the perspective of leading noncultural 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, in this article I seek to remedy the previous neglect of political culture in the study of foreign and security policy. First, I suggest the need to consider culture as a variable by describing the failure of neorealism to predict German security policy after unification. I then assess the various cultural approaches to explaining state behavior that have been advanced in recent years. After noting the similarities in these approaches, I discuss the important differences that mark them and identify reasons for the greater utility of political culture in comparison with alternative cultural concepts.

In the final section I illustrate the explanatory power of the political culture approach by applying it to the case of German security policy after unification. After describing the antimilitarist and multilateralist sentiments that have characterized German political culture, I show 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. I conclude by offering 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. 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

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2. Throughout the article, I use the term *state behavior* as a short-hand expression for its external aspects, especially foreign and national security policy.

3. See, especially, Waltz 1979, 67–72.

4. Two leading examples are Posen 1984; and Walt 1987. See also Elman 1995; and 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, Layne, Waltz, and others have made a number of

swept away many of the external constraints that had straitjacketed 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 augmented the Federal 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 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 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 I discuss in greater detail later. 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

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inferences about future German behavior on the basis of neorealist premises. See Mearsheimer 1990; Layne 1993; and Waltz 1993. 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 (for example, Anderson and Goodman 1993; Crawford 1996; and Lantis 1996). In any case, neorealism, more than most other theoretical approaches, promises to account for the broad thrust of German behavior.

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 per capita and the balance of payments. Rittberger 1992.

7. Indeed, Mearsheimer's analysis of Europe after the Cold War is predicated on this assumption. Mearsheimer 1990. 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, 67.

stability in the region. In addition, it has continued to emphasize the use of nonmilitary 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 acquiring 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.

Over the years, scholars have 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 are strategic, organizational, political-military, and world culture; and numerous kindred concepts, such as beliefs, ideology, norms, and national character, have also been employed.[11] These seemingly diverse approaches share a number of characteristics

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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,b. Leading expositions of organizational culture have been Legro 1995 and 1996; and

that collectively distinguish them from materialist theories such as neorealism, and, as will be discussed, 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.

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]

Culture should also 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] Although institutionalization may be an important mechanism through which culture may work, to equate culture with institutions risks overlooking the

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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 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.

13. See, for example, Tucker 1987; Ebel, Taras, and Cochrane 1991; and the discussions of the early strategic culture literature in Kupchan 1994, 28; and Johnston 1995a, 5–7.

14. See, for example, Kupchan 1994, 26; and Johnston 1995a, 19.

15. Berger 1998, 11–12.

16. Kupchan 1994, 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.

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, maintaining the distinction is important 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 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 when compared 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 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 material structures ultimately place some constraints on cultural content.[20]

Cultures are resistant to change for a number of reasons. First, the fact that they are 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 cultural 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, whereas inconsistent data tend to be ignored, rejected, or distorted in order to make them compatible with prevailing cognitive structures.[22] Fourth,

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

18. See Pye 1968, 221; and Elkins and Simeon 1979, 130.

19. See also Berger 1998, 9.

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

21. See also Berger 1998, 15.

22. Cognitive consistency is discussed in Jervis 1976, chap. 4; George 1980, 19–20, 56, 61–66; Nisbett and Ross 1980, chap. 8; and Shimko 1991, 28–32.

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 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 collective behavior. These causal pathways correspond to the tasks involved in all but 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. 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 and others to be magnified. Furthermore, culture influences how those features of the surrounding landscape and external events that do register on people's minds are interpreted and understood; that is, 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, culture shapes the formulation and identification of the behaviors available for advancing or defending the group's interests in a particular context. At a deep level, it delimits the universe of possible actions. Culture conditions the types of options that are seen to exist. Consequently, some alternatives may not even be conceived of.[29] In addition, culture defines the instruments and tactics that are judged

23. Larson 1994, 25.

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

25. Khong has identified a very similar set of tasks. Khong 1992, 10, 20–22. Two other instructive discussions of the various ways in which beliefs can affect policymaking are 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. See Verba 1965, 517; Klein 1991; Kupchan 1994, 6, 27; Legro 1995, 21; Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 60–62; and Kier 1997, 5, 21, 38.

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

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

acceptable, appropriate, or legitimate within the broader set of those that are imaginable, thereby placing further limits on the types of 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. It conditions understandings of the likely outcomes of alternative courses of action as well as shapes assessments of the costs and benefits and thus the desirability of the various possible outcomes.[32]

The overall effect of culture 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 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 heavily criticized 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 because they describe potential pitfalls to be avoided, few, if any, have revealed intrinsic flaws in the concept of culture itself. Rather, they are primarily concerned with the problematic ways in which the concept 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 national character that preceded them, were ac-

30. See Elkins and Simeon 1979, 131; Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky 1990, 272; Kupchan 1994, 6, 27, 90; and Katzenstein 1996a, 19. A closely related concept is that of national role conceptions, which are policymakers' definitions of the actions that are suitable to their state and the functions that their state should perform on a continuing basis. See Holsti 1970; and Vertzberger 1990, 284–93.

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

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

33. See Rockman 1976, 1–4; Elkins and Simeon 1979, 133, 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. See Pateman 1971; Rogowski 1974; and Barry 1978.

cused 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 an 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 multidimensional 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 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 earlier, 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 within 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,

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38. Inkeles 1997.
39. Almond and Verba 1963.
40. See Pye 1973, 71; Verba 1980, 402–405; and Welch 1993, 43.
41. See Aberbach, Chesney, and Rockman 1975, 8; Rockman 1976; Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981, 33–35; Laitin 1988, 591–93; and Pye 1991, 500–502.
42. See Pye 1973, 67; Pye 1991, 504; and Kupchan 1994, 26.
43. See Pateman 1971; Kavanagh 1972, 9, 49; and Barry 1978, 89–92. See also Almond and Verba 1963, 50; Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981, 30–31; Kupchan 1994, 26–27; and Berger 1996, 328.
44. See Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1994, 3; and Brightman 1995, 515–18.
45. See Kupchan 1994, 26; Rosen 1995, 13–14; and Desch 1998, 150–52.
46. See Pye 1973, 67–68; Rogowski 1974, 13; and Inkeles 1997, viii.
47. On power, see, for example, Wohlforth 1993, chap. 1.

"The 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 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: the nature of the culture-bearing unit; the breadth of the issue-areas to which a particular concept applies; and 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 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

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48. Desch 1998, 152.
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.
50. In addition to the sources cited earlier, see Wendt and Barnett 1993.
51. See Kavanaugh 1972, 20; and Vertzberger 1990, 194–200.

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 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 policymaking. 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 only to certain aspects of foreign and security policy, primarily those in the formulation or execution of which the organization concerned plays a formal role. Previous applications of the concept to issues such as military doctrine and wartime decisions 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 sub-units 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 national character, political culture, political-military culture, and strategic culture.

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52. Some of the following limitations also apply to the cultures of other types of substate units.

53. Legro offers a useful framework for determining when organizational culture is likely to be influential. Legro 1995, 26–27.

54. Kier 1997.

55. As a leading proponent of the approach acknowledges, "Military 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 identifies distinct subcultures within the British army, which itself forms only a part of the British armed forces. Kier 1997, 138ff.

56. Vertzberger 1990, 272.

Issue-areas and ideational content. To narrow the field yet further, 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. 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 are unduly narrow in scope and applicability. One such approach, though not one that uses the term *culture,* can 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. But the limited range of variables that it considers prevents it from serving 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 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 the political culture approach, for two main reasons. First, they have usually been defined in ways that preclude their applicability to the full range of state behaviors 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] The concept of political-military culture may have broader applicability; yet it, too, might be inadequate for explaining important elements of foreign policy, given its explicit focus on matters of defense, security, and the military.[63]

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57. Terhune 1971, 204. Other valuable discussions include Inkeles and Levinson 1969; Elgström 1994; and Inkeles 1997.
58. See Pye 1968, 219; and Pye 1973, 68. See also Verba 1965, 523–24.
59. For an overview of the literature, see Owen 1994.
60. See Berger 1993, 1996, 1997, and 1998.
61. See, for example, Snyder 1977; and Gray 1981.
62. See Klein 1991; Kupchan 1994; and Johnston 1995a,b.
63. Berger 1998, 15.

A second reason for the greater utility of the political culture approach 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 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 particularly 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 less obvious.[67] As a result, decision makers can or must more readily fall back on their preexisting world views and notions of the consequences of alternative policies.

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

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64. Johnston 1995a, 37.

65. Kupchan 1994, 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. See Gaenslen 1986, 82; Vertzberger 1990, 276; and Gaenslen 1997, 267–70. See also Jacobsen 1995, 293.

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.

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.

Nevertheless, where a single political culture can be said to exist, and especially where it is detailed, comprehensive, and internally consistent, it may exert a strong influence over and thus offer a parsimonious explanation of important aspects of foreign and security policy. Moreover, even if there is no comprehensive political culture, those aspects of relevance to external state behavior may be homogeneous. And even where attitudinal differences go further, political culture may 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

In the remainder of the article I 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 task is to determine whether Germans indeed share a distinct political culture 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 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? How should the values of the components of political culture that are of interest be established? In the following analysis, I seek to locate German political culture within two particularly important dimensions in which attitudes can vary about the effectiveness and appro-

69. Verba 1965, 524.
70. Ibid., 520.
71. Kier 1997, 26–27.
72. Gaenslen 1997, 273.

priateness of alternative policies: militarism–antimilitarism and unilateralism–multilateralism. The analysis pays particular, though not exclusive, attention to the relevant beliefs and values of German political and administrative elites. I draw 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 task of discerning the behavioral impact of political culture, I place 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.

German Political Culture in the 1990s

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 involvement 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 sixteen 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, 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

73. A more detailed and comprehensive description appears in Duffield 1998.
74. In this article I examine 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. For example, Asmus 1994.
76. Catherine Kelleher, quoted in U.S. House 1992, 36.
77. See also Katzenstein 1996a, 249.

end to the division of Germany may have affirmed and reinforced them by seemingly vindicating and rewarding postwar policy principles and practices.

Antimilitarism.   Where then does German political culture fall within the dimensions of militarism–antimilitarism and unilateralism–multilateralism? One of the most striking aspects of German political culture concerns the military and the use of force. Since World War II, antimilitarism 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] 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 peacekeeping 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

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

81. See Clemens 1993, 235, 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 *The New York Times*, 28 January 1999, 3.

83. See also Asmus 1993a, 145; and Meiers 1995, 82–84.

84. Schwarz 1985.

means of security policy."[85] Not surprisingly, nonmilitary 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 rooted in Germany's recent past helps to locate German political culture within 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, unilateralism. Such sentiments have been expressed by virtually all German political leaders.[89] This norm has been reinforced by commonly held cause–effect beliefs. German leaders have feared the consequences of unilateralism, believing that it can lead only 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 German objectives.[93] They are useful for

85. Müller 1992, 162. See also *Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik*, 11 (November 1993), 9; Kinkel 1994c, 714; Kinkel 1994d, 864; and Federal Ministry of Defence 1994.

86. See Asmus 1993a, 146, 199; and Herzog 1995, 162.

87. See Kelleher 1985, 85–86; Young 1994; and Katzenstein 1996a, 179.

88. von Bredow 1992, 291.

89. See, for example, Kohl 1992, 77–78; Kinkel 1994c, 713; Schröder 1999; the remarks of Defense Minister Volker Rühe reported in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 September 1993, 12; and SPD leader Rudolf Scharping, as quoted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: West Europe* (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 *The Week in Germany*, 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 Volker Rühe, cited in FBIS, 25 November 1994, 18.

93. See, for example, Peters 1992, 54–57; and Müller 1992, 132.

reassuring Germany's neighbors, and they are essential for avoiding diplomatic iso-
lation 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
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 insti-
tutions is the tremendous importance that German leaders have attached to *Berechen-
barkeit*, or calculability, in foreign policy.[98] They have been anxious for their country
to be perceived as a reliable, predictable, dependable partner, a concern they fre-
quently and openly articulate.[99] This imperative "has created a presumption against
any government reneging upon, let alone renouncing, the basic substance of estab-
lished foreign-policy commitments."[100] Not to fulfill Germany's international obliga-
tions and responsibilities would undermine the country's credibility in the eyes of its
partners. Thus stability and continuity in German security policy have become lead-
ing normative guidelines in their own right.

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 important, 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 Social Democratic party (SPD) expressed satisfaction

94. For example, Kohl 1993a, 610.
95. See also Müller 1992, 162; Schlör 1993, 6–7; and Josef Joffe in *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 28 March
1991, 4, trans. in FBIS, 2 April 1991, 8.
96. Morgan 1990, 149; Stent 1990–91, 69; Müller 1992, 162; Anderson and Goodman 1993, 24, 60–61;
Kelleher and Fisher 1994, 170–71; and *Die Zeit,* 21 September 1990, 1.
97. Kohl 1993a, 610. See also Asmus 1991, vii; and Linnenkamp 1992, 94.
98. See Schweigler 1984, 86–88; Clemens 1989, 242–43; Müller 1992, 161; and Pond 1996, 25.
99. See 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.
101. Even if the German armed forces were to possess a distinct organizational culture, their ability to
influence German national security policy would be highly limited, since the postwar organizational struc-
ture of the government was designed to ensure tight civilian control of the military.

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 had on German state behavior since 1990? In this section I examine the influence of political culture on three main areas of Germany's security policy after unification: its policy toward Europe's security institutions, the transformation of the *Bundeswehr*, 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 observers 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 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]

102. See, for example, Scharping 1994; and Schröder 1998. See also 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 that distinctions between German governments led by different parties have been "least pronounced in foreign and defense policy." Edinger 1986, 180.

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 later.

105. See also Berger 1998, 186–87.

106. For representative statements, see Kohl 1993b; Kinkel 1994a; Rühe 1993a; Klose 1993; 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 by the author with General John Galvin, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, Harrisburg, Virginia, 16 December 1993.

At the same time, Germany has been at the forefront of recent efforts to create a West European security and defense identity. Jointly with France, Germany proposed that the European Community develop a common foreign and security policy, 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 Western European Union and to bring that body within the framework of the European Union where it could implement defense-related aspects of the common foreign and security policy.[110] In 1992 Germany and France elaborated plans to expand the existing Franco-German brigade into an integrated "Eurocorps," which other Western European Union members were invited to join.[111] These efforts to give the European security and defense identity 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 that would include the former Warsaw Pact states.[114] Subsequently, German leaders have worked to strengthen further NATO and Western European Union links with their country's eastern neighbors and have advocated that these bodies be open to new members, though they have been quick to caution that enlargement should not be allowed to weaken the alliances or unduly strain 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 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

109. The key Franco-German proposals were "Gemeinsame Botschaft," *Bulletin,* 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,* 117 (18 October 1991), 929–31.

110. Interviews by the author with German Foreign Ministry officials, Bonn, 15 July 1993 and 21 June 1994.

111. See *The 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 common foreign and security policy in Schröder 1999; and "Ziele und Schwerpunkte der deutschen Präsidentschaft im Rat der Europäischen Union," available from <http:www.auswaertiges-amt.de/6_archiv/2p/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,* 46 (20 May 1994), 414.

114. "U.S.–German Joint Statement on the Transatlantic Community," U.S. Department of State Dispatch (7 October 1991), 736–37.

115. See, especially, Rühe 1993b.

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 value on European security institutions independently of any careful cost-benefit calculations. They help to explain why German officials have seen no 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]

The transformation of the *Bundeswehr*.   A second area in which German political culture has arguably had a noticeable impact is in the German armed forces. Since 1990, the *Bundeswehr* has been profoundly transformed. The armed forces have been not only 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 have also been fundamentally restructured. During the Cold War nearly all regular *Bundeswehr* units were maintained at a high level of readiness, whereas now the majority are heavily dependent on 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 tradition-

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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.

119. For details, see "Konzeptionelle Leitlinie," reprinted in *Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik,* 9 (September 1994), 47; and "Anpassung der Streitkräfte, der Territorialen Verwaltung und der Stationierung der Bundeswehr," reprinted in *Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik,* 7 (July 1995), 30–46.

ally 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 military usefulness and the political legitimacy of conscription have been regularly called into question. Even France, 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 antimilitarism that it contains.[122] On the one hand, antimilitarism lies 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, antimilitarism 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 though an increasing number of commentators have observed that Germany has nothing to fear from a professional army.[126] These attitudes have ensured the preservation of conscription in Germany, even as Germany's neighbors have moved to abandon the draft.

German responses to out-of-area crises and conflicts. A third major area of German security policy in which political culture appears to have exerted considerable influence is Germany'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-

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120. Young 1992 and 1994.

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 earlier are consistent with the decided preference for nonmilitary instruments that characterizes German political culture.

123. See Young 1994, 12, 16, and Kelleher 1985, 85–86.

124. See *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; and FBIS, 7 February 1994, 17. See also Berger 1998, 170, 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 *Die Zeit*, 19 February 1993, 5.

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 events, especially the fighting in the former Yugoslavia, threatened to affect Germany directly; the country has also repeatedly come under pressure from the UN and its allies to contribute to a wide variety of international actions outside the NATO area intended to keep or restore the peace. 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. *Bundeswehr* 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 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 been deployed outside the NATO area, they have done so only in relatively small numbers and have been restricted almost exclusively to roles involving 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 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

127. See, for example, Federal Ministry of Defense 1994, 84.
128. See Kaiser and Becher 1992, 40; Asmus 1993a, 144; and Schlör 1993, 6.
129. See, for example, Gordon 1994.
130. Duffield 1998, chap. 8. A useful, if now somewhat dated, overview is Müller 1994.
131. For example, Kaiser and Becher 1992.

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 primárily 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 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 of risk involved, and its primarily noncombat 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 antimilitarist 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 and that 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 inter-

132. For example, Kinkel 1994b, 657–58.
133. See, for example, *The Washington Post*, 1 July 1995, A1; *The Washington Post*, 19 August 1995, A15; *Die Welt*, 4 October 1995, 1; and *Der Spiegel*, 16 October 1995, 24–27.
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 *Die Zeit*, 30 (17 July 1992), 1.
135. For corresponding public opinion data, see Juhász and Rattinger 1992, tab. 2.

national 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 considered earlier, 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 describes 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 Union[139] and Free Democratic party 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 primarily by antimilitarist 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

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

137. See, for example, *Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik*, 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.

139. The Union consists of the Christian Democratic Union and the Bavaria-based Christian Social Union, which together form a single parliamentary group in the *Bundestag*.

by the other. Although few, if any, members of the Union and the Free Democratic party 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 clearly proscribed some theoretically possible policy responses.

Nevertheless, the installation of an SPD–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 advocated German withdrawal from NATO, called for the abolition of conscription and the eventual dissolution of the *Bundeswehr*, and 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 the views of members of the pragmatic *Realo* 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, deferred any fundamental restructuring of the *Bundeswehr* for at least two years, and 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 antimilitarism. On the one hand, the government strongly endorsed the alliance policy of using air strikes 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 fourteen 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]

Conclusion

This brief case study offers support for the proposition that political culture can be an important source of external state behavior. I contend that German political elites

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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 1999.

have shared a set of beliefs and values—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, a continuation of German security policy along the lines laid down in the 1990s seems quite likely well into the next century. While I acknowledge 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 antimilitarism 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 capacity for independent military action; a willingness to deploy forces abroad only in conjunction with other states, especially Germany's NATO and European Union 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 on 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 suggests the potential influence of political culture, it pro-

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143. For a multivariate analysis that includes both systemic and other domestic-level factors, see Duffield 1998.

vides little basis for making generalizations about its effects and its relative impor-
tance vis-à-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 inter-
temporal 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,
and so on. 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 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 oc-
cur 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 estab-
lish 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 impor-
tant limitations as an explanation of state behavior that must be acknowledged. Ear-
lier I noted that not every society can be characterized as possessing a distinct politi-
cal 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. Consequently, 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. Al-
though often highly stable, it can evolve over time, and it can sometimes be pro-
foundly altered in a relatively short period, as evidenced by the transformation that
arguably took place as a result of World War II in the German political culture of the
first half of the twentieth century. Likewise, one should not assume that Germany's
current political culture is immune to change. To the contrary, it is possible to imag-
ine 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 reemergence 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

144. See also Johnston 1995b, 54.
145. Johnston has argued that a *realpolitik* strategic culture may be quite prevalent because it should be
a natural result of the process of state formation. Johnston 1995b, 62.
146. Duffield 1998.

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.

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 within which beliefs and values regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of alternative policies can vary: isolationism—internationalism, militarism–antimilitarism, and unilateralism–multilateralism.[147] Because of unified Germany's history, location, and level of economic dependence, however, it 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 in this article addresses only the last two dimensions.

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

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147. See Chittick and Billingsley 1989; Wittkopf 1990; and Holsti 1992, 449–50.
148. Putnam 1971, 651.

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 policymakers 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, whereas 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, leaders may defy it or seek to reshape it, especially in the areas of foreign and security policy.[150]

I do not mean 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 similar 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 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

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149. See Putnam 1971, 652; Putnam 1976, 87–88; and Kupchan 1994, 43.
150. Page and Shapiro 1992, 172, 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.
154. On the problem of distinguishing between instrumental and representational communications, see Shimko 1992, 52–53; and Holsti 1976, 43–44.

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 on 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 relatively objective sources, such as press reports and the analyses of independent experts.[157] Third, I have conducted confidential interviews with German policymakers, party officials, and other close observers of German policymaking. 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 foolproof, 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 replicating interview-based findings, it should be stressed that the inferences in this study are not based on interview material alone. Rather, the interviews served primarily to corroborate information obtained from public sources.

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 article considers only a single case, and then only over a relatively brief time span. As a result, there is no cross-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, I place primary emphasis here on what George has called the "congruence" procedure.[161] By this method, one seeks simply to establish whether a cor-

155. For public statements, I have relied primarily on *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. See Risse-Kappen 1995, 41; and Foyle 1997, 148.

157. For press reports, I have drawn on the extensive clipping files of the Press Documentation Office of the *Bundestag* and of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and on 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.

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.

TABLE 1. *Interview subjects*

	Germans
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

	Others
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 by the author over a two-year period spanning two trips to Europe in 1993 and 1994. Several individuals were interviewed twice.

respondence 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 I attempt 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, whereas they are congruent with what consideration of German political culture would lead one to predict.

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