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**GERMAN DIPLOMACY IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:
FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH THE CZECH REPUBLIC
AND POLAND**

1990-1998

PHD

**LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
& POLITICAL SCIENCE**

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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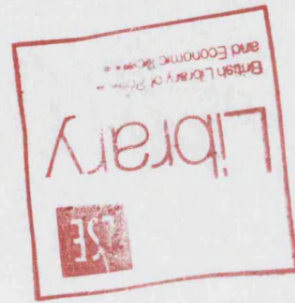
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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that German unification in October 1990, the Soviet Empire's disintegration in 1991, and the end of the Cold War had profound implications for the conduct of Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour. Its aim is to compare and contrast German foreign policy towards Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) and Poland between 1990 and 1998. Germany's foreign policy towards both states was guided by three crucial components: political reconciliation, economic, and security interests. By discussing the interplay between agential and structural sources of Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour, this thesis provides an exhaustive description of how German influence manifested itself in these states, and how it was channelled and constrained. Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour towards both states helps to explain three problems: the manifold implications of Germany's return to the European *Mittellage* (centre); Germany's ability to manage complex bilateral relationships despite being burdened by history, and the multi-level nature of its foreign and security policy apparatus.

Thesis Certification

I, Chad S. Peterson, declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Chad S. Peterson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several individuals have guided me through the long process of writing a Ph. D. thesis. I would especially like to thank my supervisor, Professor Christopher Hill, for his unrelenting academic support during my studies at the LSE and after his move to Cambridge University. His dedication and quality of advice were invaluable. Without his encouragement and personal support, it would have been impossible to complete the thesis.

My family and friends, in all parts of the world, provided me with an immense amount of personal and financial support while I was writing my thesis. I would like to thank my parents and grandparents in the United States and Germany for their financial support and confidence in my abilities. My grandfather, Hal C. Peterson, was an inspirational light for me in all matters pertaining to international relations. I am eternally grateful to my entire family for their help and constant encouragement.

I would also like to thank the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals who administer the Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme for their generous financial support and the Department of International Relations at the LSE for sponsoring my attendance at several conferences. I would like to thank the numerous experts who agreed to speak to me about my thesis. I am also indebted to Rear Admiral Richard Cobbold and Dr. Jonathan Eyal at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Dr. Robert McGeehan, Dr. Michael Sutton and Dr. Neil Partrick for their personal and professional support. I would also like to thank the U.S. State Department, in particular the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, Finland, for allowing me to take time off to finish my thesis.

Last, but not least, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Dr. Cécile Malet-Dagréou. She has been a constant force in my personal and professional development for the last fifteen years and she was instrumental in helping me get through the less inspiring days of writing a thesis and getting me back on track. I could not have asked for a better companion in life.

The librarians and staff of the following institutions in the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the United States deserve my gratitude for their support:

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bulletin	<i>Bulletin der Bundesregierung</i>
BdV	Bund der Vertriebenen
BfdiP	<i>Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik</i>
BfpB	Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung
BI-Ost	Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien
BMF	Bundesministerium der Finanzen
BMVg	Bundesministerium für Verteidigung
BMWi	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft
BPA	Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Association
CEI	Central European Initiative
CGF	Central Group Forces
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSFR	Czech and Slovak Federal Republic
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Social Union)
DIW	Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung
DGAP	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik
DPA	Deutsche Presse Agentur
EAPC	European-Atlantic Partnership Council
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECE	East Central Europe
EDC	European Defence Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
EC	European Community
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
EU	European Union
FAZ	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
FBIS	<i>Foreign Broadcast Information Service</i>
FDI	foreign direct investment
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GDR	German Democratic Republic
G-7	Group of Seven
G-24	Group of Twenty-Four
HSFK	Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung

IIR	Institute of International Relations (Prague, Czech Republic)
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
MMG	<i>Militärpolitische und militärstrategische Grundlagen und konzeptionelle Grundrichtung der Neugestaltung der Bundeswehr</i>
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAP	Polish Press Agency
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Aid for the Reconstruction of Economies
PJC	NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
SPD	Social Democrat Party
UN/ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
VPR	<i>Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien</i>
WEU	Western European Union
WGF	Western Group Forces
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organisation

PERSONAL ABBREVIATIONS

MT	My Translation
----	----------------

INTRODUCTION

In response to a question on the internal state of a unified Germany, the external consequences of unification¹, and their implications for German foreign policy, German President Richard von Weizsäcker declared in 1992:

Some partners and neighbours originally thought that the Germans were the only ones who profited from the end of the Cold War. They worried about the possible consequences of Germany's behaviour after unification. In the context of unification, we were quickly regarded as an obstinate great power. Now it is apparent that we are experiencing difficulties and there is talk of a 'German sickness'. In reality, Germany is neither a giant or sick.²

He not only indirectly criticised those individuals portraying a unified Germany as the ultimate benefactor of the end of the Cold War, but also implied that the immense financial burdens imposed by unification had not reduced it to Europe's 'sick man'. Between 1990 and 1998, Germany was perceived by its Western and Eastern European neighbours as wavering from one extreme to the other.

The future of Germany's socio-political and economic development after unification was a source of concern, especially for the new independent states in East Central Europe (ECE).³ Weizsäcker's critical observations raise two important questions: what impact has unification had on Bonn's political leadership and the formulation and implementation of its foreign and security policy? More specifically, how has unification shaped Germany's foreign

¹'Unification' (*Vereinigung*) and 'reunification' (*Wiedervereinigung*) were used interchangeably after 1990, the latter being more frequent. 'Unification' refers to the re-creation of a unified single German state. The term 'reunification' as defined in the German *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) suggests that Germany would return to its 1937 borders. This is inappropriate: there were no plans to return Germany's *Ostgebiete* (Eastern territories) after unification in 1990.

²Gunter Hoffmann and Werner A. Perger, *Richard von Weizsäcker im Gespräch* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1992), p. 95. MT.

³ECE includes the countries of the Visegrád Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia).

relations with Czechoslovakia (CSFR)⁴ and Poland from unification on 3 October 1990 to 27 September 1998?⁵

German diplomacy in the twentieth century has been the subject of countless analyses. James Der Derian defines diplomacy by the following criteria:

It is the formal means by which the self-identity of the sovereign state is constituted and articulated through external relations with other states. Like the dialogue from which it is constructed, diplomacy requires and seeks to mediate otherness through the use of persuasion and force, promises and threats, codes and symbols. ... Diplomacy is now considered to be an essential international institution which provides the norms, protocols, and practices for reconciliation of differences between normal states. ... Diplomacy remains, however, the institution by which states pursue their own particular interests.⁶

Throughout the Cold War, the objectives of West German diplomacy were intimately linked to the successful conclusion of the 'German question'. Observers and policy-makers from Germany and abroad struggled to understand its numerous incarnations. As W. R. Smyser pointed out, 'from 1945 to 1990 the struggle over Germany helped shape the world. It formed the central vortex of the Cold War, sucking in every state in Europe and many beyond'.⁷ The 'German question' was on the policy-making agenda of every post-Second World War West German government in Bonn and East German government in East Berlin. Overcoming the division of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) after the Second World War became the foremost domestic policy goal of every Bonn government from 1949 onwards. On the other hand, East Berlin, under the Soviet yoke, was quite content with Germany's division and position as one of the most privileged Soviet satellite states.

⁴The CSFR was dissolved on 1 January 1993. There were two successor states: the Czech Republic and Republic of Slovakia.

⁵Chancellor Kohl's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party lost the federal elections on 27 September 1998, but he remained chancellor until 27 October 1998.

⁶James Der Derian, 'Diplomacy' in Joel Krieger (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to the Politics of the World* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 244-245.

⁷W. R. Smyser, *From Yalta to Berlin: The Cold War Struggle over Germany* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), p. xvii.

The fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 – twenty-seven years after its erection and coincidentally the same date as the proclamation of the Weimar Republic in 1918 and *Reichkristallnacht* in 1938 – followed by German unification on 3 October 1990, significantly altered the nature of the ‘German question’. The Cold War’s end and Soviet Union’s disintegration put into question its new incarnation: how would a unified Germany manage its newly won sovereignty and enhanced geographical status in international relations? More importantly, how would Germany’s internal and external transformation affect the conduct of its foreign relations with its two immediate neighbours to the east, the CSFR and Poland? This thesis will examine Germany’s foreign and security policy – also known as *Ostpolitik*⁸ – towards the CSFR (Czech Republic) and Poland from German unification to the political demise of Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s government, and the domestic and external forces that shaped it.⁹ The following questions will be answered: What are the socio-political, economic and security dimensions of *Ostpolitik* after unification? Why and how did ECE evolve as one of the most significant but potentially disturbing geographical areas in German foreign and security policy-making calculations after 1990?

Germany’s position in Europe was fundamentally changed by unification, the Soviet Union’s collapse, and the slow decline of American hegemony in Europe once the Cold War was over. Germany sought its national identity, *raison d’être*, future role and position in an evolving European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and considered its bilateral relations with ECE states. Unification placed Germany back into the *Mittellage* (geographical centre) of Europe, a position offering innumerable challenges to Germany’s foreign policy-makers. The extension of its Eastern frontier exposed the existence of ‘new’ *Ostprobleme* (Eastern problems) and revealed the German political leadership’s

⁸The term ‘*Ostpolitik*’ can be traced to Karl Georg Pfeleiderer, a Free Democratic Party (FDP) member of the *Bundestag* in the early 1950s. See Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress, *A History of West Germany: From Shadow to Substance 1945-1963*. Vol. 2 (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 319, 375-376.

⁹Christopher Hill defines ‘foreign policy’ as ‘the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations’. See Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. 3.

penchant to wallow in what could, retrospectively, be described as *Ost-Angst* (Eastern anxiety): a condition with complex historical roots and profound implications for Germany's development after 1990. The Soviet Union's demise, coupled with the subsequent withdrawal of its conventional and nuclear infrastructure from former Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) states between 1990 and 1994 undeniably facilitated a more proactive German involvement in the political and economic affairs of its Eastern neighbours due to its position in the *Mittellage* once again. The Soviet Union's retreat from ECE left a political, economic, and military void in the region that could be partially filled by a unified Germany looking increasingly eastwards but not intent on severing its extensive *Westbindung* (Western ties).

Germany's Eastern *problématique* was not new if one considers the historical, political, economic, and cultural significance of ECE in its history. The years 1918 and 1989 are crucial to understand the events that profoundly shaped the twentieth century and the course of German history. According to Lonnie Johnson, 'both dates mark the demise of great empires, a recession of Russian influence in the region as a consequence of domestic revolution and turmoil, the advent of democracy for oppressed peoples and the beginning of self-determination'.¹⁰ However, leaving aside the Soviet Empire's collapse and its implications for ECE for a moment, there were multiple historical, economic, and cultural arguments influencing a unified Germany to look eastwards. History is a powerful tool to assess the rich but often destructive links between Germany and ECE. Jochen Thies, for example, declared that history would be linked to the significance of this region for Germany: 'Germany cannot escape from it, nor can the country run away from the new realities of geography. There is no relief from being positioned in the middle of Europe'.¹¹ Walter Russell Mead agreed: 'Germany's involvement with the East and the East's influence on German life are facts of nature, not arbitrary and baffling choices made by misguided German

¹⁰Lonnie Johnson, *Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 295.

¹¹Jochen Thies, 'Germany & Eastern Europe, Past & Future' in Arnulf Baring (ed.), *Germany's New Position in Europe: Problems and Perspectives* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), p. 72.

politicians'.¹² A sense of manifest destiny and historical obligation drew Germany eastwards as no German politician could possibly resist Mitteleuropa's siren cries.

With an extended Eastern frontier, a unified Germany re-emerged in a strikingly familiar territorial and historical position vis-à-vis its Western and Eastern European neighbours. Its geographical position on the eve of the First World War looked remarkably similar after 1990. There were, however, distinct differences. According to Victor Gray, 'unlike 1914, however, Franco-German enmity has been replaced by a firm German anchor in the West. And to those who fear a return to 1933, there is not only that anchor in the West but a half of century of successful experience with democracy to provide assurance to the contrary'.¹³ The FRG, with its allies' support, had successfully pursued a policy of *Westbindung* or *Westintegration* (Western integration) after 1949. The Bismarckian *Schaukelpolitik* (balancing policy between East and West), which characterised German foreign policy throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had become obsolete after 1949. *Westbindung* and Ostpolitik represented two sides of the same coin. The pursuit of a German *Sonderweg* (special path) in ECE and revival of residual German-Russian links that would alienate Mitteleuropa after unification were made more complicated by Germany's extensive *Westbindung* after 1949.

Furthermore, the powerful legacy of historical agreements and treaties concluded between Germany and Russia exerted a profound influence on German as well as East and Central European decision-making structures. In ECE, the prospect of a Bonn-Moscow rapprochement after unification raised fears which the spectre of the Treaty of Rapallo (1922) and the Hitler-Stalin Pact (1939) intensified. Historical memories generated by these questionable bilateral agreements cast doubts on the real motives underlying Germany's Eastern 'urge' after unification. History's lessons, however, taught its political leadership that

¹²Walter Russell Mead, 'The Once and Future Reich', *World Policy Journal*, vol. 7, no. 4 (Fall 1990), p. 602.

¹³Victor Gray, 'Germany: The 'Reluctant Power' Turns East', *Parameters*, vol. 24, no. 3 (Autumn 1994), p. 85.

an Ostpolitik could not be pursued in isolation or opposition to the interests of its neighbours in ECE or Western Europe.

Historical memory is an essential component, especially in the respective reconciliation processes of German-Czech and German-Polish relations.¹⁴ As Theo Sommer noted, 'history casts a long shadow. The short span of 75 years of unity was not the happiest of Germany's 1000-year existence nor the happiest period for its neighbours. Memories linger, and Germans will do well to keep them in mind'.¹⁵ Memories – especially when painful and traumatic – act as powerful constraints. A unified Germany was a prisoner of its own history. Nowhere is this more apparent than in its bilateral relations with its Eastern neighbours, given its tendency to frame and enunciate foreign and security policy decisions within a complex and often symbolic historical context. The fundamental problems underlying Germany's Ostpolitik, therefore, derive from German as well as foreign perceptions of the country's history.

The power of history or historical memory alone do not account for German foreign policy. The socio-political, economic and security realities of the European continent after 1990 are equally important. They encouraged a unified Germany to become an 'advocate' for the political and economic interests of ECE. Germany's political leadership acknowledged the existence of concerns or 'risks' in ECE and the former Soviet satellites which were intimately linked with the Soviet Union's collapse and the demise of communism. For Germany, managing the decline of the former superpower and the substantial residual socio-political, economic, and military fall-out for ECE were two major foreign policy imperatives after the end of the Cold War. Daniel Schoenbaum and Elizabeth Pond argued:

¹⁴William E. Paterson, 'The Germany in the New Europe', *German Politics*, vol. 5, no. 1 (August 1996), pp. 181-182. German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel argued: 'We have learnt from the experiences of our past. They determine our politics.' See *Bulletin*, no. 106 (2 October 1992), p. 985. MT.

¹⁵Theo Sommer, 'Germany: United But Not a World Power', *European Affairs*, vol. 1, no. 1 (February-March 1991), p. 40.

For the West in general and Germany in particular, managing the Russian decline was first perceived as avoiding two historically defined traps (or at least minimising their impact): the kind of turmoil and violence that followed the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, and the kind of humiliation and backlash that engulfed Weimar Germany.¹⁶

Germany and Russia remained key regional powers and, consequently, regarded each other as natural competitors and prospective partners.

For Germany's Eastern neighbours, especially the CSFR and Poland, two vital questions persisted after October 1990: would Germany foster stability or instability in ECE, and would its policies be guided by principles of reconciliation and moral responsibility or revisionism and revanchism?¹⁷ Germany's Eastern and Western neighbours equally feared German isolationism and excessive activism in ECE after unification.¹⁸ Having initiated two world wars in the twentieth century, it was legitimate to ask whether Germany would again pursue an imperialistic version of Mitteleuropa. Sixteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the legitimacy of these fears and cardinal questions continue to baffle many. After 1998, there was some confusion about the nature and objectives of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Ostpolitik. It was Germany's classic Eastern dilemma: would a unified Germany emerge as a hegemon or stabiliser and moderniser in ECE? There is a wide schism between those attributing dubious motives to Germany's 'eastward urge' and those regarding it as a positive and indispensable force in the socio-political and economic development of the CSFR and Poland. As often, however, reality is more complex than this simplistic view suggests.

Bonn's policy choices in ECE were unlimited; in many cases, however, they depended on endogenous and exogenous factors often beyond its control.¹⁹ For Garton Ash, Germany was confronted with four main policy options, two of which are particularly

¹⁶David Schoenbaum and Elizabeth Pond, *The German Question and Other Questions* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 202.

¹⁷Reconciliation is literally translated as *Versöhnung* or *Aussöhnung*. The Germans used these terms and others interchangeably. See Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993), pp. 298-300.

¹⁸Timothy Garton Ash, 'Germany in Central Europe' in All Souls College Foreign Policy Studies Programme (ed.), *Germany, Europe and the World* (Oxford: All Souls College, 1998), p. 37.

¹⁹Timothy Garton Ash, 'Germany's Choice', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 4 (July-August 1994), pp. 65-81.

relevant when assessing Germany's foreign relations with its Eastern neighbours. The 'Wider Europe' option emphasises Germany's choice to promote the dual enlargement processes of the EU and NATO. The 'Moscow First' option indicates that Germany might focus primarily on its relationship with Russia. This is particularly significant: the contours of any future German-Russian partnership on the European continent would have had profound implications for all states in ECE as well as its Western European and transatlantic allies. For Garton Ash, the 'Wider Europe' choice was the preferred option. In 1994, he argued that German foreign policy would be dominated by the desire to fuse the important elements of each foreign policy option into one, supposedly, coherent foreign policy.

Through what Gunther Hellmann contends are the five major schools of thought in the German discourse on foreign policy – 'pragmatic multilateralists', 'Europeanists', 'euroskeptics', 'internationalists', and 'normalisation-nationalists' – one common strand emerges about Germany's future role and position in ECE after 1990. In the German foreign policy discourse vis-à-vis ECE virtually all observers agreed that Germany could not and would not be able to pursue the Mitteleuropa option – which entailed Germany's political and economic domination of ECE – and emphasized its futility.²⁰ Proponents of the 'euroskeptic' and 'normalisation-nationalist' schools, however, argued that Germany would have to act unilaterally in ECE if political and economic conditions deteriorated and Western international institutions failed to address Germany's socio-political, economic and security concerns on its Eastern frontier. The infamous Wolfgang Schäuble-Karl Lamers Paper (1 September 1994) captured this sentiment:

²⁰Gunther Hellmann, "Goodbye Bismarck? The Foreign Policy of Contemporary Germany," *Mershon International Studies Review*, no. 40 (1996), p. 25.

The only solution which will prevent a return to the unstable pre-war system, with Germany once again caught in the middle of East and West, is to integrate Germany's Central and Eastern neighbours into the European post-war system and to establish a wide-ranging partnership between this system and Russia. Never again must there be a destabilising vacuum of power in Europe in central Europe. If European integration were not to progress, Germany might be called upon, or tempted by its own security constraints, to try to effect the stabilisation of Eastern Europe on its own and in the traditional way.²¹

Hellmann also pointed out that pursuing the Mitteleuropa option 'would mark a major departure from Germany's traditional Western orientation (including a dramatic unlearning of historical lessons) and would almost certainly lead to a deterioration of Germany's relations with the West'.²² The move towards ECE was regarded as natural by those intimately involved with its history: the region would either become a German sphere of influence or develop peacefully as a community of nations between Germany and Russia.

A unified and sovereign Germany, no longer constrained by superpower politics, is still adjusting to its new geographic position in Europe's centre and role as a crucial power and geopolitical hinge between states in Western and Eastern Europe. Post-unification Germany remains a state in transition, like its East and Central European counterparts, albeit with more economic and financial resources. Its difficult internal and external transformation from a semi-sovereign to a sovereign power created what Ludger Kühnhardt describes as a foreign policy identity crisis in Bonn:

Foreign policy thinking seemed to have vanished in a state that was the very product of foreign policy developments and decisions and that is still very dependent on the evolution of the international order. Germany remains a foreign policy country – a country dependent on the future of the world and its responses – but many of its policy-makers are domestically oriented and domestic in habit indeed.²³

²¹'Überlegungen zur europäischen Politik: Position der CDU/CSU Bundestagsfraktion vom 1 September 1994', quoted by John Newhouse, *Europe Adrift* (New York: Pantheon, 1997), pp. 126-127. For the complete text, see 'Positionspapier der CDU/CSU-Bundestagsfraktion vom 1 September 1994', *BfdiP*, no. 10 (1994), pp. 1271-1280. Symbolically, the paper was released on the fortieth anniversary of the Nazi invasion of Poland and one day after the Soviet Union's withdrawal from the former GDR.

²²Hellmann, 'Goodbye Bismarck?', p. 24.

²³Ludger Kühnhardt, *Ideals and Interests in German Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1993), p. 17.

The foreign policy debate amongst the German public also reflected this issue.²⁴ It also raised important questions about Germany's self-image as a major foreign and security policy actor on the international political scene and its perceptions of and responses to complex foreign and security policy challenges in ECE. The dynamics of unification, to a certain degree, were responsible for driving Germany's foreign policy agenda. Eckart Arnold's observation 'that it is the domestic problems of unification, far more than external factors, that will be the driving force shaping the future stance of German foreign policy' illustrates the power of domestic factors in forecasting future German foreign policy orientations.²⁵

In retrospect, that a unified Germany would play a more prominent and powerful role on the world stage was to be expected. However, it was uncertain how Bonn would manage its own internal transformation processes and the conduct of its foreign policy. Given the anarchic and chaotic nature of the European system after 1989-1990 and Bonn's impression that the country might drown in a potential sea of instability, Germany's political leadership was forced to focus extensively on ECE. Safeguarding extensive German investments in the Eastern *Länder* (states) and socio-political, economic and security interests in ECE became an overriding foreign policy imperative.

Before focusing on the significance of the CSFR (Czech Republic) and Poland after 1990, why there are obvious research omissions in this thesis should be explained. Ostpolitik, as noted earlier, was used extensively by Germany's political leadership throughout the Cold War to define the entire spectrum of its relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The *Ostverträge* (Eastern treaties) were the main foundation of Ostpolitik, especially during Willy Brandt's chancellorship. The term 'Ostpolitik' is paradoxical: it implies the existence of a specific geographical area and foreign policy strategy focusing solely on Germany's foreign

²⁴Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, 'Öffentliche Meinung und Aussenpolitik: die fehlende Debatte in Deutschland', *Internationale Politik*, no. 8 (1995), pp. 3-12.

²⁵Eckart Arnold, 'German Foreign Policy and Unification', *International Affairs*, vol. 67, no. 3 (1991), p. 455.

relations with the 'East' or Eastern bloc. It often treats the 'East' as one coherent bloc; it rarely differentiates or highlights the numerous nuances existing in Germany's bilateral relations with its Eastern neighbours. This thesis argues that Ostpolitik is still a pertinent analytical term in the discourse on German foreign policy; nonetheless, it is a mistake to group together all ECE states into one category. Bonn's Ostpolitik strategy was not conducted in a uniform fashion; Germany's foreign policy objectives were simply too diverse to apply one overall strategy. Germany entertained different policy goals vis-à-vis each ECE state. A decision was made to concentrate only on the Czech Republic and Poland, for reasons explained below, which offers a unique opportunity to compare and contrast Germany's multi-faceted foreign policy behaviour towards these states.

No attempt will be made to examine Germany's foreign relations with Hungary after 1990 and Slovakia after 1993, except within the overall context of its interest in the EU and NATO enlargement processes. There are several reasons for this approach. First, there are no mutual borders between these states and Germany. Second, complex reconciliation and ethnic German issues did not complicate the normalisation of Germany's relations with Hungary and Slovakia. Germany's relations with Hungary were not burdened with similar historical baggage as with the Czechs and Poles. During both World Wars, Hungary did not side with Germany's adversaries, although it is true that several hundred thousand *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans) were expelled from Hungary after 1945. Nonetheless, dismissing altogether the political, economic, and military significance of Hungary and Slovakia in German Ostpolitik calculations would be a mistake. Slovakia's role as an independent state after the CSFR's dissolution (January 1993), will be assessed in the overall context of German-Czech relations. Hungary's role as a founding member of the Visegrád Group and integral component of Germany's plans to enlarge the EU and NATO will also be acknowledged.

Why focus exclusively on Germany's foreign relations with the CSFR (Czech Republic) and Poland? A sound geographical, historical, cultural, economic and strategic logic is undeniable. First, both states share a common border with Germany stretching roughly 1200 kilometres from Szczecin (Poland) in the north, to Plechy (Czech Republic) in

the south. Second, Germany's protean border (the Oder-Neisse line) with Poland has been the subject of much political controversy in the twentieth century. Third, the physical relocation of the Federal German government from Bonn to Berlin (48 kilometers from the Polish border) in 1999 further highlighted the geographical, strategic, and economic significance of not only Poland but also all of ECE for Germany's political leadership. Fourth, Germany and its neighbours have particularly strong historical and cultural ties due to their close geographical proximity. Fifth, the legacy of the Second World War and its immediate aftermath constituted an omnipresent trait in Germany's foreign policy behaviour before and after unification. Czechoslovakia and Poland suffered immensely under the Nazi regime. They are ideal case studies to examine the processes by which the three countries handled the issues of expulsion²⁶, moral responsibility, minority rights, material claims, and compensation for victims of Nazism. Despite these striking similarities, however, both states were accorded a different priority by Germany's foreign policy-makers after 1990. Sixth, Germany's cultural presence in Mitteleuropa and powerful economic interests were always linked. Finally, there were powerful security reasons behind Germany's focus on these two countries after 1990.

THESIS CONTRIBUTION

Sixteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this thesis intends to fill a significant gap in the discipline of International Relations by examining Germany's complex and multi-faceted foreign and security policy towards the Czech Republic and Poland, and the domestic and international factors that shaped it. It will consider the socio-political, economic, cultural, historical and strategic dimensions of Germany's relations with both states. It will discuss the metamorphoses of German diplomacy and foreign policy after unification and the role and significance of bilateral relations in an interdependent system. Past studies have almost exclusively focused on the totality of Germany's Ostpolitik after unification without attempting to deconstruct its key components or compare and contrast them in the cases of the

²⁶The term 'expulsion' remains controversial. It is widely used in Germany to describe the ethnic Germans' fate in Czechoslovakia and Poland after the Second World War. In Czechoslovakia, it is widely referred to as *Odsun* or 'transfer', not as *Vyhnaní* which means expulsion.

Czech Republic and Poland. Striking similarities and differences in Germany's foreign policy strategy vis-à-vis each state will be highlighted. This work also suggests that not all of Germany's priorities in the region are uniform. There are contradictions and paradoxes inherent in Bonn's desire to strike a balance between promoting deeper integration in the EU, assisting in the political and economic reconstruction of ECE, and the need to foster a new relationship within the Atlantic Alliance.

The research methodology employed in this thesis allows the reader to appreciate two important facts. First, Germany's foreign policy was not created and implemented against the backdrop of a grand German vision or strategy that applies equally to all states in ECE or even the FSU. Second, its foreign policy was not pursued solely within a multilateral context, although multilateralism cannot be ignored when examining Germany's foreign policy. This approach is complemented by a discussion of Germany's bilateral ties and its presence – governmental and non-governmental – in the region.

This thesis will address the following gaps in the study of German foreign policy in International Relations. By 2006, no study, either in Germany or abroad, had provided an in-depth examination of two important features of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards ECE. First, there has been no attempt to provide a comprehensive, comparative, analysis of Chancellor Kohl's foreign policy record vis-à-vis the Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) and Poland from October 1990 until his political demise in September 1998. Second, studies on Germany's Ostpolitik objectives after 1990 have proliferated, but none have sought to explain the connections between Germany's political reconciliation processes, and economic and security interests towards the Czech Republic and Poland. Recent analyses have viewed these states in isolation from each other despite striking historical similarities and differences, which highlight Germany's strategies and interests vis-à-vis both states. An exhaustive description of how German influence manifests itself in both states, how it is channelled and constrained will close this significant research gap. Germany's foreign policy behaviour toward ECE in the post-unification period – that is the geographical area and the time frame –

which have been crucial to Germany's sense of itself for the last one thousand years – will be analysed.

THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis aims to provide a lucid, concise, and structured overview of the mechanics of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland after October 1990. The evaluation of this critical power's foreign and security policy machinery will include its goals in ECE, the principal domestic and international sources of its foreign policy, and the nature of its bilateral and multilateral instruments.

Chapter One examines the main theoretical traditions in the International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) literature and discusses their relevance in understanding the socio-political, economic, and security dimensions of German foreign policy. It also focuses on how each tradition, where pertinent, explained German foreign policy behaviour towards ECE, both in general and more specifically towards the states under study.

Chapter Two assesses the main characteristics of Germany's domestic and international environment and their implications for its foreign and security policy towards ECE. It provides an explanatory model for the study of German foreign policy towards the Czech Republic and Poland. Understanding the complex interplay between the 'domestic' and 'international' is crucial.

Chapter Three offers a brief historical overview of Mitteleuropa's significance for successive German leaders and governments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The historical legacy of Germany's former role and record as a stabilising and destabilising force in ECE is directly linked to its foreign policy behaviour after unification.

Chapter Four examines one of the central components of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards ECE: the pursuit of political reconciliation to resume 'normal' relations with its two Eastern neighbours. It was an essential precondition if a unified Germany was to enjoy productive and prosperous relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Chapter Five concentrates on the economic dimension of Germany's Ostpolitik, specifically the importance of its *Osthandel* (Eastern trade). It explores Germany's position as a 'trading state' in the international system and underlines the significance of ECE, especially Czechoslovakia and Poland in its economic calculations. It addresses the following questions: what were the main domestic and external determinants of Bonn's economic Ostpolitik and how important were economic instruments in meeting Bonn's foreign and security policy goals in ECE?

Chapter Six considers the security dimension of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. Within the context of German security policy, 'exporting stability' to ECE became the principal security leitmotif guiding the German government after 1990. This chapter discusses Germany's Eastern security environment and focuses on the military and non-military threats or 'vulnerabilities' in ECE and the Former Soviet Union (FSU) as perceived and articulated by Germany's political leadership.

This thesis concludes with an assessment of whether Germany's foreign and security policy towards both states was a success and met its stated objectives, and with the implications of these findings for Germany's new leadership under Chancellor Angela Merkel.

CHAPTER ONE
GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

German foreign and security policy behaviour can be evaluated by exploring the vast array of analytical and theoretical tools contained in International Relations literature. Identifying the main determinants of a unified Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour is a complex process that requires a closer assessment of the principal assumptions guiding theoretical perspectives in the fields of International Relations and FPA. Where does one start and what does one focus on in International Relations? A simultaneous examination of unit and systemic levels of analysis seems adequate.

Analysts remain at odds about several fundamental questions in International Relations theory, which have important implications for the study of Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour. First, can the nation-state, given the extensive proliferation of international institutions and other global phenomena, still be categorised as the primary actor in International Relations? If the nation-state is under threat or in 'retreat', then something similar must be said of the practice of national foreign policies as international institutions or forces of globalisation swallow the traditional functions of states.¹ These phenomena raise the question of whether states actually pursue distinct and discernible national foreign and security policies. The perceived existence of a national foreign policy begs the question of whom or what is actually responsible for framing and pursuing specific objectives. Finally, do systemic or unit level theories account for shaping a state's interests and strategies? These are but a few of the questions which have implications for the research methodology of this thesis.

In addition to the theoretical problems associated with defining a state's interests and strategies, examining perceived German interests, especially towards ECE, is difficult due to the complex and controversial historical connotations. The 'perceived' pursuit of explicit German interests by the political leadership reawakens demons of the past, domestically and abroad, and

¹Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

rekindles collective memories of Germany's pre-war attempts to maximise its power in the international system by using military force, especially vis-à-vis ECE. Peter Pulzer observes that the 'German past, German national identity and the continuities or breaches in institutions or society – all these are sensitive areas, subject to taboos or heavily coded debates'.² Any attempt to define German national interests will remain difficult as long as Germany is still evolving as a nation.³

Despite the existence of several analytical obstacles rooted in Germany's controversial past, a debate on the nature of its foreign and security policy interests was conducted between 1990 and 1998. It focuses on the following important question: should Germany, in light of its controversial past, be pursuing explicit interests in the international political system? In other words, should Germany act like a 'normal' power in the international system? Whether a state responsible for two world wars in the twentieth century should be able to conduct its foreign and security policy operations in a similar manner as its Western European counterparts, like Britain and France, is the subject of considerable debate. The FRG's evolution as a peaceful and model democratic state after the Second World War did not inspire confidence in all corners of the world, especially in ECE. It should be noted that some dismiss the debate on perceived German interests as redundant, which is not the case.⁴ The debate's leitmotifs reflect Germany's attempts to create a foreign and security policy identity consistent with its new status as one of the most powerful states on the European continent.

As this chapter will show, Germany's foreign policy behaviour represents somewhat of an enigma in international politics. Recent attempts to explain Germany's foreign policy behaviour are numerous and rooted in some of the most influential schools in International Relations theory and FPA: realism, neorealism, liberalism, neoliberal-institutionalism and social constructivism. Each tradition, however, only manages to highlight one or several facets of its foreign and

²Peter Pulzer, 'Nation State and National Sovereignty', *German Historical Institute Bulletin*, vol. 17, no. 3 (November 1995), p. 6.

³See Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 73.

⁴Lothar Kettenacker, *Germany since 1945* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 234-235.

security policy behaviour. Past studies would have us believe that a state's foreign policy behaviour can be solely elucidated with theoretical tools from one tradition. It is not so; moreover, this is not a good strategy for understanding the complex evolution of German foreign policy. An examination of Germany's foreign relations with the CSFR and Poland exposes this crucial fact and highlights the need for a different theoretical approach: one taking into account the multi-level nature of the internal and external determinants that influence Germany's complex foreign policy machine.

This chapter's first section surveys the main components of the various traditions in International Relations theory and examines the main internal and external determinants responsible for shaping and influencing a state's interests and strategies. The second section focuses specifically on recent theoretical attempts to explain Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards Czechoslovakia, Poland, and in some cases ECE.

Realism and Neorealism

Realism emphasises the primacy of the nation-state in international relations, the flawed nature of man, and the anarchical international system within which states pursue their national interests.⁵ An anarchical international system is characterised by the absence of a central political authority that is significantly more important and influential than the state. The logic of political realism follows from this main point. Rational state actors in an anarchical international system are primarily concerned with the perennial struggle for power and security as they engage in self-help activities that often result in conflict. The anarchical characteristics of the international system, in turn, are responsible for shaping a state's interests. According to realism, conflict is a natural state of affairs; states always seek to enhance their power and position vis-à-vis other states in the international system. This 'reality' has important implications for states seeking to define their interests in terms of power. The maximisation of power is the common factor that unites all states.

⁵Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Amongst Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).

The 'national interest' concept is fundamentally realist and is linked to the notion that states are rational and unitary actors in the international system. More precisely, the national interest 'is employed to describe, explain, or evaluate the sources of adequacy of a nation's foreign policy. As an instrument of political action, it serves as a means of justifying, denouncing, or proposing policies'.⁶ According to Hans Morgenthau, the concept of 'interest' serves the following purpose:

[It] provides the link between reason trying to understand international politics and the facts to be understood. ... We assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power, and the evidence of history bears that assumption out. That assumption allows us to retrace and anticipate, as it were, the steps a statesman—past, present, or future—has taken or will take on the political scene.⁷

A state's foreign policy objectives can be classified as constant; they are easily discernible to other political leaders and observers at any one time.⁸ For Morgenthau, interest is the essence of politics – a notion historical evidence supports. The political and cultural environments within which a state's foreign policy is conducted often determine interest and power alike.

If a state's foreign policy can only be examined by evaluating interest in terms of power then what power means in realism must be defined. For Morgenthau, power 'may comprise anything that establishes and maintains the control of man over man'.⁹ For Arnold Wolfers, power is 'the ability to move others or to get them to do what one wants them to do and not to do what one does not want them to do'.¹⁰ In addition to pursuing interests in terms of power, the ultimate goal of a state remains self-preservation and survival. National security concerns are at the top of a state's agenda; therefore, it comes as little surprise that politicians have used both the 'national interest' and the 'national security interest' interchangeably to justify a plan of action.¹¹

Intricately linked with the concept of 'national interest' is the notion of 'self-interest'. According to Robert Osgood, there are five main reasons why a state pursues a policy of self-

⁶James N. Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (London: Frances Pinter, 1980), p. 283.

⁷Morgenthau, *Politics amongst Nations*, p. 5.

⁸Joseph Frankel, *The Making of Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 3.

⁹Morgenthau, *Politics amongst Nations*, p. 11.

¹⁰Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 103.

¹¹Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, pp. 147-148.

interest in the international system. First, states are primarily concerned with self-preservation and survival. Second, states pursue 'vital interests' which are important for their well being but not necessary for their survival. Third, states aim to be self-sufficient. Fourth, the inherent longing for national prestige is an inevitable by-product of pursuing policies based on the national interest. Finally, by pursuing their self-interest, states can ultimately increase their levels of national power.¹² However, the 'national interest' concept as a tool for explaining a state's foreign policy behaviour is prone to much criticism. Some have highlighted the complex analytical problems associated with 'interests' in general, especially when they are defined in terms of power. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye argue that 'the state may prove to be multi-faceted, even schizophrenic. National interests will be defined differently on different issues, at different times, and by different governmental units'.¹³ The concept is only useful if we have a clear understanding of the nature of the political processes by which interests are formulated and implemented. According to P.A. Reynolds, 'even if the 'real interest' is conceivable, and should exist, no practical decision-maker in an actual situation, and no observer of that situation afterwards, could have the totality of knowledge necessary correctly to identify it'.¹⁴ Hedley Bull raises the following point:

The criterion of 'national interest', or 'interest of state', in itself provides us with no specific guidance either in interpreting the behaviour of states or in prescribing how they should behave – unless we are told what concrete ends or objectives states do or should pursue: security, prosperity, ideological objectives or whatever. ... However, the conception of the national interest or interest of state does have some meaning in a situation in which national or state ends are defined and agreed, and the question at issue is by what means they can be promoted.¹⁵

According to James Rosenau, there are three main limitations:

One is the ambiguous nature of the nation and the difficulty of specifying whose interests it encompasses. A second is the elusiveness of criteria for determining the existence of interests and for tracing their presence in substantive policies. Still another confounding factor is the absence of procedures for cumulating the interests once they have been identified.¹⁶

¹²Robert E. Osgood, *Ideas and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 5-6.

¹³Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*. (New York: Harper Collins, 1989), p. 35.

¹⁴P.A. Reynolds, *An Introduction to International Relations* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1994), p. 52.

¹⁵Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 66.

¹⁶Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy*, p. 287.

The 'national interest' concept remains ambiguous and difficult to define but, despite its theoretical flaws, policy-makers still continue to use the 'national interest' as a device to gain support and justify the choice of a particular policy.

Using classical realism as a theoretical foundation, the founding father of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz, developed a more 'pure' theory of international relations, one that focused exclusively on the dynamics of the international system. This system is primarily composed of structure and interacting units. This structure is defined as a 'set of constraining conditions'; it works 'through a process of socialisation that limits and moulds behaviour' and 'competition'.¹⁷ Consequently, the nature of the structure affects the behaviour of the units; 'states are the units whose interactions form the structure of international political systems'.¹⁸ In *Man, the State and War*, Waltz showed that the major causes of war could be attributed to the anarchical nature of the international state system (third image), not within states themselves or within man; his later works refined this idea.¹⁹

One of Waltz's objectives in *Theory of International Politics* was to differentiate between system and unit-level theories and describe the dynamics of political structures as they pertained to the units in the system. Waltz defined the structure of the international system by analysing three core propositions. First, he argued that international politics are anarchic and decentralised, unlike domestic political structures. Anarchy in international politics manifests itself in the lack of order and organisation. This has important implications for the units in the system as 'structures are formed by the coaction of their units'. Indeed, units in the system function according to the principle of self-help.²⁰ He also believes that the 'first concern of states is not to maximise power but to maintain their positions in the system'.²¹ Second, states being in a constant state of anarchy and self-help, they are prone to excessive competition which often results in the failure to

¹⁷Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 73, 76.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁹Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

²⁰Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 91.

²¹Ibid., p. 126.

cooperate when faced with common interests.²² Increased competition in the international system results in either bandwagoning or balancing behaviour by states.²³ States or 'units' perform similar functions because 'anarchy entails relations of coordination among a system's units' and 'international politics consists of like units duplicating one another's activities'.²⁴ Waltz stresses that these 'units' or states are sovereign entities pursuing their own destiny in the international system.²⁵ Third, the distribution of capabilities amongst units reveals how the structure works and even changes. He argues:

The structure of a system changes with changes in the distribution of capabilities across the system's units. And changes in structure change expectations about how the units of the system will behave and about the outcomes their interactions will produce. ... Power is estimated by comparing the capabilities of a number of units. Although capabilities are attributes of units, the distribution across of capabilities across units is not. The distribution of capabilities is not a unit attribute, but rather a system-wide concept.²⁶

As the structure is determined by or directly linked to the distribution of capabilities across units, states in a self-help system 'have to use their combined capabilities to serve their interests'. A state's ranking in the international system depends on how it fares in not just one of the following sectors but in all: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence.²⁷

Like Waltz, John Mearsheimer highlights anarchy as the prime characteristic of the international system because 'in anarchy there is no higher body or sovereign that protects states from one another'.²⁸ This state of affairs affects how states view each other in the international system. Essentially, they operate in a constant state of competition as they struggle for survival.

²²Joseph M. Grieco, 'Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism' in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 118.

²³Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 125-126.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 93, 97.

²⁵See Arthur Stein, 'Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World' in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 29-59.

²⁶Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 97.

²⁷Ibid., p. 131.

²⁸John J. Mearsheimer, 'Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War', *International Security*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990), p. 12.

To counter anarchy, states seek to maximise their power.²⁹ Their primacy is paramount. Despite the end of bipolarity in the international system and increasing interdependence, states continue to represent the dominant force in international politics.³⁰ The international system being a competitive arena, states increasingly seek to improve their security prospects and military power to counter or balance any potential aggressors.

Another neorealist, Christopher Layne, argues that 'structural driven phenomena', differential growth rates, and anarchy are responsible for great power emergence in the international system.³¹ Whether a great power rises or not, however, is ultimately linked to decisions taken at unit-level, which contradicts the basic premise of neorealism. Layne argues that

(1) structural constraints press eligible states to become great powers; (2) such states make unit-level decisions whether to pursue great power status in response to these structural constraints; (3) if a unit-level decision to seek great power status produces a consequential shift in polarity, it has a structural impact. Rising states have choices about whether to become great powers.³²

According to neorealists, it was highly probable that Germany would opt for great-power status after unification. Powerful constraints inherent in the bipolar structure of the international system during the Cold War had been removed; therefore, it seemed likely that a unified Germany would emerge as the main benefactor from structural changes in the international system. The rationale underpinning this logic was simple, but in Germany's case, ignored powerful unit-level factors. Powerful domestic constraints actually hindered Germany's ability to assume great power status in the international system.³³

Liberalism and Neoliberal Institutionalism

The tradition of liberalism in International Relations encompasses several theoretical ideas and concepts which have their roots in the Western political and economic philosophy of

²⁹Ibid., p. 12.

³⁰John J. Mearsheimer, 'Disorder Restored' in Graham Allison and Gregory F. Treverton (eds.), *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 214.

³¹Christopher Layne, 'The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise', *International Security*, vol. 17, no. 4 (Spring 1993), p. 9.

³²Layne, 'The Unipolar Illusion', p. 9.

³³See chapter two.

David Hume, Emmanuel Kant, John Locke, Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill. Political liberalism highlights the role of individual equality and liberty; it focuses on economic and social interdependence and the role of international institutions in international relations. Economic liberalism emphasizes commitment to individuals, the free market and private property. According to Ole Holsti, liberal models offer the following explanations for international political processes: '(1) international behaviour and outcomes arise from a multiplicity of motives, not merely security, at least if security is defined solely in military or strategic terms, and (2) important international processes and conditions originate not only in the actions of nation-states but also in the aggregated behaviour of other actors'.³⁴ Liberals view a state's foreign policy behaviour through a domestic lens.³⁵ According to Andrew Moravcsik, a liberal theory of international politics is based on three main assumptions: the primacy of societal actors, representation and state preferences, and interdependence and the international system.³⁶ His first assumption is based on the premise that individuals and private groups are the main actors in international politics. He states:

Political action is embedded in domestic and transnational civil society, understood as an aggregation of boundedly rational individuals with differentiated tastes, social commitments, and resource endowments. Socially differentiated individuals define their material and ideational interests independently of politics and then advance those interests through political exchange and collective action.³⁷

Indeed, these individuals or political leaders are responsible for shaping states' interests and influencing powerful international and domestic constraints, which in turn influence a state's behaviour. As Mark Zacher and Richard Matthew acknowledge:

³⁴Ole R. Holsti, 'Theories of International Relations and Foreign Policy: Realism and its Challengers' in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (ed.), *Controversies in International Relations Theory. Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 44.

³⁵See Helen Milner, 'The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique' in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 143-169, and William Wallace, *Foreign Policy and the Political Process* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1971), p. 12.

³⁶Andrew Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics', *International Organisation*, vol. 51, no. 4 (Autumn 1997), pp. 516-21.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 517.

Liberal international theory's conceptualisation of progress in terms of human freedom and the importance attributed to liberal democracy, free trade, cognitive changes, communications and moral norms all indicate that liberals regard individual human beings as the primary international actors. Liberals view states as the most important collective actors in our present era but they are seen as pluralistic actors whose interests and policies are determined by bargaining among groups and elections.³⁸

As for political leaders, they entertain personal belief systems, perceptions, or worldviews about the international environment they live in.

Moravcsik's second assumption rests on the notion that 'states (or other political institutions) represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics'.³⁹ Individuals and groups within a state's domestic political system 'constrain' policy-makers by lobbying for their individual or collective 'preferences'. 'Preferences' are defined as a 'set of fundamental interests defined across 'states of the world' which 'are by definition causally independent of the strategies of other actors and, therefore, prior to specific interstate political interactions, including external threats, incentives, manipulation of information, or other tactics'.⁴⁰ The notion of the 'disaggregation of the state' is particularly important in an examination of the forces which shape a state's foreign policy behaviour. Moravcsik argues:

States may act in either a unitary or "disaggregated" way. In many traditional areas of foreign policy, "politics stops at the water's edge," and there is strong co-ordination among national officials and politicians. In other areas, the state may be "disaggregated," with different elements—executives, courts, central banks, regulatory bureaucracies, and ruling parties, for example—conducting semiautonomous foreign policies in the service of disparate societal interests.⁴¹

The third premise highlights the significance of interdependence in the international system. For Moravcsik, preferences determine states' behaviour. They are defined by a 'purpose' guiding a state's conduct and enticing it to act or pursue a particular foreign policy option. In this context, it is important to note that in contrast to neorealism or neoliberal institutionalism, a state within the liberal school does not pursue 'its ideal policy, oblivious of others; instead, each state seeks to realise its distinctive preferences under varying constraints imposed by the preferences of

³⁸Mark W. Zacher and Richard A. Matthew, 'Liberal International Theory: Common Threads, Divergent Strands' in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (ed.), *Controversies in International Relations Theory*, p. 118.

³⁹Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously', p. 518.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 519.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 519.

other states'.⁴² In effect, interdependence constrains state behaviour. Interdependent states also tend to display similar foreign policy characteristics. As Richard Rosecrance mentions, interdependent states are often trading states. He argues:

While trading states try to improve their position and their domestic allocation of resources, they do so within a context of interdependence. ... The incentive to wage war is absent in such a system for war disrupts trade and the interdependence on which trade is based. Trading states reveal they can do better through internal economic development sustained by a worldwide market for their goods and services than by trying to conquer and assimilate large tracts of land.⁴³

There are, therefore, numerous incentives for states to become trading states. Thus, the role and nature of domestic politics determine a state's behaviour.

The second strand of liberalism deserving attention is institutional theory or neoliberal institutionalism, although the latter has more in common with its neorealist counterpart than liberalism.⁴⁴ Robert Keohane defines the main theoretical assumptions of institutionalism as follows:

... institutionalist theory assumes that states are the principal actors in world politics and that they behave on the basis of conceptions of their own self-interests. Relative capabilities – realism's 'distribution of power' – remain important, and states must rely on themselves to assure themselves gains from cooperation. However, institutionalist theory also emphasises the role of international institutions in changing conceptions of self-interest. Thus it draws on liberal thinking about the formation of interests.⁴⁵

International institutions are defined 'as persistent and connected sets of rules, often affiliated with organisations that operate across international boundaries. Institutions range from conventions (such as sovereignty) to regimes (such as the non-proliferation regime) to formal organisations (such as NATO)'.⁴⁶ States create institutions to achieve their objectives and interests. As in realism, 'states pursue self-interested goals, which are defined at least partially in

⁴²Ibid., p. 520.

⁴³Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 24.

⁴⁴See Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), and Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989).

⁴⁵See Robert O. Keohane, 'Institutionalist Theory and the Realist Challenge after the Cold War' in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism*, p. 271.

⁴⁶Helga Haftendorn, Robert O. Keohane, and Celeste A. Wallander, 'Introduction' in Helga Haftendorn, Robert O. Keohane and Celeste A. Wallander (eds.) *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 1-2.

terms of relative power and autonomy'.⁴⁷ International institutions do not limit a state's actions in the international system; they merely 'affect the incentives facing states, even if those states' fundamental interests are defined autonomously'. As Keohane notes, however, 'state actions depend to a considerable degree on prevailing institutional arrangements'.⁴⁸

States coexist in an anarchical international system yet international institutions play a vital role in civilising anarchy. Neoliberal institutionalism concentrates on international political processes and how institutions affect state strategies. The focus on institutions is appropriate because they 'help us understand the conditions under which states' attempts at cooperation, *in their own interests*, will be successful'.⁴⁹ The political process, as outlined by Keohane and Joseph Nye, in their complex interdependence model requires international institutions. This model is based on three characteristics: multiple channels, absence of hierarchy among issues, and the minor role of military force.⁵⁰ The first characteristic is the most important as it emphasises the role of international organisations and their part in the international system. Keohane and Nye argue that

in a world of multiple issues imperfectly linked, in which coalitions are formed transnationally and transgovernmentally, the potential role of international institutions in political bargaining is greatly increased. In particular, they help set the international agenda and act as catalysts for coalition-formation and as arenas for political initiatives and linkage by weak states.

According to Nye, 'institutions provide a framework that shapes expectations'.⁵¹ They serve four functions: they provide a sense of continuity, an opportunity for reciprocity, a flow of information, and ways to solve conflicts.⁵²

Proponents of liberalism and neoliberal institutionalism offer essential tools to dissect or interpret Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour. Liberals focus on the primacy of

⁴⁷Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, 'Introduction: The End of the Cold War in Europe' in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Stanley Hoffmann (eds.), *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 5.

⁴⁸Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power*, pp. 2, 5.

⁴⁹Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p. 246.

⁵⁰Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, p. 35.

⁵¹Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Understanding International Conflict: An Introduction to History and Theory* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 38.

⁵²Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, pp. 38-39.

domestic politics in determining a state's interests whereas neoliberal institutionalists focus on how international institutions affect a state's foreign policy behaviour and vice-versa. Liberals emphasise domestic political processes, not international political processes, and concentrate primarily on the link between domestic politics and the fulfilment of Germany's foreign and security policy interests. Behind a state's foreign policy behaviour, there are a domestic political system and individuals directly responsible for shaping its foreign and security policy objectives. As the political leadership of a given state does not pursue its objectives or 'preferences' in an international vacuum, who or what is responsible for advocating a state's preferences? As William Wallace notes, 'states do not make policy; governments do'.⁵³ Governments are composed of individuals acting collectively in a given state's interest. Individuals or actors are at the heart of governments' decision-making processes and, therefore, are a fundamental component of the international system. The connection between domestic political actors and foreign policy formulation and implementation is a central one in the discourse on German foreign policy analysis.

Social Constructivism

The social constructivist school in International Relations, in stark contrast to the four previous schools, justifies a state's foreign policy behaviour by the systemic level constructions of a state's identity.⁵⁴ Constructivists highlight the power of social factors in shaping state behaviour. Thomas Berger argues that 'constructivism differs from the dominant paradigms in the study of foreign policy formation which share a view of foreign policy as being made by rational state or bureaucratic actors seeking to maximise their interests within the constraints imposed by the international and domestic political systems'.⁵⁵ The main difference between constructivism and its theoretical counterparts is the emphasis on culture and identity, two factors largely ignored by the dominant traditions in International Relations. According to Peter Katzenstein, this school

⁵³William Wallace, *Foreign Policy*, p. 25.

⁵⁴Alexander Wendt, 'Collective Identity Formation and the International State', *American Political Science Review*, vol. 88, no. 2 (Summer 1994), pp. 384-396.

⁵⁵Thomas U. Berger, 'The Past in the Present: Historical Memory and German National Security Policy', *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 1 (April 1997), p. 43.

seeks to link the materialism and rationalism that characterises mainstream theorising to processes of communication and social discourse that constitute actors and help define their interests. The analysis of institutional forces has retained an even stronger appeal in the analysis of domestic politics. The “new” institutionalism encompasses a broad array of approaches. Prominent among them is the historical-sociological approach that seeks to understand how institutional norms and identities shape policies and politics.⁵⁶

A state’s security interests are not taken for granted. As Alexander Wendt states: ‘actors do not have a ‘portfolio’ of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situations’.⁵⁷ He also points out that a ‘fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them’.⁵⁸ Indeed, interests are ‘constructed through a process of social interaction’ and ‘defined by actors who respond to cultural factors’.⁵⁹ The state is regarded as a social actor influenced by numerous yet different sociological processes; a state’s identity defines its interests. States are not unitary rational actors; their governments do not only consist of people intent on maximising their power and security (billiard ball model). Their interests and foreign policy behaviour cannot be solely explained by the international system’s structural characteristics. For Stephen Walt,

Constructivist approaches emphasise the impact of ideas. Instead of taking the state for granted and assuming that it simply seeks to survive, constructivists regard the interests and identities of states as a highly malleable product of specific historical processes. They pay close attention to the prevailing discourse(s) in society because discourse reflects and shapes beliefs and interests, and establishes accepted norms of behaviour.⁶⁰

A state’s security interests, specifically its national security policies, are primarily shaped by three main factors: norms, identity and culture. Katzenstein defines them as follows:

⁵⁶Peter J. Katzenstein, ‘United Germany in an Integrating Europe’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 16.

⁵⁷Alexander Wendt, ‘Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics’ in Friedrich Kratochwil and Edward P. Mansfield (eds.), *International Organisation: A Reader* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), p. 90.

⁵⁸Wendt, ‘Collective Identity Formation’, p. 80.

⁵⁹Peter J. Katzenstein, ‘Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 2.

⁶⁰Stephen M. Walt, ‘International Relations: One World, Many Theories’, *Foreign Policy*, no. 108 (Spring 1998), pp. 40-41.

[Norms] are collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors within a given identity. ... Norms operate like rules that define the identity of an actor, thus having 'constitutive effects' that specify what actions will cause relevant others to recognise a particular identity. ... Norms operate as standards that specify the proper enactment of an already defined identity. In such instances, norms have 'regulative' effects that specify standards of proper behaviour. ... Identity [is described] as a shorthand label for varying constructions of nation- and statehood. ... Culture [is described] as a broad label that denotes collective models of nation-state authority or identity carried by custom or law. Culture refers to both a set of evaluative standards (such as norms and values) and a set of cognitive standards (such as rules and models) that define what social actors exist in a system, how they operate, and how they relate to one another.⁶¹

These factors 'result from social processes, purposeful political action, and differences in power capabilities'. The formulation of a state's national security policy is dependent on two main determinants: the cultural-institutional context and the constructed identity of states.⁶² The former focuses on how cultural-institutionalist factors, specifically international regimes or institutions, have shaped a state's interests and strategies. The latter concentrates on the impact domestic and international environments or societies have on the construction of a state's collective identity. The nature of historical processes, collective memories, and common values a society places emphasis upon influence both determinants. According to Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich, collective memories are the 'vessel through which pass individual, scattered, fragmented, and populist attitudes, on the one hand, and elite, coherent worldviews on the other'.⁶³ For Katzenstein, 'memories are contemporary experiences, interpretations, and reinterpretations of history'.⁶⁴ Markovits and Reich define collective memories as follows:

On a national level, collective memory is the view of the past articulated by national leaders and the political class. This is collective memory in two senses. First, it is memory about a collectivity, the nation state, about its domestic developments and its foreign involvements. Second, it is, in an extended sense, memory of a collectivity. National leaders, representative of the polity as a whole, articulate memories in the name of the nation-state.⁶⁵

Historical factors are also important in assessing interests because they affect the development of a state's identity.

⁶¹Katzenstein, 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives', pp. 5-6.

⁶²Ibid., p. 4.

⁶³Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich, *The German Predicament: Memory and Power in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 12.

⁶⁴Peter J. Katzenstein, 'The Smaller European States, Germany and Europe' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 296.

⁶⁵Markovits and Reich, *The German Predicament*, p. 18.

According to Berger, a constructivist approach to foreign policy formulation 'argues that state behaviour is first and foremost shaped by particular sets of normative and cognitive beliefs which a society and its leaders hold about the nation, its role in the international system, and the utility of military force in the realisation of national goals'.⁶⁶ Values and memories of political actors shape interests. Berger's concept of political-military culture is a 'subset of the larger political culture that influences how members of a given society view national security, the military as an institution, and the use of force in international relations'.⁶⁷ Social constructivists, in their rejection of neorealism and neoliberalism, focus extensively on non-systemic factors in their analysis of state interests. In Germany, the domestic and international forces responsible for shaping its foreign and security policy are rooted in sociological processes that have moulded its political-military culture and its foreign policy behaviour. Constructivists use mainly sociological tools to analyse Germany's foreign and national security policy-making processes.

Germany's Ostpolitik and International Relations Theory

Numerous theoretical tools and concepts are available to explain the foreign and security policy behaviour of individual state actors and the complex dynamics of the international system. However, within the field of International Relations, surprisingly few studies apply theoretical tools to the main dimensions of Germany's Ostpolitik after 1990, especially its foreign policy behaviour towards the Czech Republic and Poland. Sixteen years have passed since unification; is it too soon – given Germany's transition from a semi-sovereign power to a sovereign one – to be able to assess the intricacies of a unified Germany's Ostpolitik? The extensive proliferation of analytical material on this important subject indicates that it isn't.

There are two obvious gaps in the International Relations research literature on Germany's Ostpolitik. First, few cases, grounded in International Relations theory, have actually explored the multiple dimensions of Germany's Ostpolitik. Past studies have operated from the assumption that Germany pursues a uniform and coherent approach to all state actors in the region. Individual state actors in ECE are mostly treated as one homogeneous group, i.e. the

⁶⁶Berger 'The Past in the Present', p. 41.

⁶⁷Thomas U. Berger, 'Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan' in Peter J. Katzenstein, (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identities in World Politics*, pp. 325-326.

Visegrád states, not as individual state actors in the international system with their own distinct foreign and security policy objectives. There is some merit to this approach when considering Germany's multilateral reflexes, for example, within the EU and NATO, but it would be erroneous to entirely ignore Germany's bilateral reflexes and how these state actors featured individually on the agenda of Germany's political leadership between 1990 and 1998.

Second, from a German perspective, the Czech Republic and Poland have only been assessed in virtual isolation from each other. International Relations theory has been applied sporadically to identify one or many facets of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards either state. Relatively few studies have compared and contrasted Germany's foreign policy behaviour toward both states. It is quite clear, as the introduction to this thesis argues, that there are ample similarities and differences between the two which require further explanation if we are to outline the principal motives underlying Germany's plans in ECE after 1990. This thesis seeks to redress some of these imbalances.

Realism and Neorealism

With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, International Relations theorists were forced to return to the drawing board to assess the relevance of their theories in predicting epochal events such as those that occurred in 1989-90.⁶⁸ In the FRG, few predicted the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the Soviet Union's collapse or the end of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. The puzzle of the perennial 'German question' finally solved, Germany underwent phenomenal internal and external changes, which were to leave a lasting imprint on the European continent. As Volker Rittberger noted, it seemed obvious to many observers in the field of International Relations, especially realists and neorealists that Germany's power would increase after unification. Few would dispute this claim, given German unification and the Soviet Union's demise. However, how Germany would adapt to the dynamics of a 'new'

⁶⁸John L. Gaddis, 'International Relations and the End of the Cold War', *International Security*, vol. 17, no. 3 (1992/1993), pp. 5-58.

international system or manage the practise of its foreign and security policy was a mystery.⁶⁹

Rittberger declared:

Realists would expect German foreign policy behavior to change as a result of this change in Germany's power position in the international system. Indeed, such a change in German foreign policy was anticipated not only by students of International Relations, but also by many policy-makers around the world. Germany was expected to turn away from its multilateral orientation towards a more unilateral and power-oriented foreign policy.⁷⁰

Sixteen years after unification, the chance of this scenario becoming reality remains slim although some evidence suggests that Germany pursued a more power-oriented foreign policy in the former Yugoslavia.⁷¹ Given Germany's extensive *Westbindung* during the Cold War, it seemed even more unlikely that Germany would abandon its multilateral tendencies in favour of unilateral ones, although indications of the latter were visible in the early stages of Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour.

In retrospect, Rittberger's conclusion was logical given states' historical behaviour in the international system; this line of reasoning was frequently adopted by those ensconced in the realist and neorealist camps. Almost immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, neorealists like Waltz, Mearsheimer, and Layne were confident that profound changes in the international system would elevate Germany to the status of a great power with a keen interest in acquiring nuclear weapons. Within the space of several years after unification, their arguments were responsible for launching an academic debate on the main determinants which were to shape Germany's actions. According to Waltz: 'the behaviours of states, the patterns of their interactions, and the outcomes their interactions produced had been repeated again and again throughout the centuries despite profound changes in the internal composition of states'.⁷² It was, therefore, unwise to assume that Germany would behave any differently from its Western European counterparts. All states

⁶⁹See Volker Rittberger and Frank Schimmelfennig, 'Deutsche Aussenpolitik nach der Vereinigung: Realistische Prognosen auf dem Prüfstand', *Tübinger Arbeitspapiere zur internationalen Politik und Friedensforschung*, no. 28 (1997), p. 2.

⁷⁰See interview with Volker Rittberger at <http://amber.berkeley.edu:5031/fall/fallp6.html>.

⁷¹Bonn's unilateral recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in December 1991 supports this assertion. See Beverly Crawford, 'Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany's Unilateral Recognition of Croatia', *World Politics*, vol. 48, no. 4 (1996), pp. 482-521.

⁷²Kenneth N. Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics', *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 2 (Fall 1993), p. 45.

throughout history have attempted to maximise their economic capacities to improve their relative political-military position in the international system. According to Waltz, the link between an increase in economic capabilities and the achievement of great power status is fundamental when analysing all states' actions. Economic power would ultimately turn Germany into a great power. A connection between possessing nuclear weapons and achieving great power status also existed.⁷³ In Germany, the development of the former was far more likely than the latter.

Realists and neorealists have not undertaken any in-depth studies of the nature of Germany's foreign policy behaviour toward ECE in particular the Czech Republic and Poland.⁷⁴ Several observations, however, were made about Germany's future position in the region. Waltz's reasoning suggests that Germany, given its economic capabilities, would behave like a great power again. Neorealists and realists drew the appropriate conclusions about Germany's future development from their analyses of the dynamics of the new international system. They took their assessments one step further and applied them to Germany's interactions with its political and economic hinterland in ECE. Waltz asserted that 'Germany is in the best position to play a leading role in Eastern Europe, Ukraine, and Russia. ... Ironically, Japan in Asia and Germany in Eastern Europe are likely in the next century to replay roles in some ways similar to those they played earlier'.⁷⁵ Jacob Heilbrunn argued that Germany 'is creating an old-fashioned sphere of influence in the East, in which Central and Eastern Europe form a vital market for German goods and provide cheap labour for German manufacturers'.⁷⁶ For Gregory Treverton, the consequences of German unification for its European allies and new Eastern neighbours were increased levels of German power which might result in economic and political tension in the region. Germany's *Zwang nach Osten* (need to help the East) or the 'pull of perceived obligation' would likely result in the following scenario:

⁷³Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure', p. 54.

⁷⁴There have been more neorealist attempts to explain Germany's integration in the EU and its support for Economic and Monetary Union. See Thomas Pedersen, *Germany, France and the Creation of the Union: a Realist Interpretation* (London; New York: Pinter, 1998).

⁷⁵Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure', p. 63.

⁷⁶Jacob Heilbrunn, 'Tomorrow's Germany', *The National Interest*, no. 36 (Summer 1994), p. 47.

Eastern Europe seems destined to return to its prewar pattern, its economies organized around Germany's; prewar Germany had at least a quarter of Eastern Europe's trade. Territories adjacent to Germany, especially the former German ones, will wind up bearing the same relation to Germany as northern Mexico does to the United States — independent in sovereignty but in practice of a piece with the German economy.⁷⁷

Although Treverton's observations are to a certain degree accurate, increased levels of German power did not necessarily result in political or economic tension in the region. Paradoxically, its counterparts in ECE welcomed Germany's economic engagement there but emphasised the need to balance German investment with investment from other countries in Western Europe.⁷⁸

There were, however, some residual doubts about Germany's future economic role and 'perceived' increased levels of ECE dependency on the German economy. Markovits and Reich, for instance, wondered why these Eastern European countries had allowed themselves to become so dependent on the German economy and its political and economic institutions for advice and technological expertise. They argued: 'belief in the centrality of Germany's involvement—and indeed Germany's prosperity—to the development of these European states, provides the Germans, *de facto*, with tremendous influence whether they want it or not'.⁷⁹ Indeed, like many realists and neorealists, they presumed that Germany would act like any other state in the international system; it would seek to maximise its power in a region ripe for economic penetration. The emphasis on the preponderance of German economic power – not military power – should be noted, although systemic developments did influence Germany's security policy toward the region.

Neorealists, like their geopolitical, geostrategical, and realist counterparts emphasise the primacy of the international system, geographical factors, and the concept of the 'national' or 'self' interest in defining the main political, economic and security parameters of Germany's Ostpolitik.⁸⁰ Several studies grounded in 'interest' based language derived from realism focus

⁷⁷Gregory Treverton, *Germany, America and the Future of Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 200.

⁷⁸Interview with Polish official in Warsaw.

⁷⁹Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich, 'Should Europe Fear the Germans?' in Michael G. Huelshof, Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich (eds.), *From Bundesrepublik to Deutschland: German Politics after Unification* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1993), p. 287.

⁸⁰See Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas: Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne* (Berlin: Siedler, 1994); Christian Hacke, *Weltmacht wider Willen: die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1993); Michael Sturmer, 'Deutsche Interessen' in Karl Kaiser

specifically on Germany's foreign relations with ECE, in particular the Czech Republic and Poland. For example, Stephan Martens' *La politique à l'Est de la République fédérale d'Allemagne depuis 1949* examines Germany's Ostpolitik through a realist and Realpolitik lens concluding that Germany has successfully achieved its objectives in ECE under the aegis of a proactive *Europapolitik*.

Within the economic dimension of its relations with ECE, it is apparent that Germany's motives in the region are governed by extensive cultural and commercial interests which consequently serve German national goals.⁸¹ Patricia Davis argued that Germany's bilateral relationship with Poland was driven primarily by the pursuit of self-interest and self-help in three main areas: reconciliation between the two nations, ethnic Germans in Poland, and foreign economic assistance for Poland's economic transition. According to Davis, there is ample evidence, from a German perspective, to suggest that Germany does not always advocate the 'European interest'.⁸² The pursuit of German national interests is paramount and should serve Germany's objectives in the EU.

Studies of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* (security policy) also focused on the international system and 'interest' driven language. This is not particularly surprising given that the two principal German defence documents on defining Germany's security interests were inherently realist and geopolitical in their outlook: the *Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien* (1992) and the *Weissbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr* (1994).⁸³ Jolanda Wijnsma used neorealist, realist, and geopolitical theories to explain the evolution of Germany's Ostpolitik after 1990.⁸⁴ Ostpolitik is described as a form of geopolitics in a study that concentrates almost exclusively on the primacy of international

and Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Interessen und Strategien*. Vol. 3 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 3-13, and Wilfried von Bredow and Thomas Jäger, *Neue deutsche Aussenpolitik: nationale Interessen in internationalen Beziehungen* (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1993).

⁸¹François Bafail (ed.), *Les stratégies allemandes en Europe centrale et orientale. Une géopolitique des investissements directs* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).

⁸²See Patricia Davis, 'National Interests Revisited: The German Case', *German Politics and Society*, vol. 16, no. 1 (Spring 1998), pp. 82-111.

⁸³Both documents represent the most unambiguous statements of Bonn's security interests after 1990. See chapter 6 for further detail.

⁸⁴Jolanda Wijnsma, *German Ostpolitik since Unification: Geopolitical Determinants in German Security Policy*. NUPI Report, no. 230 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 1997).

systems, Germany's geographical position vis-à-vis the East, and the division of power within the region. Geopolitical and geostrategic theories were applied extensively by German as well as American analysts who located the logic underpinning Germany's security interests in the East in concepts that focused on Germany's geographic position in the *Mittellage* of Europe. Germany's security perceptions of the East were fundamentally shaped by the Soviet Union's collapse and the emergence of new independent but unstable states on its Eastern security frontier.⁸⁵

Liberalism and Neo-Liberal Institutionalism

Proponents of liberalism and neoliberal institutionalism offer several useful tools to assess Germany's foreign policy behaviour. Studies focusing on the domestic sources of Germany's foreign and security policy are becoming more plentiful.⁸⁶ More emphasis is being placed on the roles played by domestic and societal actors: policy-makers, government ministries, political parties and interest groups, in the formulation and implementation of German foreign and security policy. This trend, however, has only been apparent in a few studies concerned with Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. The use of this approach is limited due to a significant lack of primary material, although there is enough secondary material to support the conclusion, for example, that Chancellor Kohl took a personal interest in steering the reconciliation processes with the Czech Republic and Poland.⁸⁷

The domestic sources of German foreign policy towards Poland are the subject of Dieter Bingen's *Die Polenpolitik der Bonner Republik von Adenauer bis Kohl, 1949-1991*. He considers the relationship between Germany's domestic political system and the formation of a German foreign policy consensus towards Poland. Specific attention is paid to the roles played by

⁸⁵See Heinz Brill, *Geopolitik heute: Deutschlands Chance?* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1994) and Ronald D. Asmus, *Germany's Geopolitical Maturation: Public Opinion and Security Policy in 1994* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1994), especially chapter 2.

⁸⁶See for example Ernst-Otto Czempel, *Kluge Macht: Aussenpolitik für das 21. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1999); Stephan G. Bierling, *Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Normen, Akteure, Entscheidungen* (Munich; Vienna: R. Oldenbourg, 1999), and Reinhard Rode, *Deutsche Aussenpolitik* (Berlin: G+B Verlag Fakultas, 1996).

⁸⁷Kohl's former speechwriter, Michael Mertes, highlights another significant research problem that will complicate assessments of the Kohl era. Kohl's 'most important means of communication was private conversation, either face-to-face or on the telephone; not memos or letters'. See Michael Mertes, 'Germany Moves On', *Prospect* (March 2000), p. 10.

successive German chancellors. The study concentrates almost exclusively on the FRG's relations with Poland throughout the Cold War and does not, except from 1990-1991, analyse the dynamics underpinning Kohl's *Polenpolitik* until 1998. A similar study also examined German-Czech relations. Libor Roucek focuses on the main domestic and external determinants of German-Czech relations, but does not include a post-unification assessment of the relations between these two states.⁸⁸

When assessing the domestic sources of German foreign policy towards the Czech Republic and Poland, it is important to highlight the roles played by the *Vertriebenerverbände* (expellee organisations) – which exercised considerable influence on Kohl's government from 1990-1998. This was apparent in the negotiations with Poland and the CSFR in their respective friendship treaties with Germany and the subsequent Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation (1997). As a powerful lobby group, the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft* with their parent organisation, the *Bundesverband der Vertriebenen*, used their close connection with the Christian Social Union in Bavaria to try and influence German foreign policy toward the Czech Republic. No significant study seems to have addressed the complex dynamic of CDU/CSU/FDP coalition politics and German foreign policy toward the Czech Republic or Poland. On the contrary, numerous studies have focused on these organisations' roles in shaping Germany's Ostpolitik after unification.⁸⁹

The role of bureaucratic politics in Germany's domestic political system also came to the fore with the German debate on the NATO enlargement from 1993-1997. The debate exposed the degree to which the Chancellor, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence were advocating different timetables for NATO enlargement. It highlighted the significance of the 'Russia factor'

⁸⁸Libor Roucek, *Die Tschechoslowakei und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1989: Bestimmungsfaktoren, Entwicklungen und Probleme ihrer Beziehungen* (Munich: Tuduv, 1990).

⁸⁹Herbert Czaja, 'Die politische Rolle der Vertriebenen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und ihr Anteil am Ausgleich mit den östlichen Nachbarn' in Christof Dahm (ed.), *Verständigung der deutschen Vertriebenen mit den östlichen Nachbarn: Vergangenheit und Zukunft* (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der Vertriebenen, 1992), pp. 23-37. On the role of the ethnic Germans, the expellees, and the planned eastward extension of the EU to ECE, see Dieter Blumenwitz, Gilbert H. Gornig and Dietrich Murswiek (eds.), *Der Beitritt der Staaten Ostmitteleuropas zur Europäischen Union und die Rechte der deutschen Volksgruppen und Minderheiten sowie der Vertriebenen* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1997).

in Germany's domestic political establishment, and fundamental differences about the approach the Atlantic Alliance should be adopting vis-à-vis its neighbours in ECE and Russia.⁹⁰

Two major academic works tried to isolate the principal domestic determinants of Germany's economic Ostpolitik. Michael Sturm combines a liberal, institutionalist, and international political economy approach to explaining how Germany's economic mechanisms manifested themselves in ECE. He describes the main governmental actors and interest groups, which exercised the most influence in Germany's economic decision-making processes. He also focuses extensively on the role of non-governmental organisations, and assesses the significance of private sector interests in defining German government responses to the transition phases in ECE. His study refutes the notion that neorealism is the appropriate paradigm for viewing Germany's economic Ostpolitik and suggests that a combination of bilateral and multilateral measures, formed in conjunction with other external actors were the dominant methods by which Germany promoted its foreign economic policy.⁹¹

Silvia Engels assesses Germany's response to the economic crises in the new ECE independent states from 1989-1992. She compares Germany's foreign economic relations with Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary and discusses the role of the main governmental and private actors in planning and implementing Germany's economic Ostpolitik. In contrast to Sturm, however, she comes to a rather different conclusion about the roles played by domestic German actors (especially the private sector) in formulating an economic Ostpolitik.⁹² Using a theoretical approach grounded in liberal theory, Engels maintains that transnational or societal actors play a major role in determining Germany's economic policy but have not replaced the importance of the state or the state system in determining the parameters, which shape a state's foreign economic policy. Germany's foreign policy is still a privilege of state actors although

⁹⁰The internal debate on the evolution of Germany's position on NATO enlargement illustrates the role of bureaucratic politics in the German system. See for example, Ulrich Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa: die Atlantische Allianz in der Bewährung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999) and Reinhard Wolf, 'The Doubtful Mover: Germany and NATO Expansion' in David Haglund (ed.), *Will NATO Go East? The Debate over Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance* (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University Press, 1996).

⁹¹Michael Sturm, *Stabilität und Geschäft: Deutsche Aussenwirtschaftspolitik in Osteuropa nach 1990* (Amsterdam: G+B Verlag Fakultas, 1998).

⁹²Silvia Engels, *Deutsche Wirtschaft – Gestalter der Ostpolitik? Die Bedeutung der Wirtschaftsbeziehungen für die Regierungspolitik: die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Polen, Ungarn sowie die Tschechoslowakei, 1985-1992* (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 1999).

transnational actors are beginning to play a more important role. This trend was especially apparent from 1989-1992.

The role of international institutions in defining and shaping German interests after the Second World War and the Cold War cannot be underestimated as a critical factor in defining German foreign policy. Like its predecessor, the FRG, Germany's political leadership relied extensively on institutionalist and multilateral frameworks to meet its foreign policy objectives.⁹³ From 1989-1991, however, German bilateral diplomacy and unilateral action, in the form of political reconciliation, vis-à-vis ECE prevailed. Jeffrey Anderson and John Goodman argue that 'Bonn's bilateral diplomacy targeted issues that either fell outside the current purview of international institutions or generated such a lack of consensus within multilateral frameworks that timely action was precluded'.⁹⁴ International institutions were not ignored; they were simply not perceived as adequate foreign policy instruments for addressing Germany's immediate political, economic and security concerns in the East from 1989-1991. After 1991, this strategy was replaced by a reflexive, multilateral approach that emphasised the significance of international institutions and multilateral strategies in Germany's foreign policy behaviour, especially towards ECE.

The institutionalist or integrationist perspective has a powerful history in Germany's foreign policy tradition. Of all the theoretical traditions in International Relations attempting to explain German foreign policy towards ECE and the Czech Republic and Poland in particular, this approach was undoubtedly adopted the most frequently. The use of multilateral instruments to meet German as well as EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) objectives in ECE was a dominant feature of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards the region.⁹⁵ For Bonn,

⁹³See Christian Deubner, *Deutsche Europapolitik: von Maastricht nach Kerneuropa* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1995); John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Thomas Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy 1945-1995* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), and Jeffrey Anderson, *German Unification and the Union of Europe: The Domestic Politics of Integration Policy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁹⁴Jeffrey J. Anderson and John Goodman, 'Mars or Minerva? A United Germany in a Post-Cold War Europe' in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and Stanley Hoffmann (eds.), *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 40.

⁹⁵Josef Janning, 'Deutschland und die europäische Union: Integration und Erweiterung' in Karl Kaiser and Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Interessen und Strategien*. Vol. 3 (Munich: R.

international institutions or frameworks were regarded as ideal, convenient, and uncontroversial forums within which to pursue interests and strategies. Germany relied extensively on multilateral institutions like the EU and NATO to conduct its foreign and security policy. Germany also used the institutions' multilateral frameworks to pursue its own interests, which were not always the same as its Western partners. This cannot be underestimated when considering Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland.

The studies of German foreign policy toward ECE, and the Czech Republic and Poland in particular have focused extensively on its use of multilateral instruments to meet its objectives. As one of the principal powers and easternmost states of the EU, it was naturally in Germany's interest to support the EU's enlargement eastwards.⁹⁶ As states bordering Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland mattered a great deal to Germany's political leadership. Besides, both states viewed Germany as an ideal vehicle for achieving their own foreign and security policy interests in Europe. All paths to the EU and NATO went via Germany. To meet each other's respective objectives, mutual interests began to emerge amongst all three states. In Poland, the phrase 'community of interests' coined in early 1990 by the Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, began to characterise the bilateral and multilateral dynamics of the German-Polish relationship.⁹⁷ This convergence of interests was visible in almost all aspects of German-Polish relations after unification: political reconciliation, the creation of the Weimar Triangle with France, Germany's support for the dual enlargement processes of the EU and NATO to include Poland, and the establishment of intensive cross-border cooperation projects. Germany's role as a 'lawyer' for Polish interests was frequently mentioned to highlight the intimate nature of this key relationship.

Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 31-54; Reinhardt Rummel, 'Germany's Role in the CFSP: Normalität or 'Sonderweg?' in Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 40-67.

⁹⁶Roland Freudenstein, 'Poland, Germany and the EU', *International Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 1 (January 1998), pp. 41-54.

⁹⁷Friedbert Pflüger, 'Die deutsch-polnische Interessengemeinschaft' in Karl Kaiser and Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Interessen und Strategien*. Vol. 3 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 143-148.

There was no such framework to satisfy the mutual interests of Czechs and Germans. Bilateral structures had to suffice. As it had done for Poland, Germany concentrated on advocating the extension of multilateral frameworks to include the Czech Republic, although it was blatantly obvious that this relationship did not elicit the same support from the Germans which the Poles benefited from. However, this did not delay or hinder the Czech Republic's chances of gaining entrance into NATO or concluding important association agreements with the EU. Germany's institutionalist orientation was prominent in all political, economic, and military areas of cooperation with the Czechs.⁹⁸

The argument that Germany would only be able to meet its foreign and security policy goals in ECE if it merged its national and European interests into one policy gained significant momentum during the Kohl years. Klaus Goetz maintains that the process has already been completed: the Europeanisation of the German state has led to the permanent fusion of national and European interests.⁹⁹ The institutionalisation of a 'sovereign power' raises important questions. Peter Katzenstein states: 'why does Germany, the most powerful state in Europe, appear bent on giving up voluntarily its newly won sovereign power? Why have long-standing institutional inefficiencies not blocked advances in European integration?'¹⁰⁰

According to Hanns Maull, the institutionalisation and 'softening' of German power during the Cold War had profound implications for the FRG's development. After unification, Germany's membership in several multilateral institutions had a 'civilising' effect on German foreign and security policy. He regards Germany, along with Japan, as the quintessential civilian power in the international system or, as James Sperling maintains, Germany was a civilian power in an uncivilian world.¹⁰¹ This 'civilian power' model was also applied to the study of Germany's

⁹⁸Rudolf Seiters, 'Erweiterung von europäischer Union und NATO im Kontext der deutsch-tschechischen Beziehungen', *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Auslandsinformationen*, no. 5 (1995), pp. 3-13.

⁹⁹See Klaus Goetz, 'Integration Policy in a Europeanised State: Germany and the Intergovernmental Conference', *Journal of European Public Policy*, no. 3 (1996), p. 40.

¹⁰⁰Peter Katzenstein, 'United Germany in an Integrating Europe' in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 2.

¹⁰¹See Hanns W. Maull 'Zivilmacht Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Vierzehn Thesen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik', *Europa-Archiv*, vol. 43, no. 10 (1992), pp. 269-278; Michael Staack, *Handelstaat Deutschland: deutsche Aussenpolitik in einem neuen internationalen System* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), and James Sperling, 'German Security Policy after the Cold War: The Struggle of a Civilian Power in an

foreign policy behaviour towards ECE after unification. In contrast with Maull, Henning Tewes makes the important distinction that a civilian power does not always pursue a multilateral foreign policy. Using three elements (aid, trade, and institutional extension) to highlight the main characteristics of German civilian power, Tewes argues that Germany's foreign policy towards the region can be analysed through a 'non-military, multilateral, and institutionalised framework'.¹⁰² Despite this approach, Tewes states that there was no coherent German programme, especially after unification, to extend EU memberships to its Eastern neighbours.

In a similar vein, Patricia Davis and Peter Dombrowski maintain that Germany's foreign economic relations with ECE, especially its foreign assistance programmes were indicative of similar multilateral and institutionalist tendencies, which had shaped Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification.¹⁰³ They concluded its economic expenditures in ECE served other 'unknown' purposes, not just German interests.

Richard Rosecrance offers the concept of the 'trading state' in *International Relations*. The FRG was described as the model *Handelsstaat* in the international system. Trading states are 'independent nations which accept equality of status on the basis of differentiation of freedom'. Their objectives are 'to improve national welfare and the allocation of resources through internal development and trade'.¹⁰⁴ Citing Germany and Japan as prime examples of trading states in the international system, he argued:

For a time, they were incapable of fighting war on a major scale; their endorsement of the trading system was merely an adoption of the remaining policy alternative. But that endorsement did not change even when the economic strength of the two nations might have sustained a more nationalistic and military policy. Given the choice between military expansion to achieve self-sufficiency (a choice made more difficult by modern conventional and nuclear weapons in the hands of other powers) and the procurement of necessary markets and raw materials through international commerce, Japan and Germany chose the latter.¹⁰⁵

Uncivilian World' in Stuart Croft and Phil Williams (eds.), *European Security without the Soviet Union* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 77-98.

¹⁰²Henning Tewes, 'The Emergence of a Civilian Power: Germany and Central Europe', *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 2 (August 1997), p. 113. See Henning Tewes, *Germany, Civilian Power and the New Europe: enlarging NATO and the European Union* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002).

¹⁰³Patricia Davis and Peter Dombrowski, 'Appetite of the Wolf: German Foreign Assistance for Central and Eastern Europe', *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 1 (April 1997), p. 19.

¹⁰⁴Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 28.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 138-139, especially chapter five.

Institutionalist and integration theory occupies a prime spot when analysing Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards the Czech Republic and Poland and also the complete spectrum of Germany's Ostpolitik after unification. Institutionalists emphasised the significance of Germany's multilateral foreign policy in determining the nature of its relations with ECE. For example, Claus Hofhansel outlines multilateralism's impact on shaping Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification. He explores the history of diplomatic negotiations between Germany and the Czech Republic, disputes over compensation for Czech and Polish victims of Nazi crimes, and the German position on EU enlargement. He considers the political reconciliation processes in all three countries but does not dwell on the powerful economic and security factors driving German interests in ECE.¹⁰⁶ Germany's political leadership opted for multilateralism as the preferred method for integrating the Visegrád states into Western international institutions. Moreover, ECE actually favoured this 'multilateral' strategy as they chose to negotiate with the West through international institutions and not on a bilateral or collective basis with Germany.

Social Constructivism

Germany is an ideal case to test constructivist tools. Its complex historical record and the power of citizens' collective memory are considered potent forces in the development of German interests in the post-Cold War era. To this date, however, some constructivist theory has been applied to Germany's complex foreign relations with ECE, especially the Czech Republic and Poland. In Germany, historical processes have profoundly influenced the development of its political institutions, the political leadership, and the creation of a German identity.¹⁰⁷ The reconciliation processes in German-Polish and German-Czech relations were no exception.¹⁰⁸ Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff explore the main determinants of German foreign policy making in

¹⁰⁶See Claus Hofhansel, *Multilateralism, German Foreign Policy and Central Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

¹⁰⁷Thomas Banchoff, 'Historical Memory and German Foreign Policy: The Cases of Adenauer and Brandt', *German Politics and Society*, no. 14 (Summer 1996), pp. 36-53.

¹⁰⁸Lily Gardner Feldman, 'The Principle and Practice of 'Reconciliation' in German Foreign Policy: Relations with France, Israel, Poland and the Czech Republic', *International Affairs*, vol. 75, no. 2 (1999), pp. 333-356, and Ann L. Phillips, 'The Politics of Reconciliation: Germany in Central-East Europe', *German Politics*, vol. 7, no. 2 (August 1998), pp. 64-85.

relation to the Czech Republic and Poland. They focus on the historical continuity of Ostpolitik in shaping priorities after unification and they see Ostpolitik 'as a broadly conceived strategy of foreign policy to achieve peace, reconciliation, and regime change'.¹⁰⁹ Using social constructivism as a theoretical model, they look at the domestic, governmental, bilateral and international contexts. Germany's economic and security interests in ECE are not discussed in significant detail.

Germany's historical record as an aggressor during the Second World War had profound implications for the evolution of its political-military culture and post-war and post-Cold War identity. Thomas Berger argues that the Second World War and the subsequent Allied occupation resulted in the rise of anti-militarism in Germany, the restructuring of the Bundeswehr, and the rejection of the use of force as an instrument in international relations. Germany's new national security policy was based on a policy of continuity marked by its 'multilateralism, a non-threatening force posture and a model of civilian control based on democratising and integrating the armed forces into society'.¹¹⁰ Bonn's pursuit of continuity in its foreign policy represented the dominant leitmotif after unification but it did not take place at the detriment of its national interest. Historical and collective memories had shaped Germany's post-war identity and the political elites' and public's general aversion to the militarism that dominated the pre-war era. Collective memories continue to exert a fair amount of pressure on Germany's foreign policy-making processes. Markovits and Reich argue: 'Germany is caught between the Scylla of collective memory which will not permit it to exercise power in a normal manner, and the Charybdis of contemporary exigencies, which demand German acceptance of its responsibilities in Europe and maybe even in the world'.¹¹¹ Germany's collective memory, combined with an 'ideology of reticence', continued to limit German power in the post-Cold War era.

Constructivists argue that a state's identity reveals clues about the nature of its interests. How did the evolution of Germany's post-war political-military culture and the power of

¹⁰⁹Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Germany's Foreign Policy Towards Poland and the Czech Republic: Ostpolitik Revisited* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 8.

¹¹⁰Thomas U. Berger, 'The Past in the Present: Historical Memory and German National Security Policy', *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 1 (April 1997), p. 56.

¹¹¹Markovits and Reich, *The German Predicament*, p. 7.

historical and collective memories affect the construction of a German or 'European' identity after the Second World War? More importantly, what impact did identity have on German interests after unification? Germany's political-military culture was transformed after 1945 as Germans dealt with their state's destruction and allied occupation. These post-war realities shaped the development of a German identity as ordinary Germans struggled to define what being 'German' actually meant. The 'Europeanisation' of Germany had its roots in the FRG's post-war political culture. Throughout the Cold War, West Germany's identity was slowly becoming more European. The fall of the Berlin Wall, German unification in 1990, and the decision to amend Article 23 of the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) intensified the links between Germany and the European Union and accelerated the 'Europeanisation' process.¹¹²

However, no consensus exists among Germans that Germany's identity has been supplanted by a European one. Christopher Coker, for example, maintains that 'the Germany struggling to be born in the post-war era was heir to impulses it only half understood. ... What could be identified in the closing years of the Cold War was an undertow of redemptive yearning, a wish to be exceptional of necessity, not choice—once again to be "German"'. These thoughts were reflected in both the Left and Right in Germany, especially in the 1980s when the main theme to emerge was the following: Germany's 'Western integration was an ideological façade that had outlived its usefulness'.¹¹³

Multilateral terminology that is primarily European in nature is often applied to a unified Germany's national interest. As Garton Ash notes: '... French and German politicians utterly conflate the national and the European, so it is almost impossible to distinguish when they are talking about Europe and when about their own nations'.¹¹⁴ Thomas Banchoff's analysis of Kohl's post-unification foreign policy rhetoric suggests that two historical themes were intertwined in the German foreign policy process: 'that European integration is a 'question of war and peace', and

¹¹²For the exact wording of Article 23 of the Basic Law, see BfpB, *Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: BfpB, June 1993), p. 22.

¹¹³Christopher Coker, *Twilight of the West* (Boulder, CO; Oxford: Westview, 1998), p. 113.

¹¹⁴Timothy Garton Ash, *History of the Present: Essays, Sketches and Despatches from Europe in the 1990s* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999), p. 181.

that German and European unity represent 'two sides of the same coin'.¹¹⁵ German and European interests have successfully blended. Germany's identity became European as social constructivists would have us believe.

As this chapter demonstrated, scholars in International Relations have used numerous theoretical tools to interpret Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification. Germany's transition from a 'semi-sovereign' to a 'sovereign' state after the end of the Cold War has presented them with multiple, unanswered questions sixteen years after unification. There is general agreement that a unified Germany experienced fundamental internal and external changes, which influenced its foreign policy behaviour, especially towards the CSFR and Poland. However, there is fundamental disagreement on whether primarily internal or external factors are responsible for shaping a state's interests, strategies and conduct. Despite the dramatic changes which occurred in the international system after 1989, two crucial facts still apply: states coexist in an anarchic realm (since there is no higher authority they can depend on to ensure their security), and states continue to put national before supranational interests. Germany's relations with the Czech Republic and Poland offer us a glimpse of this reality.

¹¹⁵Banchoff, 'German Policy toward the European Union', p. 61.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DOMESTIC AND EXTERNAL SOURCES OF GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

Germany is central to many theoretical debates in International Relations. However, there is little consensus about the qualitative variables which shaped Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour. Germany is not an isolated case. There is a lack of consensus on the determinants of a state's behaviour and this is reflected in the current state of research and theoretical study in International Relations. There is no comprehensive theory which explains the interplay between agential and structural variables that shape a state's foreign policy behaviour, although Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) tools are helpful in guiding us through the complexities of Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification.

What types of theoretical problems present themselves when one analyses Germany's foreign and security policy behaviour? Sixteen years after unification, there is no consensus on whether Germany can be classified as a 'normal' actor in International Relations.¹ How does one define 'normality' in Germany's case? The 'normalisation' debate exposed a rift between two major groups. Proponents of normalisation argue that Germany should implement a foreign policy which is based on defined and explicit national interests. Opponents argue that a foreign policy based on national interests is not appropriate given Germany's disturbing historical record in the twentieth century. This controversial debate dominated the German foreign policy discourse throughout the Kohl era. Sixteen years after German unification and eight years after Kohl's demise, it is possible to discern the domestic and external sources of Bonn's Ostpolitik from 1990 to 1998.

This chapter has three main sections. The first provides a theoretical framework for examining the domestic and external sources of German foreign policy after unification. The second examines domestic sources. The emphasis is, first, on describing the roles played by these sources and then on discussing how they shaped German foreign policy. This section's aim is to hint at these sources' significance before describing their roles in Germany's relations with the

¹For an overview of the 'normalisation' debate in German foreign policy discourse, see Philip H. Gordon, 'Berlin's Difficulties: The Normalisation of German Foreign Policy', *Orbis*, no. 38 (Spring 1994), pp. 225-243.

Czech Republic and Poland in subsequent chapters. The third section will define the external sources with reference to the Czech Republic and Poland. By examining all sources, instruments, and the constraints imposed by domestic society on foreign policy makers, it is possible to ascertain where and how Germany and its leaders exert influence and, more importantly, where it maintains political and economic leverage in its bilateral relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. It is also possible to determine which influences were temporary and would endure as significant and constant factors in influencing Germany's foreign policy behaviour.

A Theoretical Framework for Analysing German Foreign Policy

This thesis relies on a FPA theoretical framework which allows us to explain and appreciate the vibrant links between *das Primat der Aussen- und Innenpolitik* (primacy of foreign and domestic policy) in shaping Germany's behaviour.² There are historical precedents for this approach's application when studying West Germany's foreign policy behaviour after the Second World War. Lewis Edinger, for example, observed: 'Domestic and foreign affairs are so closely intertwined in West German public affairs that domestic policy issues are frequently coloured by foreign policy considerations and foreign policy decisions influenced by domestic policy concerns'.³ Wolfram Hanrieder argued: 'Given the intimate connection between the major patterns of the international system and the evolving characteristics of West German society, external events 'penetrated' the domestic 'subsystem' of West Germany to a high degree of fusion of national and international systems'.⁴ The first Social Democratic leader after the Second World War, Kurt Schumacher, had remarked that in Germany a decision about foreign policy is simultaneously a decision about domestic policy. These observations highlight the interplay between the domestic and the international in German foreign policy before and after unification.

Das Primat der Aussen- und Innenpolitik captures the essence of the agency-structure debate in FPA and is useful for examining Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic

²Reinhard Rode, *Deutsche Aussenpolitik* (Berlin: G+B Verlag Fakultas, 1996), pp. 4-9.

³Lewis J. Edinger, *West German Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 230-231.

⁴Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *West German Foreign Policy 1949-1963: International Pressure and Domestic Response* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 228.

and Poland. According to Christopher Hill, it is important to understand ‘the interplay, indeed overlap’ of these sources and their impact on ‘understanding an individual’s behaviour’.⁵ For Hill, agents are ‘the entities capable of decisions and actions in any given context. They may be single individuals or collectives’ but they are ‘individual human beings taking decisions and implementing them on behalf of entities which possess varying degrees of coherence, organisation and power’.⁶ As Arnold Wolfers notes:

All events occurring in the international system must be conceived of and understood from two angles simultaneously: one calling for concentration on the behaviour of states as organized bodies of man, the other calling for concentration on human beings upon whose psychological reactions the behaviour credited to states ultimately rests.⁷

Thus, actors determine or at least shape a state’s behaviour: In Germany’s case, the chancellor is one of the major foreign policy actors. According to Robert Jervis, there are three main individual sources which shape a decision maker’s opinion: an actor’s beliefs about his own domestic political system, an actor’s previous experiences, and the course of international history.⁸ In the case of Ostpolitik, the belief systems of successive German chancellors were significantly influenced by the course of German history during the twentieth century.

Structure ‘focuses on the international context and diverse forms of constraint and opportunity that actors experience’.⁹ As a caveat, however, structure not only focuses on the international context but also on ‘the political, bureaucratic and social structures which condition foreign policy making’.¹⁰ The focus here is on external state actors, inter-governmental organisations, and changes in the international political system from 1989-1991, such as German unification and its external ramifications, as well as the Soviet Union’s and WTO’s collapse. According to Robert Gilpin, international political change can be examined by focusing on the anarchical international system which is absent of any significant central or supranational

⁵Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. xix.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 27, 51.

⁷Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 9.

⁸Robert Jervis, ‘Hypotheses on Misperception’, *World Politics*, vol. 20, no. 3 (April 1968), pp. 466-472.

⁹Hill. *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 20.

¹⁰*Ibid.* p. 26.

authority.¹¹ The principal actor in the international system is the state, composed of individual and collective actors; it may also 'be conceived as a coalition of coalitions whose objectives and interests result from the powers and bargaining among the several coalitions composing the larger society and political elite'.¹² Thus, the dominant members or ruling coalitions of a society shape a state's foreign policy, although it is impossible to define all the domestic characteristics which affect this process. States, in particular political elites, are governed by multiple interests but as

Gilpin notes

states, as such, have no interests or what economists call utility functions, nor do bureaucracies, interest groups or so-called transnational actors, for that matter. Only individuals and individuals joined together into various types of coalitions can be said to have interests'.¹³

States themselves are not responsible for shaping foreign and security policy interests, governments are. Governments, in turn, rely on individual human actors to interpret and react to events occurring in the international system or in their domestic political systems.

In Germany's case, the debate is about whether the 'agents' or 'actors' there are shaped by 'structures' (or vice versa), more specifically, the dynamics of Germany's international environment or milieu. According to Hill:

Structures are the set of factors which make up the multiple environments in which agents operate and they shape the nature of choices, by setting limits to the possible but also, more profoundly, by determining the nature of the problems which occur there, by shaping our very life worlds'.¹⁴

Both agents and structures are appropriate reference points in Germany's Ostpolitik as the interplay between both produces complex interactions and outcomes which shape its international position and domestic context. Historically, this model has been successful in understanding West Germany's foreign policy behaviour after the Second World War. FPA tools allow us to discern the motives of individual actors and agents in Germany's domestic political system and to understand those policy arenas where decisions are actually being made.

¹¹Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 10.

¹²Ibid., p. 19.

¹³Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁴Ibid. p. 26.

In all states – Germany is no exception – there are strong ties between the policy formulation processes and the outcomes of those processes. The policy-making environment, within which a government operates, in some cases, constrains or improves foreign policy choices available to decision-makers. What Germany is able to achieve outside its territorial borders depends to a certain extent on the size, flexibility, and levels of bureaucratisation inherent in its decision-making processes. States and their respective governments do not pursue their objectives from within a governmental vacuum that discounts societal pressures and public opinion. According to Hill, ‘foreign policy is not immune from the impact of values, ideas and initiatives and upheavals, transnational in many respects but often also internally generated’.¹⁵

Constructivism’s emphasis on political culture, identity, and history also allows us to test how these influential variables influenced German domestic politics and its external behaviour. A state’s social dynamics cannot be ignored as an important factor in shaping a leader’s perceptions about its international environment. In Germany’s case, unification had a major impact on its perceptions of its external environment and foreign policy towards ECE. Special interest groups, such as the expellee organisations, also played a role in shaping Germany’s foreign relations with its eastern neighbours; they also functioned as a constraint.

The agential-structural approach also takes into account the ‘actor’ features of German foreign policy: policy-making individuals, interest groups, and coalition politics. The ‘actor’ dimension is crucial to understanding the personal motivations behind the German political leadership’s views of their position in the *Mittellage* and their external position vis-à-vis the Czech Republic and Poland. The agential-structural approach also allows us to focus on the significance of political, economic, and security arrangements, including international institutions which states use to pursue their multiple objectives. Institutions are essential in the process of identity and interest formation and Germany’s policy-makers were extremely adept at using them to achieve their national objectives.¹⁶

¹⁵Hill. *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 222.

¹⁶Jeffrey Anderson and John B. Goodman, ‘Mars or Minerva? A United Germany in a Post-Cold War Europe’ in Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Stanley Hoffmann (eds.), *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 23-62.

Agency and German Foreign Policy

Federal President

The *Grundgesetz* of 1949 is the constitutional foundation of Germany. It is responsible for delineating the responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches in its political system, incorporating international law into national law, and the transfer of German rights of sovereignty to supra-national institutions. This latter point is critical, especially in foreign policy where according to Peter Graf Kielmansegg, 'West German foreign policy has been guided by what the political elites viewed as the *raison d'être* of the Federal Republic', its integration in supra-national institutions.¹⁷ Within the executive branch, the ceremonial head of state is the president. Article 59 of the Basic Law gives the president the right to represent Germany in its international relations and conclude treaties with other states on its behalf. The president also accredits and receives envoys, although foreign policy as such is the responsibility of the federal government, in particular, the chancellor and the Foreign Office. The president plays a minimal role in foreign policy although some presidents rise above their office's confines to play powerful roles on the international stage. Although the president's position is symbolic and ceremonial, he/she embodies the country's major political institutions and structures in society regardless of their party distinctions. Symbols are particularly important in modern Germany as the president embodies the state to the outside world which watches Germany very closely. He/she can also exercise considerable personal authority by acting in a neutral, mediating function and by commenting on issues of currency. This position allows him/her to rise above party-political controversies and set standards for the public's political and moral guidance.

After unification, President Richard von Weizsäcker played an important role in the political reconciliation processes with Czechoslovakia and Poland and he assisted the chancellor quite ably in this area. Weizsäcker's role was largely symbolic but the quality of his personal relationships, for instance, with the CSFR's President Václav Havel, and the sincerity and forcefulness with which his public statements were delivered cannot be underestimated as a powerful symbol in Germany's bilateral relations with its Eastern neighbours. Early dialogues and

¹⁷Peter Graf Kielmansegg, *The Basic Law – Response to the Past or Design for the Future*. Occasional Paper no. 1 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1990), p. 9.

exchanges of letters of apology were important instruments for expressing German war guilt and Czech and Polish regrets about the expulsion of ethnic Germans from the Sudetenland and Poland after the Second World War. Weizsäcker was involved with his Czech and Polish counterparts in developing a close political rapport and facilitating exchanges of opinion on important bilateral matters of state. His successor Roman Herzog was also involved in Germany's reconciliation processes with the Czech Republic and Poland, although he lacked the same public profile and persona as his predecessor.

The Chancellor and the Federal Chancellery

In the executive branch, the most important actor in the government is the chancellor who acts as its head, chairman of the cabinet, and head of the *Bundeskanzlei* (Federal Chancellery). The chancellor's omnipotent role in Germany's decision-making processes has resulted in the German government being called a *Kanzlerdemokratie* (chancellor democracy) where the chancellor exercises control under the principle of *Kanzlerprinzip* (chancellor authority).¹⁸ These principles have persisted throughout Germany's evolution as a peaceful and democratic state after the Second World War. It was clear that 'the dominant characteristic of foreign policy-making in the early years of the Federal Republic was its extreme, not to say excessive, centralisation in the person of the first chancellor'.¹⁹ Within the executive branch, the chancellor's role in determining foreign policy is paramount. He or she holds the *Richtlinienkompetenz* (guideline competence), as executive authority is vested in the chancellor and ultimately his or her cabinet. The chancellor's role as the chief executive of the state is defined in Article 65 of the Basic Law:

¹⁸According to Karl-Rudolf Korte, the *Kanzlerprinzip* in the Kohl era allowed him to construct 'his own political early warning system within the field of foreign policy' which enabled him 'to distinguish himself from a Foreign Office that at the time was dominated by his Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher'. See Karl-Rudolf Korte, 'The Effects of German Unification on the Federal Chancellor's Decision-Making', *German Politics*, vol. 11, no. 3 (December 2001), p. 95.

¹⁹William E. Paterson, 'The Chancellor and Foreign Policy' in Stephen Padgett (ed.), *Adenauer to Kohl: The Development of the German Chancellorship* (London: C. Hurst, 1994), p. 128.

The Chancellor determines and bears responsibility for the general guidelines of governmental policy. Within this policy, each minister conducts the affairs of his department independently and under his own responsibility. The government decides on differences of opinion between ministers. The Chancellor conducts the business of the government in accordance with the rules of procedure adopted by it and approved by the President.²⁰

The chancellor has the formal authority to determine government policy and to coordinate the work of the various departments. The cabinet ministers are appointed by the Federal President on the nomination of the chancellor who has the sole power for this task as well as dismissing ministers under Article 64. To date, however, the Chancellor of one of the two major parties, the SPD or CDU, has often been forced to rely on a coalition partner, the FDP or the Greens, to maintain a *Bundestag* majority. In foreign policy, successive CDU governments have employed a foreign minister who was a member of the FDP party. According to Karl-Rudolf Korte, however, 'the centralisation of governmental management even led to the situation that the Chancellor's Office itself began to interfere in the coalition partner's departmental work', especially in the area of foreign policy, for example, in relations between Kohl's Foreign and Security Policy Advisor Joachim Bitterlich and Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.²¹ Kohl's tenure in office is replete with such interventions. The conduct of German foreign policy was subject to constant wrangling between personalities and different political parties which had an effect on policy outcomes.

Within the Chancellery, there is also the foreign relations directorate-general which is responsible for coordinating foreign policy positions amongst the various ministries. Judith Siwert-Probst notes that this entity plays an important role in the formulation and implementation processes of German foreign policy but cannot be expected to be a master of all the paperwork flowing into the Chancellery from the various ministerial agents and actors. Indeed, 'the Chancellery's job is, first, to coordinate points of view by maintaining the closest possible contact with ministries, secondly, to recognise and reconcile differences of opinion in good time and, finally, whenever necessary, reiterate the chancellor's stated guidelines'.²² The head of the foreign

²⁰David P. Conradt, *The German Polity* (New York; London: Longman, 1986), p. 264.

²¹Korte. 'The Effects of German Unification on the Federal Chancellor's Decision-Making', p. 85.

²²Judith Siwert-Probst, 'Traditional Institutions of Foreign Policy' in Karl Kaiser and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein (eds.), *Germany's New Foreign Policy: Decision-making in an Interdependent World* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 22.

relations directorate general serves as the Chancellor's foreign and security policy advisor and it is not uncommon that the incumbent of this position clashes with the foreign minister on any given subject. Chancellor Kohl had two foreign and security policy advisors after 1990: Horst Teltchik and Joachim Bitterlich.

The Cabinet

The chancellor and the chancellery, however, were not left to their own devices although their primacy in the decision-making processes is beyond dispute. In Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland, four ministries wielded control in their respective fields, the *Auswärtiges Amt* (Foreign Office), the *Bundesministerium für Verteidigung* (Ministry of Defence – BMVg), the *Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft* (Ministry of Economics – BMWi), and the *Bundesministerium der Finanzen* (Federal Ministry of Finances – BMF). The Foreign Office is the foreign policy organ responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs and Germany's diplomatic relations with foreign states. The BMVg handles Germany's defence and security matters and plays a role in developing, with input from the *Bundeskanzlei* and the Foreign Office, its *Sicherheitspolitik*. It plays a crucial role in defining the security and defence strategies used to meet its policy objectives in ECE and it was also the foremost proponent of NATO enlargement in the German government. In the economics sphere – before and after unification – the foreign economic policy making apparatus consisted of several 'agents': the BMWi²³, the BMF; the Foreign Office, and the *Bundeskanzlei*. Each of the ministries responsible for developing Germany's foreign economic policy towards the Czech Republic and Poland seconded officials to serve on an Inter-ministerial Committee (*Interministerieller Ausschuß*: IMA) which according to Patricia Davis was 'responsible for decision-making regarding the primary instruments of economic persuasion: export and investment credit guarantees as well as tied and untied credits'.²⁴

²³According to Anderson and Wallander, the internal structures of the BMWi, for example, were largely left intact. The creation of a new *Referat* (administrative unit) to oversee Bonn's bilateral and multilateral engagements in ECE was the only visible change as a result of unification and new tasks taken on by the ministry. See Jeffrey J. Anderson and Celeste A. Wallander, *In the Shadow of the Wall: Germany's Eastern Trade Policy after Unification*. Working Paper, no. 96-3 (Cambridge, MA: Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1996), note 21, p. 11.

²⁴Patricia Davis, *The Art of Economic Persuasion: Positive Incentives and German Economic Diplomacy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 152.

This decision-making arrangement, located in Bonn, steered the direction and content of Germany's foreign economic policy with the assistance of the *Ost-Ausschuß* (Eastern Committee) which was charged with coordinating Germany's foreign economic policy towards all countries in ECE on the ground. The *Ost-Ausschuß*, in turn, was linked to the German government via the *Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie* (Federation of German Industry). The *Länder* also play an important role in this decision making structure; indeed, they are tied to the individual ministries in the form of *Leitungsstäbe* (task forces or divisions) which are located in individual ministries and are a focal point for keeping the *Länder* informed about the government's economic efforts in Europe but also in ECE.

It is apparent here that there were many actors and agents with considerable overlap in responsibilities. An issue or sector area was crucial in determining which actors held a stake in the outcome of a particular policy process. For example, the political reconciliation processes were controlled by the *Bundeskanzlei* and the Foreign Office with the former often taking direct responsibility for negotiations with the Czech Republic and Poland on significant matters. Chancellor Kohl often exercised his prerogative to personally manage and control Germany's foreign relations; this was not necessarily his forte when he assumed office in 1982 but it quickly became his passion to delegate certain aspects of German foreign affairs as *Chefsache*. Throughout the Two Plus Four Accord negotiations, Kohl personally steered the FRG through the high-level negotiations of one of the most complex diplomatic mazes in Germany's history in the twentieth century. Kohl shone in the international spotlight and he appreciated the domestic and international attention he received as the 'father' of German and European unity. The Foreign Office was also involved with negotiating the friendship treaties with both the Czech Republic and Poland but, in most cases and in areas of dispute, the *Bundeskanzlei* often took the lead role depending on the significance of the issues at stake. There was an important historical precedent here as far as Ostpolitik was concerned. Chancellor Brandt personally spearheaded the negotiations of the Eastern Treaties with the Foreign Office in the 1960s and 1970s. Here, the need for secrecy required the Chancellor's personal attention.

German *Länder*

Within Germany's federal structure, the *Länder* have been playing an important role in the country's foreign and security policy, especially vis-à-vis the EU's decision-making processes and enlargement.²⁵ In the *Grundgesetz*, Article 23(1) stipulates that future transfers of sovereignty can occur only with the consent of the *Bundesrat* (*Länder's* chamber). Subject to Article 79(3) which protects the 'federal' nature of the Federal Republic, Article 23(5) strengthens the weight of *Bundesrat* opinion in relation to the passage of European legislation into German law. More efforts at 'deepening' European integration include the transfer of sovereignty from the Federal Republic and the *Länder* to the EU. Germany's federal structure permits the *Länder* to enjoy some sovereignty on those issues which are affected by European integration. The *Bundesrat* can therefore block legislative action proposed by the government through the Bundestag. The *Länder* can block treaties, for example, which directly affect their future existence.

Article 32 outlines the parameters within which the *Länder* can formulate independent foreign policies towards other states. The importance of sub-national foreign policies (*Neben-Aussenpolitik*) or 'para-diplomatic' activities pursued by the *Länder* is evident in Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland.²⁶ This is crucial since the *Länder*, through the *Bundesrat*, have the power to veto legislation, which may adversely affect their interests. The German government's executive and legislative branches are therefore subject to political decisions made by the *Länder* in the *Bundesrat*. One *Land*, Bavaria (led by the CSU and managed from Munich), often challenged the chancellor's foreign and security policy, especially in the context of German-Czech relations. This became apparent during the negotiations of the German-CSFR friendship treaty from 1990-1992 and the Czech-German Declaration on Mutual Relations in 1997.

This 'political meddling' follows a trend where the *Länder* are more interested in expanding their scope of participation in the foreign policy formulation processes, thus hoping to

²⁵Charlie Jeffery and Stephen Collins, 'The German *Länder* and EU Enlargement: Between Apple Pie and Issue Linkage', *German Politics*, vol. 7, no. 2 (August 1998) : 86-101.

²⁶Michèle Knodt, "Auswärtiges Handeln der deutschen *Länder*" in Karl Kaiser and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Institutionen und Ressourcen*. Vol. 4 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), p. 156.

increase their influence on the international stage. In the cases of the Czech Republic and Poland this is accomplished with much success, as the governments of individual *Länder* prodded Bonn to pay more attention to regional political and economic developments on its border and to intensify the ties between German *Länder* and their Eastern counterparts. In the context of inter-regional economic cooperation, for example, the *Länder* wanted to enhance their public profile and use their financial power to influence their immediate environment.²⁷

German Non-governmental Actors/Political Lobbying Groups

Expellee Organisations

One of the most powerful interest groups in the post-war period was the umbrella organisation of the expellee groups: the *Bund der Vertriebenen* formed in 1950. The expellees' political agenda was shaped by their expulsion from their homelands in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union after 1944. The organisation played an integral role within the CDU/CSU political parties and was an active lobbying power for its interests in ECE both during the Cold War and after. After the Second World War, approximately ten million expellees became members in an effort to promote their interests vis-à-vis the CSFR, Poland, and Bonn more effectively. Their political aims were to prevent a normalisation of relations between the FRG and ECE – a goal which persisted before unification. There is no longer one official expellee party although there are large numbers of expellee organisations spread throughout Germany, including the *Schlesier-* and *Sudeten Landsmannschaften*. Their political influence in Bonn was at its peak in the 1950s but waned in significance because of their intransigence on the political reconciliation processes initiated with ECE during Brandt's Ostpolitik.

As a major source of Ostpolitik, it will become evident in the next chapter how important the expellee organisations were in influencing Bonn's foreign policies vis-à-vis the Czech Republic and Poland after unification. When Bonn wanted to renegotiate the *Ostverträge* with Czechoslovakia and Poland, the expellee organisations exerted a lot of political influence through their lobbying efforts and political party voice: the CSU. The negotiation processes of the German

²⁷Michèle Knodt. 'External Representation of German Länder Interests' in Karl Kaiser and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein (eds.), *Germany's New Foreign Policy: Decision-making in an Interdependent World* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 180.

friendship and border treaties with both states exhibited high levels of input on the part of the expellee organisations, although many of their political demands were not met.

The expellee organisations exerted their influence on three levels: the federal, *Land*, and bilateral levels of Germany's foreign relations with its eastern neighbours. Despite their relatively small numbers in political terms, they shaped Munich's political agenda in Bonn and put Bavaria on the map as far as the Sudeten German question was concerned. The Sudeten German question also affected the negotiations to enlarge the EU to include the Czech Republic, as the CSU was a major obstacle. German-Czech relations, in contrast with Poland, were often held hostage by Sudeten German and CSU demands. As a non-governmental organisation, they were certainly more powerful in voicing their demands in comparison with their *Schlesier* (Silesian) counterparts. As the principal coalition partner in Bonn and political master of one of Germany's most prosperous and influential *Länder*, the CSU took an active interest in all areas of the Czech-German relationship because of the political power of the Sudeten Germans in Bavaria.

Political and Cultural Foundations

Political and cultural foundations are major players in promulgating and supporting German foreign policy objectives, including Germany's *Kulturpolitik*, especially in ECE. With their close links to the German political system, in particular, through its political parties and funding from the Foreign Office and the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, these foundations perform a vital function in support of 'official' German foreign policy objectives. According to Sebastian Bartsch:

German political foundations make an important contribution to the pluralisation of German foreign policy. They strengthen the anchoring of foreign policy in society, widen the spectrum of actors relevant to foreign policy, improve the official foreign policy network information and communication, add to the presence of Germany abroad, as well as the range of its political agenda and its profile, and expedite the communication of values and ideas.²⁸

These foundations, including institutes and think tanks, like the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, Friedrich-Naumann Stiftung, Heinrich Böll Stiftung,

²⁸Sebastian Bartsch, 'Political Foundations: Linking the Worlds of Foreign Policy and Transnationalism' in Karl Kaiser and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein (eds.), *Germany's New Foreign Policy: Decision-making in an Interdependent World* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 212.

Stiftungsverband Regenbogen, and the Goethe and German Historical Institutes (to name a few) exert a great amount of political influence in their host nations as they seek to promote German policies, culture, and language awareness.

The ultimate aim of the foundations is to assess and sway political and cultural opinions in the states they operate and intensify bilateral relations, on all levels, between political and socio-cultural elites. According to Peter J. Katzenstein, they perform the following functions:

The government's traditional foreign policy is complemented by Germany's societal foreign policy (*gesellschaftliche Aussenpolitik*). Most of the major German institutions conduct their own foreign relations. Typically, they engage partner institutions in other countries thus creating or reinforcing a pattern of transnational relations. This gives German political actors ample opportunities to intervene obliquely in the domestic affairs of other European states, without throwing their weight around unduly.²⁹

In ECE, the following tools are useful in helping achieve their objectives: conferences, publications, political and cultural exchanges, student scholarships, and management and training workshops. Germany's political and cultural foundations are important institutional components and proponents of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland as they promote the political and economic stabilisation processes in ECE and enhance Germany's socio-political, cultural and economic position in the region by building on its prominent historical and cultural presence in Mitteleuropa.

Germany's political foundations also fulfil another important role; they advance Germany's relations with its eastern neighbours in the fields of educational, cultural and research exchanges. These areas of interest were enshrined in the friendship treaties Germany signed with the Czech Republic and Poland and they also highlighted the need to get younger generations to participate in Germany's reconciliation efforts with the Czech Republic and Poland. This effort is undertaken through the intensification of education and research contacts between schools in Germany and ECE and the provision of scholarship funds for foreign students seeking to study in Germany.

The development of Germany's *Kulturpolitik* was intricately linked with the promotion of Germany's cultural, economic, and political presence in ECE. Cultural instruments were regarded by Germany's leaders as important tools in safeguarding *Standort Deutschland*. Advancing the

²⁹Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Germany and Mitteleuropa: An Introduction' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Mitteleuropa: Between Europe and Germany* (Oxford; Providence, RI: Berghahn, 1997), p. 25.

German language in ECE was a central feature of this strategy. For centuries, the German language functioned as the *lingua franca* in Eastern Europe. Promoting a revival of German culture and the German language was one of the most significant components of Germany's *Kulturpolitik*.

Structure and German Foreign Policy

The international system was radically transformed between 1989 and 1991. The end of the Cold War, German unification, and the disintegration of the Soviet Empire had a profound impact on all states. In its various incarnations from 1949-1990, Bonn's Ostpolitik depicts a story of how successive governments managed and, indeed, struggled with competing domestic and foreign policy goals vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the GDR, WTO states, and their West European and transatlantic allies. With German unification, the socio-political, economic, and security ramifications of the German state changed. Otto von Bismarck's dictum that geography is the only constant factor in foreign policy reminds us that Germany's interests would always be shaped, amongst others, by this factor. During the Cold War, the FRG's Ostpolitik was a product of its international environment; the end of the Cold War did not alter this fact.

The main objective here is to define the external sources of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. How has Germany been influenced by the foreign and security policies of its Western and Eastern neighbours? External sources, such as states and institutions in the international system, also function as constraints limiting a state's capacity to act. According to Robert O. Keohane, institutions constrain states 'through the operation of rules, and provide them with opportunities without posing the threats to other states that are so characteristic of realist anarchy'.³⁰ In Germany's case, how did external actors and institutions act as constraints and as a stimulus for policy change?

It is important, however, in this context not to lose sight of Wolfer's warnings about the significance of external sources in a country's foreign policy:

³⁰Robert O. Keohane, 'Institutional Theory and the Realist Challenge after the Cold War' in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism*, p. 272.

Factors external to the actor can become determinants only as they affect the mind, the heart, and the will of the decision-maker. A human decision to act in a specific way ... necessarily represents the last link in the chain of antecedents of any fact of policy. A geographical set of conditions, for instance, can affect the behaviour of a nation only as specific persons perceive and interpret these conditions.³¹

To focus on a state's foreign policy behaviour one should simultaneously focus on the endogenous and exogenous parameters within which a state devises and implements its foreign policy objectives. Understanding this link is crucial. Three major structural or international sources will be examined here: the Soviet Union and its successor, the Russian Federation, France and the United States. In addition, the historical roles of two institutional sources will be assessed: the EU and NATO.

Soviet Union/Russian Federation

The Soviet Union and its political-military hegemony in Eastern Europe played a major role in shaping Germany's foreign relations with the CSFR and Poland. The Soviet conventional and nuclear threat to the FRG's existence defined the mindset of its political leaders throughout the Cold War. The Soviet Union was a major superpower and the principal actor in Eastern Europe throughout the Cold War. The Second World War had shaped the post-war evolution of German-Soviet relations and their relationship with Eastern Europe. As Celeste Wallander noted: 'German-Russian rivalry has been central to European conflict because of geopolitics: Russia's westward expansion created the potential for conflict with Prussia (and later Germany) over territory in Central and Eastern Europe, especially Poland and the Balkans'.³² Germany and Russia were enchanted with ECE and reluctant to cede control of the region to the other.

Germany's foreign relations towards ECE were influenced by five main Soviet/Russian factors: (1) Soviet and Russian perceptions about the nature of Germany's future role in ECE; (2) the presence of Soviet/Russian troops in the former GDR after unification until August 1994; (3) fears in ECE of a German-Russian rapprochement (4) the socio-political and economic implications of the demise of international communism in ECE and Russia for Germany; finally,

³¹Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, p. 42.

³²Celeste A. Wallander, *Mortal Friends, Best Enemies: German-Russian Cooperation after the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 1.

(5) political uncertainty and instability in the Soviet Union/Russia and the impact on security levels in Germany and ECE.³³ After unification, relations between Germany and the Soviet Union and its successor, the Russian Federation, determined the content of Germany's foreign and security policy strategies and objectives in ECE. In contrast with the Cold War's bipolar order, the roles were now reversed. The Soviet Union, in steady decline between 1989-1991, operated from a position of political, economic, and military weakness whereas Germany emerged from the Two Plus Four Accords as the European victor of the Cold War, despite being financially burdened by unification. This dramatic reversal of fortune had a significant impact on German strategies vis-à-vis its new Eastern neighbours, Russia's future political-military role in ECE and the FSU, and perceptions in ECE of increasing levels of German power, especially economic power. Despite the Soviet Union's relative decline in political and economic importance after 1991, especially in ECE, it nonetheless exerted high levels of influence on Germany's ambitions in ECE. Germany's leaders felt uneasy about the country's return to the *Mittellage* and the unpredictable events unfolding in ECE and the FSU.

German unification was described by the Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh as 'one of the most hated developments in the history of Soviet foreign policy'.³⁴ Germany derived substantial benefits from the Cold War's end whereas the Soviet Union lost everything its leaders had sought to protect after the end of the Second World War. Unification induced a profound sense of disillusionment among the Soviet Union's political leadership about their foreign policy and military capabilities in 1990. Unification also marked the end of the Soviet Union's influence in ECE and the dawn of its own disintegration. The loss of its satellite states in Eastern Europe and a more proactive German presence in its former political and economic hinterland exacerbated the Soviet Union's unease about a unified Germany's development and the implications for its future position in ECE. Now, Germany became the political and economic focal point for all states in ECE, at the Soviet Union's expense.

³³Points 2 and 5 are discussed in chapter 6.

³⁴Bessmertnykh quoted in Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. ix.

Given the Soviet Union's domination of ECE for forty-five years, this process was inevitable. From Moscow's perspective, Bonn was no longer perceived as an enemy. However, Bonn was a long way from becoming Moscow's friend and partner in the creation of a new European security architecture. Volker Rühle's contention that 'peace and stability in Europe can only be achieved with Russia, not against her' highlighted Russia's significance in the development of a European security architecture.³⁵ As Peter Frank observed, the ability to achieve stability in Russia was also crucial for the peaceful evolution of ECE after 1990:

Russia holds the key to stability in Central and Eastern Europe. ... Stability in Russia is not in itself a guarantee of stability elsewhere. But there is little doubt that, were Russia to degenerate into violent disorder, economic breakdown or environmental catastrophe, it would have extremely serious adverse consequences for Central and Eastern Europe, too.³⁶

The Soviet Union's position on German unification had been shaped through a Cold War lens which initially showed little flexibility but then became more so under Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership. Although Gorbachev was politically weakened by the Soviet Union's impending collapse, he played an invaluable role, despite vehement domestic opposition, in facilitating German unification. His conduct throughout the Two Plus Four Accord negotiations exemplified his non-obstructionist attitude towards the 'German question', although the Soviet Union was absorbed by the FRG's status as a close ally of the United States and proponent of its interests; the role of the Bundeswehr as 'NATO's 'first army'', and the presence of U.S. Pershing missiles on German soil.³⁷ Bonn's objective was to assuage Soviet concerns about a unified Germany's future political-military status in Europe. This point is crucial since it formed the crux of what evolved into a fundamental disagreement between Russia and the West on NATO's enlargement.³⁸ By not resisting Germany's aspirations of self-determination, the Soviet Union

³⁵Volker Rühle, 'The Future of European Security: A German View', *Central European Issues: Romanian Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1995/96), p. 19.

³⁶Peter Frank, 'Stability and Instability in Eastern Europe' in IISS, *European Security after the Cold War*. Adelphi Paper 285. Conference Papers - Part II (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1994), p. 13.

³⁷Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs* (London: Doubleday, 1996), p. 517.

³⁸According to Gorbachev, U.S. Secretary of State Baker made the following remark on Germany's future status to him: 'Assuming unification takes place, what would you prefer: a united Germany outside NATO and completely autonomous, without American forces stationed on its territory, or a united Germany that maintains its ties with NATO, but with the guarantee that NATO jurisdiction or troops would not extend east of the current line'. See Gorbachev, *Memoirs*, p. 529.

acted with a keen historical instinct. In playing the 'German card', Moscow aimed to benefit financially from its consent for unification to proceed. Furthermore, it relied on Germany to provide assistance for its economic transition processes and support for its European objectives.

During the Two Plus Four negotiations, the Soviet Union and Germany viewed each other with immense self-importance. The latter, however, with the support of the United States, was in a more powerful position to dictate the negotiation's terms despite internal and external constraints. Whereas Moscow was operating from a weak negotiating position, Bonn was extremely confident about achieving its foreign policy objectives: unification and its continued membership in NATO. For Bonn, its classic 'Eastern problem' was highlighted again. It had to pay attention to the political, economic, and security interests of ECE and Russia without compromising its position as an effective advocate for ECE interests and as Russia's principal voice and partner in Western international institutions.

Soviet influence in ECE decreased dramatically. There were several reasons for this development. First, with the Cold War's end and the peaceful revolutions of 1989 in ECE, the Soviet Union was forced to relinquish control of its political and economic hinterland. Second, having suffered for nearly forty-five years under Soviet tutelage, the states of ECE wished to realign their economic interests with Germany, their European partners and the United States. As ECE looked to the West to subscribe to the values of Western liberal democracy and the free market, the Soviet Union became a marginal and less attractive political and economic player in the region, although it still figured largely as a potential security threat for the region.

After the Soviet Union's demise, Russia's relations with ECE were in a state of disrepair. They remained strained since Russia shifted its foreign policy priorities away from the region allowing Germany to play a more influential political and economic role. Despite the loss of political-military and economic leverage, Russia had three priorities in its relations with ECE. First, it wanted to ensure that no physical threats to its security emanated from the region, a geographical space perceived still to be located in a Russian sphere of influence despite the end of the Cold War. Russia's foreign and security policy interests were shaped significantly by its historical perceptions of the region's role in facilitating successive invasions of its territory. Second, Russia wanted to minimise the impact of ECE's political and military ties with Western

international institutions that excluded Russia. Third, Russia wanted to limit Western influence in ECE to resurrect more interest in Russia on the part of ECE.³⁹

Throughout history, Germany and Russia exerted a profound influence on what was defined as *Zwischeneuropa* (middle Europe). The prospect of NATO's enlargement to the East galvanized Russian interest in the region. As Peter Shearman notes: 'Due to their political, historic, and economic interests in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and Germany are bound to perceive each other as the significant *other* in their foreign policy-making in the region'.⁴⁰ In Russia, German unification was regarded as a German cloak for expanding its zone of influence in ECE – a fear also apparent throughout ECE. NATO's enlargement to include the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland gave credence to these worries. The ECE governments were cognisant of the region's importance in German and Russian calculations and were therefore keen to avoid being located, first, in a geopolitical no man's land and, second, in a region where two larger powers – Germany and Russia – were vying for more influence. The fear of a German-Soviet/Russian rapprochement during the Two Plus Four Accord negotiations and immediately after unification was acute, especially in Warsaw.

The genesis of the post-unification debate on a potential rapprochement between Germany and Russia has its roots in history. The Treaty of Rapallo (1922) and the Hitler-Stalin Pact (1939) are examples of what ensues when Germany and Russia share similar expansionist ambitions vis-à-vis Eastern Europe. Even before unification, the rapprochement thesis was gaining credibility throughout ECE and in some Western European quarters. Western and ECE policy-makers, especially in Poland, feared the prospect of a Bonn-Moscow rapprochement and a German drift eastwards into Mitteleuropa.⁴¹ As the FRG suffered from an acute 'Potsdam complex' after the Second World War, Poland feared that the conditions of its independence and

³⁹Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse and the New Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 207-208.

⁴⁰Peter Shearman, 'Russian Policy towards Western Europe: The German Axis' in Peter Shearman (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), p. 98.

⁴¹A German-Russian partnership axis was actually advocated by Klaus Kinkel and the Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. Kozyrev maintained that 'good German-Russian relations could relieve Eastern European countries of the feeling that they are being torn between the interests of Germany and Russia'. See *DPA*, 18 July 1993, FBIS-WEU-93-136, 19 July 1993, p. 11.

freedom would be determined by a concert of German and Russian interests, which historically flatly ignored its existence. Many of these fears in Warsaw were justifiable as Poland's historical experiences with Germany in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had shown. On the other hand, Warsaw failed to recognise that Germany's relations with Russia after unification were always going to be a paramount factor in its Ostpolitik.⁴²

Russia's instability was the principal problem facing Western and ECE after the Cold War's end. The ongoing presence of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the FSU sparked concerns in Bonn and the West about their possible proliferation to third-party countries. The Soviet Union's disintegration also raised fears in Bonn about Russia's future role in extra-territorial conflicts and the spill-over effect of regional crises which would have socio-political consequences for Germany in the form of higher levels of East-West migration. The principal non-military threat to emerge from a collapse of transformation processes or an outbreak of armed conflict in ECE or the CIS stemmed primarily from the potential influx of ethnic Germans, illegal immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers from the East onto German territory. The notion of Germany's 'Algeria lies to the East' captured Bonn's mood about potential immigration problems on its Eastern frontier. The political and economic implications of a large influx of immigrants from the East were portrayed by Bonn as a potential threat to its domestic political and economic systems and its own transformation processes.

The demise of international communism in the Soviet Union and ECE also had enormous implications for the political and economic infrastructures of the states concerned. After unification, any perceived security threats to the stability of ECE were regarded as potential threats to German security. By linking the political and economic fates of ECE with Germany's 'domestic situation', the stability of its Eastern frontier, and general prosperity and security in Western Europe, Bonn wanted to assist the transformation and reform processes in ECE and urged other states to do the same. Bonn feared that instability in the East would ultimately be

⁴²Mieczyslaw Tomala, 'Deutschland – Russland: Grund zur Unruhe oder eine Chance für Zusammenarbeit mit Polen' in Michal Dobroczyński (ed.), *Deutschland, Polen, Russland: europäische Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit* (Wesola: Assur Agencja for Centrum für Östliche Studien/Warsaw University, 1996), p. 74.

exported to the West if political and economic assistance for ECE and the CIS were not forthcoming from states other than Germany. Kohl explained the rationale behind this thinking:

The entire West should always remember that it is in its own interests to help actively the reforming nations of central, Eastern, and south Eastern Europe, as well as the republics of the Soviet Union, in their process of renewal on their way to democracy, the rule of law, and the market economy. ... The Germans cannot bear the burden alone.⁴³

On the other hand, Kinkel noted the following:

We have from the beginning engaged ourselves more than our partners in central and Eastern Europe and the twelve new states. As a result of our history and geography, this is necessary and is connected to our increasing responsibilities throughout the world after unification. We are, however, pushing our partners to engage themselves more strongly; we do not want nor can we solve this colossal task ourselves.⁴⁴

The economic rationale behind Germany's eastward outlook was compelling. If the political and economic transformation processes failed in ECE or the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Germany would lose its traditional export markets in the East. Germany relied on ECE as an outlet for its products and as a source of cheap labour for the German private sector seeking to invest in the region. Vital imports from the East would also stop or would be limited by states seeking to control the flow of raw materials, like gas and oil, for political purposes. ECE was heavily dependent on these materials and so was Germany.

Russia played a vital role as an external source of Germany's Ostpolitik between 1990 and 1998. It also functioned as a significant constraint since it remained the predominant conventional and nuclear power on the European continent. In ECE, Germany and Russia were driven by two fears. Germany was obsessed with instability on its Eastern frontier and Russia feared that a future European security architecture would not include it but, instead, be directed towards it.⁴⁵ Richard Kugler highlighted another difference in German and Russian approaches vis-à-vis ECE:

⁴³ *Berlin ADN*, 31 October 1991, FBIS-WEU-91-213, 4 November 1991, p. 10.

⁴⁴ See Kinkel's speech on 25 May 1992 published in German Foreign Office, *Deutsche Aussenpolitik nach der Einheit, 1990-1993: Eine Dokumentation* (Meckenheim: DCM, 1993), p. 163.

⁴⁵ Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn*, p. 204.

A complicating factor is that Germany and Russia rely on different instruments of power. Germany is a great economic power but only a medium-sized military power. Russia has large military forces but lacks economic strength. This situation may allow for Germany's economic power to expand eastward, whereas Russia will lack the economic strength to influence the trade and commerce of ECE.⁴⁶

Germany and Russia would once again play the most important roles in determining the evolution of a security architecture which either included ECE or left it outside. Germany chose to support the former path; ECE chose to put its destiny into the hands of NATO and the EU. Russia, despite signing extensive cooperation agreements with NATO and the EU, remains outside these international institutions.

Russia was a central component in Bonn's strategic calculations since it had the potential to significantly shape – whether it wanted to or not – the outcome of the reform and transition processes in ECE and Germany. The internal German debate on NATO's enlargement was ample evidence of a German craving to satisfy the strategic interests of ECE and Russia simultaneously – an impossible feat even in ideal circumstances. The German strategy to enhance cooperation between NATO and Russia and the EU and Russia to make enlargement more acceptable to the Russians was only partially acceptable. NATO enlargement was never palatable for the Russians; however, the EU was another matter. Russia's significance in Germany's foreign relations with ECE was felt in all policy areas. Besides coping with difficult domestic and international issues, Germany felt obliged to advocate Russian interests in Western international institutions. There was a German interest in finding a balance between ECE and Russia on major foreign and security policy themes, a strategy that often perplexed the Czech Republic's and Poland's political leaders. The dynamics of NATO enlargement clearly exposed this German dilemma straining the decision-making processes in Bonn to their limit.

France

The evolution of Franco-German relations after the Second World War is crucial to our understanding of the role France played in Germany's foreign relations with ECE after unification. France was the FRG's principal partner and ally in Western Europe; the country embodied the European pillar of Germany's foreign policy. This relationship between France and

⁴⁶Richard L. Kugler, *Enlarging NATO - The Russia Factor* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1996), p. 166.

Germany was instrumental in establishing the foundations for Europe's integration. Throughout the Cold War, Paris was driven by two main ambitions in Western Europe. First, it aimed to protect its unrivalled position as the dominant actor in European politics and especially the European Community. Second, it aimed to tie the FRG extensively into Western European political and economic institutions to ensure peace and stability on the European continent and prevent another world war emanating from the territory of its neighbour. These goals should be viewed against a backdrop of a central theme running throughout the history of French presidents in the Fifth Republic: the promotion of French independence, ideas, and power throughout the world. These objectives were promoted and achieved with remarkable diplomatic skill.

German unification, however, altered the European balance of power and threatened France's political hegemony in Western Europe and any political and economic aspirations it might have entertained vis-à-vis Moscow, Prague and Warsaw after 1990. Before examining France's role in Germany's foreign relations with ECE after unification, it is necessary to highlight France's general unease about two processes: first, German unification and its potential impact on Europe's integration processes and, second, French fears about Germany's eastern interests after unification at the possible expense of its *Westbindung*. These two omnipresent fears amongst the French political leadership and elite are intimately linked.⁴⁷ French calculations surmised that unification would strengthen Germany's position in Western and Eastern Europe. Paris was aware of the negative impact unification would have on its future political and economic role in the region. Bonn viewed French perceptions on these matters with great interest. They were a constant reminder that France's consent was required for unification to proceed and that it would be watching Germany's movements in ECE with great interest. French perceptions influenced and often complicated Kohl's negotiation strategies during the Two Plus Four Accords with France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. The Polish border question and France's support for Poland in the Two Plus Four process exacerbated Franco-German tensions on this matter.

⁴⁷Paradoxically, French public opinion did not share the same fears of Germany. See Renate Fritsch-Bournazel, *Europe and German Unification* (Providence, RI: Berg, 1992), pp. 174-175.

While Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was the most sceptical about German unification in Europe, French President François Mitterand shared similar views about the impact unification would have on German levels of power in Western and Eastern Europe.⁴⁸ Unlike Thatcher, however, the French displayed their lack of enthusiasm for unification in a more circumspect and ambivalent manner. Throughout the Cold War, France had prospered as a result of Germany's division and its political and economic containment in international institutions. The prospect of German unification, however, threatened the status quo, which had dominated France's external existence after the Second World War.⁴⁹ France pursued a German unification policy rooted in its historical anxieties: it had been invaded by Germany three times in a little over one hundred years and this shaped its sceptical reaction to the events occurring in Bonn and Berlin.

The FRG's political and economic development after the Second World War and its close cooperation with France were viewed as extremely positive developments by Paris. However, German unification threatened the harmony of the German-French relationship and exposed a pervasive fear held by a segment of France's political and intellectual elite that Germany would rival France's dominant position in Europe. If German unification was to proceed in a manner which did not encroach upon France's foreign and security policy interests, then it was vital that Franco-German cooperation continue to function as the principal cornerstone of further European union and as a mechanism to ensure peace and stability in the East.⁵⁰ From Paris's perspective, Franco-German cooperation would complement Germany's foreign relations with ECE and its objectives. Mitterand was extremely tolerant about Germany's motives for pursuing unification but was often sceptical, especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall, whether a unified Germany would continue to support further European integration.⁵¹ The answer provided by Germany's political leadership was overwhelmingly positive and reassured the French that Bonn's interests

⁴⁸For evidence of Prime Minister Thatcher's thinking on the prospects of German unification, see Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 793.

⁴⁹Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'alliance incertaine: Les rapports politico-stratégiques franco-allemands, 1954-1996* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), pp. 397-401.

⁵⁰Friedbert Pflüger, 'Polen – unser Frankreich im Osten' in Wolfgang Schäuble and Rudolf Seiters (eds.), *Aussenpolitik im 21. Jahrhundert: die Thesen der jungen Aussenpolitiker* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1996), p. 183.

⁵¹Rice and Zelikow, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 116.

should not be viewed with suspicion. Mitterand remained uncomfortable with unification but he realised he could not prevent the self-determination of the German people. Throughout the negotiations of the Two Plus Four Accords, however, deep suspicions about the nature of Germany's future interests amongst French officialdom persisted. These sentiments extended long after unification had been completed in 1990; indeed, the Kohl era was dogged by France's obsession with rising levels of German power within the EU and in ECE.⁵²

In the context of France's German unification policy and its 'perceived' role as a champion of East and Central European interests, it is important to pay brief attention to the first main challenge facing the architects of Germany's foreign policy during the Two Plus Four Accords: the FRG's recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border and France's role in this process.⁵³ After November 1989, French diplomacy wanted to ensure that Germany's neighbours, such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, did not feel threatened by Germany's impending unification. Although the Czechoslovak and Polish leaderships welcomed the prospect of German unification they, nonetheless, remained concerned about the impact unification would have on their relations with Germany.

Poland played a symbolic role during the Two Plus Four Accords because of the status of its Western border along the Oder-Neisse line. In the absence of clear signals from Bonn during 1990, the French were sceptical and critical of Kohl's fluctuating stance on the legality of the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border. A comment made by a German government spokesman had caused significant alarm and disquiet in France in late 1989: 'Who can contest that Silesia is a German territory?'"⁵⁴ The future status of the Oder-Neisse line became a *cause célèbre* in French political circles. Mitterand's foreign policy strategy concentrated on obtaining cast-iron guarantees from Bonn that it would recognise the Oder-Neisse line *before* unification occurred.⁵⁵ Mitterand told Kohl that 'it was not possible to move on from one historical phase to

⁵²Françoise Nicolas and Hans Stark, *L'Allemagne: une nouvelle hégémonie* (Paris: IFRI-Dunod, 1992).

⁵³See chapter four.

⁵⁴Rice and Zelikow, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 206.

⁵⁵Weidenfeld, *Aussenpolitik für die deutsche Einheit*, pp. 486-487. Mitterand's thoughts on resolving the Polish border question before unification can be examined in François Mitterand, *De L'Allemagne, de la France* (Paris: Editions Odile Jacob, 1996), pp. 213-218.

another without this solemn act having been accomplished'.⁵⁶ He also used the Two Plus Four Accords to ensure that unification took into the account the interests of its future Eastern neighbours.

By adopting this strategy, Mitterand wanted to place France at the centre of Germany's relationship with Poland. Mitterand took this action because he was clearly troubled by the prospect of higher and disproportionate levels of German political and economic power in ECE after unification.⁵⁷ France's extensive involvement in the dispute about the Polish border question in German-Polish relations marked the first visible sign that France desired to play a prominent role in the processes which had a direct impact on Germany's foreign policy behaviour, especially towards an independent Poland.

Germany emerged as the dominant political and economic actor in ECE after unification. France, on the other hand, despite huge promises of cooperation and economic assistance, did not play the role originally envisaged by ECE. Its geographical position and increased focus on the Southern Mediterranean and Maghreb regions precluded France from becoming actively engaged in a region that was far removed from its core foreign policy interests. However, despite having a different regional focus France wanted to avoid becoming a marginal figure in the political and economic development of ECE. German interests in ECE prompted France to develop a higher profile in the region than would have normally been the case. If France could not unilaterally influence the political and economic transformation processes in ECE, then it was important to act with the dominant actor in the region – Germany – and in partnership with other European states in international institutions. Germany was not averse to this strategy; indeed, it actually preferred to pursue its objectives in ECE with France and other European partners. The pursuit of a 'joint Ostpolitik' suited German as well as French interests.

⁵⁶Mitterand quoted by Paul Latawski, 'Germany's Reconciliation with its Eastern Neighbors', *RUSI Journal*, vol. 139, no. 6 (December 1994), p. 66.

⁵⁷Stanislaw Parzymies, 'The Interests of Partners in Weimar Cooperation', *Central European Review*, vol. 5, nos. 20-21 (February 1998), p. 74.

Weimar Triangle

The Franco-German reconciliation processes culminating in the 1963 Elysée Treaty were the foundation for Germany's political rapprochement with its Eastern neighbours after 1990. Franco-German co-operation after the Second World War was regarded as a model by the Poles which could be emulated in German-Polish relations after 1990, the aim being to improve German-Polish relations.⁵⁸ The political and historical dynamics of Franco-German co-operation after the end of the Second World War formed the backdrop for the highly symbolic creation of a trilateral forum – the Weimar triangle – designed to recognise Poland's significance as the most pivotal and critical state in ECE. In August 1991, the German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas proposed the creation of a trilateral forum in which German, French, and Polish ministers and legislators could discuss areas of mutual interest. The Weimar Declaration (29 August 1991) highlighted the important role played by the three actors in the future development and success of European institutions. Article VI of the declaration stipulates:

The reform states of middle and Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, must be helped comprehensively. Europe cannot be divided by borders between the rich and the poor. France and Germany support all efforts to bring Poland closer to all states in the European Community. Both are pushing for quick association agreements with the democracies of middle and south-east Europe and want to promote the widening of a political dialogue. It is in accordance with the goals of the European Community to open a path for membership for these new democracies.⁵⁹

This forum's creation was concrete evidence of Germany and France's will to act jointly in ECE. Extensive cooperation between Bonn and Paris was based on the premise that their foreign policy interests could be accommodated in the development of joint policies and strategies towards Poland and other states in ECE.

The Weimar triangle, however, served different purposes for France, Germany, and Poland. Although its main aim was to address the socio-political, economic, and security concerns of Poland and identify its domestic, foreign and security policy needs, there were fundamentally different motives behind France and Germany's creation of the triangle. From Poland's

⁵⁸Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, 'Polen und seine Nachbarn: Bemerkungen zur polnischen Aussenpolitik', *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 43, no. 1 (1996), p. 68.

⁵⁹'Gemeinsame Erklärung der Aussenminister von Deutschland, Frankreich und Polen in Weimar', *Bulletin*, no. 92 (3 September 1991), p. 735. MT.

perspective, it was delighted to be elevated to the status of a 'preferred' partner in ECE for the French and Germans. The former Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek described the significance of this trilateral relationship for Poland:

Today, the French-German co-operation serves as an example of a correct relationship between neighbouring countries for others to follow. This relationship is often referred to as the engine of European integration. ... For sovereign Poland, which has been able to shape its foreign policy independently since 1989, the co-operation between France and German is inspiring. It has encouraged us to improve our bilateral relationships with France and Germany.⁶⁰

The Czech Republic, however, was not accorded a similar privilege.⁶¹ France wanted to achieve the following objectives: first, it wanted to lift its stagnating profile in Poland by becoming a more visible political and economic actor; second, it wanted to balance, monitor, and check Germany's political and economic presence in Poland and ECE.⁶² Third, despite public support for the dual enlargement processes of NATO and the EU, the French, privately, wanted to delay these processes out of fear that they could not compete economically with Germany in ECE. Whereas Germany pursued a simultaneous policy of 'deepening' and 'widening' in the EU, France was concerned about the slow pace of the former. Krzysztof Rak argues that the French were paralysed by the fear of an EU that was contiguous with a larger sphere of German influence in ECE.⁶³ Closely linked to these concerns about Germany's influence was Poland's interest in maintaining a strong institutional link with France to check German influence.

Germany, on other hand, had different objectives. By inviting Poland to join in a trilateral framework with France, Germany was displaying sound historical instincts by recognising that its integration in multilateral frameworks after the Second World War had played a fundamental role in its own positive democratic and economic development. Germany wanted to emulate this

⁶⁰Bronislaw Geremek, 'The Weimar Triangle', *Central European Review*, vol. 5, nos. 20-21 (February 1998), p. 71.

⁶¹Czechoslovakia's exclusion from the Weimar triangle was perceived by the Czechs as 'no cause for uncontrolled outbursts of enthusiasm but neither for deep depression'. See Petr Robejsek, 'The Weimar Triangle in the Fractal Geometry of Post-Communist Europe' in Vladimir Handl *et al*, *Germany and East Central Europe since 1990* (Prague: Institute of International Relations, 1999), p. 131.

⁶²Valérie Guérin-Sendelbach and Jacek Rulkowski, "'Euro-Trio' France-Germany-Poland', *Aussenpolitik* (English version), no. 3 (1994), p. 246. The military dimension of the Weimar triangle is examined in chapter 6.

⁶³Krzysztof Rak, 'Das Weimarer Dreieck' in Lennart Souchon and Kai Hirschmann (eds.), *Die Deutsche-Polnische Kooperation in Fragen der Sicherheitspolitik; Diskussionspapiere des 1. Deutsch-Polnischen Workshops vom 28.-30. November 1994 in Berlin/Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik*. (Bonn; Berlin; Hamburg: Mittler, 1995), p. 54.

successful experiment with Poland. Poland's integration into the EU and NATO was essential if it was to master its internal transformation and reform processes. As Kinkel noted:

Germany considers itself to be an advocate of central Eastern European states aspiring to join the EU. ... Cooperation within the Weimar Triangle has proven to be the moving force in bringing Poland closer to the EU. The main motive behind the trilateral cooperation is Germany's desire to have equally good and close neighbourly relations with Poland and France. ... Just like the relations between Germany and France which are the moving force behind progress in West Europe, German-Polish relations must provide for and anchor stability in central Eastern Europe.⁶⁴

By working with France and Poland in a trilateral forum, Germany was able to deflect any criticisms of potential German *Sonderwege* in Europe. In Western and ECE where scepticism was rife about Germany's objectives, this strategy was crucial in establishing Germany as an actor intent on operating from within trilateral and multilateral frameworks to achieve its multiple foreign and security policy objectives.

United States

In Western Europe, the Franco-German motor was one of the most important sources of Germany's foreign policy during and after the end of the Cold War. However, Germany's foreign and security policy included a transatlantic dimension manifested by its close partnership with the United States. The role of the United States cannot be underestimated when examining Germany's conduct in ECE as it shaped its foreign and security policy objectives before and after unification. Throughout the Cold War, the FRG's Ostpolitik was a product of the nature of the international environment, especially the superpower struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶⁵ As a semi-sovereign state in the international system, the FRG was limited in its capacity to operate an independent foreign policy, especially one that contravened the interests of the United States. Wolfram Hanrieder described the foreign policy objectives of the United States vis-à-vis the FRG after the Second World War as follows:

⁶⁴WPROST *Poznan*, 21 June 1996, FBIS-WEU-96-121, 21 June 1996, pp. 13-14.

⁶⁵See chapter 3.

The restraint of the Federal Republic through international organisations and treaties was at the core of Washington's postwar European policy of double containment: the containment of the Soviet Union at arm's length, and of West Germany with an embrace. Every major event follows from this: the rearmament and economic reconstruction of the Federal Republic within the restraints of international organisations, the development of NATO from a loosely organised mutual assistance pact into an integrated military alliance, American support for West European integration, and the solidification of the division of Germany and Europe.⁶⁶

By the early 1950s, the United States and the FRG shared one common goal: the prevention of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe and containment. The FRG's *Westintegration* precluded a proactive West German foreign policy towards Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, although in practice Bonn carved a role for itself in the process of détente. The United States aimed to preserve the stability of Western Europe and the FRG. The FRG's security dependence on the United States served as the cornerstone of European security within NATO. Bonn and Washington recognised that their security objectives in Europe, within NATO, and vis-à-vis the Soviet Union could only be achieved if there was a bilateral consensus on important challenges. The Soviet Union's demise and German unification had a profound impact on the bilateral dynamics of U.S.-German relations and the objectives they entertained regarding Western Europe's future security, especially ECE. In contrast with the British, French and Soviets, U.S. President George H. W. Bush entertained few reservations about the prospects of unification and Germany's desire for self-determination. He remarked:

I would think it's a matter for the Germans to decide. But put it this way: If that was worked out between the two Germany's, I do not think we should view that as bad for Western interests. I think there's been a dramatic change in post-World War II Germany. And so, I don't fear it. ... But I think there is in some quarters a feeling—well, a reunified Germany would be detrimental to the peace of Europe, of Western Europe, some way; and I don't accept that at all, simply don't.⁶⁷

The United States was Germany's most ardent supporter during the Two Plus Four Accord negotiations. Bush's offer to Germany to become 'partners in leadership' after the Brussels North Atlantic Summit (May 1989) was symbolic of the United States' commitment to German unification after forty-five years of division and occupation. This commitment was also reflected by the United States' position on the future status of the Oder-Neisse as Poland's Western border.

⁶⁶Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 6.

⁶⁷Bush quoted in Robert M. Gates, *In From the Shadows* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 484. See George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), p. 187.

Whereas Germany's other allies were sceptical about Germany's intentions to recognise the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border, the United States played a significant role in assuaging Polish concerns about Germany's plans.⁶⁸ Washington's support for Bonn on the border issue was the first sign of its willingness to allow Bonn to freely exercise its interests vis-à-vis Poland.

The United States functioned as a vital external source of Germany's foreign relations with ECE for three main reasons. First, inherent in the 'partners in leadership' offer made by Washington to Bonn was the notion that it should assume a more prominent position not only in the political and economic reconstruction of ECE but also in the global arena. Second, the intensification of German-American ties and cooperation in multilateral institutions was essential if Germany was going to be able to pursue a harmonious security relationship with its Eastern neighbours. The forward presence of the United States in Europe was crucial if Germany was going to achieve its bilateral and multilateral security objectives in ECE. Third, the United States played a critical role in steering the NATO enlargement debate and securing one of Germany's prime military objectives after unification: the stability of its Eastern frontier.

The 'partners in leadership' model closely linked German and American foreign and security policy interests. Bush outlined the significance of this partnership for the United States:

You [Germany] are our partner in building a more united and cooperative Europe. In that spirit, we strongly welcome German involvement in global affairs. Strong German-American cooperation is fully compatible with the development of a more unified Europe; a goal that the United States has consistently supported over the years, just as unequivocally as we supported a united Germany.⁶⁹

Bonn's formal acceptance of the offer – albeit two years later – in Washington was indicative of its willingness to become a more proactive international actor but it also raised several questions about its capacity, in light of reunification, to assume more political and economic leadership commensurate with its enhanced status in the international system. Washington and Bonn often entertained different definitions about the aims of their respective partnership. Washington was clearly not afraid of the prospect of Germany becoming more engaged in ECE at the expense of

⁶⁸Rice and Zelikow, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 217-222.

⁶⁹*US State Department Dispatch*, 4 May 1992, p. 348.

its *Westbindung*.⁷⁰ Bush noted rather bluntly: ‘What his (Kohl’s) neighbours were really afraid of was that the Germans might drift to the East (meaning develop closer ties to Moscow at the expense of the West) — which was nonsense — as well as the rapid development of Germany, faster than the rest of Western Europe’.⁷¹ Bush and his successor, Bill Clinton, were confident that Germany would fulfil its role as a harbinger of the United States’ political and economic interests in ECE.⁷²

As a partner in leadership with the United States, Germany was one of the major European powers that could help the United States fulfil its strategic objectives in Europe after the Cold War’s end. Germany was also a crucial power for promoting closer ties with ECE. Washington’s perspective on Germany’s future engagement in ECE was clear:

... it is only a strong Germany that can help contain nationalism and help to stabilise Eastern Europe. While it is clear that East Europeans have ambivalent feelings about German influence and power in the region, it is only a strong Germany that can provide them with the support they need both bilaterally and multilaterally – be it political, economic or security ... Often they see the American role and presence as a hedge against a resurgent Germany. But they must also realise ... that a strong Germany will actually make it easier for the United States to remain engaged in Europe.⁷³

Washington was convinced that only a strong Germany could assist the transition states in ECE.⁷⁴ At a time when the Soviet Union was in decline and ECE was in a state of transformation, the United States was unable for domestic reasons to play a constructive role in the economic reconstruction of the region although its symbolic physical presence in Europe, especially Germany was comforting to both the Czech Republic and Poland. Washington believed that Germany’s objectives to maintain peace and stability on its Eastern frontier, despite the fears voiced by ECE about increasing levels of German power, was a legitimate exercise. The U.S. presence and commitment to the transformation processes of the ECE states played an important role in ensuring that German objectives were met in partnership with its allies and within

⁷⁰W. R. Smyser, *Germany and America: New Identities, Fateful Rift?* (Oxford; Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), p. 53.

⁷¹Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, pp. 198-199.

⁷³Ronald D. Asmus, *Germany in the Eyes of the American Security Elite* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993), p. 18.

⁷⁴Robert D. Hormats, ‘United Germany and the United States: A New Partnership for the 1990s’ in Steven Muller and Gebhard Schweigler (eds.), *From Occupation to Cooperation*, pp. 195-198.

international institutions such as NATO. The symbolism of the U.S. presence in Europe cannot be underestimated, especially for the governments in ECE.

Institutional Sources

This section briefly examines two important external institutional sources of Germany's Ostpolitik during the Cold War and after: the EU and NATO.⁷⁵ The historical origins of the EU and NATO were rooted in the interests of Germany's Western European and transatlantic partners to firmly integrate the FRG into multilateral structures which would contain and prohibit it from unleashing a third round of terror and destruction in the twentieth century. There was a unanimous consensus amongst all of the Euro-Atlantic actors that the FRG's integration into Western international institutions after the Second World War, instead of the restoration of its full national independence, was the only viable alternative to prevent a future rise of German nationalism. How did these external sources shape the FRG's evolution after 1949 and unification?

The European Union

The FRG's development as a democratic and peaceful nation after the Second World War was to a large extent dependent on its integration in multilateral European and transatlantic frameworks. The FRG's membership in the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 had a tremendous impact on the FRG's political recovery and economic reconstruction. The foundations for Germany's multilateralism have their roots in the efforts undertaken by the FRG's occupying powers to allow German democracy to flourish in a multilateral setting with like-minded partners. The FRG's multilateral tendencies were shaped during the Adenauer chancellorship; his policies of *Westbindung* and *Westintegration* formed the main foundation for the FRG's foreign and security policy orientation. For Josef Janning, the EU was the multilateral setting 'most responsive to Germany's

⁷⁵Germany's position on NATO's enlargement will be discussed in chapter six whereas its position on the EU's enlargement will be discussed here.

needs and its policy style' because its 'implicit values were closer to the internationalist spirit of the Federal Republic's diplomacy'.⁷⁶

Throughout the Cold War, Bonn relied on multilateral institutions such as the EU to achieve its foreign policy objectives so much so that one observer noted that one important feature of German Europeanism was 'Europe acting as an identity crutch and political-economic bolstering device for German rehabilitation and German unification'.⁷⁷ According to a close adviser to Chancellor Kohl, Wolfgang Bergsdorf, 'Germany's *Staatsräson* was its integration in Europe' and its role in a *Europa als Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (Europe as a community of common destiny).⁷⁸ German notions of national identity and sovereignty were permanently altered by Europe's integration efforts. Its active participation here hastened its political rehabilitation in its neighbours' eyes. Germany derived many benefits from this strategy. According to Helga Haftendorn, 'under the conditions of the Cold War, Bonn viewed a multilateral approach to foreign affairs as a cost-effective variant in advocating their national interests ...'.⁷⁹ This approach helped the FRG fare well throughout its existence as a divided and occupied state. It was not a surprise that its reunified successor would adopt a similar strategy to meet its objectives in ECE.

After unification, Germany's membership and prominent position within the EU functioned as a magnet for the Czech Republic and Poland. Ironically, after 1949, successive Bonn governments operated on the assumption that European unification would precede German unification. Having now achieved German unity first, Bonn concentrated on finally achieving one of the major objectives which had eluded it throughout the duration of the Cold War: further European union. As Reinhardt Rummel noted, 'The goal of Eastern enlargement and of multiple connections with Russia and Ukraine has replaced German unification as Bonn's condition for the

⁷⁶Josef Janning, 'Germany's Interests in CFSP and the European Security', *Central European Issues: Romanian Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1995/96), p. 151. See Rainer Baumann, 'The Transformation of German Multilateralism', *German Politics and Society*, Issue 65, vol. 20, no. 4 (Winter 2002), pp. 1-26.

⁷⁷Ulf Hedetoft, 'Germany's National and European Identity: Normalisation by other Means' in Carl Lankowski (ed.), *Break out, break down or break in? Germany and the European Union after Amsterdam* (Washington, DC: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1998), p. 3.

⁷⁸Bergsdorf quoted in Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 385.

⁷⁹Helga Haftendorn, 'Gulliver in the Centre of Europe: International Involvement and National Capabilities for Action' in Bertel Heurlin (ed.), *Germany in Europe in the Nineties* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 104.

EU's further integration'.⁸⁰ Bonn's Eastern neighbours, abandoned on the Eastern fringes of Western Europe, aimed to democratise their political systems and restructure their economies with the assistance of Western Europe and the EU in particular. Germany was their most fervent advocate.

The strategy for achieving these goals was only possible from within the EU framework as Germany enlisted more political and economic support for its immediate foreign and security policy concerns in the East. Burdened by the budgetary constraints imposed by unification, Germany simply did not have the financial means at its disposal to single-handedly solve its 'Eastern problem' without diverting precious and limited economic resources from the transformation processes of its Eastern *Länder*. Bonn argued on several occasions that it had reached its limits with regard to offering support to ECE and called upon other governments to play a more prominent role in the region.⁸¹ Kohl pointed out that 'supporting development in these countries is not merely a contribution towards consolidating their stability, but an investment in Europe's future which serves world peace'.⁸² He also noted that 'it is inconceivable for Germany that Poland's Western border should remain the European Union's Eastern border. Despite all the institutional and economic challenges involved, enlargement to the east is not only a historic and moral duty but it is also in our political, economic and cultural interest'.⁸³

Bonn's goal to achieve socio-political, economic, and military stability in ECE was dependent on its role as an effective advocate or lawyer of ECE interests in the EU and within the EU's CFSP. The FRG had already played an active role in creating the foundations for its antecedent, the European Political Cooperation (EPC), which came into being after 1973. The Single European Act of 1986 formalised the objectives of the EPC. The FRG actively used the

⁸⁰Reinhardt Rummel, 'Germany's Role in the CFSP: Normalität or 'Sonderweg'?' in Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 46.

⁸¹*Bulletin*, no. 15 (16 February 1994), p. 136 and *Bulletin*, no. 40 (5 May 1994), p. 350.

⁸²*The European* (12 November 1993), p. 9.

⁸³Kohl quoted by Jörg Schlegel, 'The Political Situation in Berlin and Germany' in Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrat Group), European Parliament, *European Digest*, Berlin Study Days (4-8 May 1998), p. 29.

EPC framework to develop common foreign policy positions on external issues amongst which was the closer forging of ties between the EC and ECE.

It was self-evident that Germany's multilateralism within the EU would be constrained by other actors who sought to limit German power or shared other priorities than Eastern enlargement, for example. Paradoxically, during the Kohl era Bonn was obsessed with linking its foreign and security policy activities to multilateral decision-making processes, especially in the EU. According to Peter Schmidt, 'enlargement, therefore, seemed an appropriate means for the German side to invalidate the accusation of any German striving for hegemony from the start, since this would multilateralise relations to the Central and Eastern European countries — i.e. subject them to more broadly-based participation and control'.⁸⁴ Josef Joffe used the appropriate analogy that 'Germany is like a Gulliver who likes his ropes'. Germany's integration into the EC resulted in the creation of what some called an 'Europeanised state'. According to William Paterson and Simon Bulmer, 'The Europeanisation of Germany may be seen both as an objective and an achievement of Bonn's European policy'.⁸⁵

Germany and the European Union's Enlargement

Domestic German actors and agents worked within the EU and with other member states to shape a policy towards ECE which would meet not only German interests but also the EU's. Of course, foreign policy cynics in Germany, the Czech Republic, and Poland questioned Germany's motives and the nature of its bilateral and multilateral strategies and interests vis-à-vis ECE. One politician from the region quipped, for example, that what association with the European Union really means for the countries of ECE is association with Germany. The rise of a German economic hegemon in ECE was not welcomed in Prague or Warsaw but, on the other hand, responsible political leaders in both cities were not going to easily turn away German foreign direct investment or trade, especially when it was desperately needed from 1990 to 1998 and even afterwards. Germany's multilateral efforts, especially within the framework of the EU, calmed the

⁸⁴Peter Schmidt, 'German Security Policy in the Framework of the EU, WEU, and NATO', *Aussenpolitik* (English version), no. 3 (1996), p. 213.

⁸⁵Simon Bulmer and William E. Paterson, 'Germany in the European Union: Gentle Giant or Emergent Leader?' *International Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 1 (January 1996), p. 12.

cynics and also, paradoxically, made Germany's leaders feel more comfortable as they adjusted to their newly-won sovereignty and more privileged position in the international system.

What were the principal reasons underlying Bonn's support for the enlargement of the EU? Political, economic, and security calculations drove Germany to become one of the most fervent advocates of EU enlargement during the Kohl era. The political symbolism of Germany's support for the enlargement of the EU to include the Czech Republic and Poland was inescapable as it was linked to the FRG's *Westintegration* after the Second World War. Bonn believed that international institutions, like the EU, had proven to be beneficial for the FRG's development after the Second World War so consequently, there was no reason to believe that they could not perform a similar function for the transition states in ECE. Josef Janning, for instance, argued that

Germany does not want to choose between East and West and thus has no interest in operating the country's relations with the East in a different mode than those with the West. Without integrating the new democracies into the Union, however, such a difference could hardly be avoided ... By enlarging the Union eastwards, offers a way out of geopolitical determinism - in a union of 20 or 25, there is no *Mittellage* for Germany in the old sense of the word'.⁸⁶

Bonn calculated that the prospect of its neighbours becoming EU members would help create the socio-political and economic climate necessary for these states to succeed in their political and economic reform efforts. With enlargement, Bonn viewed the deepening of the EU's political and economic structures as a way of anchoring a reunified Germany in the West and ensuring the existence of a 'European Germany' rather than a 'German Europe'.

The bilateral friendship treaties that Germany concluded with the CSFR and Poland after unification embodied the EU's significance in Germany's political and economic thinking. Article VIII in the German-Polish Treaty on Good-Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation guaranteed Bonn's support for Poland's associate membership in the EU as a first step towards full membership. Article X in the German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendship confirmed the same commitment on Bonn's part. The preamble to the German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development also reiterated Germany's unwavering support for the EU's enlargement to include the Czech Republic. Germany's bilateral friendship treaties with the Czech Republic and Poland were symbolic since they contained and

⁸⁶Josef Janning, 'Germany's Interests in CFSP', p. 152.

guaranteed strong German support for an endeavour that was desperately sought by these countries but was still considered politically explosive within other EU quarters.⁸⁷

The geographical shift of the EU to the East would also have positive implications for Germany's security as it would be shielded or at least better protected against any political or economic instabilities emanating in the former Soviet Union or in Russia. Bonn's aim was to address the security concerns it believed existed on its eastern frontier by ceasing to be the EU's easternmost front-line state, thus allowing Berlin to prosper as Germany's new capital after 1999. This particular theme resonated strongly in the minds of Germany's political leadership, especially between 1990 and 1998 but even until 2004 when the Czech Republic and Poland finally became EU member states.

The economic logic underpinning Bonn's support for EU enlargement was to forestall the rise of potential economic sources of instability on its Eastern frontier, which would ultimately result in the creation of zones or pockets of poverty that would exacerbate economic tensions in the new *Länder*. Kohl frequently argued that it was in Germany's best interest to close the gap between the rich in the West and the poor in the East to avoid the creation of what he called a *Wohlstandsgrenze* (living standards border) on Germany's Eastern frontier. The economic prospects of membership would also avert a downward spiral of living standards in ECE. According to Kohl, this was an essential precondition for securing the 'internal peace of Europe and Germany'.⁸⁸

There was also a domestic economic rationale for expanding the EU. Germany's private sector were keen to gain a vital economic foothold in the region to promote their commercial interests by creating and expanding trade links with the ultimate aim of increasing their market share in their respective industries. The German government and the private sector were keen to operate in a region not characterised by ethnic strife, endemic nationalism, decreasing living standards, and gross economic disparities. Bonn firmly believed that the prospect of EU

⁸⁷The moral dimension of German support was based on its 'indebtedness to the new democracies of central Europe for having brought about the peaceful unification of Germany in 1989-90'. See Roland Freudenstein, 'Poland, Germany and the EU', *International Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 1 (January 1998), pp. 41-54.

⁸⁸See Kohl's broadcast on *Budapest Kossuth Radio Network*, 6 September 1993, FBIS-WEU-93-171, p. 13.

membership for these states would promote the political and economic stabilisation of the region and provides an ideal environment for German investments and intensified economic activity and cooperation between Germany and the ECE. The prospect of extending the EU to the East also had the effect of distributing reconstruction costs more evenly amongst the EU's member states.

A brief overview of the EU enlargement process after the disappearance of the Iron Curtain in 1989/90 captures the significant efforts made by both Western Europe, especially Germany and ECE to redefine their political relations and expand their economic ties in an effort to assist the latter with its transformation efforts. The ideal institutional vehicle to achieve this endeavour was the EU. At the end of 1989, the European Commission created a grant aid programme entitled PHARE (originally an acronym for "Poland and Hungary Action for the Reconstruction of the Economy) to assist countries that were moving towards market economies and developing democratic institutions. PHARE funds are focused on technical assistance for the transformation towards market economies and the introduction of democratic procedures. It was initially intended to provide assistance to Poland and Hungary, but was soon extended to other countries in the region.

The negotiation and implementation of the European Agreements with Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland (December 1991) also had extensive German support. The agreements established a framework to support the gradual integration of ECE into the EC through harmonisation of regulatory structures, technical standards, competition laws, opening of services, etc. Their main purpose was to liberalize trade between the EU and the country in question, develop guidelines for political dialogue and promote cooperation in the following areas: free movement of goods and services, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, harmonisation of legislation, financial cooperation industry, environmental protection and transport. The Europe Agreements also included guidance on how to structure national laws so they could be integrated into EU law as well as providing the countries in question with guidance on how to become member states of the EU. On 16 December 1991, the Europe Agreements were signed with Hungary and Poland and they came into force on 1 February 1994. On 4 October 1994, European Agreements were signed with the Czech Republic and Slovakia and they came into force on 1 February 1995.

The next step in defining the accession criteria for membership was taken at the Copenhagen European Council of 21-22 June 1993. The 'Copenhagen criteria' required the following from all candidates: (1) stable institutions to guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities (the political criterion); (2) a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU (the economic criterion), and (3) the ability to take on all the obligations of membership, i.e. the entire body of EU law (*acquis communautaire*), and adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union (the *acquis* criterion). The European Council also stated: 'Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required'. Poland applied for EU membership on 5 April 1994.

The following European Council Summit in Essen in December 1994 requested a strategic design for preparing ECE for future accession. Under the German presidency, the EU adopted a strategy which emphasised the establishment of structured relations, agricultural policy studies, and the request to the Commission to prepare a White Paper on creating the preconditions for bringing ECE into the internal market and achieving a harmonisation of legislation. Consequently, the White Paper approved by the Cannes European Council Summit in 1995 identified key legislative, regulatory and institutional aspects of the *acquis* required for accession of the ECE to the EU. The Czech Republic applied to join the EU on 17 January 1996. At its Luxembourg Summit in December 1997, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations on 31 March 1998 with six countries, as recommended by the European Commission: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia. The Luxembourg European Council of 1997 declared that while compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria was essential for the opening of negotiations, the economic and 'acquis' criteria must be assessed 'in a forward-looking, dynamic way'.

During Kohl's tenure as chancellor, the enlargement of the EU had developed an internal dynamic of its own with Germany, simultaneously, assuming the role of the prime advocate of enlargement and the deepening of the EU's institutions to make monetary and political union irreversible. The genesis of Kohl's enlargement vision as the success of European post-war

integration was becoming reality although it was evident that not all members shared the same enthusiasm for enlargement as Germany did. However, Germany was not always successful in meeting its enlargement objectives. It failed, for example, to convince other EU member states that the EU should enlarge to only three countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) in the first instance.⁸⁹ The Amsterdam Treaty of June 1997 expanded on earlier achievements by publishing Agenda 2000, the first official document of the EU to address the link between the EU's future evolution, its financing system, and progress in EU integration and enlargement. It also provided a comprehensive explanation of the accession criteria, obligations of membership and future strategy for enlargement. Agenda 2000 together with the European Agreements constituted the core of the institutional vehicle for enlargement at which Germany was at the forefront.⁹⁰ Germany viewed no contradiction between deepening and widening processes in EU although it was evident that both were not always pursued in a contiguous fashion. The reform of the CAP is an example where Germany's *Europapolitik* suffered from inherent contradictions: it supported the expansion of the EU whilst wanting to close markets to some goods emanating from ECE. Indeed, Bonn, in contrast with other members in the EU, actively pushed a parallel process by which deepening and widening would be pursued jointly.⁹¹ The enlargement issue was used by Bonn to force enlargement onto the political agenda and make EMU and further political union an irrevocable process.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

The FRG was one of the principal beneficiaries of NATO membership in the post-Second World War Two era; the histories of the FRG and NATO became intimately linked after 1955 when the FRG was accepted into the Atlantic Alliance.⁹² NATO played an instrumental role in the

⁸⁹Karen E. Smith, *The Making of European Union Foreign Policy: The Case of Eastern Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 165.

⁹⁰The ceremonial signing of the Treaty of Accession with the ten accession countries took place in Athens on 16 April 2003 with the participation of the Heads of State and Government and the Foreign Ministers of the countries involved.

⁹¹Josef Janning, 'Deutschland und die europäische Union: Integration und Erweiterung' in Karl Kaiser and Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Interessen und Strategien*. Vol. 3 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996), p. 36.

⁹²Karl Kaiser, 'Forty Years of German Membership in NATO', *NATO Review* (July 1995), pp. 3-8.

FRG's evolution as a pillar of democracy and stability. German military forces were denied an independent command structure; they belonged to the Alliance's integrated military structure. The rationale behind Germany's aspirations to become a NATO member 'flowed from its desire for protection from the Soviet Union; for the economic and military integration of the Federal Republic in the Western society of states in an effort to gain respectability lost between 1933 and 1945; for regaining its sovereignty; ... and for achieving the goal of unifying a dismembered Germany'.⁹³ The FRG was permitted to flourish and prosper in an alliance of like-minded members whose common fear was rooted in the expansion of the Soviet Union into Western Europe. After the traumatic experiences of Nazism, the FRG evolved as a peaceful democratic state after 1955 which was a lasting tribute to the benefits it derived from membership in the Atlantic Alliance. According to Josef Joffe, NATO and its founding members managed to achieve the following objectives with regard to Germany:

The Cold War alliance system protected Germany not only from others, but from itself. Contrary to the Bismarck Empire, postwar Germany did not have to labour under the double burden of projecting the main threat to Europe's stability *and* managing that order from a solitary position at the centre. ... With *two* Germanies countervailing each other in opposing blocs, German strength was both neutralised and harnessed. At the same time, the two Germanies were not left alone, but remained anchored in alliances that provided them with a shelter and a role.⁹⁴

The FRG's security policy had been shaped by the following factors: the division and occupation of the German state, German history, domestic and international scepticism about the evolution of German democracy, its position in the *Mittellage* of Europe and as a front-line state in what was seen as the major battleground for a third world war, and, finally, its dependency on the United States and NATO for all its security needs.

The FRG's security objectives were successfully met by its membership in NATO. Under these circumstances, it is no surprise that Bonn was keen to expand, not sever, its vital link with NATO after unification despite the absence of an overwhelming Soviet conventional military threat. The same applied to its principal transatlantic partner in NATO, the United States. Herbert Blankenhorn defined the German consensus on NATO throughout the Cold War: 'we [Germans]

⁹³See Emil J. Kirchner and James Sperling. 'The Future Germany and the Future of NATO', *German Politics*, vol. 1, no. 1 (April 1992), p. 53.

⁹⁴Josef Joffe, 'The Foreign Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany: Tradition and Change' in Roy C. Macridis (ed.), *Foreign Policy in World Politics* (Singapore: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 76.

ourselves cannot do without NATO. NATO after all is the cloak under which the German-American alliance becomes tolerable not only for France but also for smaller neighbours and, last but not least, for the Soviet Union itself.⁹⁵ NATO's functions served the FRG's interests throughout the Cold War. After 1990, Bonn voiced few doubts that NATO could perform a similar function for a united Germany and, crucially, the new independent states in ECE. NATO provided an institutional mechanism for containing and integrating the FRG and supporting its political and economic agendas in Western and Eastern Europe. The 40-year partnership between the United States and the FRG within NATO's multinational force planning process also illustrates how important NATO was as a tool for meeting German objectives. Successive German leaders have understood the strategic imperative of anchoring their country in the operations of Western institutions.

Given the speedy process of unification and the collapse of the Soviet Empire, it was unclear how NATO would reinvent itself after 1990 and how its members would address external security challenges on its Eastern frontier. After the end of the Cold War, the U.S. mission in Europe, especially in Germany changed. Without a specific threat from the Soviet Union, the rationale for the existence of NATO and presence of U.S. troops in Western Europe was questioned. The potential decline of American hegemony in Europe was being debated in Western Europe and the United States.⁹⁶ It also had far-reaching implications for NATO's attempts to redefine its mission in the post-Cold War era. The decline of its arch Soviet enemy raised the question whether NATO should be permanently disbanded since its primary mission, the protection of its members from a conventional or nuclear attack from the Soviet Union, had been achieved.

NATO, despite its critics, survived in the post-Cold War era for two main reasons. Although there was no formal enemy in the post-Cold War era, the dissolution of the Alliance would have unravelled the three main foundations of NATO's creation highlighted by Lord

⁹⁵Blankenhorn quoted by Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 37.

⁹⁶207,660 U.S. troops were deployed in Germany in Europe in 1990. By 1999, the figure was 57,740. See Karen E. Donfried, 'German-American Relations in the New Europe', *Congressional Research Service Issue Brief*, no. 91018 (5 December, 1996), and IISS, *Military Balance 1998/99* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 27.

Ismay's popular dictum: 'NATO was designed to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and Germans down'. NATO could not be replaced; indeed, there was no other comparable military alliance which its member states could use to achieve their respective security policy objectives. The OSCE and the EU, for example, did not have the appropriate institutional mechanisms or the required support to replace NATO's functions in a post-Cold War Europe.⁹⁷

NATO's existence provided for an American anchor in Europe and dispelled the notion that Germany might seek to establish a political-military hegemony in ECE. As Volker Rühle noted: Germany's and the United States' contribution to NATO remains '... the most visible element of strategic and political continuity in transatlantic relations'.⁹⁸ International institutions such as the EU and NATO were regarded by Germany's Western European allies and its Eastern European neighbours as effective instruments for harnessing German power and ambitions in the post-Cold War era – a role they had played successfully throughout the Cold War. Somewhat paradoxically, Germany's foreign policy elite felt the same way. Cynically, if some political analysts were to be believed, it was actually necessary for Germany to stay firmly ensconced in Western international institutions to prevent it from exercising excess levels of German power and pursuing any unilateral or independent foreign and security policy options. In short, Germany had to be 'saved from itself'. By continuing to operate within the NATO, Germany was able to rebut the notion that it was establishing a new sphere of influence in ECE where bilateral German instruments would supersede multilateral ones.

Although the Cold War officially ended sixteen years ago, NATO continues to function as the primary political-military alliance in Europe and North America. NATO was a vital external source of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* and by extension its foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. There are three main reasons for this. First, Bonn perceived NATO to be the ideal and only military alliance to export stability to these states. Second, a unified Germany's continued membership in NATO and its subsequent support for its enlargement was a confidence-building mechanism that reassured the Czechs and Poles about Germany's objectives and future

⁹⁷James Sperling and Emil Kirchner, 'The Security Architectures and Institutional Futures of Post-1989 Europe', *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 4, no. 2 (June 1997), p. 158.

⁹⁸Volker Rühle, 'Shaping Euro-Atlantic Policies: A Grand Strategy for a New Era', *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 2 (Summer 1993), p. 131.

intentions in ECE. Third, as a NATO member, Germany could continue energetically to pursue its security objectives without overextending itself in the defence or in the provision of military assistance to ECE. Germany's membership in NATO was an invaluable asset in its foreign and security policy arsenal and as a multilateral security instrument for meeting its objectives in the Czech Republic and Poland.

A critical intersection of agential and structural factors played a fundamental role in determining Germany's Ostpolitik after unification. The German government from 1990-1998 was characterized by remarkable continuity in the staying power of key individuals and decision making structures. Germany's Ostpolitik between 1990 and 1998 endured a low turnover of ministers in major cabinet positions in the highest echelons of government. In the executive branch, there were two German presidents: Richard von Weizsäcker (1984-1994) and Roman Herzog (1994-1999). Chancellor Kohl was in power from 1982 until he left office in October 1998. His foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, served between October 1982 and May 1992 (Genscher was first appointed foreign minister in Helmut Schmidt's government in 1974). His successor Klaus Kinkel was foreign minister from May 1992 until September 1998. Gerhard Stoltenberg commenced his position as defence minister in April 1989; he retired from office in May 1992. His successor Volker Rühle stayed in the government until the CDU defeat in the Bundestag elections in September 1998. Theo Waigel (CSU) served as the finance minister from April 1989 until September 1998 and was regarded as a crucial political player with regard to the Sudeten German question with Prague.

Throughout Kohl's tenure in office, his CDU party was the dominant political force in the country. The CDU's coalition with the CSU and FDP enjoyed a parliamentary majority of 60.1 per cent after the federal elections in 1990. In 1994, the same coalition held on to a 50.7 per cent majority in the Bundestag. From the perspective of the foreign minister's portfolio in the government, the junior coalition partner, FDP, was given the position of the foreign minister, a traditional domain of the FDP since Walter Scheel's tenure in office under Willy Brandt between

1969 and 1974.⁹⁹ In the positions of vital importance to the foreign and policy making structures of the German government, there was a remarkable continuity of individuals who stayed in office, especially after 1992, allowing us to better understand the individual dynamics shaping the Ostpolitik formulation and implementation processes.

The foreign policy predispositions of the FRG shaped the foreign policy of its unified successor. The principal foundation of Germany's *Westbindung* after the Second World War was its partnership with France in the EC and the United States in NATO. These were the FRG's principal allies in the post-war period and after unification. Both were responsible for shaping the FRG's political, economic, and military development after 1949. Furthermore, they were motivated by one prime concern: preventing the spectre of totalitarianism on the European continent. The FRG's membership in the EC and NATO provided West German decision-makers with a number of policy options which were outside the purview of its capabilities. The Cold War's end did not change this power constellation; if anything, Germany's overwhelmingly positive experiences within the EU and NATO and with its main allies strengthened its resolve to continue to act in multilateral frameworks and to eschew potentially dangerous and harmful unilateral options in ECE.

As a semi-sovereign state in the international system, the FRG's multilateralism was the principal point of reference for successive governments in Bonn. The bipolar nature of the Cold War and Germany's division prevented the FRG from adopting unilateral measures in ECE. Only from within international institutions such as the EU and NATO could the FRG pursue its foreign and security policy objectives, especially unification. The same applied to Ostpolitik which was heavily influenced by the same institutional actors, the foreign policies of Czechoslovakia and Poland, as well as the Soviet Union.

⁹⁹Juliet Kaarbo, 'Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making: The Role of Junior Coalition Partners in German and Israeli Foreign Policy', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 4 (1996), pp. 501-530.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF GERMANY'S OSTPOLITIK

Ostpolitik has played a central role in German history, especially in the latter half of the twentieth century. The term literally means 'Eastern policy' and was commonly used throughout the German foreign policy discourse. Its genesis was in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and in the context of the FRG's foreign policy before 1990, Ostpolitik encompasses all of Germany's foreign relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. After 1990, Ostpolitik also embraces the new independent states in ECE, South-East Europe, the Baltic States, Russia and the FSU.

Ostpolitik, in its various historical incarnations from the Iron Chancellor Otto von Bismarck to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, underwent a radical transformation in less than one hundred and thirty years. This historical period was crucial in defining the nature of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland after unification. This chapter focuses on the historical origins of Ostpolitik and its relevance for Germany's post-unification foreign and security policy behaviour.

From Bismarck to Hitler: the Historical Roots of the FRG's Ostpolitik

Germany's position in the *Mittellage* of Europe influenced its history and Ostpolitik. Its physical location between Latin Christendom in the West and Slavs in the East was a cardinal factor in determining the course of German history.¹ An increased German focus on the lands inhabited by its Slavic counterparts had its roots in the migration of German settlers and traders to the lands east of the Elbe and Vistula rivers and beyond the Baltic shores during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. According to one of the leading German intellectuals of this era, Heinrich von Treitschke, an ancient German impulse rooted in the 'northward and eastward rush of the German spirit and the formidable activities of people as conqueror, trader and discipliner of its neighbours' was responsible for driving German interests eastwards.² He also noted rather prophetically in

¹Golo Mann, *The History of Germany since 1789* (London: Pimlico, 1996), pp. 5-6.

²Heinrich von Treitschke quoted by Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards: a Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 5-6.

1887 that 'each great nation at the height of her power decides to make some mark on the barbaric lands. ... Those who do not participate in this great rivalry will play a miserable role in the coming epoch. Colonisation became a matter of life and death for the great nations'.³ Increasingly, German leaders' attention turned to the Slavic lands in the East: they clearly exuded a mythical lure that the Germans could not possibly resist.

Geography and a perennial German *Blick nach Osten* (eastward gaze) thrust Germans and Slavs into a common historical and cultural legacy: one with positive but overwhelming negative consequences for both parties. Over one thousand years ago, countless German peasants and urban settlers colonized the region and established settlements and towns alongside Slavic tribes. The historical implications of this fateful decision were significant. According to Geoffrey Barraclough, 'it gave for all time a new direction to German aspirations, a new outlet for German energies; it added to Germany an area equivalent in dimensions to two-thirds of its original territories'.⁴ Two centuries after German settlers began colonising the East, German had replaced Slav as the pre-eminent language in the territories between the Elbe and Oder rivers. The *Volksdeutsche* represented the most significant minority in Mitteleuropa's social fabric.⁵ More disturbingly, as time progressed, their existence created an acute source of instability in Germany's relations with its Eastern neighbours. In the near future, they were to become pawns in the game successive German leaders played in Berlin.

³Heinrich von Treitschke quoted by Ivan T. Berend, 'German Economic Penetration in East Central Europe in Historical Perspective' in Stephen E. Hanson and Willfried Spohn (eds.), *Can Europe Work? Germany and the Reconstruction of Postcommunist Societies* (Seattle, WA; London: University of Washington Press, 1995), p. 133.

⁴Geoffrey Barraclough, *Factors in German History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946), pp. 40-46.

⁵Martyn Rady, 'The German Settlement in Central and Eastern Europe during the High Middle Ages' in Roger Bartlett and Karen Schönwälder (eds.), *The German Lands and Eastern Europe: Essays on the History of their Social, Cultural and Political Relations* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 11. Alfred De Zayas defines *Volksdeutsche* 'as ethnic Germans outside the Reich and holding citizenship in their respective countries of residence'. See Alfred M. De Zayas, *The German Expellees: Victims in War and Peace* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p. 14.

Bismarck's Germany and Mitteleuropa

Between the creation of the Second German Empire in January 1871 and the demise of Hitler's Third Reich in May 1945, Mitteleuropa played a fundamental role in the foreign policy calculations of successive German leaders. German conceptions of the East were profoundly influenced by several factors: (1) Germany's position in the *Mittellage* of Europe, (2) Mitteleuropa as a source of important raw materials and trade, (3) the presence of ethnic Germans in Mitteleuropa, and (4) the loss of German territory in the East after 1918 and 1945.⁶ The historical record of Bismarck's Second German Empire, Wilhelmine Germany, Weimar Germany, and Nazi Germany towards Mitteleuropa illustrates German and particularly Prussian concepts of Mitteleuropa: dreams of conquest, expansion, and the acquisition of colonial empires, started two catastrophic world wars. The history of German-Slav co-habitation in Mitteleuropa throughout the last one thousand years is a lasting testament to the notion that Germans and Slavs endured a 'love-hate' relationship. Hatred, however, exercised more influence on Prussian and German politics. Prussian nationalism and Nazism aimed at reducing all Slavs, specifically Poles, to the status of *Untermenschen* (subhumans) and servile subjects.

With German unification in 1871, the eternal quest for national unity and identity – a constant factor in German history – had been satisfied. The geographical contours of Bismarck's Germany after 1871 revealed much about the Second German Empire's location in the heart of Europe. Lodged in the heart of the German Empire were East and West Prussia and the Grand Duchy of Posen, which had always been outside German borders. It excluded Bohemia and the German and Slovene provinces of Austria and Trieste. Three principal entities controlled the vast heartland of Eastern Europe: Prussia, Russia and Austria-Hungary. Poland suffered partition; it was divided into three separate zones.⁷ The *Volksdeutsche* still inhabited vast portions of Bohemia, Moravia and Poland.

Poland, on Germany's Eastern perimeter, sparked Bismarck's interests. Polish nationalism represented the arch antithesis of German interests of achieving national unity. One

⁶Peter Stirk, 'The Idea of Mitteleuropa' in Peter Stirk (ed.), *Mitteleuropa: History and Prospects* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), pp. 1-35.

⁷Norman Davies, *God's Playground. A History of Poland*. Vols. 1 & 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

hundred and twenty years of foreign partition exacerbated Prussian feelings of domination and superiority over Poland and fuelled Poland's contempt for Prussian politics. Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* (cultural struggle) further alienated Poles and Germans. Besides, Polish Catholicism and Prussian Protestantism remained incompatible; *Kulturkampf* was designed to crush any potential political alliances between Catholics and opposition parties in Europe which threatened Germany's existence. Bismarck's principal foreign policy concern in the East was to counter any potential influence the Polish Catholic minority in Prussia's Eastern provinces might exert throughout Europe.

With Bismarck's resignation on 20 March 1890, Wilhelmine Germany embarked on a 'new course' in foreign policy. It unravelled Bismarck's alliance strategies and consequently, thrust the Empire into self-inflicted isolation with the prospect of having to fight a future war on two fronts. The Empire was obsessed with maintaining its colonial possessions in Africa and East Asia. With the outbreak of the First World War and the subsequent end of the Wilhelmine era, the role of 'Middle Europe' became increasingly important in Germany's wartime calculations. Three main reasons explain this development. First, the region was considered a prime source of invaluable raw materials. Second, Germany's political, economic and military control of Mitteleuropa would secure German hegemony on the continent and limit Russia's role in the region. The creation of a Middle European Reich with Germany as the central, organising, political, and economic power was gaining more credibility in the face of a British blockade, which threatened Germany's economic position and international markets.⁸ Finally, the 'Middle Europe' idea, i.e. German hegemony in Mitteleuropa, enshrined in Reich Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg's September memorandum of 1914, was viewed as the ultimate vehicle for cultivating Germany's political and economic hinterland and creating a Central European economic area that would include Austria-Hungary, Poland, Denmark, Italy and Scandinavia. Bethmann-Hollweg's dismissal in 1917, the defeat of the First World War, and the punishing provisions of the Treaty of Versailles destroyed for the time being all of Germany's Mitteleuropa ambitions.

⁸For a comprehensive overview of the Mitteleuropa concept in German history, see Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa* (Berlin: Georg Reiner, 1916).

Weimar Germany and Mitteleuropa

The German Empire collapsed with the abdication of Wilhelm II on 9 November 1918. Germany's war defeat signalled the simultaneous destruction of Prussian nationalism and Wilhelmine Germany. The 1919 Treaty of Versailles had disastrous consequences for Germany's territorial possessions in Mitteleuropa and the region's future ethnic composition. Before the Peace Settlements of 1919, the Second Republic of Poland had been proclaimed in 1918, and Czechoslovakia had become an independent republic under the leadership of President Thomas Masaryk in October 1918. The perceived *Diktat* of the Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to cede the following areas to Poland: the Polish Corridor (between East Prussia and Pomerania), Posen, Eastern Upper Silesia and the port city of Danzig, which became a Free City under the control of the League of Nations. Lithuania annexed Memelland and Germany lost the Hultschiner territories to Czechoslovakia. The Austro-Hungarian Empire disappeared entirely. German losses in the East had devastating human and material consequences not only for German governments after unification in 1990 but also for subsequent political developments between 1933 and 1945 and after.

Germany's losses in Eastern Europe after 1919 also affected the region's ethnic makeup in Czechoslovakia and Poland especially. The principles of self-determination and nationality, which had inspired the spirit and conduct of the Peace settlements of 1919, led to a precarious situation: one-third of the Polish population did not speak Polish and one-third of the 'new' Czechoslovak population consisted of Germans (approximately three million), Russians, Magyars, Poles and Ruthenes. The proportion of *Volksdeutsche* in Czechoslovakia and Poland created an explosive cocktail with important ramifications for Germany's future relations with both states. Large contingents of ethnic Germans suddenly became minorities in several newly created independent states in Eastern Europe after 1919.

To achieve the recovery of Germany's *Ostgebiete*, especially in Poland, the Weimar leadership resurrected Germany's Mitteleuropa ambitions under the banner of securing a revision of the Treaty of Versailles. There was a consensus amongst Germany's political parties that the 1919 German-Polish border was unacceptable and that the Polish Corridor, Danzig, and Eastern Upper Silesia should be returned to Germany. These revisionist objectives were part of a

comprehensive policy to restore German hegemony in Eastern Europe, not by military means but via economic strength, and promote Germany's inclusion in European as well as international structures. These aims were facilitated by two international agreements: the 1922 Treaty of Rapallo and the 1925 Locarno Agreements. The latter represented Weimar Germany's first decisive foray into international politics after the end of the war and marked the dawn of an autonomous foreign policy by a heavily constrained Germany. The former signalled a new German strategy to solve its post-Versailles treaty dilemmas in the East. The treaty between Germany and Soviet Russia raised the fear of an *entente* and potential revisionist claims; it also caused acute alarm in Britain, France, and Poland. Germany's relations with Soviet Russia steadily improved whereas its relations with Poland deteriorated over the lost German territory issue. It was increasingly manifest that as long as Germany could not regain its lost *Ostgebiete*, German-Polish relations would remain tense. Besides, as long as Germany and Soviet Russia remained friends, Poland's future was uncertain.

The 1925 Locarno Agreements represented an overt attempt by German Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann to pursue political rapprochement with the West, especially France, and secure a revision of its border with Poland. Westpolitik and Ostpolitik represented the two sides of the same coin; both were intimately linked and dependent on each other's success. Germany's Westpolitik relied on achieving a political rapprochement with France, which in turn would facilitate its foreign policy strategy vis-à-vis Poland.⁹ The Locarno Agreements provided the ideal forum to meet this goal. Whereas a West-Locarno was feasible and desirable in most German political circles, an *Ost-Locarno*, i.e., the recognition of the German-Polish border was tantamount to committing political suicide for any of its advocates.¹⁰ Weimar's Ostpolitik questioned the legitimacy of the 1919 German-Polish border at every opportunity: its future revision was a priority. By signing the Locarno Agreements, Stresemann intended to regain the Reich's lost territories in Eastern Europe by recognising the status quo in the European system and achieving a political rapprochement with the West, especially France. According to A. J. P.

⁹Klaus Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich: deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler 1871-1945* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1999), pp. 535, 540.

¹⁰Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich*, p. 535.

Taylor, the essence of this strategy was not based on achieving supremacy in Mitteleuropa via military means – an unrealistic goal. Supremacy in the region would be achieved ‘by the weight of German industry and the preponderance of German organizing power’.¹¹ This strategy was not successful in the Weimar era but laid the foundations for Hitler’s aspirations to eventually recover the lost *Ostgebiete*.

Nazi Germany and Mitteleuropa

The dynamics of the FRG’s bilateral relationship with Poland after the Second World War reflect the Nazi regime’s impact on both German and Polish politicians. The same applies to Czechoslovakia. With the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the rise of Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist Party in 1933, relations between Germany and its Eastern neighbours rapidly deteriorated. Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (1925) presented the major foundations of his ideology and political platform: the revision of the 1919 Versailles Treaty and the inclusion of all ‘stranded’ *Volksdeutsche* in the German Reich, rabid anti-Semitism and anti-Slavism, and the dispersion of the German *Volk* (people) into Mitteleuropa. Like its Weimar predecessor, Nazi Germany pursued extensive revisionist projects in Eastern Europe although Weimar’s aims, by comparison, were rather limited.¹² At the heart of Hitler’s ideology was the quest for additional *Lebensraum* (living space) for Mitteleuropa’s Germans and the protection of the *Deutschtum* or *Deutscher Volksboden* in Eastern Europe.

The Pan-German movements in Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany provided the impetus for Hitler’s ideology. According to Ian Kershaw, Pan-Germans used the *Lebensraum* and *Raumnot* (lack of living space) concepts ‘to justify territorial conquest by evoking the colonizing of Slav lands by Teutonic knights in the Middle Ages and, emotively, conjure up notions of uniting in the Reich what came to be described as *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans) scattered throughout Eastern Europe’.¹³ Acquiring additional *Lebensraum* in the East would facilitate

¹¹A. J. P. Taylor, *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of German History since 1815* (London: Methuen & Co., 1976), p. 233.

¹²Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 4.

¹³Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris* (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, 1998), 247-250, especially p. 248.

Eastern Europe's Germanisation. Nazi Germany's foreign policy vis-à-vis its Eastern neighbours epitomised every aspect of this strategy as the *Volksdeutsche* became an important instrument in Hitler's design for stirring up pan-German feelings in their respective homelands.

The most cathartic moment in German-Czech relations after 1933 was the 1938 Munich Agreement since it dismembered Czechoslovakia with Britain's and France's tacit approval. Hitler's antipathy for the Slavic Czechs fuelled his desire to destroy Czechoslovakia at all costs. The leader of the Sudeten German Party in Czechoslovakia, Konrad Henlein, became Hitler's stooge in achieving this objective. The party played the nationalist card in Czech politics thus creating chaotic conditions which prompted a forceful Nazi diplomatic and military intervention. Under immense Nazi pressure, the Munich Agreement secured a Czechoslovak withdrawal from the Sudetenland and the subsequent German annexation of the territory. The Sudetenland annexation confirmed Czech suspicions in 1938 that Hitler could not be trusted and de-legitimised the Sudeten cause in Czechoslovakia.

Paradoxically, Nazi Germany sought a political rapprochement with Poland after 1933 at the expense of its relations with the Soviet Union. A Non-aggression Pact with Poland was signed in January 1934, Hitler's first step to end Germany's foreign policy isolation in Europe and challenge the French alliance system in Eastern Europe. Germany's *Anschluss* with Austria, Czechoslovakia's destruction, and the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, however, revealed Hitler's real targets across the Baltics, Eastern Europe and Russia: the complete subjugation of all Slavic peoples and extermination of all Jewry. Exerting political-military control over the vast Eastern heartland was regarded as essential for maintaining and consolidating Nazi Germany's power base. With the invasion in September 1939 and creation of a Soviet sphere of influence in most of Lithuania as well as Estonia and Latvia, the Hitler-Stalin Pact completed the full-scale dismemberment of Poland. The brutal occupation of Poland from 1939 to 1945 represented the most significant manifestation of the Nazi *Drang nach Osten* to create more *Lebensraum* for the German *Herrenvolk* (master race).¹⁴ Nazi Germany's conduct during the Second World War was

¹⁴The term 'Drang nach Osten' in German, Eastern European, and Soviet literature has a complex history. See Wolfgang Wippermann, *Der 'Deutsche Drang nach Osten'* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981).

critical in defining the nature of the FRG's post-war Ostpolitik and the contours of a unified Germany's Ostpolitik.

The Nazi dictatorship's collapse and the German *Wehrmacht's* unconditional surrender in May 1945 marked a significant turning point in German history. The Third Reich's defeat at the hands of the Allied Powers put an end to Nazi tyranny throughout Western and Eastern Europe. It also heralded the beginning of a complex era in the relations between the FRG, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellite states, including the GDR.

The Big Three Agreements: Tehran (28 November – 1 December 1943), Yalta (4 February – 11 February 1945), and Potsdam (17 July – 2 August 1945) created the future legal parameters of the FRG's foreign relations with its Eastern neighbours. At Tehran, the Allies agreed that Poland's border should be moved westward to the Oder River but a decision was not reached on the status of the Polish-German border south of the Oder. The Neisse River became the focal point but there was some confusion about whether the Allies were referring to the Eastern or Western Neisse (the Western Neisse flows northward into the Oder at a point where the upstream line of the Oder turns sharply eastward).¹⁵ Any shift of Polish borders to the west would result in the loss of Germany's *Ostgebiete*. In addition, the Soviet Union reserved the right to annex northern East Prussia, including the city of Königsberg, and pre-war Eastern Poland (acquired in 1939 by agreement with Nazi Germany). The subsequent transfer of ethnic Germans from Poland was discussed but no firm agreements on how this was to be achieved were reached.

By February 1945, the Allies reckoned it was only a matter of time before Nazi Germany capitulated. The Yalta Conference addressed the future shape of post-war Germany; clarified Allied Power views on the future status of Poland's Western and Eastern borders, and discussed the composition of Poland's first post-war government. Operating from a position of strength in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union pressed for U.S. and British approval of the Oder and Lusatian Neisse River as Poland's Western border. It was Stalin's wish that Poland be compensated for the future loss of its Eastern territories to the Soviet Union by gaining all German territories east of the Oder-Neisse River. Northern East Prussia was to be divided evenly between Poland and the

¹⁵W. R. Smyser, *From Yalta to Berlin: The Cold War Struggle over Germany* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 8-9.

Soviet Union; the German cities of Stettin and Breslau were to be incorporated into Polish territory. These demands met with broad approval from both the U.S. and British with the provision that only a final peace treaty with Germany could resolve this important issue. Indeed, as the Yalta Conference communiqué indicated, the Curzon Line was acknowledged as Poland's Eastern frontier and there was agreement amongst the Allies that Poland should acquire unspecified amounts of territory in the north and west. The communiqué was kept vague in anticipation of a final peace settlement to be concluded between the Allies and a defeated Germany after the end of the war.

The Big Three Agreement at Potsdam was crucial to the FRG's post-war development and its relations with the East. It sealed Germany's fate in Europe. Nazi Germany was thoroughly dismembered by the Allied Powers: it was divided into four zones of occupation and had lost its *Ostgebiete*. The agreement formed the basis for the *Deutschlandpolitik* of the victorious Allies and the emerging European bipolar security order. Besides advancing the principles of denazification, demilitarisation, economic decentralization, and re-education of the German people along democratic lines, the Potsdam Agreement sealed the loss of Germany's *Ostgebiete* – all German territories east of the Oder-Neisse River – to Poland and the Soviet Union. The Oder-Neisse River was regarded as Poland's Western border until a peace conference (which was never convened) took place to address the issue.¹⁶ The agreement's main provision exposed the ambiguities inherent in the Yalta Agreement. There was eternal disagreement amongst the Allies: should Poland's Western border correspond to the Western or Eastern Neisse line?¹⁷ Moreover, if the Allies harboured any doubts about the finality of the Oder-Neisse line, the decision to expel ethnic Germans from Poland cemented Poland's as well as the Soviet Union's hold on Germany's former *Ostgebiete*. By the end of the Potsdam Conference, Germany was forced to relinquish twenty-four per cent of the territory it had occupied in 1937.

¹⁶There are at least six international documents that pertain to the Polish-German border issue (Oder-Neisse line): the Potsdam Agreement of 1945, the Görlitz (Zgorzelec) Treaty between the GDR and Poland of 1950, the Warsaw Treaty of 1970, the Two Plus Four Agreement of 1990, the Border Treaty between Germany and Poland (November 1990), and the Treaty of Friendship between Germany and Poland in June 1991.

¹⁷Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), pp. 434-35.

Expulsion of Ethnic Germans from Mitteleuropa

The deportation and expropriation of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovak border regions resulted from post-war decrees issued by Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš and approved by the Potsdam Conference. They affected over 3.5 million Germans. Beneš issued several controversial decrees, the most important being the 'Czechoslovak citizenship decree' that stripped all ethnic Germans of their citizenship and prepared their expulsion from the Sudetenland. By 25 October 1945, Beneš had issued the 'enemy property confiscation decree', confiscating Sudeten German property and thus paving the way for Czechs to purchase property formerly owned by Sudeten Germans.¹⁸ The Beneš Decrees which sanctioned and legalised the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans after the Second World War had a devastating effect on the 'normalisation' of relations between both states after 1945 and 1990.

Following the first round of 'unofficial' expulsions in late 1944 and early 1945, the Potsdam Agreement tacitly sanctioned the expulsion of millions of ethnic Germans from Silesia, Pomerania, East Brandenburg, and northern East Prussia, along with ethnic Germans who had lived outside the territories of pre-war Germany, in Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic States, Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet Union.¹⁹ This fateful decision was rooted in the ethnic Germans' willing complicity and collaboration with the Nazi regime. Paradoxically, the expulsions were to be undertaken in an 'orderly and humane' fashion, which according to Golo Mann 'was somewhat reminiscent of the request of the Holy Inquisition that its victims should be put to death as gently as possible and without bloodshed'.²⁰ The expulsions were actually carried out with brutal force in all states concerned. Revenge became the guiding leitmotif of the Czech and Polish governments: the *Volksdeutsche* were viewed as unwanted agents of the Nazi occupation and therefore deserved expulsion. According to John Keegan, the Allies' controversial decision to permit the expulsion of ethnic Germans had important implications for the future

¹⁸Pavel Winkel, 'The Czechoslovak Presidential Decrees, 1940-45', *Perspectives: The Central European Review of International Affairs*, no. 4 (Winter 1994/1995), pp. 13-23.

¹⁹Alfred M. De Zayas, *The German Expellees: Victims in War and Peace* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Philipp Ther, *Deutsche und Polnische Vertriebene: Gesellschaft und Vertriebenenpolitik in der SBZ/DDR und in Polen 1945-1956* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), and Radomir Luza, *The Transfer of the Sudeten Germans: A Study of Czech-German Relations, 1933-1962* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1964).

²⁰Mann, *The History of Germany*, p. 493.

ethnic composition of Germany, Eastern Europe, and the creation of a post-war European bipolar order:

By endorsing the resettlement westward of Eastern Europe's Germans – both those of the borderlands of the *Deuschtum* in Poland and Czechoslovakia and the more scattered settlements of German commercial, agricultural and intellectual enterprise in the Slav and Baltic states – it returned ethnic frontiers in Europe largely to those that had prevailed at the creation of Charlemagne's empire at the beginning of the ninth century, solved at a stroke the largest of the 'minority problems', and ensured Soviet domination of central and Eastern Europe for two generations to come.²¹

Two critical factors: the loss of Germany's *Ostgebiete* and the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe profoundly shaped the conduct of its relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland during the Cold War and after unification. Nazi Germany's brutal occupation of Czechoslovakia and Poland cast a dark shadow on any future prospects of a normalisation of relations between the FRG and these states after 1949. Given the nature of these historical events, the FRG's political leadership under Konrad Adenauer struggled much to formulate a coherent foreign policy toward the region which had suffered the most under Nazi occupation.

The FRG's Ostpolitik: Policy Paradoxes between 1949 and 1969

Konrad Adenauer's Ostpolitik

With the creation of the FRG and the GDR in 1949, the two Germanys became members of opposing ideological blocks with divergent foreign and security policy interests in Europe. After 1949, successive Bonn governments, whether they were led by the CDU/CSU, the SPD, the Grand Coalition (1966-1969) or in combination with smaller parties such as the FDP, pursued their Ostpolitik within the confines of a superpower straightjacket. The FRG's ability to pursue independent foreign policy objectives towards Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union was therefore limited. The history of Bonn's Ostpolitik, however, exemplifies how the FRG gradually evolved from a passive and constrained foreign policy actor in international politics after 1949 to a more independent and assertive actor after 1969. Ostpolitik was the most visible manifestation of this significant change in the FRG's foreign policy behaviour.

²¹John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1990), p. 593.

The first post-war CDU German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, however, faced insurmountable domestic and foreign policy obstacles after 1949. His strong personal convictions about the FRG's future role in Western and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union made his task harder. Adenauer was driven by a fundamental lack of interest in Eastern Europe, although the main focus of his Ostpolitik was on Moscow.²² The controversial Potsdam Agreement only exacerbated the FRG's difficulties after 1949. The FRG was not a party to the agreement which simultaneously sealed the fate of its *Ostgebiete* and heralded the largest post-war expulsion of any ethnic group in Europe, the *Volksdeutsche*. For Adenauer's government, the agreement did not constitute a final peace settlement. Instead, it was dismissed as being short-lived, although its provisions were still binding under international law.²³

The permanent loss of the *Ostgebiete*, the most important feature of the agreement, was regarded as transient. This point exposed a significant gulf in domestic political opinion after 1949, especially amongst the three largest political parties: the CDU, the CSU and the SPD. Adenauer wished to seal Germany's fate in a final peace treaty thereby recovering the lost *Ostgebiete*. In retrospect, however, this policy was illusory and self-defeating since it did not recognise the nature of the bipolar order in international relations and the Soviet Union's political-military hegemony in Eastern Europe. Critics of Bonn's revisionist plans in Eastern Europe argued that the status of the Oder-Neisse line was final and should be regarded as permanently lost. The Soviet Union was regarded as the ultimate arbiter of the affairs of its satellite states in Eastern Europe and thus, would never permit any changes in its zone of occupation.²⁴ One point, however, united Germany's political parties: the brutal expulsion of ethnic Germans from the former Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia and Poland was not condoned.

Germany's division into four zones of occupation and the Soviet Union's control of what was defined as 'Central Germany', Northern East Prussia, and East Berlin exacerbated Bonn's multiple *Ostprobleme* after 1949. Hoping to achieve unification as quickly as possible, the task of

²²William E. Griffith, *The Ostpolitik of the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1978), p. 47.

²³Phillip A. Bühler, *The Oder-Neisse line: A Reappraisal under International Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

²⁴Karl Jaspers, *The Future of Germany* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 132.

pursuing a compatible and successful Ost- and Westpolitik became much more difficult for Bonn. Would Bonn choose an Ostpolitik strategy denying the GDR's existence or would it legally recognise it the GDR to improve its relations with its East German counterpart and its Eastern neighbours? The successive governments of Adenauer, Ludwig Erhard, and Kurt Georg Kiesinger – with different emphases – believed largely in the merits of the former strategy.

Bonn's foreign policy priorities between 1949 and 1969 did not focus extensively or exclusively on formulating a constructive and proactive Ostpolitik. Westpolitik, in particular *Westbindung*, was paramount. *Westbindung* represented the ultimate panacea for Bonn in achieving its main objective: unification. In the spirit of *Westbindung*, the government deemed it unwise to pursue a rapid rapprochement with the Soviet Union and Eastern European neighbours. According to Clay Clemens, the adoption of this strategy 'guaranteed against a 'return to Potsdam', that is, a return to the days of complete national impotence, when the country's fate was settled entirely by external powers in the absence of German representation'.²⁵ This fear laid the foundation for Adenauer's 'Potsdam complex': the notion that the FRG would be excluded from future decisions or negotiations that directly affected its future in Europe.²⁶ Ostpolitik was largely discredited in the German foreign policy discourse because of its association with Germany's expansionist heritage in Eastern Europe.

Ostpolitik was also complicated further as Bonn created its own internal legal obstacles, which actively prevented a speedy rapprochement with its Eastern neighbours and, in addition, affected its relations with its Western allies. The adoption of extensive legal and quasi-legal language – especially under the CDU/CSU led coalition governments – manifested itself in the following political leitmotifs: the *Alleinvertretungsrecht* (sole power of representation); the *Selbstbestimmungsrecht* (right of self-determination); the *Recht auf Heimat* (the right of expelled Germans to their homelands in Eastern Europe); and the 1956 Hallstein Doctrine.²⁷ Adenauer's

²⁵Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists: The CDU/CSU and West German Ostpolitik, 1969-1982* (London; Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), p. 19.

²⁶Hans-Peter Schwarz, 'Adenauer's Ostpolitik' in Wolfram F. Hanrieder and Hans Rühle, eds. *Im Spannungsfeld der Weltpolitik: 30 Jahre deutsche Aussenpolitik 1949-1979* (Stuttgart: Bonn Aktuell, 1981), p. 213.

²⁷Roger Tilford, 'Introduction' in Roger Tilford (ed.), *The Ostpolitik and Political Change in Germany* (Westmead: Saxon House, 1975), p. 15.

Politik der Stärke (politics of strength) included these factors along with his anti-communism. The self-imposed Hallstein Doctrine was the most serious policy impediment in the FRG's efforts to improve relations with its Eastern European neighbours and any state which recognised the GDR.²⁸ The principle of *Recht auf Heimat* consolidated the *Vertriebenenverbände's* support for Bonn's 'passive' Ostpolitik in the 1950s and 1960s. They represented a powerful domestic political force in the conduct of Ostpolitik.²⁹ Combined, each of these foreign policy doctrines had a significant impact on the foreign policy processes of the FRG in the 1950s.

It is, therefore, erroneous to claim there was no Ostpolitik between 1949 and 1969.³⁰ In the mid-1950s, the overall prospects for a political rapprochement and resumption of diplomatic relations between the FRG, Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe were not good, unsurprisingly. The Paris treaties of 23 October 1954 had successfully integrated the FRG into the Atlantic Alliance. In addition, it became a sovereign state on 5 May 1955. Nine days later, the Soviet Union created the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO), which included the GDR. The simultaneous creation of two political-military alliances with one Germany in each had a profound impact on the FRG's Ostpolitik as well as its *Deutschlandpolitik*. Against this backdrop, Adenauer's visit to Moscow (9-13 September 1955) laid the first concrete step for a political rapprochement since the Second World War. Despite internal disagreements amongst Germany's political elite and a lack of progress on the 'German question', the summit marked an important turning point in the FRG's Ostpolitik, especially as the quality of its relations with the Soviet Union dramatically improved. The FRG's failure to respond economically to the unrest and upheavals which occurred in Poland and Hungary in 1956 revealed, however, its lack of interest in its Eastern neighbours' affairs.³¹

²⁸The Hallstein Doctrine was directly linked to the concept of *Alleinvertretungsrecht*. It was implemented in 1955 to prevent the recognition of the GDR by third party states by threatening the abrogation of diplomatic relations with the FRG. It was only applied twice: Yugoslavia (1957) and Cuba (1963).

²⁹Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists*, p. 16.

³⁰Gordon Craig, 'Did Ostpolitik Work?', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no.1 (January-February 1994), p. 163.

³¹Robert W. Dean, *West German Trade with the East: The Political Dimension* (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 172.

Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik

Before 1966, Bonn operated in a self-imposed foreign policy vacuum vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and its Eastern neighbours, although the decision taken by Chancellor Ludwig Erhard to open West German trade missions in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary marked the beginning of a new policy vis-à-vis the East. Ostpolitik still remained a hostage of the international environment's dynamics and especially the superpower rivalry. Bonn was engaged in a proactive *Westpolitik* whereas its Ostpolitik was suffocated by strong domestic and international constraints, preventing a 'normalisation' of the FRG's relations with its Eastern neighbours. The Berlin Wall's erection in 1961 marked a turning point in the history of the FRG's *Deutschlandpolitik* and Ostpolitik. It symbolically embodied the failure of Adenauer's *Deutschland-* and Ostpolitik. The impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 on the Cold War and the reciprocal Polish and German Episcopal addresses in 1965 on relations between the FRG and Poland were also noteworthy.

In its bilateral relations with Poland, the FRG continued to dispute the validity of the Oder-Neisse River as Poland's Western border. It also refused to declare the 1938 Munich Agreement, a significant factor in FRG-Czech relations, null and void. For both countries, these actions illustrated not only Bonn's intransigence but also German revisionism and revanchism after the Second World War. Making matters worse, the WTO, under Moscow's instructions, practised an explicit *Abgrenzungspolitik* (barrier politics) against the FRG, a further obstacle to resuming diplomatic relations between the FRG and Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia's occupation by WTO states (except Romania) in August 1968 proved that Moscow would not tolerate dissent by its satellite states.

The SPD/FDP coalition government which came to power under the chancellorship of Willy Brandt in October 1969 charted a new foreign policy course vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the GDR and Eastern Europe aiming at closing the gap between a proactive *Westpolitik* and passive Ostpolitik.³² The FRG's successful *Westpolitik* encouraged it to adopt a more constructive and forward-looking approach vis-à-vis Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The 'new' Ostpolitik,

³²Marion Gräfin Dönhoff, *Polen und Deutsche: die schwierige Versöhnung* (Munich: Goldmann, 1993), p. 50.

launched by Brandt during his previous tenure as foreign minister in the Kiesinger government, was now given more impetus, especially after Bonn granted full recognition to Romania in 1967, thereby signalling the *de facto* end of the Hallstein Doctrine. From 1969, Brandt as Chancellor could pursue an Ostpolitik independently which was not held hostage to the workings of the CDU/CSU/SPD coalition government:

An essential ingredient of our Ostpolitik was that we applied ourselves to our own affairs in a new and more positive manner instead of relying solely on others to speak for us. This meant that, while remaining in touch with our allies and retaining their confidence, we became the advocate of our own interests vis-à-vis the governments of Eastern Europe. By so doing we strengthened our voice inside the bodies devoted to West European, Atlantic, and international cooperation.³³

This strategy was pursued within the confines of a *europäische Friedensordnung* (European peace order).³⁴

To meet its objectives in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Bonn was forced to re-evaluate all the domestic and external foundations of its foreign policy for the previous twenty years. Brandt directly challenged the conventional wisdom of previous CDU/CSU governments, which believed that maintaining the status quo in the international system was an effective strategy for furthering the FRG's interests, unification especially. For Brandt, it only isolated the FRG further from its Western and Eastern neighbours. In addition, the government emphatically rejected claims made by the opposition and critics of Ostpolitik that Brandt had lost bargaining leverage with the communist block and permanently sealed the lost *Ostgebiete's* fate.

To advance the FRG's interests vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the GDR and Eastern Europe, Bonn acknowledged that German unification was not possible in the current tumultuous international environment. The FRG then could formulate and implement a new foreign policy strategy towards its Eastern neighbours including: political rapprochement with the Soviet Union to promote *Entspannungspolitik* (détente) in Europe, the normalisation of relations with its Eastern neighbours, better bilateral relations with the GDR, the Non-Proliferation Treaty's

³³Willy Brandt, *People and Politics* (London: Collins, 1978), pp. 168-169.

³⁴See Brandt's government declaration published in Klaus von Beyme (ed.), *Die grossen Regierungserklärungen der deutschen Bundeskanzler von Adenauer bis Schmidt* (Munich; Vienna: Carl Hanser, 1979).

signature, and an agreement on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).³⁵ The Brandt government's foreign policy was meant to influence the ECE regimes to the FRG's advantage.³⁶

Bonn, however, still would not recognise the GDR as a legitimate, independent state. The Brandt government preferred talking, rather provocatively, about *zwei Staaten in einer Nation* (two states in one nation). That was one of the chief aims of Brandt's Ostpolitik: finally acknowledging the consequences of Germany's defeat in the Second World War. For twenty years, Bonn's political leadership had refused to accept the geopolitical and geo-strategic realities of the international system, including Germany's division and the Potsdam Agreement. The logic behind the FRG's new foreign policy was simple: implementing an Ostpolitik which simultaneously increased its capacity to act and expanded its international bargaining power and freedom of action vis-à-vis its Western allies. Securing the ratification of the *Ostverträge* was a first step.

Eastern Treaties

Bonn's foreign policy raison d'être after 1969 became intimately tied to an Ostpolitik whose basis was the *Ostverträge*: a multi-level amount of complex diplomatic negotiations and agreements with Moscow and its satellite states in Eastern Europe. The *Ostverträge* symbolised a revolutionary shift in Bonn's Eastern foreign policy priorities after 1969; they were the first concrete attempt by any post-war government to facilitate a political rapprochement with the Soviet Union, GDR, and Eastern Europe. They signalled an important watershed in the FRG's *Deutschland-* and Ostpolitik for numerous reasons. First, Brandt's willingness to address historically and politically sensitive bilateral issues without insisting on the FRG's *Alleinvertretungsrecht* represented a significant reversal in Bonn's foreign policy thinking. Secondly, the negotiation of the *Ostverträge* was the political elite's first critical step towards a 'normalisation' of relations with its Eastern neighbours. Bonn's efforts at

³⁵The CSCE became an Organisation (OSCE) on 1 January 1995. It has 55 member states, comprising all European states together with the United States and Canada.

³⁶Philip Windsor, *Germany and the Management of Détente* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), p. 84.

Vergangenheitsbewältigung (overcoming or confronting the past) and the development of a conscious *Verantwortungspolitik* (politics of responsibility) injected an element of realism into the political negotiations, strikingly absent in the foreign policy strategies adopted by previous German governments.

Finally, the negotiation processes of the *Ostverträge* offer a unique insight into how Bonn managed its *Ostprobleme* and the prioritisation of its bilateral relations with its Eastern neighbours: Moscow first, Warsaw second, the GDR third and Czechoslovakia fourth – a set of priorities remarkably similar to a unified Germany's. The desire for a political rapprochement with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe also entailed Bonn's implicit recognition that the CDU/CSU's foreign policy strategies (especially those adopted by the Adenauer government) had failed to further its fundamental foreign policy interests. Under previous CDU/CSU governments, Ostpolitik was portrayed as a thorn in their side. Bonn wanted to achieve unification as soon as possible through *Westpolitik*. This policy of 'firmness' or 'strength' vis-à-vis Eastern Europe also placed unnecessary strains on Bonn's foreign relations with its Western Allies. Brandt's priorities and strategies were different: the FRG would ultimately benefit (i.e., solve the 'German question') by formulating and implementing a strategy that recognised the status quo, guaranteed the legitimate sovereignty of the GDR, and acknowledged the Soviet Union's dominance in Eastern Europe. For Roger Morgan, the grand design of the Director of the Policy Planning Staff in the German Foreign Office, Egon Bahr, was based on achieving 'reconciliation with Germany's Eastern neighbours [which] would result in the creation of a reunified German state, contained in a neutralised Central Europe freed from the military power blocs of the Cold War'.³⁷ The central theme underlying the FRG's Ostpolitik: '*Wandel durch Annäherung*' (change through rapprochement) was devised by Egon Bahr as early as 1963.³⁸

The *Ostverträge* were vital instruments furthering Bonn's domestic and foreign policy ambitions vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the GDR and Eastern Europe. A political rapprochement with Moscow first was necessary to secure similar agreements with its satellite states in Eastern

³⁷Roger Morgan. *West Germany's Foreign Policy Agenda* (Beverly Hills, CA; London: Sage, 1978), p. 20.

³⁸'Referat des Leiters des Presse- und Informationsamtes des Landes Berlins Bahr (SPD) vor der Evangelischen Akademie Tutzing am 15 Juli 1963' in Boris Meissner (ed.), *Die deutsche Ostpolitik 1961-1970: Kontinuität und Wandel* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1970), pp. 45-48.

Europe, including the GDR. Previous West German chancellors, including Adenauer, had recognised Moscow's prominence in Germany's Ostpolitik. Moscow always occupied a predominant position in German calculations. Relations with Eastern Europe came second. A successful *Deutschland-* and Ostpolitik depended on a political rapprochement and a normalisation of relations with Moscow. Yet, the FRG's political leadership remained lucid about the Cold War's political-military realities: it was politically unwise to ignore U.S. and Western interests for the sake of its Ostpolitik. German pursuits of bilateral relations were frowned upon; the basis for any successful Ostpolitik was rooted in Germany's membership in the European Community and NATO, and the use of multilateral instruments to meet foreign and security policy objectives – a strategy adopted by successive German chancellors after 1949.

Moscow Treaty

The Moscow Treaty (12 August 1970) was the crux of Brandt's Ostpolitik. It was a turning point in the FRG's post-war history as it laid the political and economic foundations for a rapprochement with Poland, the GDR, and Czechoslovakia.³⁹ It also contributed significantly to détente in Europe. Peter Frank, State Secretary in the Foreign Office from 1970 to 1974, highlighted the Soviet Union's significance in the FRG's foreign policy calculations:

The Federal Republic of Germany cannot do without striving for good relations with the Soviet Union. A country in the middle of Europe with more neighbours than any other European country is dependent on being friendly with its neighbours on all sides. ... It should also be borne in mind with regard to relations with the Soviet Union that the Soviet Union is *de facto* the determinative force in Eastern Europe.⁴⁰

The treaty illustrated the first major sign of improvement in West German-Soviet relations since Adenauer had visited Moscow in October 1955. Negotiated by Egon Bahr and the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko between 30 January and 22 May 1970, the treaty was an ideal prototype for the FRG's subsequent treaties with Poland, the GDR and Czechoslovakia. Signed on 12 August 1970 by Chancellor Brandt and the Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin it included two important articles for Germany's future with its Eastern neighbours. Articles II and III were

³⁹Michael Freund, *From Cold War to Ostpolitik: Germany and the New Europe* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1972), p. 112.

⁴⁰Frank quoted by Avril Pittman, *From Ostpolitik to Reunification: West German-Soviet Political Relations since 1974* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 11-12.

especially pertinent because their emphasis on respecting the territorial integrity of all states in the international system was critical in the context of détente during the Cold War. The FRG's acknowledgement of its frontier with the GDR and the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western frontier was very important.

Warsaw Treaty

Eight months after the Moscow Treaty, the FRG was prepared to conclude a similar agreement with Poland. Old Ostpolitik business – the status of the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border – was at the heart of the FRG's bilateral relationship with Poland and the Warsaw Treaty. Negotiations began in February 1970 and Chancellor Willy Brandt and Polish Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz signed the treaty on 7 December 1970 in Warsaw. Article I outlined the most important provisions regarding frontier settlement:

- The Polish People's Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany unanimously affirm that the existing frontier line, the course of which was established in Chapter IX of the decisions of the Potsdam Conference of August 2, 1945, as from the Baltic Sea immediately west of Swinoujscie (Swinemünde) and thence along the Oder River to the confluence of the Lusatian Neisse River to the Czechoslovak frontier, constitutes the Western state frontier of the Polish People's Republic.
- They confirm the inviolability of their existing frontiers now and in the future, and mutually pledge to respect unreservedly their territorial integrity.
- They declare that they have no territorial claims against one another nor shall they advance such claims in the future.⁴¹

The treaty was paradoxical: it finally confirmed the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border; but, this was not regarded as binding on a future unified Germany – a major source of contention in 1989 and during the negotiation of the Two Plus Four Accords in 1990. It also mentioned full diplomatic relations between the parties and the renunciation of the use of force. In a separate agreement signed later, Poland allowed a number of ethnic Germans living in Poland to be reunited with their families in the FRG.

The Warsaw Treaty, a cornerstone of Brandt's Ostpolitik, had lasting political, psychological and moral implications for the bilateral relations between both states. Brandt's visit to Warsaw (6 December 1970) and symbolic kneeling in front of the monument to the 1943 Jewish Warsaw Ghetto uprising paved the way for the signing of the most important document in

⁴¹For the English translation of Article I, see Wladislaw W. Kulski, *Germany and Poland: from War to Peaceful Relations* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1976), p. 188.

the FRG's relations with Poland during the Cold War. It was also a signal that the FRG meant to normalise its relations with all WTO states.

Prague Treaty

For the first twenty years of the CDU/CSU's Ostpolitik, Bonn's relationship with Prague was practically non-existent. Several factors prevented the normalisation of their relations. Czech collective memories of the Munich Agreement (29 September 1938) – or what Czechs describe as *Muichovane* (Munichites) or *Muicho vanstvi*⁴² (Munichism) – the separation of Slovakia, the Sudetenland Nazi annexation in 1938, and the formation of the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939, froze any prospects of political rapprochement after 1945. In addition, the Soviet Union's hegemony in Eastern Europe, the close ideological relationship between Czechoslovakia and the GDR, Bonn's foreign policy, and the political demands of the Sudeten lobby provided additional obstacles.⁴³

Against the backdrop of Czechoslovakia's occupation by WTO troops (with the exception of Romania) and the Prague Spring, a treaty between Bonn and Prague was unprecedented. Chancellor Kiesinger's policy statement in 1966 declaring the 1938 Munich Agreement null and void was an important step towards better relations with Prague. Political rapprochement was cemented by a bilateral treaty on commodity traffic and cooperation in economic, scientific and technical areas on 17 December 1970. It took three years and six bilateral sessions for Czech Foreign Ministry and German Foreign Office representatives to solve their differences about the validity of the Munich Agreement, which had erased Czechoslovakia from the European map. Czechoslovakia insisted that Bonn acknowledge 'the invalidity of the Munich Agreement *ab initio* (*ex tunc*) with all the resulting consequences'. This specific wording was rejected, although Bonn did recognise that the Munich Agreement was null and void the moment Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia in 1939. The final treaty version simply reiterated the point that the agreement was 'void with regard to their mutual relations'. Article II stated that it would not 'affect the legal

⁴²Joseph Frederick Zacek, 'The Czechoslovak View' in Maya Latynski (ed.), *Reappraising the Munich Pact: Continental Perspective* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 1992), p. 47.

⁴³Libor Roucek, *Die Tschechoslowakei und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1989: Bestimmungsfaktoren, Entwicklungen und Probleme ihrer Beziehungen* (Munich: Tuduv, 1990), p. 18.

effects on natural or legal persons of law as applied in the period between 30 September 1928 and 9 May 1945'. Crucially for Bonn, the legal status, war crimes liability, nationality, or reparations claims were not affected. As with the other *Ostverträge*, the treaty prevented the use of force, acknowledged the territorial boundaries between Czechoslovakia and Germany, and provided for repatriation services for Czechoslovaks and Germans should they be necessary.

As the last Eastern treaty to be signed, the Prague Treaty of 11 December 1973 was obviously not accorded the same importance as the Warsaw Treaty. In fact, as Radko Brach noted, 'the impulse for concluding a treaty between Czechoslovakia and the FRG was rooted in the West German-Soviet political agreements, not as a result of an organic bilateral necessity'.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the treaty was symbolic as it announced Bonn's bilateral treaties with Hungary and Bulgaria. As with all previous *Ostverträge*, the CDU/CSU *Bundestagsfraktion* attempted to stall the treaty ratification by subjecting it to numerous hearings and sessions. It took three years to reach an agreement with Prague after the Warsaw Treaty has been initialled.

In sum, the *Ostverträge* contributed actively to *Entspannungspolitik* on the European continent though not at the expense of the FRG's *Westbindung*. As Garton Ash argues: 'Ostpolitik can be described as détente policy: *Entspannungspolitik*'.⁴⁵ With this comprehensive Ostpolitik strategy, the FRG's room to manoeuvre in the international system vastly expanded, thus increasing its capacity to act and shape its own foreign policy destiny albeit in partnership with its Western allies. Political reconciliation with ECE countries was established under the pretext of overcoming the ideological divisions of the Cold War, forging a stronger European community of states, and exporting political and economic stability to the East. The treaties served as political frameworks for Germany's Ostpolitik until 1990; they were then revised completely after unification.

⁴⁴Radko Brach, 'Die Bedeutung des Prager Vertrags von 1973 für die deutsche Ostpolitik' in Hans Lemberg, Jan Kren and Dusan Kovac (eds.), *Im geteilten Europa: Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutsche und ihre Staaten 1949-1989* (Essen: Klartext, 1998), p. 170. MT.

⁴⁵Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name*, p. 22.

Helmut Schmidt's Ostpolitik

Helmut Schmidt's ascent to power in May 1974 as the second post-war German chancellor of the SPD was due to a policy characterised by two leitmotifs: 'continuity' and 'concentration'. Pursuing a 'continuous' foreign policy embedded in Western institutional arrangements represented a lasting tribute to Brandt's Ostpolitik. Ostpolitik had undergone a radical and positive transformation under Brandt. Schmidt's objective was to consolidate his predecessor's foreign and security policy through closer political and economic relations. In his first official government declaration in the *Bundestag*, Schmidt stressed that the main characteristics of Brandt's Ostpolitik would be found in his own, vis-à-vis the GDR, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.⁴⁶ Schmidt had played a critical role in shaping Brandt's Ostpolitik; there was no reason to believe significant revisions would be forthcoming – a policy heralded as a diplomatic success by the SPD/FDP coalition government but still derided by the CDU/CSU opposition. The idea of 'continuity' was a reminder of the international parameters within which German chancellors had to conduct their foreign and security policies. Under Brandt and Schmidt, the FRG undoubtedly benefited politically and economically from the *Ostverträge's* implementation. On the other hand, Ostpolitik entangled the FRG in a web of foreign and security policies which actually hindered its capacity to act in the international system.

The domestic debate about Ostpolitik, especially the ratification processes of the *Ostverträge*, was rife with accusations from the CDU/CSU opposition about selling out the FRG's interests to the GDR, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe. There was no discernible cross-party political consensus on Ostpolitik's emerging contours. The CDU/CSU opposition continued to engage in open warfare with the government on the content of its Ostpolitik. Paradoxically, the same opponents of Brandt and Schmidt's Ostpolitik maintained SPD based policies when they gained power under Chancellor Kohl in 1982.

Internationally, the FRG operated in an environment where its Ostpolitik suffered from being a pawn in a complex diplomatic game subject to its NATO allies' whims and the foreign

⁴⁶Helmut Schmidt, *Kontinuität und Konzentration* (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Neue Gesellschaft, 1975), pp. 9, 15-16.

and security policy interests of the Soviet Union and its satellite states in ECE.⁴⁷ The FRG fluctuated between both poles while trying to develop its diverse interests between the late 1970s and the end of the Cold War. This strategy had alienated the FRG's Western allies. Brandt's Ostpolitik had undermined *Westpolitik*. Schmidt intended to reverse this damaging trend whilst paying attention to burgeoning domestic and global economic crises, such as the drastic increase of oil prices by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries in June 1979.

The notion of 'concentration' illustrated Bonn's needs to 'concentrate' on the obstacles presented by the domestic political system and its external foreign policy machinery. However, like his predecessors, Schmidt inherited a completely different set of external conditions which would shape his tenure as chancellor until his political demise in 1982. By 1974, the FRG's position vis-à-vis the GDR, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union had fundamentally improved. The *Ostverträge* had been successfully negotiated and implemented with all major actors in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The treaties reduced tensions and contributed to *Entspannungspolitik*. The Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin had been successfully negotiated and the multilateral processes of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Conference and Final Act of 1975, and the follow-up conferences at Belgrade and Madrid in 1977-78 and 1980-83) and the Mutual Balance Force Reduction talks in Vienna de-escalated the East-West conflict on the European continent.

While the main objectives of Brandt's Ostpolitik had been achieved, there were outstanding disagreements between the FRG and its Eastern neighbours still due to the superpower rivalry during the Cold War and the nature of their bilateral relations. Brandt's Ostpolitik was idealistic; Schmidt's foreign policy style was realistic and pragmatic. For Schmidt, the superpower-dominated international system precluded the normalisation of relations and close friendships with East Berlin, Moscow, Warsaw, and Prague.⁴⁸ Schmidt and his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, intended to consolidate the considerable gains achieved by Brandt's

⁴⁷Helga Haftendorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung: Zur Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1955-1982* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1983), pp. 502-504.

⁴⁸Helmut Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn: Menschen und Mächte II* (Berlin: Siedler, 1992), pp. 506-507.

Ostpolitik and eliminate any residual tensions with their Eastern European and Soviet neighbours.

One key element of Schmidt's Ostpolitik is Genscherism. According to Helmut Wegner:

The meaning of Genscherism points to the very essence of Ostpolitik: to step-up confidence-building measures; reduce tensions; give support to peace development in East-West relations a high priority; and finally, to exert a positive influence on democratisation within the Warsaw Pact nations without interfering in their domestic affairs.⁴⁹

Using economic instruments to meet foreign policy objectives was regarded as a crucial measure to reduce tensions. They were just as critical in the FRG's relationship with Poland.

The Warsaw Treaty of 1970 continued to cast a shadow over the FRG's relations with Poland. According to Genscher, Warsaw regarded normalisation as 'swift economic assistance from the FRG' whereas Bonn was concerned about 'increased freedoms for human beings, the exchange of information and opinions, and a satisfactory solution for the ethnic Germans living in Poland: between 100,000 and 300,000 Germans had applied for an exit visa with the Polish government after the signing of the Warsaw Treaty and were waiting for an answer'.⁵⁰ Czechoslovak-German relations also continued to be hampered by Sudeten German revisionism within the FRG. Schmidt's government firmly believed that economic instruments, in particular, *Osthandel* and the provision of *Ostkredite* (Eastern credits), were vital in positively altering the nature of the FRG's relationship with its Eastern neighbours and in achieving Bonn's political interests.⁵¹ One crucial component of this strategy was Schmidt's support for ethnic Germans residing in scattered communities throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Bonn and Warsaw negotiated on the provision of credits worth DM 2.3bn to secure the right of between 120,000-125,000 ethnic Germans to emigrate. Dennis Bark and David Gress pointed out that Schmidt and the SPD right wing believed that economic incentives 'would make the [communist] regimes more secure, consequently less inclined to repression and unrestrained violence against their own people, and therefore, eventually more liberal and less authoritarian'.⁵² According to

⁴⁹Helmut Wegner, 'The West German Ostpolitik', *RUSI Journal*, vol. 135, no. 1 (Spring 1990), p. 37.

⁵⁰Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1999), p. 255. MT.

⁵¹Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn*, p. 505.

⁵²Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress, *A History of West Germany. Democracy and its Discontents 1963-1991* (Oxford; Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1993), p. 322.

Garton Ash, however, this was a flawed premise hence the following dilemma for Brandt and Schmidt's Ostpolitik:

In this case the original strategy of Ostpolitik contained an inherent contradiction. Its premise was that communist rulers would make desirable changes only when they were not under pressure. But the effect of the changes which presumably the West desired would be to increase the pressure on those rulers; pressure from outside would be replaced by pressure from below; and then, if the premise was correct, those rulers presumably would feel impelled to clamp down again.⁵³

The need to 'clamp down' became apparent during the Solidarity uprisings in Poland between 1980 and 1981. Bonn's lack-lustre reaction was not lost on the Polish people and the Solidarity's leaders.⁵⁴

Helmut Kohl's Ostpolitik

The CDU/CSU/FDP coalition government under Chancellor Kohl which emerged after Schmidt's demise on 1 October 1982 pursued an Ostpolitik once again based on 'continuity'. In the international system, the spirit of détente was waning. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (December 1979), the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom (1979) and Ronald Reagan in the United States (1980), and the Solidarity uprising in Poland (1980) contributed to the end of détente in Europe. The stationing of Pershing II rockets and cruise missiles on German soil coupled with the Soviet response to place nuclear weapons in Poland did not help either. The foundations of Bonn's Ostpolitik were unchanged but the new leadership was clearly dissatisfied with political and economic developments in the GDR and Eastern Europe. The prevalent idea that the FRG's Ostpolitik had stagnated during Schmidt's chancellorship had to be engaged.

It is worth considering the main foreign policy leitmotifs and personal convictions behind Kohl's Ostpolitik from 1982-1989 as they set the tone for his second Ostpolitik after 1990. Kohl's historical legacy as the chancellor responsible for unification includes an important Ostpolitik dimension which became even more apparent after Mikhail Gorbachev's rise in the Soviet Union (1985) and during the diplomatic negotiations on German unification (1989-1990). Despite the CDU/CSU's past criticisms of the SPD's Ostpolitik, the new coalition government did not attempt

⁵³Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999), p. 334.

⁵⁴Artur Hajnicz, *Polens Wende und Deutschlands Vereinigung: die Öffnung zur Normalität, 1989-1992* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1995), pp. 26-27.

to shake the foundations of Brandt's or Schmidt's Ostpolitik. Actually, they welcomed the treaties' provisions which, in retrospect, was rather surprising given the CDU/CSU's fervent opposition to the negotiation and implementation processes of the *Ostverträge* from 1969-1974.⁵⁵ According to Clay Clemens, 'the party continued to pursue a dualistic, two-track policy on relations with the East. Few observers were surprised that Kohl's union once in power continued to deal with Bonn's Soviet bloc neighbours, but the enthusiasm with which the party did so caught many off guard'.⁵⁶ In part, this 'continuity' and 'enthusiasm', relating to Ostpolitik, was due to Genscher who controlled the Foreign Office under Kohl.⁵⁷

The *Ostverträge* still inspired Kohl's Ostpolitik from 1982 to 1989. The FRG adopted a trilateral policy framework: the FRG's *Westbindung* (close relations with France and the United States especially), an extensive reliance on multilateralism in foreign and security policy operations, and an Ostpolitik balancing the interests of the two main superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. The latter still remained the dominant power on the European continent and most important actor in Bonn's Ostpolitik calculations, particularly after 1985. Chancellor Kohl's foreign policy adviser, Horst Teltschik, explained the Soviet Union's omnipresence in Kohl's Ostpolitik: 'Germany's Ostpolitik will be condemned to fail at the moment it attempts to pursue policies which circumvent Moscow or when it plays off individual members of the Warsaw Pact against Moscow or with one another to develop special relationships'.⁵⁸ Kohl's Ostpolitik still respected the traditional hierarchical structure: the Soviet Union first, followed by Poland, and the other Soviet satellite states. The GDR also played a

⁵⁵Karl-Rudolf Korte, *Deutschlandpolitik in Helmut Kohl's Kanzlerschaft: Regierungstil und Entscheidungen 1982-1989* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998), p. 264. For a description of Kohl's thinking and internal party coalition deliberations on the *Ostverträge* ratification, see Helmut Kohl, *Erinnerungen: 1932-1982* (Munich: Droemer, 2004), pp. 379-384.

⁵⁶Clemens, *Reluctant Realists*, p. 278.

⁵⁷The FRG's Ost- and *Deutschlandpolitik* suffered frequently from divergent interests expressed by Kohl and Genscher, especially regarding the legal recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border. For Genscher's thoughts on this matter, see Genscher, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 464-468.

⁵⁸Teltschik quoted in Dieter Bingen, *Die Polenpolitik der Bonner Republik von Adenauer bis Kohl, 1949-1991* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1998), pp. 221-222.

significant role in Kohl's *Deutschlandpolitik*, and Ostpolitik, especially vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia and Poland between 1982 and 1989.⁵⁹

Czechoslovakia

The FRG's Ostpolitik vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia during Kohl's first government suffered from the dynamics of the bipolar system but also disturbing memories rooted in history, especially between 1938 and 1946. The Prague Treaty (1973) was the highlight of a lifeless relationship after 1949. Given the contours of FRG-CSFR relations after 1949 and the stern communist leadership in Prague, Kohl was not expected to alter the relationship after 1982. It was also unfortunate that President Gustav Husák applied repressive and rigid policies with the Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev's tacit approval.

Relations were also burdened by disturbing historical memories on both sides, although they diminished in influence and intensity compared with the period 1949-1973. There were no outstanding, high-profile bilateral issues (such as territorial disputes) to overshadow relations between the FRG and CSFR. Nonetheless, revisionist demands by the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft*, under the political patronage of Bavaria's CSU, still upset Czech government officials. Husák and the Czech Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal exploited the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft* demands, with Moscow's support, to fan anti-German sentiments in public and Czech media.⁶⁰ This did not affect FRG-CSFR relations but was a constant reminder to the German leadership that the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft's* and to a certain extent, the CSU leadership's demands for *Recht auf Heimat*, would not disappear from the political landscape.

From 1982 to 1985, bilateral relations were calm and there were no political highlights or breakthroughs. Bonn was not compelled to address the Sudeten Germans' cries for *Recht auf Heimat* or Prague's proposals for financial restitution for Czechs victims of the Nazi regime. It intended to meet its foreign policy objectives through 'positive-linkage' politics: a 'partial'

⁵⁹Matthias Zimmer, *Nationales Interesse und Staatsräson: zur Deutschlandpolitik der Regierung Kohl 1982-1989* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1992).

⁶⁰Roucek, *Die Tschechoslowakei und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1989*, p. 107.

normalisation of relations would be achieved by promoting further economic and cultural ties.⁶¹ Bonn actively influenced those domains which were not regarded as 'controversial' by Prague. There were annual meetings on a foreign ministerial level but the last German chancellor to visit Prague was Brandt in 1973, which was revealing. Kohl did not visit Prague until 1988.

Despite Gorbachev's rise to power in 1985 and overtures thanks to *perestroika* and *glasnost*, relations between Prague and Moscow did not improve. To maintain its power base, the Czechoslovak Communist Party's leadership resisted all of Moscow's reform efforts which threatened to undermine its position.⁶² The relations between the FRG and the CSFR were consequently affected. Kohl looked increasingly to Moscow to promote changes in Eastern Europe but this tactic was complicated by NATO's dual-track decision on medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. Political changes in Moscow would necessarily have an impact on satellite states, especially Czechoslovakia and Kohl counted on that.⁶³ The FRG and Czechoslovakia managed to sign three bilateral agreements: cultural exchanges (1986), environmental protection (1987), and inland navigation, concluded during Kohl's first official visit as chancellor to Prague in January 1988. Unfortunately, his visit, however significant, failed to meet the expectations of either side. It was almost overshadowed by Kohl's threat to leave if he was not permitted to pay a courtesy call on Cardinal František Tomášek. The Czech Prime Minister Štrougal relented and the visit proceeded. Although not disastrous, Kohl's visit was not a success either. Even the Velvet Revolution (1989) had little impact on German-Czech relations.⁶⁴

Poland

Near the end of Schmidt's tenure in office, the FRG's relations with Poland were dominated by the Solidarity uprising (summer of 1980) and declaration of martial law by Polish

⁶¹Silvia Engels, *Deutsche Wirtschaft – Gestalter der Ostpolitik? Die Bedeutung der Wirtschaftsbeziehungen für die Regierungspolitik: Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Polen, Ungarn sowie die Tschechoslowakei 1985-1992* (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 1999), p. 218.

⁶²Rothschild, *A Political History of East Central Europe*, p. 211. Kohl made a similar observation when he visited Prague in 1988. See Helmut Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1996), pp. 90-91.

⁶³Kohl hinted at this strategy's effectiveness in 1989. See Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit*, pp. 91-92.

⁶⁴Vladimir Handl, 'Zum Verhältnis von Innen- und Aussenpolitik: die tschechoslowakische-deutschen Beziehungen seit 1945' in Niedersächsischen Landeszentrale für politische Bildung (ed.), *Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutsche: Nachbarn in Europa* (Bonn: BfP, 1995), pp. 78-79.

President Wojciech Jaruzelski (13 December 1981). The magnitude and psychological impact of this major domestic crisis on the Polish population captured the Germans' attention; they sent over two million clothing and food packages.⁶⁵ Paradoxically, the German political leadership under Schmidt did not do much.⁶⁶ In response to the Solidarity upheaval, the *Bundestag* issued a cross-party resolution (18 December 1981) outlining several demands if relations were to return to 'normal': the lifting of martial law, release of all prisoners, resumption of dialogue with the Church, and legalisation of Solidarity.⁶⁷

When Kohl assumed office on 1 October 1982, the German conditions for a resumption of 'normal' relations had not been met.⁶⁸ In his first official address (13 October 1982) Kohl reiterated Germany's demands. As long as the Solidarity crisis persisted, Kohl could not solve several outstanding foreign policy issues: reconciliation and normalisation under the banner of *Verständigungspolitik* (politics of understanding) and the political foundations of the Warsaw Treaty of 1970, and the elimination and rebuttal of German 'enemy' stereotypes (due to 'perceived' German revanchism in Poland) among the Soviets and Poles. Dieter Bingen defined Bonn's objectives as *Schadensbegrenzung* (damage limitation) during Kohl's first term in office.⁶⁹

The Warsaw Treaty, although highly controversial amongst the CDU/CSU right wing faction, helped Kohl manage relations with Poland after 1982. *Vertragstreue* (treaty loyalty) was essential; incidentally, this was also the case with the 1973 Prague Treaty. Kohl's Ostpolitik centred on three issues: the Oder-Neisse line, support for ethnic Germans living in Poland, and the improvement and expansion of economic ties, including the reduction of the Polish debt owed to the FRG. The controversial Oder-Neisse line was undoubtedly the most delicate issue for Poland.

First, the treaty's Article I stipulated that the FRG would not call into question the legality of the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border. Kohl never did but he failed to stamp his

⁶⁵Jörg K. Hoensch, 'Der Normalisierungsprozess zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Polen', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, nos. 12-13 (16 March 1990), p. 48.

⁶⁶For the reasons behind Bonn's hesitant reaction to the crisis in Poland, see Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution*, pp. 329-338.

⁶⁷Bingen, *Die Polenpolitik der Bonner Republik*, p. 223.

⁶⁸Martial law was suspended at the end of December 1982 and formally lifted on 22 July 1983.

⁶⁹Bingen, *Die Polenpolitik der Bonner Republik*, p. 230.

authority thereby allowing the CDU/CSU's fringe elements (expellee organisations such as the *Bundesverband der Vertriebenen* and the *Schlesien Landsmannschaft*) to exploit this old border issue for political purposes. Government ministers from 1982 to 1990 had insisted that only a unified Germany could decide whether the Oder-Neisse line *would* remain Poland's Western border.⁷⁰ From a Polish perspective, Bonn's emphasis on *Rechtspositionen* (legalistic interpretations of the treaty) was revisionist and revanchist.⁷¹

Various interpretations of Article I spawned internal differences in Kohl's own party and with his coalition partner, the FDP. In the absence of clear, unambiguous government statements on central issues in FRG-Polish relations in the immediate months following Kohl's rise to power, it became increasingly apparent (after October 1982) that the CDU/CSU's revisionist voice was becoming louder than in the past. It came from the right wing of the party, especially the BdV, led by their President Herbert Czaja (CDU), and the Federal Chairman of the *Schlesien Landsmannschaft*, Herbert Hupka (CDU). Both fuelled the notions that, first, the *Ostgebiete* should be returned to Germany so it could regain its 1937 territory and, secondly, that the Warsaw Treaty should be completely revised. These revisionist tendencies caused general unease in German-Polish relations after 1982. Between 1989 and 1990, Kohl dealt with the Polish border issue by encouraging consensus and party cohesion on pivotal foreign policy issues. The status of the Oder-Neisse line was a divisive issue in the CDU, especially since fifteen per cent of their membership were expellees.⁷² Power and party-political considerations were at the forefront of Kohl's defence of his position on the Oder-Neisse line; he always viewed himself first as political party leader and second as chancellor.⁷³

On this issue, differences between Kohl and Genscher became apparent in 1985. Whereas Genscher, backed by the FDP and the SPD, was keen to extend firm guarantees to the Poles on

⁷⁰Korte, *Deutschlandpolitik in Helmut Kohl's Kanzlerschaft*, p. 245.

⁷¹These legal interpretations guided the FRG's foreign policy towards Poland from October 1982 until the signing of the Border Treaty in November 1990 and the Friendship Treaty in June 1991 with Poland. They also explain, amongst other factors, why Kohl was hesitant in 1989-90 about recognising the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border. See chapter four.

⁷²Korte, *Deutschlandpolitik in Helmut Kohl's Kanzlerschaft*, p. 250.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 249.

the Oder-Neisse line, Kohl insisted on the treaty's legal interpretation. Genscher made constant references to the permanence of the Oder-Neisse line in several speeches, the most prominent one being in a *Bundestag* debate (June 1984). Genscher's motives were guided by his deep sense of *Moral-* and *Verantwortungspolitik* towards the Poles. This does not imply that Kohl was not moved by similar feelings. One major difference separated the two: Kohl's need to silence his party's right wing opposed to future concessions to Poland. On the other hand, Genscher had the full support of his party (and the SPD) for an immediate recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as a unified Germany's border with Poland.⁷⁴ This issue continued to drive a wedge within the CDU and between the CDU and FDP until 1990. It also attracted the attention of Germany's Western allies, especially from French President François Mitterrand during the negotiations of the Two Plus Four Agreements (1990) and the Border Treaty with Poland (14 November 1990).

The fate of the *Volksdeutsche* in Poland was another hot topic in Kohl's *Polenpolitik*. The problems surrounding the ethnic Germans' status in Poland resulted from the Allies' decision to sanction their expulsion from their homeland after the Second World War. Those who were not expelled were fully incorporated into Polish society (Polonisation) at the expense of their socio-political, cultural, and historical heritage.⁷⁵ Kohl's *Polenpolitik* offered support – politically and financially – to all the *Volksdeutsche* residing in Poland and all the lost *Ostgebiete* in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Central Asia. According to Volker Ronge, this was a 'policy addressing the consequences of war, and not as a part of a general (im)migration policy'.⁷⁶ It took three elements into account: the treatment of ethnic Germans by East European governments in their respective homelands, the FRG's policies of reception, and the lobbying efforts of the *Vertriebenerverbände*.

The status and rights of the *Volksdeutsche* in Poland were a major source of contention during Kohl's tenure in office. Ethnic Germans had been persecuted for their origins and, in some cases, allegiance to pan-German causes. After 1949, they were not recognised by Warsaw as a

⁷⁴Genscher, *Erinnerungen*, p. 271.

⁷⁵Germany's minority in Poland was not homogeneous. See Joachim Rogall, 'Die deutschen Minderheiten in Polen heute', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 48 (26 November 1993), pp. 31-43.

⁷⁶Volker Ronge, 'German Policies Toward Ethnic German Minorities' in Rainer Münz and Myron Weiner (eds.), *Migrants, Refugees, and Foreign Policy: U.S. and German Policies toward Countries of Origin* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1997), p. 118.

legitimate minority and guaranteed national minority rights. Until the signing of the Warsaw Treaty, successive Polish governments had never even acknowledged the existence of minorities on their territory, let alone a German minority which, according to some estimates, fluctuated between 600,000 and 1,400,000 people. Warsaw wanted, with mixed success, to enforce the strict Polonisation of all minorities residing in Poland.⁷⁷ On the other hand, Bonn encouraged Warsaw to allow ethnic Germans to immigrate should they wish to do so (and large numbers left Poland to move to the FRG). Warsaw was always reluctant to agree to West German demands for increased rights for ethnic Germans residing in Poland.⁷⁸ Polish authorities feared their exodus from: Upper Silesia (Katowice, Czestochowa, Opole), Lower Silesia (Wroclaw), Western Pomerania (Slupsk, Koszalin, Szczecin) and Mazurkas (Suwalki, Olsztyn). Bonn's solution was to improve ethnic Germans' general quality of life by ensuring better access to instruction in schools and religious services in the German language.

Closely linked to the ethnic Germans' controversy was Bonn's promise of economic aid to Poland. Kohl had always insisted that the approval of economic aid for Poland would depend on its positive handling of the ethnic German issue. This economic dimension of Germany's *Polenpolitik* was a way to fulfil Kohl's political objectives, especially *Verständigungs-* and *Entspannungspolitik*.⁷⁹ There was, however, an ulterior motive, as Keith Sword argues: 'Kohl's actions were motivated by a desire not only to help this *Volksgruppe*, but also to stem the large influx of ethnic Germans from the east which, when added to the massive inflow of non-German asylum seekers, was by the late 1980s reaching extraordinary proportions'.⁸⁰ A paradoxical policy was in operation. Technically, the FRG's borders were open to all ethnic Germans wishing to leave Poland. On the other hand, Bonn encouraged them to stay in their respective countries, so that they would not pose a considerable burden on the FRG's domestic economy. Bonn targeted

⁷⁷Tomasz Kamusella, 'Asserting Minority Rights in Poland', *Transition*, vol. 2, no. 3 (9 February 1996), p. 16.

⁷⁸Wlodek Aniol, Timothy A. Byrnes and Elena A. Iankova, 'Poland: Returning to Europe' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Mittleuropa: Between Europe and Germany* (Oxford; Providence, RI: Berghahn), p. 93.

⁷⁹Korger, *Die Polenpolitik der Bundesregierung*, p. 49.

⁸⁰Keith Sword, 'From Ethnic Cleansing to Ethnic Resurgence: The German Minority in Poland, 1945-1995' in Roger Bartlett and Karen Schönwälder (eds.), *The German Lands and Eastern Europe*, p. 249.

host countries' socio-political, economic and cultural policies to ensure that ethnic Germans were not tempted to emigrate.

In contrast with Czechoslovakia, the FRG and Poland managed to achieve noticeable successes in their relations shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall (9 November 1989). The Joint Communiqué on the 'firm foundation' of the 1970 Warsaw Treaty was composed of eleven agreements which were signed by Kohl and the first non-communist Prime Minister of Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki (11 November 1989).⁸¹ One of the most important decisions was the creation of a 'Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation' that would benefit ethnic Germans living in Poland and ethnic Poles living in Germany. The treaty's Article III secured the political foundations: both Warsaw and Bonn agreed to 'take further steps toward the complete normalisation and comprehensive development of their mutual relations'. Cooperation in economic, scientific, scientific-technological, and cultural fields was to be promoted. Bonn offered economic and financial support to Poland's struggling economy which was to be coordinated on a bilateral and multilateral level in conjunction with Western partners. Culturally, Bonn ensured that the identity of ethnic Germans residing in Poland was respected and preserved. Ending Polish discrimination against them was a first step towards the normalisation of Polish-German relations. The Joint Communiqué marked a significant rapprochement which was utterly lacking in Bonn's relations with Prague after the end of the Cold War.

Ostpolitik Redux

Mitteleuropa has fascinated Germans for the past one thousand years and will continue throughout the next millennium. Germans and Slavs shared a similar historical destiny because of their close geographic proximity; their fates were intertwined. Ostpolitik, as practiced throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was the most visible manifestation of Germany's obsession with what Sir Halford Mackinder defined as part of the geopolitical heartland.⁸² From Bismarck to Kohl, it was the product of a complex set of domestic and external factors, which had profound

⁸¹Horst Teltschik, 'The Federal Republic and Poland – A Difficult Partnership in the Heart of Europe', *Aussenpolitik* (English version), no. 1 (1990), pp. 3-14. Ironically, Kohl was in Warsaw when the Berlin Wall fell.

⁸²Halford J. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1962).

implications for Germany's political leadership. Ostpolitik was, first and foremost, a story of the FRG's relationship with itself and its attitude towards the perennial 'German question'. German control of its political and economic hinterland in Mitteleuropa was viewed as a means to an end: preventing Russian hegemony and the influx of Bolshevism into Eastern Europe in particular.

The main dilemma for the FRG's Ostpolitik was encapsulated in the following question: how could its political leadership achieve the correct balance in prioritising its relations with its Western European, transatlantic allies, and the Soviet Union while simultaneously meeting its own foreign and security policy objectives? These were not always compatible with other state actors. The West's relations with Poland are a case in point. As Wladislaw Kulski pointed out: "What the Poles could not understand, neither at that time [1941-1944] nor in their earlier history, was the fact that Western powers always formulated their policies toward Eastern Europe and in particular toward Poland only in consideration of their relations with Germany and Russia".⁸³ Poland's experience in Eastern Europe was not unique. Kulski's conclusion also applies to Germany's relationships with its Eastern European neighbours. The Soviet Union crucially influenced the FRG's Ostpolitik towards Eastern Europe; so did Russia in Germany's relations with the new independent states after 1990.

With the *Ostverträge*, Bonn laid the foundations for a normalisation of relations and political reconciliation between a unified Germany and ECE. After 1990, Bonn had success with Russia and Poland, before negotiating bilateral friendship treaties with other states. In the security domain, the FRG had been obsessed with *Entspannungspolitik* and its precarious strategic environment during the Cold War. After 1990, Ostpolitik included a military and security dimension designed to safeguard the stability of Germany's Eastern frontier and the security of its Eastern neighbours.

Thanks to its Ostpolitik, the FRG achieved its prime foreign policy goal after the Second World War: unification. Ostpolitik enabled Germany to address the political consequences of the Second World War and overcome the animosity and tensions resulting from a bipolar and hostile Cold War environment. By recognising the Soviet Union's ubiquitous position in Eastern Europe

⁸³Wladislaw W. Kulski, *Germany and Poland: from War to Peaceful Relations*, p. 46. Poland was not an exception.

and its potential role in helping solve the 'German question', the FRG's leaders after 1969 created the socio-political foundations for a rapprochement with its neighbours to occur.

CHAPTER FOUR

GERMANY'S POLITICS OF RECONCILIATION TOWARDS THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND

Unification marked a turning point in the evolution of Germany's foreign relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland. One of the principal components of its foreign policy was political reconciliation. Czechoslovakia and Poland were concerned, for obvious reasons, about three important processes in Germany which dominated the agendas of its domestic and external body politic: (1) the management of unification, (2) the future course of its Ostpolitik, and (3) Germany's ability and willingness to address outstanding bilateral historical issues with its Eastern neighbours. Germany's attempts to confront its historical legacy and pursue political reconciliation with Czechoslovakia and Poland form this chapter's focal points.

This chapter raises the following questions: why did political reconciliation emerge as one of the dominant leitmotifs of Ostpolitik and how did it manifest itself in its application? In the spirit of normalising relations, were there any discernible differences in Bonn's approach towards both states? In other words, does a comparison of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards Czechoslovakia and Poland support the notion that Bonn pursued a 'selective' or 'preferential' Ostpolitik? Finally, what do the political reconciliation processes with its Eastern neighbours reveal about the effectiveness of Germany's foreign policy strategies in ECE after unification?

This chapter's first section examines the concept of political reconciliation in German diplomacy after unification. The second provides an analysis of the foreign policy strategies and instruments used by Germany's leadership to pursue a political rapprochement with Czechoslovakia from 1990 until its dissolution on 1 January 1993 and with the Czech Republic until the end of the Kohl era in late September 1998. Finally, Bonn's foreign policy strategies and political reconciliation with Poland will be examined. Similarities and differences in its foreign policy behaviour towards both states will be highlighted. Each section will reinforce the combination of agential and structural factors in explaining Germany's Ostpolitik after unification.

Political Reconciliation and German Diplomacy

German diplomacy after unification and its politics of reconciliation are intimately linked.

As Martin Wight explains, effective diplomacy is, in some cases, a precondition of political reconciliation:

Diplomacy requires then, the ability to deal on even terms, the possibility of give and take, where either side can make concessions while leaving the substance of its interests intact, or else the side making the greater concessions receives compensation. This is the original meaning of 'negotiating from a position of strength'.¹

Nazi Germany's aggressive behaviour in ECE from 1938-45 cast a permanent shadow over all future German political and economic objectives there, especially during and after the Cold War. The West German population and the political elites were reminded *ad nauseam* about their country's historical legacy while conducting their foreign affairs. For example, the psychological impact of atrocities on the German self-image is crucial when examining Germany's political reconciliation with its Eastern neighbours. Norbert Elias argues: 'Germans have to struggle again and again with the fact that the we-image of the Germans is soiled by the memory of excesses committed by the Nazis, and that others, and perhaps even their own consciences, blame them for what Hitler and his followers did'.²

Collective memories rooted in the 'Holocaust' or 'Auschwitz' factors clearly cast a shadow over German foreign policy and had a profound effect on the shaping of German history and its national identity.³ For Markovits and Reich, collective memory is defined as follows: 'the view of the past articulated by national leaders and the political class. It is collective in two senses. First, it is memory about a 'collectivity', the nation state, about its domestic developments and foreign involvements. Second it is a memory of a collectivity'.⁴ The challenge of overcoming the power of collective memories, negative images, and stereotypes embodied in Germany's past became known as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past), a word given a

¹Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (London: Leicester University Press for the RIIA, 1994), p. 181.

²Norbert Elias, *The Germans: Power Struggles and the Development of Habitus in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 16.

³Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich, 'The Contemporary Power of Memory: The Dilemmas for Germany', *Communication Review*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1997), p. 92.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 100.

prominent and poignant role in German politics after the end of the Second World War. This socio-political phenomena or process, although in a slightly less unencumbered form, still pervades the German political conscience today and is considered a leitmotif in Germany's foreign relations with its Eastern neighbours.

Verantwortungsbewußtsein (sense of duty) towards the GDR and Soviet Union's Eastern European satellite states also spread throughout German domestic politics, especially after 1969, which, in turn, complicated but in some cases advanced the conduct of Germany's Ostpolitik. The fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of communism only reinforced the strong feelings and political affinities felt by Germany's leadership for the struggling people of ECE and their political leaders who played a crucial role in allowing East Germans to travel to third countries before making their escape to the West or German embassies in Budapest, Prague or Warsaw. Besides being aggressively and perhaps somewhat reluctantly involved in a constant self-analysis and inner-soul searching exercise, Germany's foreign policy makers were forced to concentrate extensively on the shameful acts committed under the banner of National Socialism. Nazi atrocities in Czechoslovakia and Poland committed over 50 years ago deeply permeated the political reconciliation efforts after the end of the Cold War.

Political reconciliation emerged as one of the dominant leitmotifs of German foreign policy after unification, especially towards the Czechoslovak and Polish governments who were keen on normalising relations with a unified Germany. This was clearly in their interest as much as Bonn's. But as with previous incarnations of Ostpolitik, Bonn was guided once again by hierarchical interests, which were not necessarily congruent with those of its eastern neighbours. German Ostpolitik, before and after unification, was dominated by an implicit desire to hierarchically structure its relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland with Bonn perceiving the latter, initially, as the most important state. German unification provided the best catalyst for Bonn's political reconciliation agenda in ECE although it quickly became evident that the majority of its diplomatic efforts would target Poland.

But what does 'reconciliation' - a term loaded with different meanings for different political institutions and leaders - mean in this context? Patricia Davis maintains that 'Most official German statements equate reconciliation with increased contact and 'understanding' as

well as future co-operation without necessarily delving into the more complex issues of confronting the past'.⁵ The root of reconciliation, reconcile, stems from the Old French word *réconcilier*, which means to 'make friendly again after estrangement', 'settle' or 'harmonise, make compatible'. Each of these three definitions is applicable. Reconciliation is translated into German as *Versöhnung* or *Aussöhnung*. Timothy Garton Ash notes that they 'are heavy with both emotional and religious overtones, containing in their root the word *Sühne*, meaning expiation, penance, atonement, and evoking the image, if not of 'God and sinners recoiled' then at least of two human beings falling tearfully into each others arms'.⁶

These two words, however, as powerful and symbolic as their meanings may suggest, were not the most commonly used in the German foreign policy discourse. Instead, a panoply of different terms was preferred, depending on a given situation or context: *Wiedergutmachung* (compensation), *gute Nachbarschaft* (good neighbourhood), *Verständigung* (understanding), *friedliche Kooperation* (peaceful cooperation) or *Zusammenarbeit* (collaboration), and *Ausgleich* (balance). They were all compatible with one of the main leitmotifs of German foreign policy after the end of the Cold War: *Harmonisierungsbedürfnis* or 'an insatiable striving after international harmony on all sides', as defined by Hans-Peter Schwarz.⁷

In the context of state-to-state interaction, 'reconciliation' has several meanings which all apply to Germany's foreign relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland. Anne Sa'adah argues:

Political reconciliation re-establishes a political community; it (re)creates the conditions of political trust. ... The various means used to achieve reconciliation – limitations on participation and competition, punishment, forgiving, a kind of negotiated memory, or forgetting – often stand in tension with values central to the liberal project: freedom of thought, expression, and assembly; due process and the rule of law and the moral agency of the individual.⁸

⁵Patricia A. Davis, *German-Polish Borderland Regions: The Need for Reconciliation and the Desire for Community* (Notre Dame, IN: Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, 1997), p. 1.

⁶Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 299. The most symbolic and visible act of reconciliation in the history of Germany's Ostpolitik is when Brandt, on a visit to Warsaw in 1970, spontaneously kneeled in front of the memorial to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto.

⁷Ibid., p. 33.

⁸Anne Sa'adah, *Germany's Second Chance: Trust, Justice, and Democratization* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 1-2.

For reasons related primarily to the nature of the international order after the Second World War, it was only after unification that Germany was finally able to launch a 'reconciliation' strategy seeking to address its historical legacy from 1938-1945. As Garton Ash argues, the inclination to address and overcome differences, in short, reconciliation, was also facilitated by the existence of an 'elementary will to reconciliation and co-operation on the part of governments and peoples, but also the basic compatibility of political, economic and social systems'.⁹ Furthermore, Ann Phillips' notion that 'the need for reconciliation presupposes a traumatic experience(s) locking two peoples in an ongoing cycle of mistrust, fear and or hatred' is particularly pertinent in this case.¹⁰ As a result of the Second World War, manifested primarily by Nazi Germany's brutal occupation of both states, feelings of profound hate and mistrust persisted from 1945 until the end of the Cold War in 1989-90, and still exist in some political quarters.

Lily Gardner Feldman identifies four factors which are crucial in a reconciliation process between states and are relevant to our discussion of German-Czech and German-Polish relations after 1990. First, history and the mutual interpretations of the 'living past' by the actors involved offers insight into the basic foundations underlying the political reconciliation process. Second, institutions and the notion of 'institutionalised transformation' are an essential component. Feldman argues that

bilateral governmental institutions between states and institutionalised transnational networks between new societies afford new attitudes, new bureaucratic and personal relationships and a new framework within which the parties can confront one another as equals in a re-calibrated power relationship.¹¹

Political reconciliation can happen when a country avoids a final settlement of accounts but strives to create political arrangements or institutions to overcome historical differences or prejudices. Third, a state's domestic environment, including the government's composition and key domestic actors, undeniably influence the reconciliation process between states. Domestic interests are paramount. The best examples are Chancellor Kohl's personal role in defining and

⁹Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰Ann L. Phillips, *Power and Influence after the Cold War: Germany in East Central Europe* (Lanham, MD; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), p. 52.

¹¹Lily Gardner Feldman, 'The Principle and Practice of 'Reconciliation' in German Foreign Policy: Relations with France, Israel, Poland and the Czech Republic'. *International Affairs*, vol. 75, no. 2 (1999), pp. 335-336.

guiding Germany's socio-political and moral rapprochement with Prague and Warsaw, and the power of ethnic Germans and expellee organisations in shaping Germany's foreign policy. Finally, the international context cannot be ignored. It was especially important during and after the Cold War as Germany sought to reassure its Western allies about its honourable intentions in ECE, while trying to include the Czech Republic and Poland in international institutions such as the EU and NATO.

Political Reconciliation with Czechoslovakia, 1990-1992

Even before German unification was considered a remote possibility, Czechoslovakia's political leadership, drawn from the ranks of the dissident Charter 77 movement after the Velvet Revolution, had welcomed the idea as early as 1985. In the 11 March 1985 'Prague Appeal', Charter 77 firmly supported the German people's self-determination long before it was fashionable to take such a position.¹² Prague's support for German unification was also apparent after the Velvet Revolution of November 1989 and throughout the negotiations of the Two Plus Four Accords. However, Czechoslovakia, unlike Poland, did not play a prominent role in this forum. This is a crucial difference: Warsaw, although not directly involved in all aspects of the Two Plus Four Accords, was nonetheless consulted extensively about the external ramifications of German unification, especially on the Oder-Neisse line's future status.

The Czech political leadership was absent from these major discussions. Bonn did not perceive Prague to be a major actor to be consulted on diplomatic matters pertaining to its future unification. It must also be said that Prague did not seek an active role in this process and expressed no desire to adopt a joint policy with Warsaw vis-à-vis Bonn. Its political leadership was keen on facilitating unification and addressing outstanding issues with Bonn within bilateral forums rather than the framework of the Two Plus Four Accords.¹³ Incidentally, Prague agreed with Warsaw that Bonn had to recognise the Oder-Neisse line *before* unification. Bonn's actions

¹²See Rick Fawn, *The Czech Republic: a Nation of Velvet* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 2000), p. 132.

¹³Radko Brach, *Die Republik der Tschechoslowakei zur Zeit der 'Regierung der nationalen Verständigung'* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1992), p. 71.

on this specific issue were closely watched, as Prague waited to see how Germany would manage one of its first major foreign policy challenges.

After unification, Germany's foreign policy had to address and, if possible, rectify the bilateral problems which had plagued Bonn's relations with Prague throughout the Cold War. However, it became clear quickly that this process, despite the absence of a super-power conflict and Soviet hegemon in ECE, would be bogged down in the hierarchical structure of Germany's domestic and foreign policy priorities. In Czechoslovakia, domestic politics precluded a speedy negotiation and conclusion of a friendship treaty. Differing German and Czech perceptions of their mutual history only exacerbated the political gulf between both states. Ferdinand Seibt quite accurately described one of the main difficulties facing Bonn and Prague after unification: 'German policy and public opinion are traditionally inclined to rank the Czechs in last place among their neighbours. We are separated by an alarming number of prejudices and generalisations that are more quickly aroused than is the case anywhere else in our neighbourhood'.¹⁴ For Wolf Oschlies, Germany was omnipresent in the Czech leadership's mind: 'the Czech Republic is more dependent on Germany, more fixated on Germany, more concerned about Germany, and more irritated with Germany than the other way around'.¹⁵ These points were not lost on President Václav Havel who declared in a speech at Prague's Charles University:

Obviously, the relationship to the Czechs is not of the same fundamental importance to the Germans; nevertheless, it may be more important to them than some Germans might be prepared to admit: traditionally, this relationship has also been one of the tests revealing their own conception of themselves. Let us recall that Germany's stand towards us has many times been a mirror image of its stand towards Europe as a whole!¹⁶

Peter Glotz went one step further pointing out the Czech Republic's real fear that its identity could be crushed by its larger neighbour.¹⁷ Political extremism in Germany was also a source of concern.¹⁸

¹⁴*Der Spiegel*, 9 January 1995, pp. 26-28, 30, *FBIS-WEU-95-018*, 27 January 1995, pp. 17-19.

¹⁵Wolf Oschlies, *Tschechen, Polen, Deutsche, 1990-96*. Part 1 (Cologne: BI-Ost, 22/1996), p. 6.

¹⁶Václav Havel, 'Czechs and Germans on the Way to Good Neighborship', *Perspectives: The Central European Review of International Affairs*, no. 4 (Winter 1994/95), p. 5.

¹⁷Peter Glotz, *Die Vertreibung – Böhmen als Lehrstück* (Munich: Ullstein, 2003), p. 256.

¹⁸Karel Vodicka, 'Tschechisch-deutsche Beziehungen und die Versöhnungserklärung,' *Osteuropa*, nos. 10/11 (1997), p. 976.

Complex and contentious historical memories blotted the domestic and foreign policy landscapes of both states, thus preventing a quick and painless normalisation of political relations after 1990. Forced to manage the collapse of communism, Czechoslovakia still considered its future relations with a unified Germany to be of paramount importance. Germany was not entirely apathetic about the political and economic affairs of its Czechoslovak neighbour yet domestic politics and the management of the Two Plus Four Accords talks took immediate precedence.

Nevertheless, there was a flurry of bilateral diplomatic activity towards the end of 1989 and in 1990 (meetings between Chancellor Kohl and President Havel on 2 January; between German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher and his Czechoslovak counterpart Jiri Dienstbier on 1-2 February and 2 November; the German President's visit to Prague on 15 March, and visit of the Czechoslovak Prime Minister Marián Čalfa in Bonn on 29-30 November) which suggests that serious attempts were made on both sides to enter a political dialogue about reconciliation and rapprochement. One of the most important initiatives, launched in February 1990, by both governments, was the creation of a Joint Commission of Historians whose task was to 'investigate jointly and to evaluate the common history of the peoples of the two countries' in the 20th century.¹⁹ Jeffrey Kopstein observed that the Czech and German historians were fully aware of their roles as their governments' official representatives as well as agents of international understanding.²⁰

The immediate aim of the German and Czechoslovak governments was to formalise their political, economic, and cultural relations thanks to a negotiated friendship treaty. President Havel – unsurprisingly perhaps given his background as a thinker, political moralist, and as some would say 'philosopher-king' – took the first step and set the moral and political tone for initiating the German and Czech governments' mutual soul searching and self-flagellation process. This process also included interest groups, especially the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft* which exerted an immense amount of influence on the foreign policy making processes in both

¹⁹Czech-German Joint Commission of Historians, *A Conflictual Community, Catastrophe, Détente: an Outline of the Portrayal of German-Czech History since the 19th Century* (Prague: Institute for International Relations, 1996).

²⁰Jeffrey Kopstein, 'Die Politik der nationalen Aussöhnung. Erinnerung und Institutionen in den deutsch-tschechischen Beziehungen seit 1989,' *WeltTrends*, no. 19 (Summer 1998), p. 59.

countries. Havel's first trip abroad to West and East Germany, just three days after becoming president, launched the political reconciliation process between both states in earnest. His visit's objectives were to intensify bilateral relations; open new border points; promote better travelling connections; open cultural centres; open new consulates; assess their mutual history, and examine Germany's role in Czechoslovak foreign policy considerations. His visit, praised in Germany as a step in the right direction towards normalised relations and setting the foundations for future reconciliation efforts, was regarded, however, with widespread suspicion in Czechoslovakia as he criticised the politics of the First Republic and apologised for the post-war expulsion of Germans.²¹ The domestic Czechoslovak reaction to this formal apology was scathing and highlighted the absence of a domestic political consensus on the Czech president's adoption of a conciliatory and remorseful tone vis-à-vis Germany.²² On the 51st anniversary of the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia (15 March), West German President Richard von Weizsäcker visited Czechoslovakia. He used the occasion to make the following incisive comment about the contents of a personal letter written by Havel (before he became president) to him after German unification was complete:

The heart of his [Havel] letter was a carefully reasoned reconciliation with us Germans, true to the admonition of the Bohemian Bishop Comenius: 'When it comes to improvement, everyone must begin with himself.' ... He wrote: 'I myself—as well as many friends—condemned the expulsion of the Germans after the war. This deed always seemed to me deeply immoral, damaging not only the Germans but also perhaps to a greater degree the Czechs themselves'.²³

Havel used Weizsäcker's visit to express the need for his countrymen to face the darker side of their national history, especially the Sudeten Germans' post-war transfer, and address their collective guilt. With their mutual statements and public outreach efforts, both statesmen were consciously preparing the ground for a normalisation of relations and the negotiation of a bilateral friendship treaty which would define their relationship after the end of the Cold War.

²¹John Keane, *Václav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999), pp. 467-468.

²²Milan Hauner, 'The Czechs and Germans: A One-Thousand Year Relationship' in Dirk Verheyen and Christian Soe (eds.), *The Germans and their Neighbours* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), p. 253.

²³Richard von Weizsäcker, *From Weimar to the Wall: My Life in German Politics* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999), p. 314.

German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendship (27 February 1992)

The Negotiation Phase: principal issues

Immediately after German unification, the German and Czechoslovak governments, as well as political parties and interest groups in both countries, staked out their respective positions. Czech nationalists, Communists and some Social Democrats remained vehemently opposed to any arrangement with Bonn including expressions of regret over the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans after World War II. Sudeten German organisations were concerned primarily about obtaining their *Recht auf Heimat* and discussing Czechoslovakia's past nationalisation of German property before the Communist Party came to power. When asked whether the Sudeten German expellees might be taken into consideration within the framework of returning nationalized property to its former owners, Prime Minister Marián Čalfa answered that 'for many reasons' the government 'would prefer not to go back' to before 1948.²⁴ Czechoslovakia's restitution laws were applied only to property confiscated between 25 February 1948 (date of the Communist takeover) and 1 January 1990, which ruled out any restitution of property to Germans.²⁵

During his visit to Prague (2 November 1990), Genscher noted that the new treaty would build upon the foundations of the 1973 normalisation treaty and the German government looked forward to future prospects in the German-Czechoslovak relationship. Jiri Dienstbier emphasised the importance of laying all issues from the past on the table to ensure a lasting reconciliation.²⁶ He also indicated that any attempt on the part of individuals or organisations to influence a process to be negotiated by federal parliaments would be dismissed. In Germany, this statement was perceived as a veiled attack on the Sudeten Germans.

On January 16 1991, the German coalition government took the key decision to omit questions of ownership and compensation from the German treaties to be signed with Czechoslovakia and Poland. The bilateral negotiations began in February 1991, and in April the two parties exchanged draft texts of the treaty. After four rounds of secretive talks between

²⁴FAZ, 16 Oct 1990, p. 6, FBIS-EEU-90-201, pp.15-16.

²⁵Jan Obrman, 'Relations with Germany', *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, vol. 2, no. 46 (15 November 1991), pp. 11-16.

²⁶DPA, 2 Nov 1990, FBIS-EEU-90-214, 5 November 1990, p. 16.

German and Czechoslovak negotiators, the Czech Foreign Ministry's spokesman, Egon Lansky, revealed that the German team was prepared to present its results to Kohl and wait for his agreement. Lansky also highlighted three contentious and unresolved issues: (1) the German position on the validity of the 1938 Munich Agreement, (2) the drafting of the Article on the current ethnic minorities on both sides and (3) the closing of the chapter on the wrongs done in the past on an inter-state level.²⁷

By early September, however, further progress had been made as provisional agreements between the Czechs and Germans had been reached in the following areas: (1) the invalidity of the Munich Agreement on the cession of the Sudetenland to Germany in 1938, (2) the recognition of the Sudeten Germans' expulsion as an injustice, (3) the protection of the ethnic German minority still residing in Czechoslovakia, and (4) the compensation for Czechoslovak war victims and provisions for German economic aid. The Czechoslovak position on several key issues remained firm: the CSFR Ambassador to Germany, Jiří Gruša, pointed out his government's insistence on Germany's moral renunciation of the Munich Agreement and on the exclusion of the Sudeten German demands for *Recht auf Heimat* and compensation for their expulsion from the Sudetenland.²⁸ The Sudeten German reaction in Munich was swift. At a two-day national assembly of the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft*, Franz Neubauer denounced the draft German-Czechoslovak treaty as it did not resolve the problems inherent in the Beneš decrees, the *Recht auf Heimat* principle and the return of former Sudeten German property (which by one old estimate from 1981 amounted to over DM 265 billion).²⁹ He stressed the need for dialogue directly with the Sudeten Germans, a demand Czech negotiators had always rejected.

President Weizsäcker in an address given to the Federal Assembly said that the wounds in the relations between the two countries had not yet fully healed: 'However, matters can be resolved with oneself and with one's neighbour, only if one adheres to the truth. He who is strong

²⁷*Lidove Noviny*, 24 July 1991, p. 3, in FBIS-EEU-91-144, 26 July 1991, pp. 15-16.

²⁸*Die Welt*, 4 September 1991, p. 4, FBIS-WEU-91-173, 6 September 1991, pp. 13-14.

²⁹Winson W. Chu, 'Remembering the German Minority: The Search for Restitution and Reconciliation in Poland and the Czech Republic', *CSEES Newsletter*, vol. 16, no. 2 (Summer 1999), p. 20.

enough to face the truth is smoothing the path toward reconciliation, and thus uncovering our strength for future co-operation'.³⁰ He also maintained:

Germany supports with full confidence the wish of Czechoslovakia to be rapidly included in European structures, especially in the EC. We will strive for a speedy conclusion of the association negotiations and have reasons to believe that we will succeed. ... For German politics, it was never questioned that a united Europe could be constructed without its geographical and spiritual centre.³¹

Kohl, under considerable pressure from his Bavarian coalition partner, the CSU, postponed the treaty's adoption several times, thus complicating the political situation in Prague even further. At a meeting with Genscher in early January, Jiri Dienstbier made it clear that Kohl had to sign the treaty by 15 February 1992 to prevent it from becoming an election issue. Otherwise, the signing ceremony would be postponed until after the elections, which would complicate the treaty's ratification in the Federal Assembly. The potential postponement raised hopes among Sudeten Germans as well as Czech opponents of the treaty that the text could still be modified.

The CSU's role in the coalition government came under fire during the post-initialling phase of the signing of the Friendship Treaty as tensions between the CSU and Genscher became apparent. The CSU leadership disagreed with the treaty provisions as far as the Munich Agreement was concerned. The CSU, motivated by *Sudeten Landsmannschaft* demands, argued that it was a legal document when it came into force and was only invalidated later. The CSFR disagreed, insisting that the treaty was invalid when it was signed in 1938. As an addendum to the 1992 treaty, the CSU wanted Bonn to include an exchange of letters between both countries' promising to address the Sudeten Germans' property and asset demands. Genscher rejected this demand and declared that the treaty would be signed as initialled.³² The German side said that it would only offer a solution similar to that found with Poland, where victims of National Socialism would receive compensation from a German government fund. In the end, the treaty was a compromise reflecting convergences and divergences of opinion on the part of the German and Czech negotiators.

³⁰DPA, 8 October 1991, FBIS-EEU-91-195, 8 October 1991, p. 18.

³¹Bulletin, 'Staatsbesuch des Bundespräsidenten in der CSFR', no. 113 (16 October 1991), p. 891. MT.

³²FAZ, 20 January 1992, FBIS-WEU-92-013, 21 January 1992, p. 18.

Treaty Provisions

After ten months of deliberations and wrangling on the part of the negotiators and key domestic political actors, Bonn signed the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation with Prague on 27 February 1992.³³ On 22 April 1992, the Czechoslovak parliament ratified it and on 20 May, the *Bundestag* approved it with a few CDU/CSU dissenting voices. On 26 June, the *Bundesrat* approved the treaty; however, Bavaria voted against its provisions in an effort to protest against the Czechoslovak Parliament's intransigence in supporting a 'Statement of Motives' which included a justification of the 1945 treatment of the Sudeten Germans as a 'legal transfer', instead of an 'expulsion'. The CSU and the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft* in particular viewed the 'statement' as an overt attempt to undermine the spirit of 'reconciliation' in a treaty designed to absolve Czechs of all guilt vis-à-vis the Sudeten Germans.³⁴

The preamble (thirteen statements) is considered to be the treaty's most controversial portion. The entire treaty contains thirty-five articles. On a consensual note, it confirms that Czechoslovakia and Germany are 'Determined to build upon the fruitful conditions of centuries of common history' and are 'Intent upon putting an end, once and for all, to the use of force, and to injustice and retaliation for injustice with new wrongs'. The parties are also 'Convinced that fulfilment of the desire of their peoples for understanding and reconciliation will contribute much to the consolidation of peace in Europe' and they understand 'the need to overcome the division of Europe once and for all' in an effort to build a 'new Europe united by a common heritage and common values'. Most importantly, both are: 'Aware of the significance that the membership of the Federal Republic of Germany in the European Community and more intensive cooperation

³³For the German text, see *Bulletin*, 'Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Tschechischen und Slowakischen Föderativen Republik über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit', no. 24 (4 March 1992), pp. 233-238.

³⁴The *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*, as the umbrella organisation for all Sudeten Germans, rejected the treaty but two other Sudeten German organisations (the Catholic *Ackermann Gemeinde* and the Social Democrat *Seliger Gemeinde*) supported it. The right wing *Witiko Bund* did not. See Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, *Germany's Foreign Policy Towards Poland and the Czech Republic: Ostpolitik Revisited* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 44.

between the European Communities and the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic have for their future relations, and bearing in mind the membership of both States in the Council of Europe'.³⁵

The following statement in the Preamble, however, required complex legal negotiations: both parties recognise 'that the Czechoslovakian State has not ceased to exist since 1918' and support 'the Treaty on Mutual Relations of 11 December 1973'. More controversially, the preamble included the 'provision on the nullity of the Munich Agreement of 29 September 1938' and both parties are 'Mindful of the many victims of tyranny, war and expulsion and the heavy suffering inflicted on many innocent people.'³⁶ After signing the treaty, President Havel noted there were many obstacles precluding easy negotiations on the contents of the preamble:

We have tried in the preamble, the introduction to this treaty, to express our joint will, our common determination, not to avoid the dark sides of our common history, to try and look them in the eye, to reflect them truthfully. It is not an easy process, especially under the conditions when for decades various superstitions, various dogmas, various taboos were being cultivated and built, when history was being distorted.³⁷

There was much disagreement about this preamble. The Germans considered the Munich Agreement to be valid between 29 September 1938 and 15 March 1939, the date on which Hitler's armies completely occupied Bohemia. The Czech negotiators would have preferred it declared invalid *ab initio*. The Germans, however, did denounce it and recognised Germany's responsibility for all subsequent suffering.

The question of whether the 'transfer' of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia in 1945 and 1946 (the term used at Potsdam) should be termed 'expulsion' in the preamble was arguably the most emotional issue, especially for Czechoslovakia's domestic constituents. During the negotiations, Germany had made it clear that it viewed the Germans' expulsion and confiscation of property without compensation as a breach of international law.³⁸ That the treaty does not address this issue of property confiscation was criticised in both countries. As far as borders and

³⁵ *Bulletin*, 'Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Tschechischen und Slowakischen Föderativen Republik', p. 24. MT.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Prague Stanice Ceskoslovensko Radio*, 'Havel, Kohl Hold Joint News Conference', FBIS-EEU-92-040, 28 February 1992, p. 9.

³⁸ Miroslav Kunštát, 'Germany and the Czech Republic' in Vladimir Handl *et al*, *Germany and East Central Europe since 1990* (Prague: Institute of International Relations, 1999), pp. 238-239.

territorial claims were concerned, Article III stated that the 'Contracting parties confirm the existing borders between them. They declare that they have no territorial claims against each other and will not raise any such claims in the future'. Security issues were a serious concern for Czechoslovakia whereas Germany understated their importance. The internal German debate about the status of the Oder-Neisse line in Poland had obviously created an impression that it was best to incorporate a border agreement within the Friendship Treaty.

While there were definitely points of contention throughout the treaty's negotiation for both parties, they were able to settle several fundamental issues. First, they agreed to solve their conflicts exclusively by peaceful means and both absolved themselves from any territorial claims against each other. Second, the principle of national self determination was highlighted. Third, Germany promised to support Czechoslovakia's economic development and future application for full membership of the European Community. Thus, Germany, as with other Eastern bilateral treaties, sought to provide an institutional framework to foster Czechoslovak aspirations vis-à-vis the EC. This reflected Kohl's wish to bring the Czechoslovaks closer to Europe. For him, the treaty was a means not only to address bilateral issues but also emphasise Germany's European ambitions and German hopes for Czechoslovakia:

The treaty we have just signed on good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation is a step of fundamental importance in relations between our countries. We are taking this step in awareness of our joint responsibility, as neighbours in the centre of Europe, for building this new Europe, a Europe of common values.³⁹

Finally, both countries granted full minority rights to Czechs and Slovaks living in Germany and Germans living in Czechoslovakia. Other important articles included provisions on economic, scientific, ecological and cultural cooperation and the role of the youth as a bridge between domestic societies in Germany and Czechoslovakia. The decision by Germany and Czechoslovakia to append two letters to the treaty indicated the lack of crucial consensus in the areas of expellee claims and outstanding property questions. In the end, no agreement could be reached in these crucial areas thus precluding a full reconciliation. It was hoped that Czechoslovakia's entry into the European Community would eventually help both parties settle their historical differences in this area.

³⁹*Prague Federal 1 Television*, 'Kohl Speech at Treaty Signing', FBIS-EEU-92-040, 28 February 1992, p. 8.

Political Reconciliation with the Czech Republic, 1993-1998

Negotiating the Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation

German-Czech relations after Czechoslovakia's dissolution⁴⁰ (January 1993) were still deadlocked on disputes concerning the 'expulsion' of the Sudeten Germans, compensation for Czech victims of Nazism, the term 'state border', measures against illegal immigration, and the opening of a dialogue with the Sudeten Germans. Steve Crawshaw outlines the crux of the problem by noting that 'it is arguments about the treatment of those German minorities prior to the Nazi invasion of the region, their subsequent role under Nazi rule and the manner of their expulsion after the war, which lie at the centre of the most intractable disputes between Germany and some of the region's governments'.⁴¹

The legality of the Beneš decrees, the Munich Agreement's validity, and the right of expelled Sudeten Germans and their descendants to claim compensation in Czech or international courts remained contentious. Bonn maintained that the Czech government should disassociate itself from the decrees authorized by the Czech President, Edvard Beneš, after the Second World War, which led to the expulsion of roughly three million Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia. Prague insisted that the Beneš decrees were legal under Czechoslovak law when they were implemented which Germany disputes. The entire dispute was exacerbated by the political agenda of Sudeten Germans, represented by various organisations involved in the political process, such as the *Sudeten Landsmannschaft*, the *Bundesverband der Vertriebenen* (BdV), and *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (VDA), all of which enjoy close political links to the CSU, a member of the ruling coalition in Bonn. This situation constituted the crux of Kohl's dilemma. Wlodek Aniol *et al.* argue that

⁴⁰Michael Kraus and Allison Stanger (eds.), *Irreconcilable differences? Explaining Czechoslovakia's Dissolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). According to Jacques Rupnik, it is highly unlikely 'that the division of Czechoslovakia came about as a result of a new Central European system under German influence'. See Jacques Rupnik, 'The International Context' in Jiri Musil (ed.), *The End of Czechoslovakia* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995), pp. 271-272. However, according to the former Czechoslovak Ambassador to Germany, Boris Lazar, there is evidence to suggest that before the CSFR's dissolution, certain individuals were trying to persuade the German Ambassador in Prague to reject it and that there were also failed attempts by the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry to try and postpone the signing and ratification of the 1992 Treaty to secure more concessions from the German government. Ultimately, Ambassador Lazar resisted such moves which resulted in the quick signature and ratification of the treaty. See Boris Lazar, "Der deutsch-tschechische Nachbarschaftsvertrag und die Erklärung über Aussöhnung" in Theodor Schweisfurth, Walter Poeggel and Andrzej Sakson (eds.), *Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien: auf dem Weg zur guten Nachbarschaft* (Berlin: Springer, 1999), p. 39.

⁴¹Steve Crawshaw, 'Special Report: Germany Looks East', *Prospect*, January (1997), p. 51.

With the CSU as a central partner in a shaky coalition in Bonn, Chancellor Kohl, German foreign policy, and German-Czech relations are thus hostage to a constellation of domestic political forces that give enough weight, within Germany's general European orientation, to a political constituency whose views express traditional Central European views.⁴²

Handl, Kural and Reiman note 'the attitude towards the Czech Republic can to a certain extent be the test of German Europeanism: it can make it clear to what extent the strongest state in Europe, which in future will face more than one temptation of national euphoria and ambition, is ready to perceive the interests of a small but not always straightforward partner'.⁴³

The principal difficulties behind the negotiation of the Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation were once again rooted in history (especially asymmetrical perceptions of each other's history) and the power of domestic interest groups, specifically in Germany. The 1992 German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendship was perceived by both sides as a major step to improve their relations but the five year interlude between the Friendship Treaty and the Mutual Declaration proved to be quite challenging for Bonn and Prague. The Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendship was comprehensive but obviously left a bitter aftertaste among powerful German and Czech domestic political constituencies. The need to 'return to history' to re-address outstanding issues rooted in the Second World War and its immediate aftermath was perceived to be indispensable if both the Czechs and Germans were to achieve their mutual objective of getting closer in the spirit of political reconciliation.

After two years of relative, or as some termed, 'dangerous' calm in their mutual relations (1993-1994), the Czech side launched an attempt to place outstanding historical issues back on the political agendas of both states. For the Czech political elite, including President Václav Havel and Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec, the status quo in German-Czech bilateral relations had endured for far too long by early 1995. Below the political surface of both states, discord was spreading about the quality of their mutual relations and willingness to put a *Schlußstrich* (end) to their historical differences – an admirable goal which had not been reached after German

⁴²Wlodek Aniol *et al.* 'Returning to Europe: Central Europe between Internationalisation and Institutionalisation' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe* (Ithaca, NJ; London: Cornell University Press), p. 249.

⁴³Vladimir Handl, Václav Kural and Michal Reimann, 'The Czech Republic and Germany', *Perspectives: The Central European Review of International Affairs*, no. 8 (Summer 1997), p. 34.

unification. Missed opportunities and explosive public comments by politicians about the state of Czech-German relations only exacerbated the relationship's problematic nature. The Czechs feared that political reconciliation was in danger of being marginalised and hijacked by difficult and attention-seeking Sudeten expellee organisations and CSU political representatives. More disturbing was the assumption that Sudeten German demands – many of which were highly controversial – were not being refuted or denounced in the manner its Czech counterpart would have wished, and were thus allowed to contaminate the complex negotiations of a new declaration.⁴⁴ Finally, to make matters worse, Czech policy makers believed that Bonn's interest in their country was waning despite its active role in supporting the Czech Republic's membership in the EU and NATO.

The Germans' view was quite different. The momentum in German-Czech relations, on an official level, was perceived to be lost after 1992, primarily because of internal considerations in each state. Germany focused on the management of unification. The election of a conservative government in Prague after June 1992 also slowed the momentum down. In 1993, the Czech government handled the CSFR's dissolution – a split that contributed to the notion that the Czech Republic would not be as important as the CSFR had been. Nonetheless, it increased Germany's relative power in Czech affairs. 1994 was also an election year in Germany and politicians devoted their attention to domestic affairs. Furthermore, Czech Republicans and Communists routinely whipped up nationalist and anti-German fervour which alienated Bonn's political leadership. In response, President Havel, as he had in November 1989, took the initiative in February 1995 to reflect on the state of German-Czech relations and made the following poignant observation about Germany's importance in Czech eyes, in a speech at Prague's Charles University:

⁴⁴ Lazar, Boris, 'Der deutsch-tschechische Nachbarschaftsvertrag und die Erklärung über Aussöhnung' in Schweisfurth *et al.*, p. 40.

Our relationship to Germany and the Germans has been more than merely one of the many themes of our diplomacy. It has been part of our destiny, even a part of our identity. Germany has been our inspiration as well as our pain; a source of understandable traumas, of many prejudices and misconceptions, as well as of standards to which we turn. Some regard Germany as our greatest hope, others as our greatest peril. It can be said that the attitude they take towards Germany and Germans has been a factor through which the Czechs define themselves, both politically and philosophically, and that it is through this particular attitude that they define not only their relationship to their own history, but also their self-perception as a nation and state.⁴⁵

Both sides have to consider the place of the 'past' in Czech-German relations:

We have to know our past history and form our opinions about it. This does not mean, however, that we should move back into our past, try to live the lives of our ancestors, time and again reconstruct the situations with which they were confronted and copy their behaviour, suffer their agonies or be moved by their successes and draw political consequences from such sentiments.⁴⁶

One year after Havel's speech, the Joint Commission of Historians even spoke about the existence of 'historical baggage' which 'still complicates political understanding between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czech Republic'.⁴⁷ The Czech historian, Jan Kren, referred to both countries' history as a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (history of a 'community of conflict') where long lasting struggles and dilemmas dominate the relationship.⁴⁸

Czech Foreign Minister Zieleniec exploited the Czechs' and Germans' positive response to Havel's speech to start an initiative to put an end to the historical difficulties underpinning their relations. He noted:

When we commenced the debate, the prevalent opinion here and in Germany was that the problem is a marginal one and would solve itself in the course of time. Then it emerged that the problem basically possesses an internal Czech and internal German dimension. Look at the debate in Germany. It is not just a debate on Czech-German relations. It is a reverberation of the big German post-war debate and of everything connected with it.⁴⁹

Zieleniec believed Prague and Berlin had to negotiate and sign a mutual declaration which would address outstanding issues in their relationship.

⁴⁵Václav Havel, 'Czechs and Germans on the Way to Good Neighborhood', *Perspectives: The Central European Review of International Affairs*, no. 4 (Winter 1994/95), p. 5.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁷Czech-German Joint Commission of Historians, *A Conflictual Community, Catastrophe, Détente: an Outline of the Portrayal of German-Czech History since the 19th Century* (Prague: IIR, 1996), p. 8.

⁴⁸Jan Kren, *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft: Tschechen und Deutsche 1780-1918*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996.

⁴⁹*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 'Czech Foreign Minister on Reconciliation Declaration', 2 October 1996, FBIS-FTS19961002000711.

Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation

Declaration Provisions

On 21 January 1997, after over two years of extensive and difficult negotiations, Czech Prime Minister Václav Klaus and Chancellor Kohl finally signed the Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation. Kohl declared it represented a crucial step in bringing Germans and Czechs closer together:

The Declaration is unable to abolish the existing wounds from the past. Nor is it able to grasp and assess history in every detail. With due respect for their hurt feelings, however, the declaration is intended to make a contribution to reconciliation. It is intended to help us both to interrupt the vicious circle of mutual reckoning and blame.⁵⁰

In a gesture to generate goodwill with the Czech government, the preamble to the Declaration states that both governments are 'aware that the Federal Republic of Germany fully supports the acceptance of the Czech Republic into the European Union and NATO in the conviction that it is in the common interest.' Chancellor Kohl had made the link between political reconciliation efforts and Germany's European objectives quite clear:

One central goal of German policy remains the construction of the European House. European unity is the best guarantee for peace and freedom in the 21st century. The Czech Republic can contribute a rich intellectual and cultural heritage to the process of European integration. ... For this reason our joint declaration not only serves our bilateral relations, but also paves the way towards our common European future. Economic co-operation can help overcome conflicting interests. But without the contribution of millions of individuals we will not succeed in completing this work of peace called European unity.⁵¹

Both governments are also 'convinced that wrongs committed cannot be redressed, but at most lessened, and that during this era new wrongs cannot be allowed to take place' and recognise 'the need for trust and openness in bilateral relations as a condition for reconciliation that is permanent and aimed towards the future.'

The principal motivation underlying the Declaration is contained in Article I: 'both sides are aware that their common path to the future requires a clear statement regarding their past which must not fail to recognize cause and effect in the sequence of events'. Both parties reaffirm that they share '... share common democratic values, respect human rights, basic freedoms and

⁵⁰Kohl Addresses Bundestag on Czech Relations' *ARD Television*, 30 January 1997, FTS19970130001709.

⁵¹See Chancellor Kohl's policy statement regarding the German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development, 30 January 1997, available at <http://www.germanembassyottawa.org/news/sas/kohl-pr-970130e.html>.

norms of international law, and are dedicated to the principles of a legal state and a policy of peace. On this basis they are resolved to work together in a friendly and close manner in all areas important to the development of relations.'

In Article II, the German government admitted its 'responsibility for its role in the historical development which led to the Munich Agreement of 1938, to the flight and expelling of people from the Czechoslovak border areas, and to the breakup and occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic.' It also 'regrets the suffering and wrongs inflicted on the Czech people by the National Socialist crimes of the Germans. The German side pays homage to the victims of violence perpetrated by the National Socialist government, and honors those who put up resistance to this violence. The German side is also aware that the National Socialist policy of violence towards the Czech people helped prepare the ground for the post-war flight, expelling and forced resettlement.'

In Article III, 'The Czech side regrets that by the post-war expelling and forced resettlement of Sudeten Germans from the former Czechoslovakia, the expropriation of their property and the removal of their citizenship, much suffering and many wrongs were inflicted on innocent people, with regard also to the collective nature of the guilt which was ascribed. It particularly regrets excesses, which were at variance with elementary humanitarian principles and also with the laws then valid, and also regrets that under law 115 of May 8, 1946, these excesses were not regarded as unlawful and as a consequence were not punished.'

Building upon these two fundamental statements of regret and guilt, both sides agreed in Article IV 'that the wrongs committed belong to the past, and that they should orientate their relations towards the future. It is because they remain aware of the tragic chapters of their history that they are decided to continue to give priority to understanding and mutual agreement in the creation of their relations, although each side remains bound by its legal order and respects that the other side has a different legal opinion. Both sides therefore declare that they will not burden their relations with political and legal questions arising from the past.' This agreement to disagree explains why it remained impossible to draw a successful legal *Schlußstrich* (to draw a line under)

to the negotiations.⁵² Political developments since the signing of the Declaration and in the post-Kohl area, however, have rendered these statements hollow.

In Article V, 'Both sides reaffirm their obligations arising from Articles 20 and 21 of the Treaty of 27 February 1992 on Good-neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation, in which the rights of the members of the German minority in the Czech Republic and of persons of Czech descent in the Federal Republic of Germany are set out in detail. Both sides are aware that this minority and these persons play an important role in mutual relations and state that their promotion continues to be in their common interest'. Paradoxically, the Declaration does not mention the German minority by name; the term 'Sudeten' having a negative connotation in Czech history.

Article VI reinforces the notion that 'Both sides are convinced that the entrance of the Czech Republic into the European Union and free movement within this space will further ease the co-existence of Czechs and Germans. Within the framework of their valid laws, both sides are prepared, when judging applications for residence and access to the labor market, to take into special consideration humanitarian and other reasons, and especially family and other ties'. Article VIII supports the efforts of the Czech-German Committee of Historians to study their mutual relations.

According to Article VII, 'Both sides will set up a Czech-German Fund for the Future.'⁵³ The German side declares that it is prepared to put 140 million DM [German Marks] into the fund. The Czech side declares that it is prepared to put 440 million Czech crowns into the fund. Both sides will conclude a separate agreement on the joint administration of the fund' Most importantly, 'the German side acknowledges its commitment and responsibility with regard to all

⁵²Dieter Blumenwitz, *Interessenausgleich zwischen Deutschland und den östlichen Nachbarstaaten*. (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1998.), p. 101.

⁵³'The Fund for the Future received a total of EUR 84,886,389 from the two governments to finance its tasks (DM 165 million), which comprised its income during its first four years of existence and should be used in a targeted manner over a period of ten years. The Board of Directors, composed of four Czech and four German members appointed by the respective foreign affairs ministers, acts as the responsible body of the Fund for the Future. Membership on the Board of Directors is honorary, similarly to the parity-based four-member Supervisory Board, which controls finances. The Fund's regular activities are secured by the secretariat, which includes Czech and German staff.' See www.zukunftsfonds.cz.

those who became victims of National Socialist violence. For this reason those projects to which it is applicable should benefit above all the victims of National Socialist violence.’⁵⁴

Coming to Terms with the Declaration

Judging from the German and Czech political leaders’ public statements after the Declaration signature ceremony, one would conclude that bilateral relations between the Czech Republic and Germany had returned to a normal state of affairs. Czech Prime Minister Václav Klaus noted that there was enough goodwill on both sides to overcome the negative pages of past-Czech-German history. He was also convinced that the document paved the way forward for better future relations with Germany but emphasised that the Declaration protected Czech interests.⁵⁵ On the German side, Kohl stated:

The text of the common German-Czech Declaration deals with controversial stages in our mutual history clearly and courageously. This, and I would like to stress that, is unprecedented in our common history. I am convinced that it is a good text, which expresses the firm willingness on both sides to go into a better, European future together.⁵⁶

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel also praised the Declaration’s achievements and placed them within the broader context of historical reconciliation efforts pursued by past German statesmen:

The German-Czech Declaration is to us not an end, but a cornerstone of our policy of reconciliation with the West and the East. It completes the work which was begun by men like Konrad Adenauer, Willy Brandt, and Walter Scheel, and which was continued resolutely by Helmut Kohl and Hans-Dietrich Genscher over many years.⁵⁷

Despite the Declaration’s success, there was still a great amount of political tension in the relationship. In effect, Article IV with its stipulation that ‘each side remains bound by its legal order and respects that the other side has a different legal opinion’, sowed the seeds for further political discord as each party shuffled to deal with the fall-out of often undiplomatic and

⁵⁴The quoted treaty extracts on pages 23-25 are all drawn from the unofficial English-language translation of ‘German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future’, Press Section, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Washington, D.C. For German text, see ‘Deutsch-Tschechische Erklärung über die gegenseitigen Beziehungen und deren künftige Entwicklung’, *Bulletin*, no. 7 (24 January 1997), pp. 61-62.

⁵⁵‘Klaus Comments on Czech-German Declaration’, *Prague CTK* (English), 17 December 1996, FTS19961217000844.

⁵⁶‘Kohl Addresses Bundestag on Czech Relations’, *ARD Television*, 30 January 1997.

⁵⁷‘Kinkel Speaks on Czech Declaration’, *ARD Television*, 30 January 1997, FTS19970130001708.

insensitive political statements made by important decision makers. In times of crisis, Article IV could easily be trumpeted as the solution for managing different opinions about mutual interpretations of the past. When the German Ambassador in Prague Anton Rossbach argued that the declaration ‘took nothing from the Sudeten Germans. On the contrary, it opens their chances and the Bonn government wishes that the chances be used’; the Czechs suspected that German interpretations of the Declaration were different. In fact, each side comfortably pointed to the existence of Article IV as a political face saving mechanism when problems arose. Zieleniec avoided criticizing Ambassador Rossbach’s comments as he was only interpreting the official German position and also noted that ‘the Declaration is being discussed among the Sudeten Germans, and not all of their leaders find its conclusions easy to reconcile with’.⁵⁸

But as with all relationships, there were lows as well as highs, and it was up to more senior statesmen – in this case the German and Czech presidents – to strike the necessary tone and create a political environment conducive to discussions about problematic bilateral issues and, most importantly, construct a path through the political minefield of expellee organisations and political parties opposed to any rapprochement. President Havel’s speech, delivered to the German Bundestag on 24 April, 1997, set the tone for building on one of the Declaration’s principal tenets: the need to look to the future rather than the complex past in an effort to build a stronger German-Czech relationship.⁵⁹ Havel’s speech was universally praised by all parties, except the Catholic *Ackermann Gemeinde* and the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*. Even the Bavarian Premier Edmund Stoiber, a fervent Sudeten German proponent, remarked that it was a demanding, clever and intelligent speech.⁶⁰

German President Roman Herzog’s speech one week later in front of Czech deputies and senators at Prague Castle was warmly welcomed by all members of the Czech political system

⁵⁸‘Zieleniec reacts to Statement by German Ambassador’, *Prague CTK* (English), 24 March 1997, FTS19970324000517.

⁵⁹Václav Havel, ‘Aus der Rede des tschechischen Staatspräsidentin Václav Havel im Deutschen Bundestag am 24. April 1997,’ *Politische Studien*, vol. 48, no. 353 (May/June 1997), pp. 13-17.

⁶⁰‘Politicians Praise Czech President’s Bundestag Speech’, *Prague CTK* (English), 24 April 1997, FTS19970424001112. See ‘Commentary Calls Herzog’s Prague Speech ‘Exemplary’’, *FAZ*, 30 April 1997, in FTS19970430000420.

with the exception of the Communists.⁶¹ The then chairman of the Social Democrats and future Czech prime minister, Milos Zeman, noted that Herzog's remarks were greatly balanced and convincing as he 'frankly admitted the cause-and-effect connection between World War Two and its consequences'. The Senate Chairman Petr Pithart said: 'I did not even expect such words to come from the German side'.⁶² Both speeches injected a healthy dose of realism and forward looking thinking into a relationship that was struggling to find its bearings after several years of difficult negotiations and a prolonged exercise in soul wrenching historical reflection. The two neighbors being largely obsessed with their past, any initiative focused on the future, like the Declaration, had to overcome significant political hurdles. As Josef Abaffy noted: 'When in 1995 and 1996 the hectic fixation of many official visitors on the statement [Declaration] overshadowed what was 'normal' at the time, the current constant comments on what is 'good' now sometimes threaten to overshadow what has not been done'.⁶³

Both presidents' speeches raised important questions about what future steps were required to consolidate the achievements announced in the Declaration and foster closer ties between Germany and the Czech Republic. From April 1997 until the German national elections in September 1998, the debate about the 'past' largely subsided and implementing the provisions of Article VII was made more difficult. In September, the Czech Parliament passed a law excluding affected parties (i.e., *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*) from belonging to the administrative and directorate structures of the Fund. By October, Kinkel was being roundly criticized in the Czech media for considering the appointment of Expellees' Association President Fritz Wittmann⁶⁴ and Sudeten German functionary Volkmar Gabert⁶⁵ to the Fund's directorate.⁶⁶ The German media was also critical. Ulrich Glauber complained that

⁶¹Roman Herzog, 'Ansprache von Bundespräsident Roman Herzog vor dem tschechischen Parlament am 29. April 1997,' *Politische Studien*, vol. 48, no. 353 (May/June 1997), pp. 3-11.

⁶²Havel, 'Others Praise Herzog Prague Speech', *Prague CTK* (English), 29 April 1997, FTS19970429001080.

⁶³'Report Views Relations with Czech Republic', *Handelsblatt*, 6 October 1997, p. 2, FTS19971006000811.

⁶⁴Fritz Wittmann was never appointed to the Fund's directorate.

⁶⁵Volkmar Gabert served on the Fund's directorate from 1998-2003.

⁶⁶'Kinkel Views Implementation of German-Czech Statement', *FAZ*, 29 November 1997, p. 2, FTS19971130000467.

it must be understood by all well-meaning people that the Czech Government cannot accept having declared opponents of all people nominated as board members of the agreed on foundation. Besides, such a possibly destructive decision cannot be in the interest of all those Germans who are anxious to achieve reconciliation...⁶⁷

The German and Czech foreign ministers, Kinkel and Sedivy met in Bonn and an agreement was reached safeguarding the 'balanced composition' of the Fund's directorate, including the Sudeten Germans. Sedivy had apparently secured a concession from Kinkel: only Germans actually interested in reconciliation efforts by the German and Czech governments would be appointed to the Fund.⁶⁸

On the occasion marking the German announcement of payments worth 11.6 million German Marks to the Czech victims of Nazism and the Czech decision to approve the country's membership in NATO on 15 April 1998, Kinkel, nonetheless, remarked that the road to reconciliation was still bumpy. He wished the reconciliation efforts achieved by Germany with France, Israel and Poland could be replicated: 'It cannot be right that we succeeded in restoring relations with these countries and peoples, but the efforts for good neighbourly relations with the Czech Republic continue to meet with obstacles. It must be possible to make progress here'. He also made a vocal appeal to the Czech public '... to seek a dialogue with everyone now, including the Sudeten Germans, and show them that we actually want to enter the future together.'⁶⁹ Prime Minister Zeman's statement that those invited to take part in the Czech-German Fund should be interested in Czech-German reconciliation and that, just as Prague had not nominated any right-wing extremists or communists, Bonn should not nominate any members of the Sudeten German lobby group, incensed German politicians. Kinkel regarded the remarks as unacceptable and said Zeman would now have to straighten things up. Kohl's government issued a statement saying his comparison was intolerable for the German-Czech dialogue. The comments made by Zeman, although disputed by the Czechs as a misinterpretation, did not help German-Czech relations in a time when both countries were seeking to implement the provisions of their 1997 Declaration.

⁶⁷'Daily Blames Kohl for Czech Declaration Delay', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 19 December 1997, p. 3, FTS19971219001119.

⁶⁸'Kinkel, Czech Counterpart Note Improvement in Relations', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 6 February 1998, p. 2, FTS 19980206001046.

⁶⁹'Kinkel Assesses Relations with Czechs', *Die Welt* (internet version), 16 April 1998, FTS 19980416000718.

Political Reconciliation with Poland

The Achilles Heel of Germany's *Polenpolitik*: the Oder-Neisse Border

Germany's political reconciliation towards the Czech Republic was complex in nature and significantly burdened by historical events stemming from the aftermath of the Second World War and the Cold War. Germany's relations with Poland were no exception. In Poland's case, however, frontier and territorial issues over the status of the Oder-Neisse line threatened to derail Germany's efforts to seek a rapprochement with Poland. The Oder-Neisse line was the only post-Second World War border that remained legally provisional despite treaties with both the GDR (July 1950, May 1989) and the FRG (December 1970). Chapter three discussed the significance of the Oder-Neisse River throughout Germany's and Poland's history; indeed, its significance gave rise to what Adam Krzeminski described as an 'Oder-Neisse complex' in Germany's political and historical conscience. Warsaw was also obsessed with the status of its Western border with Germany. This 'Oder-Neisse complex' thoroughly permeated the conduct of the FRG's bilateral relations with Poland throughout the Cold War and played a major role during the negotiations of the Two Plus Four Accords in 1990, during bilateral negotiations and in the prelude to the signing of the German-Polish Border Treaty (November 1990).⁷⁰

According to Kohl's Foreign and Security Policy Advisor, Horst Teltschik, Germany and Poland had to come to a mutually beneficial arrangement on the status of the Oder-Neisse line if they were going to enjoy 'normal' relations after unification.⁷¹ Germany's internal resolution of this outstanding territorial issue with Poland was a two-fold indicator of two important factors in Germany's *Ostpolitik*: its commitment to the historical spirit of the *Ostverträge* after unification, and uncertainty over how Germany's reconciliation towards Poland would evolve in the foreseeable future. The main question that permeated Poland's domestic politics was whether a unified and more powerful Germany would demand the return of its former *Ostgebiete* in ECE, especially Poland. In retrospect, such a demand was not likely given the international furore that

⁷⁰Adam Krzeminski, 'Deutsch-polnische Nachbarschaft als Gewinn und gegenseitige Befruchtung' in Hans Henning Hahn (ed.), *Polen und Deutschland: Nachbarn in Europa* (Schwalbach/Ts: Wochenschau, 1996), pp. 37-38, and Harry Kenneth Rosenthal, *German and Pole: National Conflict and Modern Myth* (Gainesville, FL: University Presses of Florida, 1976), p. 128.

⁷¹Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung* (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 30.

would have resulted but in the context of the changes in the international system between 1989-1990, it is not impossible to rationalise the fears expressed by Poland's leaders and other Western European powers who decided to press Germany for a speedy recognition of Poland's Western border.⁷² Poland did not appear in Kohl's 'Ten Point Plan' for German unification. Indeed, the Oder-Neisse line was not mentioned. Poland's Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski worried about the lack of German attention being paid to issues which were at the heart of Poland's existence.⁷³ International pressure, exerted by French President Mitterand in particular, was instrumental in shaping Germany's foreign policy behaviour vis-à-vis accepting the Oder-Neisse line.

Despite increasing external opposition to Bonn's Oder-Neisse politics, Kohl, nonetheless, demanded a contractual agreement with Warsaw that included a Polish renunciation of future war reparations from Germany and a guarantee for the preservation of the rights of ethnic Germans living in Poland.⁷⁴ The former German demand was dropped as a precondition for the Oder-Neisse line's recognition, although Kohl had argued persuasively that Germany was unwilling to pay supplemental reparations to the Poles on top of the DM 150 billion that had already been paid to Israel, Poland and other individuals.⁷⁵ Bonn's refusal to recognise the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border *before* unification raised levels of mistrust amongst Poland's political leadership and prompted them to demand full *de jure* recognition of the border in an official treaty, including participation in the Two Plus Four Accord talks.⁷⁶ Polish fears about German unification were also endemic as Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki pointed out:

⁷²Gisela Hendriks, 'The Oder-Neisse Line Revisited: German Unification and Poland's Western Border', *Politics and Society in Germany, Austria and Switzerland*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Summer 1992), pp. 8-9.

⁷³Krzysztof Miszczak, *Deklarationen und Realitäten: die Beziehungen zwischen der BRD und der (Volks-) Republik Polen von der Unterzeichnung des Warschauer Vertrages bis zum Abkommen über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* (Munich: Tuduv, 1993), p. 372.

⁷⁴Privately, Kohl lamented that there were no official apologetic gestures on the Polish government's part for the expulsion of ethnic Germans after the Second World War. This was in stark contrast to Havel's first official apology in 1990. See Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 174.

⁷⁵Kohl cited in George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), p. 252. The United States supported Kohl on the Oder-Neisse border issue but it was also apparent that Kohl's politics frequently frustrated Washington. See pp. 255-256.

⁷⁶Marion Dönhoff, *Polen und Deutsche: die schwierige Versöhnung* (Munich: Goldmann, 1993), p. 205.

It would be dishonest to say that the unification of Germany has produced no fears and no anxieties; opinion polls in Poland confirm this. On the one hand, there has hardly been a people so predestined to understand what an artificial, imposed division means like the Poles. On the other hand, the burden of the terrible past is too great for all the fears of a strong Germany to be dispelled. These fears manifested themselves more clearly with us than anywhere else.⁷⁷

Moreover, their fears were exacerbated by Polish President Lech Walesa's belief that Poland's role in future German foreign policy deliberations would be limited after a unified Germany had achieved its foreign policy objectives in Poland.⁷⁸

The debate about the future of the Oder-Neisse line also highlighted the fragile German political consensus on this issue. Germany's domestic political system was not immune to the Oder-Neisse line controversy; indeed, it created a substantial crisis for the CDU/FDP government coalition in 1990.⁷⁹ German President Richard von Weizsäcker's visit to Warsaw (May 1990) and his personal assurances to the Polish leadership about German intentions vis-à-vis the Oder-Neisse line eventually allayed Polish concerns but it was not until November 1990 that a Border Treaty was signed. Before that a joint resolution adopted by the *Bundestag* and the GDR *Volkskammer* (21 June 1990) stipulated that the Oder-Neisse's future status should be settled by a formal treaty, similar to the 1970 Warsaw Treaty. It is worth quoting in detail since it outlines Germany's strategy for addressing its border with Poland:

At no time, either today or in the future, will it be questioned through territorial claims on the part of us Germans. After Germany has been unified this will be reaffirmed in binding form under international law by means of a treaty with the Republic of Poland. Only an all-German Government can provide a signature which is binding under international law on behalf of a future united Germany. And only an all-German parliament can ratify such a treaty. But there is clearly no doubt as to the will of the German people as testified by the German *Bundestag* and the *Volkskammer*.⁸⁰

⁷⁷Mazowiecki quoted in Gottfried Erb, 'Asymmetries in Polish-German Relations', *Debatte: Review of Contemporary German Affairs*, no. 1 (1994), pp. 27-28.

⁷⁸Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 13.

⁷⁹Werner Weidenfeld, *Aussenpolitik für die deutsche Einheit: die Entscheidungsjahre 1989/90* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998), p. 482. Brent Scowcroft made the following observation about the dynamics of the CDU/FDP coalition: 'The coalition government in Bonn made foreign policy somewhat complicated – both for the Germans and for us. Genscher did not see eye to eye with Kohl on every issue, which meant that we occasionally had differing perspectives on what their policy really was'. See George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 237.

⁸⁰German Press and Information Office, 'Unified Germany: Statements by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany', *Countries of the World*, 1 January 1991.

With this resolution, Kohl at least laid his cards on the table but not after expending a great amount of domestic political capital with the junior political party in the government coalition, the FDP, and the *Schlesier Landsmannschaft* leadership who disagreed with the government's resolution. Bonn did not want to alienate this important domestic political constituency and right-wing voters in the CDU and CSU which were perceived to be vital to Kohl's electoral success in upcoming German federal and *Land* elections.⁸¹ Brent Scowcroft offers another insightful reason for Bonn's wavering on the Oder-Neisse line: Kohl 'had an eye on history and was reluctant to go down as the leader formally identified giving up large territories which for centuries had been an integral part of the homeland'.⁸² As Scowcroft and President George H. W. Bush also note:

The entire Oder-Neisse line dispute between the Germans and the Poles became farcical when it was decided that the FRG would integrate the GDR by means of Article 23 of the German Basic Law: A united Germany, which was simply an enlarged Federal Republic of Germany with its existing laws, would still be bound by its old legal commitment to the Oder-Neisse line. But no one thought to link Article 23 to the resolution of the border. We had lost the forest for the trees.⁸³

It took several additional months until Germany was able to make its interests vis-à-vis the border known to Poland.

Germany's Border Treaty with Poland (November 1990)

After unification, Germany's perceptions of Poland were complicated by two factors: the stern content of Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki's *Deutschlandpolitik* and the Polish *Sejm*'s resolutions that alienated potential German investors.⁸⁴ In Germany, especially amongst German advocates of Polish interests, there had been confusion about the ultimate objectives of Poland's foreign policy-makers vis-à-vis German unification and the recognition of the Oder-

⁸¹Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 14.

⁸²Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 247.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁸⁴Thomas Urban, *Deutsche in Polen: Geschichte und Gegenwart einer Minderheit* (Munich: Beck, 1993), p. 102.

Neisse line, despite the positive results of bilateral meetings in the summer of 1989 and the joint communiqué in November 1989.⁸⁵

Bonn's trials and tribulations about the need to link Germany's consent to the Oder-Neisse border as Poland's Western frontier and other bilateral issues became mute when Warsaw insisted on negotiating a separate border treaty and friendship treaty with Bonn. Kohl's political brinksmanship on the frontier issue was abruptly halted when Bonn and Warsaw decided to negotiate two separate treaties beginning in October 1990. The Treaty negotiations were conducted between Ambassador Dieter Kastrup, State Secretary, at the German Foreign Office, and the Director of the Polish Foreign Ministry's European Department Jerzy Sulek. The timing of the negotiations was crucial as Poland's presidential elections (November 25) as well as Germany's *Bundestag* elections (2 December) were looming. The CSU stubbornly opposed the negotiation of a separate border treaty with the Poles but one of its members, Wolfgang Bötsch, acknowledged that the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and the loss of the *Ostgebiete* were the price to be paid for achieving unification.⁸⁶ Kohl may have feared that a comprehensive negotiation with the Poles would result in his loss of support from German expellee groups who had a stake in the outcome of the treaty negotiations; the reality suggests that domestic and international opinion had overtaken Kohl on this particular issue forcing him to negotiate two treaties.⁸⁷ The Border Treaty's text is short but significant since it eliminated an important obstacle in Germany's political reconciliation with Poland. Chancellor Kohl described its significance:

⁸⁵See Dieter Bingen, 'Bilanz deutscher Politik gegenüber Polen 1949-1997', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 53 (1997), p. 7.

⁸⁶See *FAZ*, 25 October 1990, p. 2 in FBIS-WEU-90-208, 26 October 1990.

⁸⁷See *Der Spiegel*, 29 October, 1990, pp. 80-85 in FBIS-WEU-90-210, 30 October 1990.

The signing of the treaty between the FRG and Poland on the confirmation of the border that exists between them is a fateful step between our two peoples and for the future of Europe. It is an expression of European responsibility for peace. It has a moral, historic, and a European dimension. ... We Germans are conscious that the treaty signed today gives up nothing that that was not already long lost as a consequence of a criminal war and of a criminal system. ... We are agreed that this treaty serves not mutual demarcation, but bilateral opening toward European common ground. The confirmation of this frontier, binding under international law, is a decisive contribution to the prospect of Europe without frontiers. Germans and Poles want to help in the construction of a united Europe.⁸⁸

The preamble highlighted Germany's and Poland's resolve to 'contribute jointly to the establishment of a European peace order in which frontiers will no longer divide' and acknowledged that the 'great suffering caused by that war, including also the loss by many Germans and Poles of their native land as a result of expulsion or resettlement, are a warning and a challenge for the establishment of peaceful relations between the two peoples'. Claus Hofhansel also notes that Genscher's wife was amongst those who had lost her home east of the Oder-Neisse line after the Second World War.⁸⁹ Article I reaffirmed the frontier between Germany and Poland and Article II declared 'that the frontier between them is inviolable now and in future and mutually pledge to respect unconditionally their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Article III stipulated that the parties 'have no territorial claims against each other and they shall not put forward such claims in future'.⁹⁰

Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation (17 June 1991)

Treaty Provisions

The successful conclusion of the Border Treaty removed a significant obstacle before Bonn and Warsaw started to complete the negotiations of the Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation. For the first time in two hundred years the conditions were ripe for a German-Polish rapprochement (Poland only enjoyed twenty one years of independence in this time period). According to Dieter Bingen, the challenge for both parties was not only to

⁸⁸ *Warsaw Television Service*, 14 November 1990, FBIS-EEU-90-221, 15 November 1990, pp. 41-43.

⁸⁹ Claus Hofhansel, *Multilateralism, German Foreign Policy and Central Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 41.

⁹⁰ See 'Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland on the confirmation of the Frontier between them, 14 November 1990, at www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/TREATIES/DEU-POL1990CF.PDF

negotiate a treaty based on 'political friendship' but also to acknowledge the dangers and risks inherent in the breakdown of old political and economic structures in Poland and the nature of Germany's preventative responses.⁹¹

The treaty was comprehensive (thirty-eight articles, ten preamble statements) and in comparison with the German-Czech Friendship Treaty – despite the existence of complex bilateral issues such as the rights of ethnic Germans living in Poland – it did not take as long to negotiate and the negotiations themselves were less acrimonious, although significant opposition to both treaties amongst the *Sudeten* and *Schlesier* German constituencies was apparent. In content, the treaty bore some resemblance to the Franco-German Elysée Treaty of 1963 as Marcin Zaborowski points out. Besides creating a number of bilateral institutions and meetings between governmental representatives, there are also similar provisions for fostering youth exchanges and promoting reconciliation through cultural institutes and a joint schoolbooks' commission.⁹² The treaty also was a template for the German-Czech Friendship Treaty.

The contents of the treaty's preamble and main body tie together many of the principal leitmotifs of Germany's bilateral and multilateral foreign relations with ECE after unification: political reconciliation, European ideals and integration, economic cooperation and the rights of ethnic Germans living in Poland. Each theme is competently woven together to produce a treaty which reflects the solid political foundations necessary to achieve a successful German rapprochement with Poland. The 'need to overcome the division of Europe' and 'establish a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe', including 'the maintenance of peace in Europe' was a general theme highlighted by Germany's political leadership on several occasions. The achievement of these objectives was regarded as a precondition for furthering its political reconciliation efforts with both countries.

Article I(1) stated: "In a spirit of European responsibility, they [Germany and Poland] shall endeavour to realise the wish of both of their peoples for lasting understanding and reconciliation' and 'shall strive for the creation of a Europe in which human rights and

⁹¹Dieter Bingen, *Deutschland und Polen in Europa: Probleme, Verträge und Perspektiven* (Cologne: BI-Ost, 49/1991), p. 25.

⁹²Marcin Zaborowski, *Germany, Poland and Europe: conflict, co-operation and Europeanisation*. (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 95.

fundamental freedoms are respected and borders lose their dividing nature, *inter alia*, through the bridging of economic and social disparities'. Poland's integration into 'Europe' and the 'European Community' was to function as the major catalyst for the transformation of the Polish economy. Bonn aimed to highlight Europe's integration efforts as a positive force for Germany's transformation after the Second World War to induce the Poles to follow suit as fast as their transformation efforts would allow. Article VI(1) provided the security parameters for ensuring their success: both 'shall have the common goal, in a changing political and military environment in Europe, to work towards strengthening stability and increasing security'. Article VI(3) describes the use of bilateral and multilateral tools as 'confidence-building and stabilising measures'.

By highlighting European themes throughout several treaty articles, Poland tied its future to that of Europe and by extension one of its principal advocates, Germany. Article VIII(2) did exactly that: 'By concluding an agreement of association between the European Community and the Republic of Poland, the European Communities, their member States, and the Republic of Poland shall lay the foundations for a political and economic approach of the Republic of Poland to the European Community. The Federal Republic of Germany shall further this approach to the extent possible'. According to Article VIII(2), 'The Federal Republic of Germany views the prospect of accession of the Republic of Poland to the European Community as being feasible as soon as the prerequisites for accession have been realised'. Germany was not Poland's only proponent as Jerzy Sulek acknowledged:

In bilateral contacts, the Germans are giving their backing to our associate membership and, in the longer term, our membership in the European Community, but French support has gone even further. Germany was the first state with which we started negotiations on a treaty, but what we have attained in our talks with France is in a sense 'more mature,' it pleases us more and should be included in the Polish-German Treaty.⁹³

Closely linked to the success of Germany's and Poland's 'European' objectives was the crucial question of the kinds of economic aid, assistance and cooperation Germany and other parties could offer to Poland. The treaty's preamble stressed that 'economic cooperation is a necessary element of comprehensive mutual relations on a stable and firm foundation'. Articles IX through XIX cover Germany's and Poland's political, economic, and environmental

⁹³ *Rzeczpospolita*, 16-17 March 1991, p. 1, FBIS-EEU-91-055, 21 March 1991, pp. 22-23.

objectives. Article IX(1) reinforces the general goal of striving ‘towards an expansion and diversification of their economic relations in all spheres’ and further notes that the ‘economic reform process that has been introduced in the Republic of Poland should be promoted through international cooperation’ which included other states and international governmental and non-governmental agents. Other areas of support included investment and capital placement and industrial cooperation between German and Polish enterprises. Article X’s provision of intensifying financial cooperation in light of Poland’s debt problem also sent a crucial signal that Germany was prepared to assist Poland in this area. In 1991, Poland’s foreign debts amounted to USD 46 billion. With Germany holding the largest portion of that debt: USD 6.4 billion and German banks USD 2.4 billion, unsurprisingly, Poland made overtures to Germany to engage in some debt forgiveness.⁹⁴

Article XII(1) highlights the roles of ‘cooperative partnership between regions, cities, communities and other regional authorities, especially those near the borders’. In a border region rife with social and economic disparities but with strong historical ties, success could emerge, according to Dieter Bingen, ‘only when people, that live on both sides of the border, come together, discover and develop common interests, will an economic rapprochement take place between both parties’.⁹⁵ To facilitate this goal the Germans and Poles created a Government Commission for Regional and Border Cooperation (Article XII(2)) which was to function along the conventions and precepts of the Council of Europe and other relevant international bodies.⁹⁶ Article XV(1) highlights scientific and technical cooperation efforts between the two parties with the aim of ‘focusing on a dynamic, harmonious and comprehensive development of this cooperation’. Article XVI(3) focuses on the environment stating that Germans and Poles shall ‘strive for the development of harmonised strategies for a regional and international environmental policy, with the aim of a lasting and environmentally sustainable development in

⁹⁴Krzysztof Miszczak, *Deklarationen und Realitäten: die Beziehungen zwischen der BRD und der (Volks-) Republik Polen von der Unterzeichnung des Warschauer Vertrages bis zum Abkommen über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* (Munich: Tuduv, 1993), p. 431-432.

⁹⁵Bingen, *Deutschland und Polen in Europa*, p. 31. In practise, this did not always work well.

⁹⁶‘Notenwechsel über die Einrichtung der Deutsch-Polnischen Regierungskommission für regionale und grenznahe Zusammenarbeit’, no. 68 (18 June 1991), pp. 68-69.

Europe'. Article XVI was given extra meaning with the creation of a German-Polish Environmental Council that would highlight areas of cooperation in this sphere and suggest strategies to meet environmental challenges, especially in the German-Polish border region.⁹⁷

The treaty's most controversial component was Article XX since it dealt with the rights of the German minority in Poland.⁹⁸ For Germany, political reconciliation required Poland's acknowledgement of the existence of a large German minority residing there. As Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff note:

Successive Polish governments had never denied the presence of such a minority. Indeed the incoming post-Communist government had no particular qualms in this direction. What had always been in dispute were the size, status and national orientation of 'Germanised Poles'. The process of relaxation resulted in mainstream Polish society being confronted with the fact that in the early 1990s anything up to 500,000 Germans lived in Poland, and not the officially estimated figure of 2,500.⁹⁹

If the Polish negotiating team was bent on securing Germany's support for Poland's inclusion in the European Community, German negotiators were largely focused on securing as many concessions they could from Warsaw vis-à-vis the German minority.¹⁰⁰ On 30 January 1991, Kohl made it clear that his government would be seeking, through bilateral treaties, to ensure that the German minority was protected by national laws in their home countries.¹⁰¹

Expellee organisations and the representatives of the German minority in Poland, supported by the CSU, not only supported this initiative but demanded additional concessions from Bonn and Warsaw, such as the introduction of the German language as an official language in those areas between the new Polish Western border and Germany's eastern frontier from 1937, German religious training, development of a German-oriented school system, freedom to form German minority political movements and media organisations, and the introduction of two

⁹⁷'Bildung des Deutsch-Polnischen Umweltrats', *Bulletin*, no. 68 (18 June 1991), pp. 549-550.

⁹⁸For an historical overview of the German minority in Poland, see Joachim Rogall (ed.), *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas – Land der Grossen Ströme: von Polen nach Litauen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1996).

⁹⁹Cordell and Wolff, *Germany's Foreign Policy Towards Poland and the Czech Republic*, p. 54.

¹⁰⁰Bingen, *Deutschland und Polen in Europa*, p. 33.

¹⁰¹'Regierungserklärung des Bundeskanzlers vor dem Deutschen Bundestag', no. 11 (31 January 1991), p. 74.

language signs, including German.¹⁰² Bonn rejected many of these demands, including the *Recht auf Heimat* clause. Bonn argued that Poland's eventual integration into the European Community would provide for the free movement of individuals and labour thus negating this objective by the *Schlesier* Germans. Germans and Poles agreed to the following language in Article XX(1):

Members of the German minority in the Republic of Poland, i.e., persons having Polish nationality who are of German origin or who affirm that they belong to the community of German language, culture or tradition, as well as persons having German nationality in the Federal Republic of Germany who are of Polish origin or affirm that they belong to the community of Polish language, culture, or tradition, shall have the right, individually or in community with other members of their group, freely to express, to preserve and further develop their ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identity, free from any attempts to assimilate them against their will.¹⁰³

In a letter appended to the treaty and signed by Genscher and Skubiszewski, the German government also agreed 'to make it possible for persons living in the FRG who are of Polish origin or whom affirm that they belong to the community of Polish language, culture, or tradition and who are not covered by the provisions of Article XX(1), to enjoy to a large extent the rights referred to in Article XX and the opportunities referred to in Article XXI'. The Polish government, through a Ministerial Council Decision No. 142 established a Commission for National Minorities 'with a view to realising the rights of Polish citizens who are members of national minorities, including the German minority'.

Another crucial bilateral initiative was located in Article XXX(2) which established a German-Polish Youth Organisation whose objective was to 'promote encounters and exchanges of young people' and to ensure that 'all young people and youth organisations in both countries are entitled to participate in encounters and joint undertakings' (Article XXX(1)). The rationale behind this undertaking, modelled on the French-German Youth Organisation, was to create new opportunities for younger audiences in both states with the aim of furthering political reconciliation and promoting closer ties and trust.¹⁰⁴ Crucially, from the perspective of both countries was language reflected in the appended letter which stated: 'The present treaty is not

¹⁰²FAZ, 11 February 1991, p. 6 quoted in Krzysztof Miszczak, *Deklarationen und Realitäten: die Beziehungen zwischen der BRD und der (Volks-) Republik Polen*, p. 425.

¹⁰³The contents of all preamble and treaty citations are drawn from the 'Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation', available at <http://untreaty.un.org>.

¹⁰⁴*Bulletin*, 'Ansprache des Ministerpräsidenten der Republik Polen', no. 68 (June 18, 1991), p. 555.

concerned with matters of nationality nor with matters of assets'. Ironically, the Germans and Czechs used similar language to defer discussions on these important subjects until a later date. This decision was to have important political implications for Germany's rapprochement with Poland after 1991.

Exploring the German-Polish 'Community of Interests' (1992-1998)

The groundwork for Germany's political reconciliation efforts with Poland was laid with the intense yet successful negotiation of the Border and Friendship treaties. Having signed the most comprehensive treaty with an eastern neighbour after unification, the challenge for both parties was to implement the Friendship Treaty's provisions and start the long and difficult path of becoming closer neighbours. Reflecting on the events of 1990, Kinkel and the Polish Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati wrote:

There were fears that the question of the enormity of the crimes and wrongs that resulted from the German Nazi dictatorship, including the fact that many Poles and Germans had to leave their hometowns, would remain an insurmountable obstacle between us. Meanwhile, it turned out that the memories of the painful historical events do not necessarily have to make it impossible to reach agreements.¹⁰⁵

As Anna Sabbat-Swidlicka points out, however, both parties' reconciliation efforts were taking place on governmental and societal levels. Both treaties reflected the desire of the German and Polish governments to pursue a rapprochement. Can the same be said about German and Polish society where according to Swidlicka, reconciliation 'will require a complex and lengthy process of replacing prejudices, stereotypes, and generalisations with common goals and new experiences that will enable both nations to coexist peacefully in the centre of Europe'?¹⁰⁶ Only time will tell but Bonn and Warsaw's expectations were high that after having overcome major historical hurdles, the instruments and strategies were in place to bring Germans and Poles together through the treaties' frameworks, despite not having reached a consensus on issues such as assets and nationality. Maintaining the high levels of intensity and interest in Germany and Poland for each other's mutual relations was going to be a major challenge for Bonn and Warsaw. Looking back

¹⁰⁵ *Rzeczpospolita*, 15-16 June 1996, p. 6, FBIS-EEU-96-118 (18 June 1996), p. 49.

¹⁰⁶ Anna Sabbat-Swidlicka, 'Polish-German Relations: Turning Borders into Bridges', *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, vol. 1, no. 20 (18 May 1990), p. 38.

on the hectic years of 1990-1991 in 1999, Markus Meckel remarked: 'it appears that the energy that facilitated so much at the beginning of the 1990s is now missing. In some points, we are only moving tenaciously ahead'.¹⁰⁷

In February 1990, Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski coined the phrase 'community of interests' to highlight a nexus of issues emerging between Bonn and Warsaw after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. It was welcomed by German President Richard von Weizsäcker and subsequently used as a benchmark when referring to the state of German-Polish relations. There is plenty of substantive evidence to show that a German-Polish 'community of interests' emerged after 1990, beginning with the Border and German Friendship treaties. The treaties' content and subsequent bilateral agreements paved the way for expanding the 'community of interests' with German and Polish inputs at the governmental and nongovernmental levels. How was the 'community of interests' defined and why did its development play such an important role in fostering closer ties between Germany and Poland?

The roots of a German-Polish 'community of interest' lie in the commonalities of their respective positions and experiences after the end of the Cold War. Both nations gained their independence and for the first time could structure their external relations vis-à-vis other powers as they wished. Both countries saw their future in what Kohl always called the 'European house'. The model for this 'community of interest' was a Franco-German one which had been established after the Second World War. This particular 'community of interest' was held up both parties as an ideal example of what two long-standing enemies could achieve if they wanted to improve their bilateral relations and achieve political reconciliation. From 1990-1998, the German-Polish 'community of interests' took its inspiration from the comprehensive friendship treaty the Germans and Poles had negotiated.

In the context of the 'community of interests', the Polish Foreign Minister Wladyslaw Bartoszewski commented that one of Poland's long-term goals was the development of a bilateral relationship with Germany on par with what Germany and France had achieved after the Second

¹⁰⁷Markus Meckel, 'Der deutsch-polnische Nachbarschaftsvertrag – Bilanz nach fünf Jahren' in Theodor Schweisfurth, Walter Poeggel and Andrzej Sakson (eds.), *Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien: auf dem Weg zur guten Nachbarschaft* (Berlin: Springer, 1999), p. 6. MT.

World War.¹⁰⁸ There were many similarities and also differences between the two reconciliation processes. Writing in 1996, Bartoszewski reflected on the history of Germany and France's political reconciliation efforts and drew a comparison with what had been achieved in German-Polish relations:

As far as political relations are concerned, everything is fine thanks to the bold steps taken by Kohl and Mazowiecki in 1990, steps that have created foundations. ... We have only been able to develop our relations freely over the past six years. Six years after the end of the war, the Franco-German relationship was anything but normal. And, in the end, the Polish war experience - after that of the Jews and similar to that of the Russians - was the most tragic of mankind.¹⁰⁹

Germany and Poland could already point to great achievements in their mutual political reconciliation processes only two years after the end of the Cold War.

Anne Wolff-Poweska highlights three different types of fora where Germans and Poles should be gravitating towards each other within their 'community of interests' (there are a number of sub-categories): European¹¹⁰, bilateral (governmental and non-governmental) perspectives, and regional in the context of the German-Polish border.¹¹¹ The 'community' and fora were constantly evolving - some more successfully than others - and being challenged from 1992-1998 as new issues took centre stage and others quietly faded away. In practise, however, the existence of a 'community of interests' provided Bonn and Warsaw's foreign and security policy makers focus during a crucial time when the provisions of two of the most seminal post-war treaties in Germany and Poland's mutual history were being promoted and implemented.

Bilateral Developments

The bilateral relations conducted on a governmental level continued at a fast pace after June 1991 - so fast that one observer remarked that they were impossible to coordinate, especially

¹⁰⁸Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, 'Polen und seine Nachbarn: Bemerkungen zur polnischen Aussenpolitik', *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 43, no. 1 (1996), p. 68.

¹⁰⁹*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 Mar 1995, p. 12, FBIS-EEU-95-052, 17 March 1995, pp. 15-16. See Davis, 'National Interests Revisited: The German Case.', pp. 102-103, for a comparison of the German-Polish and German-Franco reconciliation processes.

¹¹⁰This has been addressed in chapter two and will also be addressed in chapter six.

¹¹¹Anna Wolff-Poweska, 'Zur Wahrung der Identität von Polen und Deutschen', in *Deutsch-Polnisches Symposium 22.-24 January in Strausberg: Dokumentation* (Strausberg: Amt für Information und Kommunikation, 1995), pp. 54-59.

if you were working at the German Embassy in Warsaw.¹¹² German-Polish relations underwent a flurry of activity in several different areas: bilateral government and non-governmental activity, ethnic German issues, and border region developments. Bonn and Warsaw sought to use the positive momentum in their relationship to create and implement the tools and instruments necessary to fulfil the Good Neighbourliness and Friendship Treaty's provisions.

The challenge for German and Polish politicians after 1991 was to ensure that their mutual friendship treaty was filled with life not only on a governmental but non-governmental level. The former was important for making sure the treaty provisions were honoured and bilateral contacts were nurtured in all treaty areas. The latter, including the German and Polish publics, played an important role in using the tools and instruments the treaty provided to implement projects on the ground and foster closer cooperation between both peoples. Building on the goodwill engendered by the treaty was a challenge for both Bonn and Warsaw. Maintaining the momentum of the political reconciliation efforts in both countries was an ever great one. High level governmental exchanges were symbolic and instrumental for setting the tone for German-Polish relations.

In 1992, Bonn and Warsaw concentrated on consolidating their achievements and promoting as many exchanges and visits as possible to gain a better understanding of each other's interests vis-à-vis each other and to discuss future plans. Polish President Lech Walesa's visit to Germany from 30 March-2 April 1992 to discuss the Friendship Treaty's implementation which had gone into effect several weeks earlier. During his visit, the theme of political reconciliation was voiced repeatedly by Weizsäcker and Kohl. Calling attention not only to the suffering Germans had caused, Weizsäcker noted the suffering of those Germans who had been displaced from their homes after the Second World War and praised Walesa for being able to speak openly about Germany and Poland's mutual history.¹¹³ Kohl took the opportunity to highlight the significance of their bilateral treaty as a symbol for Germany's commitment to Poland to bring it

¹¹²Markus Meckel, 'Der deutsch-polnische Nachbarschaftsvertrag' in Schweisfurth, Poeggel and Sakson (eds.), p. 6.

¹¹³*Bulletin*, 'Staatsbesuch des Präsidentin der Republik Polen', no. 34 (2 April 1992), p. 325.

closer to the EC.¹¹⁴ The visit was hailed as a huge success in Poland as it underscored Germany's positive political and economic intentions vis-à-vis Poland and its efforts to promote reconciliation.

Against the backdrop of such a high level visit, the Germans and Poles pressed ahead in 1992 with the creation of the Polish-German Cooperation Foundation whose mission is to finance projects of mutual interest, for example, infrastructure, research, and cultural projects in Poland itself. After its first operational year, over DM 58 million had been set aside for funding. The Polish-German Reconciliation Foundation also began its operations and concentrated on paying damages to former concentration prisoners and forced labourers. In 1993, it distributed over DM 200 million to 215,000 victims of National Socialism.¹¹⁵ The first Polish-German prize for special services to the development of mutual relations was awarded to Willy Brandt posthumously and Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

On a bilateral government level, there were extensive exchanges between German and Polish parliamentarians as well as heads of government of the German *Länder*. One of the most important agreements signed in the aftermath of the Friendship Treaty was the Accord ensuing from the Effects of Migration Movements (7 May 1993), negotiated by the German and Polish Ministers of the Interior Rudolf Seiters and Andrzej Milczanowski. It was envisioned that from 1 July (the day the new German Asylum Law came into force) until the end of December 1993, Germany would be allowed to send back to Poland no more than 10000 refugees and, from 1994, there would be no limits. The signing of the agreement allowed Germany to amend Article XVI of its *Grundgesetz* which governs the criteria for the possibility of claiming asylum in cases of political persecution. In the six months after the agreement came into force, 2,697 people who had illegally entered Germany from Poland were turned over to the Polish authorities.¹¹⁶ A Treaty on Environmental Cooperation (6 March 1994) which augmented the creation of the German-Polish

¹¹⁴ *Bulletin*, 'Ansprache des Bundeskanzlers', no. 34 (2 April 1992), 327.

¹¹⁵ German Foreign Office, *Beitrag des Auswärtigen Amtes zum Jahresbericht der Bundesregierung 1993* (Bonn: German Foreign Office, 1993), p. 55.

¹¹⁶ DDP/ADN, 31 January 1994, FBIS-EEU-94-021, 1 February 1994, pp. 21-22.

Environmental Council complemented the vast array of agreements and accords the Germans and the Poles signed after 1990.

Another highlight in German-Polish relations was German President Roman Herzog's visit to Warsaw to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising on 1 August 1994. He echoed Kohl's comments about German and Polish history, the need for reconciliation and understanding as Germany seeks to atone for the sins of the Nazi era, and also set the stage for Kohl's visit to Warsaw the following year:

In fact it is only history which divides us now. The Germans and the Poles do not have any opposing interests at present. Only history is now between us. At the same time, I do not simply believe that one can forget history...On the contrary, I believe in the strength of historical truth, and in the fact that we cannot brush aside what has happened though it hurts.¹¹⁷

The aim of Kohl's visit to Warsaw (July 1995) for bilateral discussions with his counterpart Prime Minister Jozef Oleksy was to assess the Friendship Treaty's progress. It was his first visit to Poland in six years. In his speech to the Polish National Assembly, Kohl made references to the significance of the bilateral treaties Germany signed with Poland in 1990 and 1991: 'By signing Polish-German treaties we managed to tie in to good traditions of peaceful coexistence with our nations, fruitful cultural and economic exchange, as well as meetings with people'.¹¹⁸ With references to Germany's past, he stated: 'We know the fundamental value and truth in the lives of nations, namely that a nation that does not know its own history does not understand the present and cannot shape the future; but the thesis I would like to state here is: Poland needs Europe and Europe needs Poland too'.¹¹⁹ Ambassador Janusz Reiter remarked:

Kohl's July visit in Poland was unquestionable a sign of the rapprochement which had taken place between our countries in recent years. German politicians made no secret of the fact that six years ago they would have mentioned Prague or Budapest, not Warsaw, as capitals with which Bonn would have the closest relations. The assessments of relations with Poland were all the more enthusiastic given the fact that the hopes placed in the Czechs were disappointed.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ *Warsaw Television Polonia Network*, 1 August 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-148, 2 August 1994, pp. 15-16.

¹¹⁸ *Warsaw TVP*, 6 July 1995, FBIS-EEU-95-130, 7 July 1995, p. 32.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹²⁰ Janusz Reiter, "'Relations with the Federal Republic of Germany' in Barbara Wizimirska (ed.), *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 1996* (Warsaw: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996), p. 118.

A further gesture of major political symbolic importance was the German invitation to Polish Foreign Minister Bartoszewski to be the only foreign guest to speak at the German *Bundestag*'s commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War on 28th April 1995.¹²¹

Wojciech Pomianowski observed accurately that in the context of Germany's bilateral relations with Poland the most important facets are not always treaties, governments, and the economy and finances, but also people - since they fill the bilateral relations with content and decide whether they will be successful or not.¹²² The Border and Friendship Treaties undoubtedly created the foundations for a solid rapprochement between the German and Polish governments but it was not entirely obvious how the treaties would be welcomed by ordinary Germans and Poles whose histories were intimately tied to the ground-breaking decisions made by their political representatives. Dietmar Scholich notes that a poll undertaken in 1991 revealed the existence of strong historical stereotypes on both sides of the border but there was also evidence of appreciation for the provisions of the German-Polish Friendship Treaty.¹²³ However, national stereotypes still permeated the discourse. Dieter Brehmer described the prejudices and stereotypes cultivated as follows:

On the Polish side it is the view that a German equals a Nazi. On our side, it is this image of a Pole who is work-shy, who does not show regard for community property, and who would dump his own rubbish in a neighbour's garden. Neither is a true picture: Both are the results of bias and prejudice.¹²⁴

This opinion may be extreme but it is illustrative of the challenges Germans and Poles faced in creating mutual understanding. To counter these prejudices, Bonn and Warsaw officially and unofficially presided over the growth of a number of organisations whose goals it were to promote political, economical and cultural ties between Germans and Poles. The Polish-German Youth

¹²¹Bartoszewski's speech is reprinted in his memoirs. See Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, *Es lohnt sich, anständig zu sein: meine Erinnerungen* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1995), pp. 117-137.

¹²²Wojciech Pomianowski, 'Bilanz der Verwirklichung des deutsch-polnischen Vertrages über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit vom 17. Juni 1991', in Schweisfurth, Poeggel and Sakson (eds.), p. 23.

¹²³Dietmar Scholich, 'Polnische-deutsche Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet der Raumplanung – ein wichtiger Baustein in einem zusammenwachsenden Europa' in Hans Henning Hahn (ed.), *Polen und Deutschland: Nachbarn in Europa* (Schwalbach/Ts: Wochenschau, 1996), p. 89.

¹²⁴*Trybuna Opolska*, 24 November 1992, pp. 1, 3, in FBIS-EEU-92-237, 9 December 1992, p. 23.

Cooperation, the Intergovernmental Commission for Border and Regional Cooperation, the European University in Frankfurt/Oder (Viadrina), the Polish-German Cooperation Foundation, and the Polish German Reconciliation Foundation all played a role in bringing Germans closer to Poles. The Goethe and German Historical Institutes also opened their doors in 1993 and a third Polish Cultural Institute was opened in Düsseldorf. Over 50 German-Polish societies came into existence under the umbrella of the German-Polish Association network. Over 350 inter-city partnerships were created from 1990-1998, the most prominent one being the House of German-Polish Cooperation which was opened in 1998.

Ethnic Germans in Poland

Articles XX-XXII provided the legal foundations for the protection of ethnic German interests in Poland. Whereas Bonn throughout the Cold War had consistently urged the ethnic Germans to repatriate to the FRG, after 1993, the German government implemented a new resettlement policy for ethnic Germans (1 January 1993) which did not necessarily close the door on those seeking to leave Poland or other countries in ECE but encouraged them to stay in their home countries and benefit from the protections accorded to them by the Friendship Treaty. Building upon the existence of several major centres of ethnic German activity in Poland: Upper and Lower Silesia, and Western Pomerania, ethnic Germans nurtured their culture with the support of the German government and organisations such as the Union of German Social and Cultural Associations, local ethnic German community centres, and the German Union of Youth.

As Wanda Jarzabek notes, despite having a very active cultural programme: meetings and seminars, libraries, choirs, orchestras, electronic and print media outlets, there are not enough professional journalists with a knowledge of German and there are also few teachers who can teach German history and literature.¹²⁵ These areas were being paid close attention to by the German government. According to Patricia Davis, German financial assistance to the ethnic Germans, via their cultural associations and expellee organisations, was significant to prompt an observation that in 1994, Germany, through the Ministry of the Interior, had spent more on aid

¹²⁵Wanda, Jarzabek, 'Poland' in Ivanka Nedeva and Joost Hermann (eds.), *Minorities and Foreign Policy: Minorities in East Central Europe and their Impact upon Foreign Policy* (Groningen: Centre for European Security Studies, 1998), p. 81.

(DM 24 million) to its ethnic Germans than development aid to Albania, Estonia, Latvia and Macedonia combined.¹²⁶ Ethnic Germans were also encouraged to participate in Poland's domestic political systems, including serving at the highest levels of Poland's government, in the Polish *Sejm* (parliament) and the Senate.

Border Region Developments

Anna Wolff-Poweska describes the German-Polish border as a 'scar of history' that has managed to bury itself into the German and Polish consciousness and psyche.¹²⁷ One of the most promising areas of the German-Polish 'community of interests' was the development of their joint border regions along the Oder-Neisse River. The economic and social disparities along the border could not have been greater. Writing in 1996, Dieter Schröder observed that on the Polish side of the border incomes averaged DM 450 per month whereas on the German side, they were eight to ten times that amount.¹²⁸ There was an immediate urgency on the part of both governments to develop the border region. German-Polish efforts at redefining their relationship along the Oder-Neisse gained new momentum with the Treaty on Border Clearances (29 July 1992) and Border Crossings (6 November 1993) and a Memorandum of Understanding on Border Regional Planning Policy (9 October 1995). The Friendship Treaty had created the German-Polish Government Commission for Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation (the first meeting convened on 22-23 April in Görlitz before the Treaty's signing) and its first major decision was to create a Commission for Interregional Cooperation whose goal it was to address questions pertaining to interregional cooperation, the development of small and medium size enterprises, and the promotion of youth exchanges. In 1993, cooperation between the border regions was expanded to include Spree-Neisse-Bóbr and Pro-Europa-Viadrina Euroregions along with an expansion of contacts between the German *Länder* and the Polish voivodships.

¹²⁶Patricia Davis, 'National Interests Revisited: The German Case.' *German Politics and Society*, vol. 16, no. 1 (Spring 1998), p. 104.

¹²⁷Anna Wolff-Poweska, 'Zur Wahrung der Identität von Polen und Deutschen', p. 60.

¹²⁸Dieterich Schröder, 'Ungleiche Nachbarn an der Oder - Perspektiven der deutsch-polnischen Grenzregionen.' *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, no. 1 (1996), p. 102.

The existence of a powerful 'community of interests' should not obscure the practical, day-to-day obstacles which threatened to undermine both countries' reconciliation efforts and a better German understanding of Poles and vice-versa. The Border and Friendship Treaties opened up many new opportunities for Germans and Poles to discover each other and work together in a cooperative fashion. However, the cultural, economic and socio-political challenges created by the treaties gave rise to new bureaucratic deficiencies and criminal elements seeking to exploit Germany's transparent relationship with Poland. Dieter Bingen highlights five problem areas that dominated German-Polish bilateral relations after 1992 and the implementation processes of the Friendship Treaty: German-Polish border operations, the rise of criminal elements, shopping tourism and border trade, the status of ethnic Germans residing in Poland, and dual nationality issues.¹²⁹ The first three and last two areas are linked. The first major problem was highlighted by Kohl in a speech to the Polish National Assembly:

Meeting one another means crossing the border. Polish-German cooperation is often narrowed to a difficult situation at border crossings. [We are] doing everything in our power to allocate the appropriate resources so that this state of affairs, this impossible state of affairs, can be ended as soon as reasonably possible, since dynamic economic development is dependent upon fast access to other markets.¹³⁰

Long delays at border crossing points along the 431 kilometer border between Germany and Poland were common from 1991-1995. The proliferation of crime, especially car theft fuelled notions in Germany of the existence of a Polish car mafia. Although increased levels of border trade and traffic were a positive outcome of Germany's rapprochement with Poland, it often led to resentment on both parts of the border as German businesses were forced to shut down in the face of growing competition from their Polish counterparts. And Polish businesses and small towns struggled to manage thousands of German visitors who came to Poland to benefit from lower prices. The ethnic German issue raises passions on both sides of the border, not only in the political circles of the German CDU and CSU but also in Poland's domestic political circles. The 1991 Friendship Treaty accorded the ethnic Germans with the role of acting as a 'bridge' between Germans and Poles but according to Dieter Bingen, they may not have the appropriate tools to

¹²⁹Dieter Bingen. 'Rahmenbedingungen deutsch-polnischer Beziehungen nach 1991', *Deutsch-Polnisches Symposium 22.-24 January in Strausberg: Dokumentation* (Strausberg: Amt für Information und Kommunikation, 1995), pp. 66-72.

¹³⁰*Warsaw TVP*, 6 July 1995, FBIS-EEU-95-130, p. 34.

perform such a function as they struggle to define their existence and gain basic recognition from their Polish neighbours.¹³¹ The 'dual nationality' conundrum is profound in Upper Silesia where ethnic Germans are still entitled to acquire German citizenship and passports. In effect, they are dual nationals with residential and work permits for two countries with natural implications for military service laws and cross border employment schemes.

Whereas after 1990, Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland were influenced by the internal and external dynamics of unification; by 1998, their relations were characterised by a burgeoning expansion of bilateral activities, exchanges, and cooperation, including Germany's proactive support for Czech and Polish ambitions to join the EU and NATO. In Poland, Kohl made highlighted the significance of the unification of Europe as a goal to be pursued by all of its neighbours:

...the acceptance of the Central and Eastern European states and the acceptance of Poland into the EU is not a matter of balancing economic interests. Integration with the euro-Atlantic structures is an imperative of solidarity between the nations of Europe, a solidarity which has arisen by way of common values.¹³²

In the Czech Republic, his ambitions were similar but they were being pursued against the backdrop of difficult reconciliation processes which were drawn out throughout Kohl's entire tenure in office. This was a major difference in the reconciliation processes between Germany and Poland and Germany and the Czech Republic. In the former, reconciliation was a complex process but the ground work, in the form of the Border and Friendship treaties, was completed by June 1991. The German-Czech Treaty was completed not long after in February 1992 but another mutual declaration was required in 1997 to address issues for which there was no agreement in 1992. Whereas the spirit of German-Polish relations remained positive after 1991, the same could not be said of Germany's relations with the Czech Republic. Internal and external factors endemic to Germany played a role here, such as the power of the Sudeten and Schlesier German organisations, including the CDU's coalition partner, the CSU, which wielded an enormous amount of political clout in Bavaria.

¹³¹Dieter Bingen, 'Rahmenbedingungen deutsch-polnischer Beziehungen nach 1991', p. 69.

¹³²*Warsaw TVP*, 6 July 1995, FBIS-EEU-95-130, p. 33.

CHAPTER FIVE
GERMANY'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE
CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND

Germany's Ostpolitik from Bismarck to Kohl illustrates how and why domestic and external economic objectives played such an important role in Germany's foreign policy behaviour. The FRG, like its unified successor, operated a highly externally orientated economy in an international environment characterised by high levels of interdependence with trading areas outside the European Union.¹ Germany's foreign economic strategies for maintaining a strong position in the global economy were founded on two leitmotifs: ensuring continued access to natural resources such as oil and gas and the expansion of its export capabilities. An intensification of economic ties with the Czech Republic and Poland was perceived by German political leaders to be a strategic economic necessity after 1990.

After the Second World War, the FRG received extensive economic assistance in the form of the Marshall Plan which was instrumental in creating a German *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle) in the 1960s and 1970s. To remove the economic shackles of communism, Bonn believed that similar economic assistance measures, with assistance from other powers, like Germany, were required for ECE to successfully embark upon its transition and transformation processes. To meet its multiple economic objectives, Bonn had to maintain its position as a pre-eminent *Handelsstaat* (trading state) to preserve *Standort* and *Modell Deutschland* in the face of growing economic competition from other European and Asian powers.

Economic instruments, such as the promotion of foreign trade, foreign direct investment (FDI), and technological know-how, were regarded by Bonn as invaluable tools for achieving domestic political aims which could not be attained via traditional foreign policy means. Patricia Davis refers to economic incentives and instruments which can be used 'as a means of ripening conditions for political cooperation with a particular country', in her case Poland, and for harnessing 'the economic resources at its disposal, that is, by gaining the support and cooperation

¹Deutsche Bundesbank, 'The State of External Adjustment after German Unification'. *Monthly Report* (May 1996), p. 57.

of the private economic sector'.² There is an important historical precedent here as the Germans actively use their economic policy for political purposes. According to Ludger Kühnhardt, there was a crucial motive behind Germany's pursuit of its economic self-interests:

German foreign policy interests are linked closely to the safeguarding of its foreign trade, that is to say, the export structures of the German economy. Securing access to resources and guaranteeing market preservation or the expansion of markets are priorities for Germany as a trading nation.³

Economic instruments are indispensable – when they are available – and form the foundation for what Hartmut Schumann defined as the 'economisation of foreign policy' in the FRG: another key German foreign policy leitmotif throughout the conduct of the Cold War.⁴

From Adenauer to Kohl, every chancellor pursued political and security goals via economic means. This strategy was effective and uncontroversial, although occasionally Germany's economic prowess created envy, especially in Western Europe. The FRG's economic interests – before and after unification – should be examined in the context of the bipolar order of the Cold War and the Soviet Union's political-military and economic hegemony in ECE. The Cold War's end and the Soviet Union's collapse significantly altered the nature of Germany's economic relations with ECE. Germany was no longer precluded by domestic or external constraints from expanding its historic economic and cultural links with ECE: the foundation of Germany's *Osthandel* (Eastern trade) for decades.⁵ Germany's rich history of *Osthandel* allowed Germany's leaders to manage better the integration of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) into West German structures and the transition processes in ECE.

After unification, Germany faced insurmountable domestic economic obstacles, which shaped its foreign policy choices and options in ECE. The first choice entailed two important complementary strands and was perceived as the most ominous in the eyes of Germany's Eastern and Western neighbours. The first focused on the loosening of Germany's extensive *Westbindung*

²Patricia Davis, *The Art of Economic Persuasion: Positive Incentives and German Economic Diplomacy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 151.

³Ludger Kühnhardt, 'Germany's Role - Germany's Goals', *German Comments*, no. 39 (1995), p. 17.

⁴Hartmut Schumann, 'Wirtschaftliche Dimensionen der Aussenpolitik', *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 41, no. 2 (1994), p. 146.

⁵Robert Mark Spaulding, *Osthandel and Ostpolitik. German Foreign Trade Policies in Eastern Europe from Bismarck to Adenauer* (Providence, RI; Oxford: Berghahn, 1996).

after unification in favour of the economic engagement of its Eastern neighbours. The second raised the concern that Germany would use its strong economic power base to thoroughly penetrate their Eastern neighbours' economic markets. This thinking received significant attention since Germany's Western neighbours were curious about Germany's economic motives in ECE.

Economic parallels between Mexico and the United States were widespread and fuelled the notion that the ECE economies would become more *dependent* on German aid, investment, and trade if they were to manage their difficult transition processes successfully. Walter Russell Mead's observation that the 'West sees Europe through Wilsonian spectacles: plucky little peoples striving for freedom. The Germans see something more like what Washington sees when it looks at Central America and the Caribbean ...' encapsulates a rather cynical American view of what Germany's policy-makers are thinking about when they look eastwards.⁶ The fear of total German economic dominance or what Paul Kennedy defined as a German commercial and financial *pénétration pacifique* into ECE was acutely felt throughout Europe and the United States.⁷ Fear in Western Europe, especially France, that Germany would somehow capitalise from its enhanced geographic position and channel its economic power towards becoming a regional economic hegemon in ECE, was repeatedly expressed.

For some, this dangerous development was a foregone conclusion. Even before German unification (February 1990), the Czechoslovak Ambassador to Washington, Rita Klímová, declared: 'The German speaking parts of Europe, including Austria, will succeed where the Habsburgs, Hitler and Bismarck were unsuccessful – in Germanising Central and Eastern Europe by purely peaceful and laudable methods of market economic development'.⁸ Wolf Jobst Siedler went even further:

⁶Walter Russell Mead, 'The Once and Future Reich', *World Policy Journal*, vol. 7, no. 4 (Fall 1990), p. 601.

⁷Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 271.

⁸Klímová quoted in Rick Fawn, *The Czech Republic: a Nation of Velvet* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 2000), p. 110.

Once the problems of unification have been overcome, Germany will not be able to avoid the economic penetration of Eastern Europe and it will probably be able to achieve what a few hundred divisions of the Third Reich could not achieve – predominance in the regions between the Weichsel, Bug, Dnjepr and Don.⁹

Taking this one step further, ECE would be penetrated at the macro and micro economic levels by a powerful and pervasive German economic presence. Once again, ECE would become an integral component of Germany's political and economic hinterland raising fears of the economic conditions prevalent in the 1930s when Germany had succeeded in creating a *Grossraumwirtschaft* (German economic realm). The publication of a secret report commissioned by the Czech Federal Security and Intelligence Agency claiming that Germany was 'seeking the political domination of Czechoslovakia' as part of a 'massive economic offensive' only added more fuel to the fire of the discontents worried about Germany's future economic influence in their country.¹⁰

The second choice entailed the least controversial and most popular option for Bonn's political leadership: the channelling of its economic power to become a constructive and proactive player in the region's political and economic development. Unilateralism would be shunned; international institutions such as the EU and NATO, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development would provide the financial and security muscles to promote regional growth and economic stability. Germany would resume its historical function as a 'bridging power' between East and West and it would act as a champion for the interests of ECE in Western Europe. This strategy's adoption would reduce suspicions about Germany's motives for looking eastwards. All the states in ECE were motivated by two common goals: an irreversible return to the West and full inclusion in the Euro-Atlantic's international economic, military and political institutions.

Finally, there was another scenario that generated concern. Germany's intense preoccupation with its own internal socio-political and economic transformation processes raised the question whether it would be able to provide the economic assistance required for helping the

⁹Siedler quoted by Wolfgang Michal, *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1995), p. 70. MT.

¹⁰Jan Obrman, 'Czechoslovak Assembly Affirms German Friendship Treaty', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, no. 21 (22 May 1992), p. 19.

emerging transition states in ECE. Due to overwhelming domestic constraints, Germany might be inclined to adopt an isolationist stance vis-à-vis ECE and thus concentrate less on pressing international matters. France, Britain, and even the United States would exacerbate this stance as they might opt to play a passive political and economic role in ECE. Subsequently, Germany would be thrust into assuming a more proactive role in the region — one it could not sustain indefinitely — to prevent a collapse of the transformation processes in ECE and forestall any security crises on its Eastern frontier.

Germany's economic interests towards the Czech Republic and Poland are an amalgamation of each of these important choices, policy options or scenarios. Agential and structural features arising from the Soviet Union's collapse, communism's demise, and the emergence of new independent states in ECE catapulted Germany into devising an economic strategy, in concert with its allies, especially the EU, and German business that would mitigate the impact of these monumental events for itself and its Eastern neighbours. Any German economic strategy vis-à-vis ECE had to be tempered with restraint to dispel residual fears that Bonn was seeking to exercise 'complete' economic control over the region. It was, however, inevitable, given the existence of powerful historical and cultural links and centuries of intense economic cooperation, that Germany would focus increasingly on emerging political, economic, and security developments in ECE after 1990.

This chapter is divided into two major sections. The first provides an overview of the major factors encouraging Germany's economic drive eastwards. The second discusses the bilateral economic dimensions of Germany's foreign relations with the Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) and Poland, in particular foreign trade and FDI. The powerful roles of Germany's private sector and the *Länder* are addressed briefly in this context.

Why Go East?

Geographical Proximity

There are four principal factors which prompted Bonn to focus on the economic challenges in ECE as a result of its new position in the European *Mittellage*: Germany's geographic proximity to ECE; the economic impact of unification on Germany's position as a

major European trading state; the economic impact of the joint collapse of the Soviet Union and the Council on Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) on the former GDR and Eastern Europe; and the German private sector's proclivity towards expanding old markets and developing new ones in ECE.

New geographical and geopolitical realities on the European continent thrust Germany into a major fulcrum of political and economic power in Western and Eastern Europe after unification. The former GDR was an ideal launching pad for promoting Germany's economic relations with ECE and spearheading its reconstruction.¹¹ For Dieter Schumacher, a unified Germany's

'...proximity to the market has the greatest positive effect on German exports of clothing, wooden articles, furniture, mineral oil products, textiles and shoes. Conversely, on the import side short distances between the CEECs [Central and East European Countries] and Germany give an advantage above all to supplies of mineral oil products, iron and steel, wooden articles and motor vehicle industry products.¹²

After 1990, it was predictable that Germany's economic relations with ECE would be more intensive with the two states located on its eastern frontier: Czechoslovakia and Poland. The reverse was also true; Germany became an instant economic magnet for both states and others in ECE. With Germany's close geographic proximity to ECE, Bonn focused increasingly on safeguarding the transition and transformation processes being undertaken by emerging independent states in ECE. The potential spill-over effect from political and economic turmoil on Germany's Eastern frontier had potentially disastrous consequences for the former GDR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other states in Eastern Europe. Germany was the principal transit route for all goods travelling from East to West and vice-versa and its central geographic position in Europe placed it in a vulnerable position.

¹¹Hisashi Watanabe, 'Germany's Unification and the Effects on Central and Eastern Europe' in Herbert Hax *et al* (eds.), *Economic Transformation in Eastern Europe and East Asia: A Challenge for Japan and Germany* (Berlin; New York: Springer, 1996), pp. 106-107.

¹²Dieter Schumacher, 'Impact on German Trade of increased division of labor with Eastern Europe' in Stanley W. Black (ed.), *Europe's Economy looks East: Implications for Germany and the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 151.

The Economic Impact of Unification

When assessing Germany's post-Cold War political and economic development it is often forgotten that despite all the apparent benefits derived from the merger of the FRG and the GDR, Germany remained a state in transition. This had important implications for Germany's economic relations with the ECE. The preservation of *Standort Deutschland* was contingent on several crucial factors which were intimately linked with Germany's ability to manage its own internal transformation processes and recreate and restructure former GDR markets that had suffered or been lost as a result of the CMEA's collapse. The socio-political and economic conditions imposed by unification acted as a constraint and catalyst in forcing Germany's economic interests in ECE onto the political agenda. The restoration of the GDR's trading ties with the defunct CMEA was an economic priority whose success would determine the outcome of Germany's unification experiment.

Although domestic economic priorities within Germany were paramount, social and economic disparities on the periphery of Germany's eastern frontier were not ignored; however, they did not receive the same amount of attention in the aftermath of unification. Bonn's Eastern dilemma can be summarised by the following question: how would Germany be able to finance the tremendous costs of unification and provide financial and economic resources for the reconstruction of ECE simultaneously? For Bonn, the former was the most important although the latter was regarded as vital if the former was to succeed.

This particular conundrum resurfaced on numerous occasions and was essential in influencing Bonn's – at times – *ad hoc* responses to the numerous challenges on its Eastern frontier. The 'unification' factor in Germany's foreign policy behaviour was important for several reasons. First, the success of German unification, especially the economic regeneration of its eastern *Länder*, was directly linked to the protracted existence of a state of socio-political, economic, and military stability on its Eastern frontier. Secondly, the preservation of Germany's internal stability (and the EU for that matter) was perceived by Bonn as intimately linked to the success of external reform and transformation processes in ECE.¹³ Third, Germany's ECE

¹³See the following speeches made by Kohl and published in *Bulletin*, 'Aufgaben deutscher Politik in den neunziger Jahren', no. 56 (22 May 1991), pp. 441-46, and *Bulletin*, 'Fundamente und Strukturen einer gemeinsamen europäischen Zukunft', no. 60 (29 May 1991), pp. 473-477.

counterparts were fully aware that if its internal transformation processes faltered, or even failed, attempts successfully to assist and reconstruct ECE would suffer a serious and irreversible setback which would have profound implications for European stability. As the principal motor for European integration and the EU's enlargement to the East, all ECE governments, especially the Czech Republic and Poland, relied extensively on Germany's ability successfully to manage its unification processes and devote substantial political and economic resources to the region's recovery.

This particular dilemma was exacerbated by the exasperation Germany's political leadership felt when trying to secure Western and especially Southern European participation in the economic reconstruction of ECE. From Germany's perspective, it was self-evident that there were legitimate comparisons between the situations of Greece, Portugal, and Spain in the 1970s and 1980s, and the new independent states in ECE after 1990.¹⁴ There is, however, little economic evidence to suggest that from 1990 to 1998 other European powers such as France, Italy, the United Kingdom, or even the United States (despite large investments spread across few sectors) played an active role, commensurate with their status in the international system, in assisting with the region's political and economic development.

Germany's economy was faced with multiple challenges as it was faced, first, with reversing forty years of centralised Soviet planning in the GDR and, second, integrating the GDR's socio-political, economic and military structures into its own. These daunting tasks had profound implications for Germany's external position vis-à-vis ECE and the Former Soviet Union (FSU). Unification, despite early buoyant proclamations, especially by Chancellor Kohl, presented the German economy with complex challenges and also contributed to a general slow-down in the European Community's growth in the early 1990s.

The following economic indicators briefly illustrate how Germany's economic fortunes were reversed after 1989. First, Germany's current account surplus in 1989 amounted to DM 108 billion or 5 per cent of GDP; by 1991, its current account showed a deficit of more than DM 30 billion. Second, the current account deficit crisis was closely linked to the sharp decline of West

¹⁴Hans-Peter Schwarz, 'Aussenpolitische Agenda für das Fin de siècle', *Merkur*, no. 48 (September/October 1994), p. 783.

German exports in the first two years after unification. German imports outpaced export growth because of the growing internal demand for West German products in the former GDR. West German exports to ECE, however, remained unaffected by this trend. Indeed, West German enterprises, fuelled by an incredible consumer demand in ECE, increased their exports to the region by one-third from 1989 to 1991. On the other hand, East German exports never recovered from their pre-1989 levels; they never even reached forty per cent of their 1989 level. West German imports from ECE increased by forty per cent whereas East German imports collapsed to an all-time low because of the CMEA's dissolution.¹⁵ Thirdly, net payments to the European Community from 1989 to 1991 increased although Germany's per capita income had decreased since unification. Finally, the dramatic appreciation of the German Mark from 1989 to 1991 raised concerns about the price competitiveness of German products abroad.¹⁶

This potent mix of economic indicators signalled the problems and challenges faced by a unified Germany undertaking the economic reconstruction of its eastern *Länder*. A crippling economic recession in the early 1990s also severely handicapped its ability and capacity to pursue its political and economic objectives in ECE. The economies of its Eastern neighbours who were becoming increasingly dependent on Western, especially German financial assistance and aid to overcome the devastating economic legacy of communism, displayed similar trends. Against this economic backdrop, Germany's policy-makers were forced to confront their Eastern *problématique* and manage their own internal transition processes simultaneously.

The Collapse of the Soviet Union and the CMEA

The Soviet Union and CMEA's collapse offered several economic challenges for Germany's policymakers. Under the provisions of the State Treaty with the former GDR and the currency union of 1 July 1990, the FRG agreed to maintain the CMEA's transfer rouble mechanism. It also purchased the transfer rouble claims arising from trade with CMEA countries at a preferential rate until the end of 1990. Consequently, through this arrangement a unified Germany became economically tied to potentially collapsing markets in the East. This was only

¹⁵Deutsche Bundesbank, 'The Economic Relations between Unified Germany and the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe Undergoing Reforms'. *Monthly Report* (July 1992), p. 15.

¹⁶Deutsche Bundesbank, 'The State of External Adjustment after German Unification', pp. 48-49.

for a short period of time but it was part of an overall German strategy to prevent the total collapse of the GDR's former internal and external markets in ECE and bolster trade with the Soviet Union.¹⁷ The CMEA's demise had dramatic economic implications for the GDR which, in turn, affected Germany's ability to shape its reunification processes. To illustrate the gravity of this state of affairs, three-quarters of all GDR exports went to the Soviet Union and CMEA countries; one quarter went to the West and the FRG received half that total.¹⁸ Within the Eastern European CMEA, trade volume had fallen between fourteen and sixteen per cent in 1990.¹⁹ The CMEA's dissolution eventually led to the collapse of the GDR's external markets there and in the FSU.

Trade patterns between the former GDR and their CMEA counterparts in ECE were also severely disrupted by the collapse of communism. Trading levels amongst the CMEA states decreased as they attempted to increase their trade with Western industrial countries. The CMEA's demise therefore led to a fundamental reappraisal of ECE economic interests which became increasingly focused on the expansion of economic relations with the West and, in particular, Germany. For Germany and ECE, the expansion of economic ties against overwhelming economic odds – although welcome on almost every level – could not dispel the historical angst of economic domination contemplated by Germany's smaller neighbours.²⁰

After forty years of Soviet domination, ECE was obviously keen to cut its dependent economic ties with Russia and return to their West European roots. Due to its weakened position, the Soviet Union, followed by the Russian Federation, had no leverage in this matter and reluctantly yielded its economic influence in the region to Germany. This dramatic role reversal had important consequences, especially for the Poles who, according to Norman Davies, had 'traditionally acted as the bridge between the dynamic German economy and the vast Russian

¹⁷Jeffrey J. Anderson and Celeste A. Wallander, *In the Shadow of the Wall: Germany's Eastern Trade Policy after Unification* (Cambridge, MA: Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, Working Paper, no. 96-3, 1996), p. 15.

¹⁸W.R. Smyser, *The German Economy: Colossus at the Crossroads* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 151.

¹⁹UN/ECE, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1990-1991* (New York: UN/ECE, 1991), p. 74.

²⁰Heinrich Machowski and Wolfram Schrettl, 'The Economic Impact of Unified Germany on Central and Eastern Europe', Study Papers, 103rd Congress, Second session (Washington, DC: Joint Economic Committee of the Congress of the United States of America, November 1994), p. 414.

market' but 'were torn between admiration for the quality of German achievements and fear of domination by German interests'.²¹

There were two immediate economic priorities for the Czech Republic and Poland. First, they had to expand their economic relations amongst themselves. Second, ECE was intent on severing their links with traditional Soviet markets and limiting their overall dependency on the Soviet style of economic management. It was inevitable given Germany's strong historical, cultural, and economic traditions in ECE that it would eventually emerge as a regional economic power responsible for spearheading economic reforms throughout the entire region. Germany was increasingly looking eastwards to meet foreign and security policy challenges whilst its neighbours in ECE were looking westwards in the hope that they would become future members of Western institutions, such as the EU and NATO. In almost all cases, the path for the return of the East to the West was via Germany. According to the UN/ECE Secretariat, this dramatic economic re-orientation of interests and priorities had the following impact on Germany's economic relations with ECE:

Probably the most pronounced structural tendency which can be observed since the late 1980s has been the rapid ascent of Germany to the position of the dominant trade partner of transition countries, and a parallel tendency for Russia's role to decline. The replacement of Russia by Germany as the main trading partner of most east European economies not only demonstrates a geographic reorientation of trade on a substantial scale... It is clear that a new pattern of 'hub and spoke' integration has emerged in Central Europe with the German economy as a centre of gravity and a pole for attraction for nearly all transition countries from Estonia in the north to Bulgaria in the south.²²

To expand on its West German traditions as a successful 'trading state' throughout the Cold War, a reunited Germany needed to create new markets in ECE and preserve old ones. This was essential for Germany to safeguard its economic investments in its eastern *Länder*, promote and expand its *Osthandel*, and remain globally competitive. There were, however, strategic implications arising from this strategy's adoption, especially for Germany's economic competitors. The prevailing opinion amongst Germany's neighbours was that the rise of a German economic giant in ECE was a potential reality, although paradoxically, these fears amongst Germany's allies in Western Europe and the United States did not result in a marked increase of

²¹Norman Davies, 'One Thousand Years of Polish-German Camaraderie' in Roger Bartlett and Karen Schönwälder (eds.), *The German Lands and Eastern Europe: Essays on the History of their Social, Cultural and Political Relations* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 269.

²²UN/ECE, *Economic Bulletin for Europe*, vol. 46 (New York: UN/ECE, 1994), p. 57.

their economic interest in ECE.²³ In its 1993 annual report, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe echoed repeatedly voiced German concerns that not enough attention was being paid to the development of the ECE economies:

First, there is still a tendency in many western countries to regard economic developments in the east as of relatively minor importance to western interests. This is short-sighted: economic failure in the transition economies would increase the risks of political instability in Europe, while economic success could eventually provide a significant stimulus to the west European economy. Second, western governments have become increasingly preoccupied with their own domestic problems.²⁴

This crucial point was not lost on Germany's political leadership or its Eastern European neighbours. There were profound implications for the following areas: Germany's perceptions of economic instability in the region, the urgency of devising a co-ordinated bilateral and multilateral approach to transformation and transition problems in ECE, and the development and implementation of economic strategies designed to forestall further economic difficulties in the region. The monumental political and economic events witnessed from 1989 to 1991 exacerbated Germany's economic malaise and its ability to shape internal and external developments without being gripped by a potentially perilous recession.

Foreign Economic Relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland

Post-unification Interregnum, 1990-1992

After 1990, Bonn was focused on mastering the economic challenges posed by unification. They far outweighed any foreign economic interests Germany may have contemplated entertaining, although there was an important link between the two. Germany's foreign economic policy infrastructure, composed of multiple agents (ministries, divisions, committees, etc.) and individual actors (highlighted in chapter two), was not readily prepared to adapt itself to the requirements of a new international system with an entirely different set of rules of engagement, especially as far as Germany's relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland were concerned. There was a lack of a concerted and coordinated effort on the part of these economic agents and actors, including the chancellor, to develop a coherent bilateral economic approach towards ECE.

²³András Inotai, 'Economic Implications of German Unification for Central and Eastern Europe' in Paul B. Stares (ed.), *The New Germany and the New Europe* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1992), p. 295.

²⁴United Nations/Economic Commission of Europe, *Economic Bulletin for Europe*, Vol. 45 (New York; Geneva: UN/ECE, 1993), pp. 1-2.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to conclude that there was minimal trade activity between Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland during this period or that German foreign direct investment in these countries was negligible. Indeed, it became clear that from 1990-1993, a pattern was emerging which suggested that Germany was already playing a prominent economic role in both countries. According to Machowski and Schrettl,

a comparison of German foreign direct investment and German exports reveals a strong discrepancy in the extent of reorientation toward the CEE [Central and Eastern Europe] region. While the share of the CEE region in German exports increased from 3 per cent in 1990 to 4 per cent in 1993, the region's share in German foreign direct investment jumped over the same period from a mere 0.7 per cent in 1990 (and practically nil before) to as much as 8.5 per cent in 1993.²⁵

That Germany's foreign economic policy lacked structure and coherence should not imply, however, that it was complacent about the economic problems on its Eastern doorstep. Germany was in a state of economic transition like its Eastern neighbours so it had, unlike its Western neighbours, a much better appreciation for the transformational political and economic changes Czechoslovakia and Poland were undertaking.

In this time period, two occurrences are worth noting. From 1990-1992, the Kohl government was able to achieve two important political objectives via economic means which are worth highlighting. Kohl successfully linked an aid package (DM2 billion in debt forgiveness and export credit guarantees) to Poland with political concessions on the ethnic German minority in Poland which were to form the basis for foundation for negotiating Germany's bilateral treaty with Poland. Second, Kohl successfully used economic carrots to induce the Soviet Union to support German unification.²⁶ Throughout the broad spectrum of Germany's foreign economic relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland, it struggled to define its economic *raison d'être* by relying on *ad hoc* arrangements and responses on the part of ministries, the *Länder*, and the private sector to answer requests for economic and financial assistance from ECE governments. Despite these informal arrangements, however, Germany was still able to provide financial

²⁵Machowski and Wolfram Schrettl, 'The Economic Impact of Unified Germany on Central and Eastern Europe', p. 421.

²⁶Patricia Davis and Peter Dombrowski, "Appetite of the Wolf: German Foreign Assistance for Central and Eastern Europe," *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 1 (April 1997), pp. 5-6.

resources totalling DM 27.5 billion to the transition countries in Eastern Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania).²⁷

Bilateralism and Germany's Foreign Economic Policy

Germany was clearly in an advantageous position to be able to shape if not dictate the contents of its foreign economic relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. Bilateral economic instruments played an important role in establishing and sustaining Germany's predominant economic position in ECE. They also functioned as effective security policy tools in the combat against economic instability. At Bonn's disposal were a broad range of bilateral economic instruments to help it prioritise its economic investments and protect its economic interests. Their application, however, was controversial since they assisted in the expansion of Germany's economic power and influence in the region. Germany held an inordinate high level of structural power in ECE. According to Susan Strange, structural power

...in short, confers the power to decide how things shall be done, the power to shape frameworks within which states relate to each other, relate to people, or relate to corporate enterprises. The relative power of each party in a relationship is more, or less, if one party is also determining the surrounding structure of the relationship.²⁸

Germany's political leaders were conscious of their country's political and economic clout and ability to shape economic environments to their liking. From the perspective of its ECE neighbours, Germany was a magnet for all economic activity within the EU and, most importantly, Czech and Polish exports. Germany's 1200 kilometer border with the Czech Republic and Poland was investment starved and crying out for economic stimuli that only Germany could provide. TRANSFORM, foreign trade (exports and imports) and direct foreign investments were crucial economic instruments in spearheading the transformation processes of its Eastern neighbours. The private sector's role was invaluable in identifying joint venture opportunities and channelling direct capital investment into Germany's neighbouring economies.

²⁷The majority of this assistance went to Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. See Deutsche Bundesbank, 'The economic relations between unified Germany and the countries of central and eastern Europe undergoing reforms', p. 18.

²⁸Susan Strange, *States and Markets* (London: Pinter, 1994), pp. 24-25.

TRANSFORM

In 1992, the *Bundeskanzlei* took the decision to formalise the aid and assistance arrangements between Bonn and ECE by placing the technical assistance programs of the individual ministries under the TRANSFORM consulting programme. Its implementation began in 1994. The BMWi and the Foreign Office were tasked with coordinating TRANSFORM: a programme designed to promote advisory aid for countries undergoing transformation and transition processes and for strengthening democratic efforts in all states targeted. Bonn laid down several important guidelines and priorities which were to influence its assistance and aid programmes for the foreseeable future: (1) the promotion of activities in target countries was contingent on where it felt it had a comparative advantage; (2) assistance would only be provided to 'priority' countries (this included the Czech Republic and Poland); and (3) technical assistance requests from national coordinators for foreign aid in the recipient countries were required before assistance could be provided.

Several cabinet decisions between March 1992 and July 1993 were instrumental in defining further the criteria for providing assistance and aid to target countries. Bonn prioritised those reform states that had made the most progress in their transition processes and trade liberalisation policies from 1990 to 1992. Not surprisingly, Czechoslovakia and Poland were defined as 'priority' countries. The BMWi cited numerous economic areas that the German government, in particular, the Foreign Office and the BMWi, in conjunction with the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (Reconstruction Loan Corporation - KfW), wished to emphasise in their bilateral economic relations with target countries: (1) political and economic advice for governments engaged in reform and transitional processes; (2) the development of mid-level structures and companies; (3) help for business restructuring and privatisation efforts; (4) creation of tax, border, insurance and bank regimes; (5) advice for agricultural sectors; (6) professional training in all economic areas; (7) law advice, in particular, in the field of business law; (8) help for the erection of administrative structures, and (9) extensive advice in the field of work and social politics.²⁹ These measures assisted transitional states in their reform and transformation efforts and they were co-ordinated by government ministries and agencies, including the *Länder*.

²⁹BMW, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit Mittel- und Osteuropa 1994*. no. 373 (Bonn: BMW, 1995), pp. 8-9.

In July 1993, Kohl appointed retired State Secretary Walter Kittel as overall co-ordinator for consultancy (technical) assistance to Part II countries, which included the Czech Republic and Poland. The BMWi emerged not only as the principal chargé of coordinating assistance activities but also for identifying the main areas for advisory services. The KfW also played an important role in this process, aided by other federal ministries, the *Länder*, and the municipalities. In daily practice, KfW offices were set up in German embassies overseas. These offices acted as clearinghouses for all aid and technical assistance projects undertaken in the recipient countries. They performed the following functions: '(1) identifying main areas of advice together with the partner country, (2) receiving and discussing applications from the partner country and giving a preliminary opinion on them, (3) giving advice to receiving governments on services available to them, (4) coordinating German technical assistance, (5) monitoring the implementation of projects, (6) observing the reform process, and (7) observing the aid activities of other donors and ensuring coordination with these activities'.³⁰

TRANSFORM and the Czech Republic

The German government's TRANSFORM report for 1996 noted that by 1994 the Czech government had been successful in its transformation efforts and did not require as much assistance, except in special sectoral areas where there was demand. Through TRANSFORM, the Czech Republic received approximately DM 15 billion for fiscal years 95-96. Germany was focused on providing technical assistance to the Czech government in the following areas: development of the market economy; support to small and medium sized enterprises; support for EU integration; education and training; the environment; support for the state and social sector; agriculture; the financial sector, and science and technology. In the Czech Republic, TRANSFORM was coordinated by the Bilateral Co-operation Unit of the BMF and the responsible national Czech ministry with the purpose of implementing the following tasks: (1) sending missions of experts from Germany to the Czech Republic and Poland, (2) educating and training Czech and Polish officials, professionals, managers and public officers, (3) delivery of

³⁰Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in Europe, *Assistance Programmes for Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. (Paris: OECD, 1996), pp. 36-37.

material and equipment necessary to the carrying out of the consultancy, (4) feasibility studies, and (5) elaboration of analyses and other kinds of documents demanded by the EU.

More specifically, the TRANSFORM report highlights several projects completed in 1995-1997. The BMWi assisted with the creation of an institute for administration in Benesov which was tasked with educating state, local and communal employees. In Hradec Králové, a pilot project for the reorganisation of the city's administration was organised. In the areas of work and social politics, the BMWi helped reform the Czech social insurance and pension systems and a model work promotion, employment and structural development centre in Zdár. Within the context of the environment, Germany provided advice on emergency and plant safety to their Czech counterparts. In the private sector, the Germans promoted the creation and development of a structure designed to advise small and medium sized enterprises with their projects and exchanges with their German counterparts. In the tourism sphere, the BMWi played an active role in contributing funds for the development of tourism infrastructure sites in the Euroregions of Sumava and Labe. In the financial sector, the BMWi concentrated on expanding the operations of the Bohemia-Moravia Guarantee and Development Bank and restructuring the operations of the Czech Savings Bank.

In 1997, the TRANSFORM budget for the Czech Republic was reduced in light of the Czech Republic's limited needs for TRANSFORM financial resources. Programmes initiated in 1996 were continued and Germany sought to continue its efforts to prepare the Czech Republic for eventual membership in the EU and to educate the country about the EU's membership requirements, laws and regulations.³¹

The Länder

A Bavarian-Czech Working Group, established in 1990, has implemented over 70 projects focused on state administration reform, particularly the education of managers and higher officials. Cross border projects aimed at improving the environment have also been undertaken, Study visits for Czech judges and prosecutors have been organised. Saxony created a joint

³¹BMW. *Die Beratung Mittel- und Osteuropas beim Aufbau von Demokratie und sozialer Marktwirtschaft: Konzept und Beratungsprogramme der Bundesregierung* (Bonn: BMWi, 1997), p. 104.

commission with the Czech Republic to promote the education and further education of manpower, including the education of managers and the development of relations between companies and enterprises in their respective private sectors, especially in the agricultural sector.

The joint working group of the Czech Republic and Baden-Württemberg, created in 1991, focuses its activities on technical assistance for small and medium sized enterprises and on the promotion of bilateral business, university and forest administration links. The working group also promotes youth outreach and internship opportunities for their students. Brandenburg supports cooperation in agricultural fields, education and research. Bremen provides a permanent representative in Prague to provide advice on harbour issues.³² Mecklenburg-Vorpommern assists in the field of education, especially high schools and the teaching of agricultural ecology.³³ The *Länder's* priorities did not change in 1997.

TRANSFORM and Poland

The German government's TRANSFORM report for 1996 highlighted Poland's number one position in the political and economic transformation processes of ECE and its first report on the priorities of TRANSFORM in Poland from 1995-1996.³⁴ From a TRANSFORM budget of DM 295 billion, Poland was allocated DM 29.5 billion for its programme (Russia received the highest allocation with DM 75 billion). The TRANSFORM report calls attention to the following areas the BMWi provided advice: (1) government consulting in the fields of social and environmental reform to prepare the Poles for the EU; (2) support for the private sector, especially small and medium sized enterprises; (3) education and further education of professional and leadership manpower, and (4) support for the agricultural sector.

In (1), the BMWi consulted with its Polish counterparts in the areas of pension, accident and health insurance and the modernisation of its social insurance systems. Within the context of the environment, Germany provided advice about emergency and plant safety. In support of Poland's aspirations to join the EU, Germany also requested that Polish government officials be

³²Source: www.mfcr.cz

³³BMWi, *Die Beratung Mittel- und Osteuropas beim Aufbau von Demokratie und sozialer Marktwirtschaft: Konzept und Beratungsprogramme der Bundesregierung* (Bonn: BMWi, 1996), p. 107.

³⁴Ibid., p. 64.

educated in the laws and regulations of the EU so that the Polish government could easily adapt its national legal structures and laws within EU community law. This project was undertaken in cooperation with the French government. In (2,3), within the Polish private sector there was a high demand for technological and business know-how, and education for its workforce that would be useful for Poland's transformation processes. Initiatives like consulting programmes, the creation of the German-Polish Economic Development Society and other regional cooperation bureaus (in the four bordering voivodships in west Poland) were all important instruments for furthering German and Polish economic objectives. In (4), the BMWi emphasised Poland's agricultural sector as an area where its professional expertise could be valuable. Here the BMWi concentrated on educating more agricultural consultants and instructors in several consultation centres in Brwinow and Posen.

From 1996-1997, the BMWi focused on furthering the implementation of the aforementioned projects, including the recurrent emphasis of bring Poland closer to the EU through consultations and education of key Polish governmental officials. A particular focus was on the voivodship of Köslin where a tourism project was being developed with German assistance.

The Länder

The *Länder* undertook their own consultations with Poland and concentrated on areas where they felt they could make an impact and areas of interest to them. The following *Länder* participated in special projects with their Polish government or voivodship counterparts: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Lower Saxony, Brandenburg, Berlin, North Rhine Westphalia, Saxony, Hesse and Baden-Württemberg. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern supported economic cooperation between itself and Poland through a joint venture located in Gdansk which promoted exchanges and trips between management delegations. Lower Saxony expanded its bilateral twinning arrangements with the cities of Posen and Wroclaw. Brandenburg concentrated on regional border development (the *Land* shares a 250 kilometre border with the Poles). Bavaria, Lower Saxony and Berlin consulted on the creation of several 'East-West' management and consultation bureaus which would foster closer cooperation between Germans and Poles. North-

Rhine Westphalia worked closely with the following regions: Kattowitz, Cracow and Oppeln in the area of development. Baden-Württemberg concentrated on similar projects in Oppeln. Hesse created a Hesse-Poland information bureau in 1996 which was designed to promote cooperation and joint ventures between their respective private sectors.

The German government's TRANSFORM report for 1997 highlights the following additional projects implemented by the *Länder*. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern participated in the development of company community associations in Srem and Olsztyn, including the expansion of communal projects along its border with the Euroregion Pommerania. Lower Saxony intensified its twinning arrangements with Posen and Wroclaw in the areas of office communication, electronic engineering and support for the agricultural sectors (delivery of heavy machinery). Bremen opened up a 'Bremen Business Office in Gdansk and the city of Hamburg supported a number of projects initiated by the Polish Consulate in Hamburg. North Rhine Westphalia continued to focus on the regions of Oppeln, Kattowitz and Cracow.³⁵

Foreign Trade and Direct Investments

In 1996, German President Roman Herzog gave a speech entitled 'Trade with Central and Eastern Europe – An Arrow of our Export Economy' where he classified foreign trade (exports and imports) with the region and direct foreign investments as the principal foundations of Germany's economic relations with the region.³⁶ In Bonn, the expansion of foreign trade between Germany and its Eastern neighbors was seen an important precondition for the establishment of a vibrant growth market for Germany's exporters seeking new opportunities. Increased levels of German direct investments abroad, especially in ECE were necessary to maintain traditional sales markets and open up new ones. Capital investments allow recipient countries to benefit from the following: economic resources that they otherwise would not get access to technological, management, and organisational knowledge which increases productivity, product quality and

³⁵BMW. *Die Beratung Mittel- und Osteuropas beim Aufbau von Demokratie und sozialer Marktwirtschaft: Konzept und Beratungsprogramme der Bundesregierung* (Bonn: BMW, 1997).

³⁶*Bulletin*, 'Handel mit Mittel- und Osteuropa – ein Pfeiler unserer Exportwirtschaft', no. 101 (10 December 1996), pp. 1091-1093.

international competitiveness, and invaluable privatisation assistance.³⁷ The link between trade exports and German direct investments could not be more profound for the German and ECE economies. The German *Bundesbank* states:

The parallel trends in German direct investment abroad and German exports indicate that domestic enterprises expand their involvement in other countries principally for strategic sales reasons. The regional distribution of the stock of German direct investment abroad is, moreover, largely identical to the regional pattern of German exports.³⁸

The Czech Republic and Poland were at the forefront of Germany's interests to intensify trade with them as they had made a strong commitment to their economic reform and transformation processes and liberalised their trade regimes.³⁹ At stake was access to a market with approximately four hundred million people of which thirteen per cent were located in the Czech Republic and Poland. In his speech, Herzog described Germany's eastern neighbours as 'tigers at the doorstep' and he also addressed complaints about Germany's economic dominance in ECE and worries that its passive economic engagement there was allowing other states to establish a vital foothold. He acknowledged the veracity of both sides' claims at a time when Germany had just completed two of its most vibrant years of foreign trade and investments with ECE (1993-1995).⁴⁰ According to the German *Bundesbank*, after several years of transformation

more than one half of the foreign trade of the CEE countries is now with the industrial countries. Germany has by far the greatest share in this trade – being just as much a consumer of raw materials and industrial products as a supplier of consumer goods and, more importantly, of capital goods for the creation of efficient production facilities'.⁴¹

Driving this growth were the following areas: the increased division of labour in textiles, leather, and clothing, in the form of outward processing, but also in the motor vehicle industry and in electrical engineering.⁴² Germany's consumption of raw materials, industrial products, and as a

³⁷Jörg Beyfuss, *Erfahrungen deutscher Auslandsinvestoren in den Reformländern Mittel- und Osteuropas* (Cologne: Deutscher Instituts-Verlag, 1996), p. 11.

³⁸Deutsche Bundesbank, 'Developments and determinants of international direct investment', *Monthly Report* (August 1997), p. 66.

³⁹Dieter Schumacher, 'Impact on German Trade of increased division of labour with Eastern Europe', p. 101.

⁴⁰*Bulletin*, 'Handel mit Mittel- und Osteuropa', p. 1092.

⁴¹Deutsche Bundesbank, 'Recent trends in Germany's economic links with central and east European countries in transition', *Monthly Report* (July 1996), p. 29.

⁴²Dieter Schumacher, 'Impact on German Trade of increased division of labour with Eastern Europe' p. 153.

supplier of consumer and capital goods were equally important. Investing in ECE was popular and made easier by the following conditions: cheap commercial properties, investment friendly legal systems, limited environmental laws, a broad selection of highly educated workers, high levels of readiness to work, limited union influence, and good prospects for energy and natural resources.⁴³

Before 1993, however, Germany's domestic economic picture was a different one marred by unification costs, a shrinking global economy, considerable losses in world trade share growth, and its tendency, in the first few years after unification, to look inward. The German *Bundesbank* acknowledged that unification induced changes in foreign trade links were attributed to Germany becoming more domestically oriented in line with experiences which support the assertion that 'a country's links with other countries diminish, as its size increases.'⁴⁴ After 1993, Germany's foreign trade with the region expanded rapidly with double digit growth rates as German exports there rose by almost thirty per cent to under DM 61 billion in 1995 making this region a more important German export market than the United States.⁴⁵ Imports from ECE amounted to nine per cent of Germany's total imports, in comparison with 7 per cent in 1993, thus allowing the ECE economies and their private sectors to benefit from increased sales to Germany and access to vitally needed foreign exchange.⁴⁶ German exports to ECE totalled DM 61 billion while imports totalled DM 58.5 billion, producing a trade surplus of DM 2.5 billion in Germany's favour.⁴⁷ Germany accounted for approximately 25 per cent of all trade with ECE countries.⁴⁸

By 1994, the trading volume between Germany and the Czech Republic had increased by 28.8 per cent to approximately DM 18.1 billion. As in the previous two years, the level of German exports (an increase over the previous year by 26.1 per cent to DM 9.7 billion) was

⁴³Hans-Georg Melhorn, 'Chancen im Osten und die Folgen für Deutschland' in Hans-Georg Melhorn (ed.), *Chancen in Osteuropa und die Folgen für Deutschland* (Leipzig: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ost- und Südosteuropa e.V./Kreativitätszentrum Leipzig, 1995), p. 23.

⁴⁴Deutsche Bundesbank, 'The state of external adjustment after German unification', p. 56.

⁴⁵Deutsche Bundesbank, 'Recent trends in Germany's economic links with central and east European countries in transition', p. 32.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 34.

⁴⁷Presse- und Informationsamts der Bundesregierung, 'German trade with Central Eastern Europe Increasingly Important', Special No. 4454 (E), 22 July, 1996.

⁴⁸United Nations/Economic Commission of Europe, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1994-1995* (New York; Geneva: UN/ECE, 1995), p. 123.

higher than the level of imports, which increased by 32 per cent to a level of DM 8.5 billion, a trading surplus of over DM 1 billion. The focus of trade between the two countries was on durable goods. Germany imported goods such as iron and steel, clothing/textiles, machinery, electro-technical goods and exported machinery, electronic and technical goods, and most importantly motor vehicles. By the end of 1994, Bonn had granted capital loans to the Czech Republic with a total value of DM 981 million. The Germans regarded the Czech Republic as the premier location in ECE for receiving capital guarantees from the German government. 60 outstanding applications totalling DM 1060 million were still being processed.⁴⁹

In 1995, the trading volume between German and the Czech Republic increased by 23.4 per cent to approximately DM 22.4 billion. As in the previous two years, the level of German exports (an increase over the previous year by 22.6 per cent to DM 11.8 billion) was higher than the level of imports, which increased by 24.5 per cent to a level of DM 10.6 billion, a trading surplus of over DM 1.2 billion. By the end of 1995, the German government granted capital loans in the amount of DM 1015.7 million. 39 outstanding applications totalling DM 937.7 million were still outstanding.⁵⁰ By the end of 1995, German direct investments in the Czech Republic rose by more than DM 2 billion to under DM 4 billion. In Poland, they rose by DM 1 billion to under DM 2 billion.⁵¹

Poland was Germany's most important trading partner in ECE in 1994. In comparison with 1993, the trade volume between both countries had increased by 11.6 per cent to DM 20.5 billion. German exports, in comparison with 1993, increased to DM 10.4 billion. Germany's imports from Poland increased by 17.2 per cent to a level of DM 10.1 billion. The principal exports from Poland were textiles, clothing, wood, iron and steel whereas the principal exports from Germany were machinery, clothing/textiles, chemical and pharmaceutical products, and electronic equipment. By 31 December 1994, the German government granted capital loans to

⁴⁹BMW, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit Mittel- und Osteuropa 1994*. No. 373 (Bonn: BMW, 1995), p. 16.

⁵⁰BMW, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit Mittel- und Osteuropa 1995* (Bonn: BMW, 1996), p. 19.

⁵¹Deutsche Bundesbank, 'International capital links between enterprises from the end of 1993 to the end of 1995', *Monthly Report* (May 1997), p. 70.

promote investments in Poland at a level of DM 254 million. 157 applications amounting to DM 487 million were outstanding.⁵²

In 1995, Poland remained Germany's principal trading partner in 1995. The trading volumes between both states increased 22.6 per cent over the previous year to DM 25.1 billion. Germany's exports to Poland, in contrast with 1994, increased by 22.6 per cent to a level of DM 12.7 billion. German imports from Poland reached a level of DM 12.4 billion and increased by 22.6 per cent. The principal exports from Poland were still textiles, clothing, wood, iron and steel. One significant addition to the list of principal exports from Germany was motor vehicles. By 31 December 1995, the German government had granted capital loans to promote investments in Poland at a level of DM 400 million. 131 applications amounting to DM 320 million were still outstanding.⁵³ By the end of 1995, German direct investments in Poland rose by DM 1 billion to under DM 2 billion.⁵⁴ Total German direct investments in Eastern Europe amounted to DM 10.5 billion by the end of 1995 and from 1995-1996, Hungary (32 per cent); Poland (31 per cent) and the Czech Republic (27 per cent) received 90 per cent of all the German direct investments in Eastern Europe.⁵⁵ It is estimated that 55 per cent of all German investments were directed towards cost saving measures whereas 45 per cent were undertaken for the purpose of securing greater market shares.⁵⁶ In 1996, German exports to Poland increased by 29 per cent to DM 16.4 billion and exports to the Czech Republic increased by 17 per cent to DM 13.9 billion. German imports from Poland decreased by -1.9 per cent to DM 12.2 billion and increased from the Czech Republic by 7.5 per cent to DM 11.4 billion⁵⁷

By 1997, Germany was conducting about 10 per cent of its global trade volume with Eastern Europe (six candidate countries for the EU), overtaking the United States for the first time

⁵²BMWi, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit Mittel- und Osteuropa 1994*. No. 373 (Bonn: BMWi, 1995), p. 15.

⁵³BMWi, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen mit Mittel- und Osteuropa 1995*, p. 18.

⁵⁴Deutsche Bundesbank, 'International capital links between enterprises from the end of 1993 to the end of 1995', p. 70.

⁵⁵Volkhart Vincentz, *Die ausenwirtschaftlichen Beziehungen mit Osteuropa und ihre Auswirkungen auf die deutsche Wirtschaft* (Munich: Osteuropa-Institut, Working Paper, no. 207, 1997), pp. 20-21.

⁵⁶Ibid. p. 28.

⁵⁷Andreas Kuhn, 'Der deutsche Aussenhandel 1995/1996', *Wirtschaft und Statistik*, no. 4 (1997), p. 242.

in importance (the region also overtook East Asia as a trade target in 1997⁵⁸). German exports to Poland increased by 16 per cent in 1997 for a total value of DM 20 billion and by 11 per cent to DM 15 billion.⁵⁹ From 1993-1997, foreign trade (exports and imports) volume doubled between Germany and these countries.⁶⁰ From three countries' perspectives (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland), Germany is their most important trading partner accounting for approximately 25 per cent of their total imports as well as being their most important market for their exports.⁶¹

As regards imports, Germany's main trading partner in ECE in 1998 was the Czech Republic, followed by Poland and Hungary. These three countries accounted for nearly two thirds of imports from the group of candidate countries. The imports from the Czech Republic consisted mainly of motor vehicles, motor vehicle parts and machinery.⁶² In 1998, Poland confirmed its position as Germany's top trading partner in the region with a volume of trade totalling DM 40.6 billion, followed by the Czech Republic with DM 35.9 billion.⁶³

The Private Sector

The German private sector was at the forefront of all attempts to extend Germany's economic influence beyond its Eastern frontier and assist in the transformation efforts of its Eastern neighbours. It played a lead role in the reinvigoration of former East German markets in ECE and the FSU to promote the economic recovery of its Eastern *Länder*. It also was responsible for maintaining and expanding Germany's role as a *Handelsstaat* in the global economy. The momentum behind the German private sector's incursion into ECE was to remain competitive in global markets. To do so, as James Kurth pointed out:

⁵⁸Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung. "Starke Ausweitung des Handels mit den Reformländern Mittel- und Osteuropas 1992 bis 1997." *Wochenbericht*, no. 7 (12 February, 1998), p. 142.

⁵⁹'German Trade with Eastern Europe Increasing', *Week in Germany*, 26 September 1997.

⁶⁰Andreas Kuhn, 'Der Aussenhandel mit den EU-Beitrittskandidaten', *Wirtschaft und Statistik*, no. 9 (1998), p. 755.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 759

⁶²Federal Statistics Office Press Release, 'Foreign trade with candidate countries for the EU's enlargement', 25 January 2000.

⁶³Report from the Federal Republic of Germany (German Embassy, UK), 'Trade with Eastern Europe Soars', April 28, 1999.

Germany needs markets that will give preference to its products, and its most natural market is Eastern Europe. With its cheap labour, Eastern Europe is also the most natural area for German industrial investment and expansion. German economic leaders need East European equivalents of Mexico and the North American Free Trade Agreement. There is consequently a German economic drive to the East, an imperative to create a *Wirtschaftsraum*, or German economic realm, in the region.⁶⁴

As a country driven by the necessity to create new markets for its products and promoting its export, Germany was dependent on the success of its business community and their efforts to promote *Standort* and *Modell Deutschland*. The private sector was ideally placed to perform this role because of Germany's proximity and decades of intensive trade and economic co-operation with ECE.

Germany's private commercial enterprises benefited immensely from the following four main advantages after 1990: geographical proximity; Germany's historical place in Eastern European foreign trade; co-production deals between German and Eastern European enterprises in the 1970s; the historical tradition of German capital expansion in the region, and the provision of the relevant German skills and know how in developing the economies of ECE.⁶⁵ Bonn's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland were conducted under the pretext that its private sector would only be able to thrive economically in an external environment where investment and aid were not jeopardised by political or military instability. This strategy's success relied on Bonn's role to promote closer political and economic relations with its counterparts.

In addition, it required generous amounts of governmental economic assistance in the form of aid, technological know-how, and general economic and financial advice on the creation of an economic climate that promoted and encouraged investment, trade, and the establishment of joint ventures. The exploitation of sales potential and cost advantages in these regions was also a consideration.⁶⁶ One such example is the significance of the German Volkswagen Group's investment in the Czech automotive company Skoda which cannot be underestimated as a powerful symbol of German capital investment in what was a fledgling Czech automotive

⁶⁴James Kurth, 'United Germany in Eastern Europe: The New Eastern Question', *Problems in Post-Communism*, vol. 42, no. 1 (January-February 1995), p. 52.

⁶⁵Zbigniew Dobosiewicz, *Foreign Investment in Eastern Europe* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 93.

⁶⁶Deutsche Bundesbank, 'Recent trends in Germany's economic links with central and east European countries in transition', p. 29.

industry in 1991. Not only did VW invest USD 2.6 billion in Skoda but it also accounted for 7.5 per cent of the Czech Republic's total exports in 1997.⁶⁷

According to the Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart, the Germans enjoyed several comparative advantages over their economic competitors:

People in Germany are incomparably better prepared, and most important, they have adapted to our conditions. An American businessman comes, and after three days he still does not understand the reactions of people he is dealing with ... A German businessman is different. This is not only due to physical proximity. I particularly ascribe it to the circumstance that the former GDR is part of the Federal Republic. These people know the mentality of our managers and ministerial bureaucrats, they have an insight that a Japanese or an American lacks.⁶⁸

On the other hand, potential pitfalls for the German private sector loomed large in ECE: low production rates; experience shortages and perceptions of low quality control on the part of employees; lack of legal protections; bureaucratic procedures; planned economy practices; difficulties in acquiring land; (7) criminal elements and corruption, and infrastructure deficits.⁶⁹

Nonetheless, after the Berlin Wall's collapse the private sector recognised immediately that vast economic benefits could be gained from communism's demise and the collapse of planned economies. The role of German finance, especially German banks, played a key role in maintaining a strong German presence in ECE.⁷⁰ Banks, private corporations, and non-profit organisations were catalysts for projecting and expanding German influence in the region and promoting economic stability.

In a survey undertaken by *Manager Magazine* (March 1994), cited by Hans-Georg Melhorn, from over one thousand German companies polled, a third indicated a willingness to relocate their production sites overseas (45.6 per cent to the Czech Republic and 6.9 per cent to Poland). Although large companies, with over one thousand employees, were willing to consider other Western European sites for production purposes, companies with less than fifty employees

⁶⁷United Nations/Economic Commission of Europe, *Economic Bulletin for Europe*, Vol. 49 (New York; Geneva: UN/ECE, 1997), p. 48. In addition, see Peter Becker, 'Das Joint Venture zwischen Volkswagen und Skoda – Eine erste Bilanz', *Osteuropa-Wirtschaft*, vol. 42, no. 4 (1997), pp. 388-417.

⁶⁸*Respekt*, no. 7, 17-23 February 1992, FBIS-EEU-92-037, 25 February 1992, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁹Jörg Beyfuss, *Erfahrungen deutscher Auslandsinvestoren in den Reformländern Mittel- und Osteuropas*, p. 13.

⁷⁰Edward Russell-Walling, 'Good Neighbours', *Central European* (July/August 1997), pp. 31-33.

(78 per cent of those polled) were considering ECE as the ideal location for their production investments because of lower costs and wages.⁷¹ The trend for German small and medium sized enterprises to relocate to ECE was becoming more attractive as production and wages costs in Germany were on the increase. By the end of 1996, the number of German small and medium sized enterprises operating with significant investments of capital in the Visegrad was put at 20000, of which 6,800 were located in the Czech Republic and 5,600 in Poland (there were 1,450 and 800 large enterprise investments in Poland and the Czech Republic with German capital).⁷²

In a survey of over 1,500 German businesses in 1993-1994, the German-Czech Chamber of Commerce analysed the main reasons for the private sector to become economically engaged in the Czech Republic. First, 31.2 per cent of those companies polled expressed an interest in increasing their market share through acquisitions. Second, 18.2 per cent of the companies polled want to use the Czech Republic as a spring board for exploiting additional markets in ECE. 14.9 per cent noted their principal rationale for looking east was to take advantage of lower labour costs in the Czech Republic.⁷³ As Melhorn notes, the German economy's success was dependent on its ability to take advantage of lower wage costs in other production countries. ECE was an ideal target for ensuring that Germany maintained its position as a *Handelsstaat*.⁷⁴

Germany's foreign economic policy towards the Czech Republic and Poland revealed the powerful link between the use of economic instruments and tools to achieve its political aims. There was a German strategic imperative to maintain its dominant position as a *Handelsstaat* in the global economy. Economic instruments were perceived by Bonn to be the ideal tools for assisting the transformation processes of the Czech Republic and Poland and securing the success

⁷¹Hans-Georg Melhorn, 'Chancen im Osten und die Folgen für Deutschland', p. 10.

⁷²Friedrich Kaufmann and Andreas Menke. 'Direktinvestition und ihre Beschäftigungseffekte: Eine empirische Analyse mittelständischer Engagements in den Visegrad-Staaten', *Osteuropa-Wirtschaft*, vol. 42, no. 2 (1997), p. 107.

⁷³Deutsch-Tschechische Industrie- und Handelskammer (ed.), *Deutsche Direktinvestitionen in der Tschechischen Republik: Motive, Erfahrungen, Perspektiven* (Bielefeld: Bertelsmann, 1994), p. 17.

⁷⁴Hans-Georg Melhorn, 'Chancen im Osten und die Folgen für Deutschland', p. 15.

of unification. After recognising the necessity to play a proactive role in the economic affairs of its neighbours, Germany emerged as the most powerful exporter and capital investor in ECE. The emphasis may have been on small and medium size enterprises and not large investments (Siemens and VW were exceptions) but it was clear that BMWi chose to concentrate on economic areas where German expertise and financial assistance would be welcome and would not clash with the interests of other powers seeking to create new markets. The TRANSFORM programme, foreign trade, and capital investment were all areas which would allow Germany to fulfil its foreign policy goals in ECE: forestalling any 'threats' to its Eastern frontier and by extension its unification processes and the preparation of the Czech Republic and Poland for their memberships in the EU. Germany's Eastern neighbours were desperate for economic investment and advice and looked, primarily, to Germany for political and economic guidance. Germany capitalised on its geography and extensive ties to Mitteleuropa to achieve its goals. The private sector was only too happy to follow.

CHAPTER SIX

GERMANY'S EASTERN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: PROMOTING INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION WITH THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND

The triad of German interests concludes with a study of Germany's quest for security and stability in ECE after October 1990. How was Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* (security policy) influenced by domestic and international factors? The epochal European events of 1989-1991 transformed ECE's security landscape, especially Germany's Eastern security environment. With German unification and the Soviet Union's and Warsaw Treaty Organisation's (WTO) collapse, Germany's leaders were confronted with a new set of security challenges. The eastward extension of Germany's frontier into the heartland of ECE – a geo-strategic space formerly dominated by the Soviet Union – had important strategic implications for a unified Germany, a Soviet Union in rapid decline, and ECE. Structural changes in the international system and Germany's former hegemonic role in Mitteleuropa influenced the dynamics of the German-ECE-Russia triangle. One of Germany's Eastern conundrums – promoting peace and security in ECE whilst avoiding alienating Russia – illustrates the difficult balancing act Bonn had to play after 1990.

Why did ECE emerge as one of the most important regions in Germany's foreign and security calculations after 1990? Besides the obvious socio-political, economic, historical, and cultural interests, Bonn was obsessed with its security and its strategic environment. Germany maintains a 1,200 kilometer long border with two pivotal states: the CSFR and Poland. Its exposed geographic position in Europe's centre led it to be more susceptible to socio-political and economic turmoil emanating from ECE and the Former Soviet Union (FSU). Germany's political leadership could not afford to be complacent about its security and the security of its Eastern neighbours as the two were inextricably linked.

The physical withdrawal of the Soviet Union's conventional and nuclear forces from ECE between 1991-1994 prompted an urgent reassessment of Germany's strategic priorities vis-à-vis ECE and the FSU. Bonn's ECE security vacuum included 'fragile' states with poor economies and non-existent democratic structures, and potentially high levels of nationalism and ethnic strife. The axiom that international politics abhors a vacuum was a reminder that peace and

stability in ECE were not automatic outcomes of the Cold War's end. Bonn's Eastern neighbours no longer enjoyed the protection of a formidable military power or bloc. Military power or 'high politics' in International Relations still played a role in international politics after 1990. This crucial fact was not lost on the defence planners and security policy-makers in the Ministry of Defence (BMVg) and the Bundeswehr.¹ The proposed relocation of the German government from Bonn to Berlin (48 kilometers from the Polish border) in 1999 also reinforced the growing political, military, and economic significance of ECE, and highlighted German interests in safeguarding the security of its Eastern frontier and its own domestic transformation and unification processes in Eastern Germany.

This chapter has three aims. The first is to define the strategic nature of Germany's immediate eastern security environment as perceived by Germany's leaders, the BMVg, and the Bundeswehr. Second, the roles of the CSFR (Czech Republic after 1993) and Poland as pivotal actors in Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* will be examined. The bilateral dimension of Bonn's security relations with Prague and Warsaw will be addressed. Finally, the multilateral dimension of Bonn's *Sicherheitspolitik* will be studied to explain how international institutions, especially NATO helped Germany to achieve its foreign and security policy objectives in both countries. Germany's position within Europe's security architecture and, more specifically, its role as a proactive advocate of ECE interests within NATO will be examined.

Germany's Eastern Security Environment after 1990

From 1949 to 1989, West German chancellors from Adenauer to Kohl wrestled with the 'German question': how to achieve unification within a bipolar, superpower-dominated, international order. The 'question' was answered in 1990 but a Pandora's Box of sources of instability on Germany's Eastern frontier emerged. Bipolarity had been replaced by multi-polarity and within this new order Germany was confronted with new strategic challenges in ECE and the FSU which were profoundly to affect its position in the European *Mittellage*.²

¹Dieter Mahncke, *Parameters of European Security*. Chaillot Paper no. 10 (Paris: WEU Institute for Security Studies, September 1993), p. 4.

²Wolfgang Schlör, *German Security Policy: An Examination of the Trends in German Security Policy in a New European and Global Context*. Adelphi Paper 277 (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1993).

The structural changes were manifested by the Soviet Union's collapse, the WTO's demise, the overwhelmingly peaceful revolutions of 1989 in ECE, and German unification. Germany's Western and Eastern European neighbours viewed it, in some cases, reluctantly and sceptically, as the main benefactor of the Cold War's end. Changes in the Eastern European sub-system forced Bonn to become a more assertive foreign and security policy actor there. Constraints imposed on Germany by the bipolar dynamics of the Cold War and its division had precluded an active role for the FRG in Eastern Europe. Consequently, the demise of Soviet hegemony gave Germany more freedom to assist in the region's future political and economic development.

Bonn's use of bilateral and multilateral frameworks reinforced political-military and economic stability in ECE and was one of the reasons pushing Germany eastwards after unification. German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel opined that Germany needed to focus on political-military and socio-economic developments in ECE for the following reasons:

As a result of our central location, our size, and our traditional relations with Central and Eastern Europe, we are also predestined to derive the main benefit from the return of these states to Europe. ... Like no other Western country we are exposed to the enormous problems with which the young reform states from the Oder River to Vladivostok are struggling. We are carrying the main burden of immigration and – at least – until now – economic support; we are the ones who are most affected by the collapse of Eastern markets; our traditional economic sectors feel the pressure of cheap imports most intensely.³

Bonn's security interests in ECE were locked into the socio-political, economic and historical dimensions of its foreign relations with the CSFR and Poland. The German Defence Minister Volker Rühle pointed out: 'the stability of our eastern neighbours and ourselves was not primarily a military question but a political and economic one'.⁴ Germany's perceptions of the quality of its own security depended on the levels of political and economic stability in the East. Germany was charged with safeguarding its own domestic transformation processes in Eastern Germany and to perform this task it required peaceful neighbours.

How can Germany's security environment in the East after unification be characterised?

Shortly before the restoration of German sovereignty (15 March 1991), the first defence minister

³FAZ, 19 March 1993, FBIS-WEU-93-054, pp. 12-17. Kinkel succeeded Hans-Dietrich Genscher as German foreign minister on 18 May 1992.

⁴Volker Rühle, *Deutschlands Verantwortung* (Frankfurt am Main; Berlin: Ullstein, 1994), p. 63. MT. Rühle succeeded Gerhard Stoltenberg as defence minister on 1 April 1992.

of a unified Germany, Gerhard Stoltenberg, argued that Germany's geo-strategic position had improved after the end of the Cold War since Germany no longer functioned as a 'front-line' state with an exposed Eastern frontier.⁵ For Stoltenberg, the WTO states' armies no longer posed a military threat to German security. Military threats from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) or ECE were perceived as benign. In January 1992, the General Inspector of the Bundeswehr Klaus Naumann echoed Stoltenberg's assessment when he observed: 'the risk of a large-scale aggression against Central Europe will be practically zero for the foreseeable future'.⁶ Germany also featured in this calculation. General Naumann expressed worry if Germany's

existence were threatened, or if there were visible risks for Europe in the sense of a likely outbreak of war. This is not so. Nonetheless, there is concern about the way security structures should be organised to allow us to prevent lasting war in Europe. There is great insecurity and instability in Eastern Europe.⁷

For Naumann, Russia's domestic instability, military capacity, nuclear capability, and conventional military strength were primary sources of concern.⁸ These concerns were exacerbated by the presence of Soviet/Russian troops and matériel in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) until August 1994: 338,000 soldiers, 207,400 family members and civilian employees, 123,481 pieces of machinery, and over 2.7 million tonnes of ammunition.⁹ During the Two plus Four Accords, the presence of Soviet troops in the GDR had the potential to have a negative impact on Germany's interests to unify. The U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, James Matlock Jr., observed the following:

Gorbachev could have played a spoiler's role in negotiations on German unity and actually improved his political position at home. While he could not close borders and reimpose a puppet regime on the GDR, he did not have to give official blessing to the unification. He had 370,000 troops in East Germany, and neither the Germans nor NATO as a whole could have used force to expel them.¹⁰

⁵*Bulletin*, no. 29 (15 March 1991), p. 215, and Gerhard Stoltenberg, 'Der Osten wendet sich zum Westen. Neue Herausforderungen durch Veränderungen in Osteuropa', *Information für die Truppe: Zeitschrift für Innere Führung*, no. 1 (1990), pp. 4-21.

⁶*Der Spiegel*, 20 January 1992, FBIS-WEU-92-013, 21 January 1992, pp. 19-21.

⁷*Berliner Zeitung*, 18 March 1993, FBIS-WEU-93-055, 24 March 1993, pp. 18-19.

⁸See Klaus Naumann 'Bundeswehr Faced with New Challenges', *Soldat und Technik* (January 1995), FBIS-WEU-95-017, 26 January 1995, pp. 11-17.

⁹Claus-Jürgen Duisberg, 'Germany: The Russians Go', *The World Today*, vol. 50, no. 10 (1994), p. 192.

¹⁰James F. Matlock, Jr., *Autopsy on an Empire* (New York: Random House, 1996), p. 387.

Their continued presence in the former GDR, four years after unification, raised many concerns in Bonn. First, the resumption of full German sovereignty was not possible as long as Soviet troops were stationed on German soil. Second, as long as Moscow was enveloped by political uncertainty, the Soviet troops' future status could be called into question by a new leadership. Third, Bonn worried about the Soviet troops' conduct and the proliferation of organised crime in military units.¹¹ The German public shared similar fears. A Rand study highlighted the German public's worries about 'critical threats' to Germany's 'vital interests' emanating from the East.¹² As Claus-Jürgen Duisberg, Germany's representative in charge of the Russo-German Treaty on the presence and withdrawal of Russian troops in Germany, pointed out:

The potential for conflict was considerable. Fears voiced in Germany were of a sudden rush of asylum-seekers, of arms deals, and weapons offences and a general increase in criminality. Admittedly, most of these fears were realised, but on a comparatively small scale, considering the magnitude of the task. ... The arrival of the so-called Soviet mafia is quite a different manner. Over the past few years these mafia-style elements have been gaining a foothold in the new German *Länder*, and particularly in Berlin, where they frequently set up operations near the Russian troops.¹³

Defining the Threats and Vulnerabilities

Militärpolitische und militärstrategische Grundlagen und konzeptionelle Grundrichtung der Neugestaltung der Bundeswehr

The most unambiguous statements about the nature of Germany's security environment were contained in three BMVg publications: *Militärpolitische und militärstrategische Grundlagen und konzeptionelle Grundrichtung der Neugestaltung der Bundeswehr* (MMG)¹⁴, the *Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien* (VPR)¹⁵, and the *Weissbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr 1994* (Defence White Paper).¹⁶ Their

¹¹Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse and the New Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 160-165.

¹²Ronald D. Asmus, *German Strategy and Opinion After the Wall, 1990-1993* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1994), p. 17.

¹³Duisberg, 'Germany: The Russians Go', pp. 192-193.

¹⁴BMVg, "Militärpolitische und militärstrategische Grundlagen und konzeptionelle Grundrichtung der Neugestaltung der Bundeswehr" reprinted in *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, no. 4 (1992), pp. 506-510.

¹⁵BMVg, "Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien für den Geschäftsbereich des Bundesministers der Verteidigung vom 26. November 1992" reprinted in *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, no. 9 (1993), pp. 1137-51.

contents represent a logical evolution of German security interests after unification; they are also evidence of the BMVg's thinking on the domestic and international factors which were liable to shape German interests into the next millennium. The documents' contents confirm that German security was not threatened by military developments or threats emanating in ECE or the FSU, although a general air of caution about Russia's future political and economic development pervaded all.

The *MMG* was a background paper for defining the future role of the Bundeswehr in German security policy. Conceived by Stoltenberg and Naumann, the document states that one of Germany's security objectives was to 'promote the democratisation processes and economic rehabilitation of all states in central east, south-east and Eastern Europe'. Germany's *Demokratisierungspolitik* (democratisation politics) towards ECE: the support and promotion of democratic norms and values was regarded as a major component of its *Sicherheitspolitik*. Military threats from the Cold War era had been replaced by latent but potentially acute sources of instability: economic, ethnic, demographic, and religious strife on German border periphery.

Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien

In stark contrast with the *MMG*, the *VPR*, conceived by the Bundeswehr's policy planning staff, defined Germany's specific national security interests and assessed geographic regions that should be of concern to Germany's leaders. The *VPR* highlighted the Atlantic Alliance and European integration in German security policy-making calculations. This ground-breaking policy document confirmed the content of many of the official policy statements made by Germany's leaders after unification: Germany faced no immediate military threats to its national security but there were potential non-military risks, especially in ECE, which threatened the internal stability of Germany and its Western neighbours. 'Risks' and 'vulnerabilities', not military threats were highlighted.¹⁷ According to Bundeswehr defence planners, the warning period for the emergence

¹⁶BMVg, *Weissbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr 1994* (Bonn: BMVg, 1994). The *Weissbuch* represents the most comprehensive document on security issues and objectives published by the German government since unification.

¹⁷Celeste Wallander argued that 'the distinction between threat and risk is fundamental to an understanding of the effect of common interests on German and Russian security strategies after the Cold War'. She also notes that 'a German official said that the government now does "risk assessment" rather than "threat

of any military threat from ECE or the FSU was approximately one year.¹⁸ The *VPR* proclaimed that Germany's strategic environment had vastly improved after the Cold War and it stressed the need for Germany to assume more responsibilities in ECE. Constructed on two pillars of 'cooperation' and 'integration', the *VPR* argued that Germany was an indispensable actor in helping the new democracies in ECE meet their security objectives:

Without Germany, it will be impossible to integrate the peoples of Eastern Europe. Without Germany, there will be no security structures in and for Europe that meet the security interests of the young democracies. Without Germany, the states who have been ruined by communist planned systems will not be economically or socially content; only with Germany can the EU use its political-economic dynamism as a source of power to promote the economic renewal of all of Europe. In this situation, Germany is a model for the politics of its partners.¹⁹

Weissbuch zur Sicherheit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zur Lage und Zukunft der Bundeswehr 1994

The *Weissbuch* was the *VPR*'s principal successor. It highlighted the features of Germany's security environment; its security interests and challenges, and examined potential threats in Europe and globally, and suggested strategies – bilateral and multilateral – to manage challenges and risks which could affect German security. It recognised the importance of three main factors: Germany's geopolitical position in the European *Mittellage* with the most neighbours in Europe; its economic position as an export-dependent industrial nation and its strong *verflochtene Interessen* (interwoven ties) in the global economy; and the experiences of German and European history'.²⁰ The *Weissbuch* also noted the major benefits Germany derived from the international system's transformation:

Germany was only surrounded by democratic states, friends, and partners. From this follows a special responsibility to widen our partnerships with the new democracies in central and Eastern Europe – this is built on the basis of a continuing close anchoring of Germany in NATO and in the deepening integration of the EU. ...The political-military changes have fundamentally improved Germany's strategic situation.²¹

assessment" because the former is a function of instability which can arise from forces such as ethnic and economic migration'. See Celeste A. Wallander, *Mortal Friends, Best Enemies: German-Russian Cooperation after the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 47.

¹⁸*Bulletin*, no. 104 (30 September 1992), p. 973.

¹⁹BMVg, "Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien", p. 1142, MT.

²⁰BMVg, *Weissbuch*, p. 42. MT.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 24. MT.

Germany's overall security environment improved after 1990 but its Eastern border region was categorised as a potential source of instability. The *Weissbuch* recognised the problems inherent in the collapse of communist systems in ECE and the CIS which could have a significant impact on the following areas: socio-political and economic transformation processes, social stability, ecological dangers, and migration influxes from East to West. It was feared that a combination of problems in these crucial areas might result in 'regressive developments with continued fragmentation of states, groups of states, changing coalitions and, as a result, the eruption of violent conflicts'.²² The *Weissbuch* provided a snapshot of Europe's political-military landscape:

The political-military landscape of Europe offers a contradictory picture. Ongoing integration processes in Western Europe are confronted with centrifugal tendencies accompanied by the fragmentation of states in the east and south-east of the continent. Europe is experiencing the simultaneous processes of integration and stability and disintegration and instability.²³

To safeguard Germany's security environment and the security of its Eastern neighbours, the *Weissbuch* advocated implementing a security policy which promoted stability in ECE through 'cooperation' and 'integration'. By intensifying 'cooperation' and advocating increased 'integration' with its ECE neighbours through the dual enlargement processes of the EU and NATO, Germany's security environment would improve. For Germany, these enlargement processes ran parallel to each other and were never to be viewed in a contradictory manner. A fact sheet released by NATO in March 1996 made the following incisive statement about the dual enlargement processes of NATO and the EU:

²²Ibid., p. 27. MT.

²³Ibid., p. 27. MT.

Both enlargement processes will contribute significantly to extending security, stability and prosperity enjoyed by their members to other, like-minded, democratic European states. All full members of the WEU are also members of NATO. The maintenance of this linkage is essential, because of the cumulative effect of security safeguards extended in the two organisations. The enlargement of both organisations should, therefore, be compatible and mutually supportive. An eventual broad congruence of European membership in NATO, EU and WEU would have positive effects on European security. Therefore, the Alliance should, at an appropriate time, give particular consideration to countries with a perspective of EU membership, and which have shown interest in joining NATO, in order to consider how they can contribute to transatlantic security within the Washington Treaty and to determine whether to invite them to join NATO.²⁴

The prospects of the EU's enlargement to the East, to include states like the Czech Republic and Poland, should therefore not be underestimated as an important mechanism that facilitated NATO's enlargement and allayed German fears about its vulnerabilities on its eastern frontier. The BMVg's main conclusion was that Germany no longer faced any direct military threats which could threaten its existence; however, this state of affairs could only be maintained while Germany remained firmly integrated within NATO and the EU for that matter.

The existence of non-military threats, dilemmas, and challenges to Germany's security emanating from ECE, the CIS, and south east Europe, however, continued to shape its *Sicherheitspolitik*. Germany was no longer a 'front-line' state in the traditional Cold War sense since it no longer faced a conventional military threat from the Soviet-controlled WTO. Democratic and friendly neighbours surrounded Germany for the first time in fifty years; hostile forces did not threaten its Eastern frontier. On the other hand, a new front-line seemed to replace old Cold War lines. Victor Gray notes that 'Germany seems cursed with being a front-line state. On both sides of the Cold War front line, it finds itself again on the edge of Western Europe's political stability and economic prosperity facing an East that lacks both'.²⁵ As Rühle pointed out, 'the end of the Cold War removed the threat of old dangers but not new risks'.²⁶ 'Old' dangers were inherent in bipolar dynamics: the risk of a large-scale conventional or nuclear attack by WTO states, the presence of a large number of conventional and nuclear forces in East and West Germany, and the likelihood that Germany would be the major battleground of any future war

²⁴See NATO Fact Sheet on NATO's Enlargement (March 1996) available at http://www.fas.org/man/nato/natodocs/fact_mar96.htm. In addition, see chapter two.

²⁵Victor Gray, 'Germany: The 'Reluctant Power' Turns East', *Parameters*, vol. 24, no. 3 (Autumn 1994), p. 86.

²⁶*Bulletin*, no. 37 (7 April 1992), p. 346. MT.

between NATO and the WTO. 'New' risks originated from the collapse of communism and the socio-political and economic difficulties associated with managing a new European system characterised by three main factors: first, the absence of an 'enemy' in the form of the Soviet Union; secondly, a unified Germany with an extended border in the heartland of ECE, and thirdly, the unstable nature of those states located in a political 'no man's land' or a 'half-way house' in ECE.

Military and Non-military 'Risks' Emanating from the CSFR and Poland

As Germany's neighbours, the CSFR and Poland were central components in German designs to secure the territorial integrity of its Eastern frontier. Germany's close geographical proximity to ECE created a strong interest on the part of Germany's leaders to influence the domestic and international environments of both states. Both were located in a region characterised by political and economic instability and had the potential to adversely affect German security interests. Furthermore, both states were perceived to be located in a security vacuum: a condition permeating all of ECE and manifested by the new independent states in ECE no longer being able to guarantee their own security. Whereas the CSFR and Poland were of significant interest for Germany's foreign policy-makers after unification, they regarded Germany as their main political and economic advocate within Europe's international security institutions.²⁷ The actions of all three states were governed by one mutual interest: securing stability in ECE and the preservation of their respective transition and transformation processes.

Why did Bonn perceive the CSFR (Czech Republic) and Poland as important security actors? What were the principal military and non-military 'threats' or 'risks' coming from these two important states? Before 1993, Bonn had been reluctant to enter or even initiate a proper debate about the future course of its security policy towards ECE, although it was cognisant of the 'threats' on its 'exposed' Eastern frontier.²⁸ A similar phenomenon was apparent in ECE as political leaders projected their security and threat perceptions of their environment in

²⁷Rainer Winkler, *Deutschlands Geopolitische Lage im sich wandelnden Europa* (Bergisch Gladbach: Amt für Studien und Übungen der Bundeswehr, 1993), p. 10.

²⁸Ulrich Weisser, *NATO ohne Feindbild: Konturen einer europäischen Sicherheitspolitik* (Bonn; Berlin: Bouvier, 1992), p. 30.

contradictory terms depending on the nature of their audience. Jan Zielonka highlighted the contradictory dynamics of this process:

It is easy to get the impression that different threats are presented to different audiences, depending on the circumstances. One day the audience is confronted with a vision of domestic anarchy and foreign aggression. Another day the same politicians describe their country as exceptionally stable and surrounded by peaceful neighbours ... the latter vision is usually presented to Western bankers and investors, the former to security experts.²⁹

Managing the Soviet Union's collapse, including the withdrawal of its military infrastructure from the former GDR and ECE, was Bonn's first strategic priority.

Immediately after unification, Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* lacked a clearly defined and coherent agenda. Bonn was immersed in its unification processes, including the integration of the GDR's National People's Army (NVA) into the Bundeswehr, and the adaptation of its foreign and security policy operations to its new domestic and international environment. It was also preoccupied with the negotiation and implementation of the Two Plus Four Accords, the 'new' Eastern treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland in particular where the future status of the Oder-Neisse line had threatened to derail German-Polish relations. Bonn had also begun to negotiate the Czech-German Agreement on Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation, initialled in October 1991 but not signed by Kohl and the CSFR President Václav Havel until February 1992.

How did Bonn formulate and implement its security objectives in ECE? The twin tools of German bilateralism and multilateralism towards these states are relevant here. Projecting stability via bilateral and multilateral security forums and instruments, primarily the EU and NATO, to states in need of political and economic assistance in their respective transformation processes was a priority. The maintenance of stability depended on three crucial factors: the CSFR and Poland's ability to master their internal socio-political, military and economic transformation processes; Germany's role as an ardent advocate of Czech and Polish interests in NATO, the EU, and other Western international institutions, and Germany's prominent role as a bilateral conduit of aid, trade, and foreign investment.

²⁹Jan Zielonka, *Security in Central Europe*. Adelphi Paper 272 (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1992), pp. 33-34.

The Czech Factor in Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik*

The Czech lands have been a fixture of the European security landscape for centuries. Before 1918, the region's population was subject to the interests of successive Austrian and German leaders. With the CSFR's independence and subsequent freedom from Austro-Hungarian hegemony in 1918, the amalgamated lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia became a constant source of irritation for the political leaders of the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany. Adolf Hitler, for example, once remarked that the CSFR symbolized a 'dagger pointing at the heart of the Reich'. After being thoroughly dismembered in 1938 and occupied by Nazi Germany in 1939, Czechoslovakia regained its independence again after the Second World War only to find itself firmly embedded in a Soviet-dominated sphere of influence after the Czech Communist Party assumed power in the spring of 1948. Throughout the Cold War, successive Soviet leaders maintained their firm grip on the CSFR and the other Eastern European satellites to preserve their political-military hegemony in the region. The CSFR was a pivotal security actor for the Soviets throughout the duration of the Cold War because of its vital strategic location on the WTO's Western front.

The Soviet invasion of the CSFR in August 1968 by WTO forces reinforced its control over Eastern Europe and underlined its strategic importance. The Soviets regarded Czechoslovakia as one of their principal bulwarks against any possible NATO attack. The stationing of the Soviet Central Group of Forces (CGF) in Czechoslovakia: two tank divisions, three motorised rifle divisions, and an air division with over one hundred combat aircraft illustrated Czechoslovakia's military importance in Soviet military planning and as a tool for discouraging any potential attack by NATO's conventional forces.³⁰ The 'Czechoslovak corridor's' protection was also deemed vital for the Soviet Union's Western Group of Forces (WGF). The WTO's collapse and loss of this strategic corridor after 1990 represented a serious military blow to the Soviet Union's political and military leadership. The WTO's dissolution allowed Czechoslovakia to break free from Soviet military control. The Soviet CGF's withdrawal

³⁰David Cox, *Retreating from the Cold War: Germany, Russia, and the Withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).

from Czechoslovakia weakened its military position in ECE but also resulted in a significant de-escalation of military tension along the German-Czech border.

To assess the CSFR's strategic significance (and one of its principal successor states, the Czech Republic) for Germany, it is important to differentiate between two significant time periods in the CSFR's history after the Cold War's end: 1990-1992 and 1993-1998. The distinction is necessary since from December 1989 (creation of the CSFR's first non-communist government in forty-one years) to the dissolution of the CSFR (1 January 1993), it was a single actor in the international system. Two successor republics emerged as a result of its division: the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia.

Czechoslovakia, 1990-1992

From 1990-1992, Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* vis-à-vis the CSFR was not preoccupied by security issues, although this changed quickly after the BMVg's policy planning staff began to contemplate the enlargement of the Atlantic Alliance in late 1992 and early 1993. Whereas the Soviet Union and Poland figured prominently in the negotiation and implementation processes of the Two Plus Four Accords, the CSFR did not.³¹ This major factor precluded Prague from occupying a prominent position in Bonn's strategic thinking. Consequently, there were no domestic or international pressures, with the exception of the Sudeten Germans, being exerted on Bonn to address the future course of German-CSFR relations or the security implications resulting from this transition state's independence. Unlike Poland, there were no outstanding border disputes with the CSFR stemming from the Second World War, although there were contentious minority issues between Germany and Czechoslovakia and Poland. Relations between Germans and Czechs were complicated by unanswered historical questions which had no profound security implications for either state after 1990.

On 27 May 1991, the last Soviet soldier withdrew from the CSFR. The continued presence of the Soviet Union's military infrastructure in ECE, after the peaceful revolutions of 1989-1990, was a concern for all ECE states. Germany was not immune to this feeling. External

³¹One Polish official surmised that the Poles were much more energetic and therefore more successful with their political demands vis-à-vis a unified Germany than the Czechs. Source: interview with Polish official in Warsaw.

military threats to the CSFR's security stemmed from the political-military implications of the Soviet Union's collapse and Russia's unpredictable foreign and security policy interests. Within Czechoslovakia, there was a latent fear of Russian hegemonic designs in ECE. German leaders were worried since Russian troops did not withdraw from the CSFR until May 1991. These worries were exacerbated by the Soviet Union's use of force against the independence movements of Lithuania and Latvia in January 1991.³² The CSFR's porous border with Ukraine, a former Soviet republic and pivotal state within the newly-formed CIS, was also a potential source of instability, although there was no evidence to suggest that Czechoslovakia's Eastern border was physically threatened by any party. Bonn did not perceive any military threats coming from CSFR. Indeed, Germany's strategic position vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia improved after the Soviet troops departed in May 1991.

After achieving independence, the CSFR's main domestic conundrum, ironically, was to maintain its union: an objective which became increasingly untenable after the national elections on 5-6 June 1992. Czechs and Slovaks advocated divergent political and economic interests which threatened to split the union thus establishing two separate republics. According to Jan Zielonka, the split had major implications:

It is not the danger of armed confrontation between Czechs and Slovaks that represents the greatest security concern, but the destabilising consequences of an eventual partition of Czechoslovakia into two or more weak states. Such a partition may stimulate a chain reaction of local ethnic conflicts, territorial claims, foreign intervention, and possible even war in the region.³³

These fears did not materialise yet events in the Balkans were illustrative of what could happen when states decided to aggressively pursue their independence aspirations. Germany's leadership did not discount an escalation of the Balkan War; paradoxically, however, it is still difficult to discern Germany's strategic rationale for its unilateral recognition of Croatia and Slovenia on 23 December 1991. In the context of increased levels of violence and hostility on the European continent, Kohl noted it was premature to declare a 'time of eternal peace' in Europe; instead, he argued that 'events in the Balkans would have catastrophic consequences not only for states

³²This controversial intervention was in stark contrast with the contents of a document that had been signed in Bonn by Kohl and Gorbachev on 12 June 1989 'affirming' the right of European states 'to determine their own political systems'.

³³Jan Zielonka, *Security in Central Europe*, p. 14.

involved in the conflict but the security of all states in Europe would be endangered'.³⁴ According to W. R. Smyser: 'To the Germans, sitting closest to the edge of Eastern Europe, the Yugoslav crisis was a grim reminder that the new Europe would present genuine threats and that Germany might not be able to rely on the United States as it often had in the past'.³⁵ The outbreak of the Balkan hostilities had implications for Germany and Western Europe and played an important role in shaping Germany's internal debate on its security challenges in ECE.

Czechoslovakia's dissolution had profound political, economic, and security implications for both successor republics and Germany. The division of resources between the Czech Republic and Slovakia was altered. For the former, the domestic consequences of the CSFR's division were less punishing than for Slovakia since the Czech Republic was viewed as the split's principal economic benefactor. Nevertheless, both republics still remained dependent on each other's economic resources.³⁶ James Brown argued:

Even though the Czech lands are economically stronger and more developed than in Slovakia, her production and assembly industries are dependent to a major degree on deliveries of raw materials and products from Slovakia. She is also dependent on energy deliveries from the FSU — if one believes that these will continue — by lines, which pass through Slovakia.³⁷

The CSFR's division also had important international implications for other ECE actors, such as Hungary which had a significant ethnic minority (600,000) in the Slovak portion of the CSFR. For Germany, the CSFR's division affected two processes where it had a stake: Czechoslovakia's associate membership with the EC through the European Agreements (1991) and the continued validity of the German-Czechoslovak Treaty on Friendship and Good Neighbourliness (February 1992). Bonn was not supportive of the CSFR's division which it viewed as a visible manifestation of increasing nationalist tendencies in ECE. Citing the CSFR's future division, Kinkel argued: 'It cannot be right that on the one hand one is trying to abolish borders in Europe while at the same

³⁴*Bulletin*, no. 66 (29 July 1993), p. 690.

³⁵W. R. Smyser, *Germany and America: New Identities, Fateful Rift?* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), p. 66.

³⁶UN/ECE, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1992-1993* (New York: UN/ECE, 1993), pp. 217-218.

³⁷James F. Brown, 'Konfliktmöglichkeiten in Mitteleuropa' in Wolfgang Heydrich *et al* (eds.), *Sicherheitspolitik Deutschlands: Neue Konstellationen, Risiken, Instrumente* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1992), p. 352. MT.

time separatist movements are gaining ground'.³⁸ Rühle also issued a warning about nationalist forces:

In the former Communist East long suppressed tensions are being set free. Old nationalisms are breaking loose. The systematic, deepening integration of the West is being accompanied by the rapid and unpredictable disintegration of Eastern Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union is tied with risks that are not only characterised by ethnic, religious and nationalist tendencies but are also connected to the security of nuclear weapons and minority problems of an unquantified nature.³⁹

The CSFR's division, although highly peaceful in nature illustrated a dangerous trend which Bonn found alarming. From 1990-1992, it was not a foregone conclusion that the CSFR's choice to split into two separate republics would be followed by other actors in ECE, especially those countries with large ethnic minorities, such as Hungary and Romania. The socio-political and economic implications of future state disintegrations were incalculable but, nonetheless, Bonn felt their potential likelihood more acutely.

Czech Republic, 1993-1998

After the CSFR's amazingly peaceful division at the end of 1992, the Czech Republic's security environment improved dramatically. It was absent of any real external threats. Indeed, in comparison with Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, its strategic location was the most favourable. The Czech Republic shared a border with neutral Austria, Germany, Slovakia, and Poland but, most importantly, from Prague's perspective, it no longer shared a border with any former Soviet republics. Unlike Slovakia, it also did not harbour any significant ethnic minorities within its territory.⁴⁰ The Czech Republic's security environment was regarded as benign, especially by Bonn. The security dilemmas posed by a residual Russian threat were not as acute as with Poland since the Czech Republic's geographical position was less exposed.

The quality of the Czech Republic's external relations with Slovakia, however, still remained a potential source of concern in Bonn. Slovakia's commitment to democracy was

³⁸*Handelsblatt*, 22 June 1992, FBIS-WEU-92-120, 23 June 1992, p. 11.

³⁹*Bulletin*, no. 104 (30 September 1992), p. 973, MT.

⁴⁰From a total population of 10,350,000 in the Czech Republic in 1996, Slovaks constituted 3 per cent, Poles, 0.6 per cent, and Germans 0.5 percent. From a total population of 5,370,000 in Slovakia in 1996, Hungarians constituted 11 per cent, Romany approximately 5 per cent and Czechs 1 per cent. See IISS, *The Military Balance, 1998/99* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for IISS, 1998), pp. 82, 93.

consistently questioned by Prague and Bonn. After the CSFR's division, Slovakia inherited all of the major security dilemmas which had plagued the CSFR. For the Czech Republic, Slovakia's strategic vulnerabilities, exposed more visibly after its NATO membership in NATO (1999), continued to influence its foreign and security policy deliberations. Being located in a region rife with internal and external threats, the Czech Republic, however, was still categorised by Germany as a state existing in a potentially dangerous security vacuum. Bonn calculated that this state of affairs would persist unless measures were undertaken to integrate the Czech Republic into Western international institutions. Germany did not have the economic resources to fill this vacuum unilaterally; indeed, this approach was viewed as politically counterproductive by its political leadership.⁴¹

The Czech Republic was not regarded as a threat to Germany's security, although its mutual border was a significant flashpoint for illegal immigration. The severity of the threat posed by immigration pressures from the states bordering Germany's Eastern frontier, especially the Czech Republic depended on external factors which were beyond German control. Bonn feared that immigration pressures would increase should the transformation and reform processes in ECE and the CIS falter or even fail. The German Minister for Employment Norbert Blüm acknowledged the problem in 1991 early; he pointed out that Germany was experiencing 'considerable immigration pressures' from the East which could be eradicated if the reform efforts in ECE succeeded.⁴² Speaking at a conference on migration and the protection of ethnic minorities in Vienna, Austria, Kohl also highlighted the immigration pressures being experienced by Germany. He stated:

In 1991, 760,000 immigrants came to Germany. In 1992, there were one million immigrants of which there were: 230,000 ethnic Germans originating from east and southeast Europe and Central Asia; 444,000 asylum seekers, of which less than five per cent left their home country for political, racist or religious reasons; 260,000 refugees, primarily from the former Yugoslavia; approximately 100,000 illegal immigrants.⁴³

⁴¹Ronald D. Asmus, 'NATO's Double Enlargement: New Tasks, New Members' in Gary Clemens (ed.), *NATO and the Quest for Post-Cold War Security* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p. 71.

⁴²*Bulletin*, no. 42 (26 April 1991), p. 314. MT.

⁴³*Bulletin*, no. 85 (13 October 1993), pp. 969-970. MT.

An influx of immigrants, especially illegal ones from the East, challenged Germany's political, economic, and security interests, especially the economic recovery of its Eastern *Länder*. By playing a proactive role in the political and economic reconstruction efforts of the post-communist states, Bonn hoped to stem the tide of immigrants coming from the East. In 1993, the German Minister of the Interior Manfred Kanther observed that the Czech-German border was rife with the presence of illegal immigrants attempting to enter Germany. In 1993 alone, 29,834 'aliens' were caught trying to enter Germany from the Czech Republic illegally.⁴⁴ Fifty-five per cent of all illegal immigrants caught on Germany's borders came from the Czech Republic. In Germany alone, between 1991 and 1993, there were 2.5 million immigrants from ECE and the Soviet Union; furthermore, there were one million emigrants. To address this problem, Bonn signed bilateral agreements with the Czech Republic and Poland to define the procedures for returning illegal immigrants to their point of origin.⁴⁵

Germany's extensive focus on its border with the Czech Republic did not alleviate the prevailing impression there that the CSFR's division had had a deep effect on its self-perceptions and identity as an actor in international relations and as one of Germany's eastern neighbours. Vladimir Handl argued that the Czech Republic's foreign policy-makers after 1993, especially its Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec, recognised that the Czech Republic's importance in German foreign policy calculations would decrease as a result of the dissolution of the CSFR and German national elections in 1994.⁴⁶ There was a widespread fear amongst the Czech political leadership that the Czech Republic would have to fend for itself since its relative significance in ECE had declined. Nonetheless, the Czech Republic's membership in the Visegrád Group enhanced its profile as a state that could not manage its own security requirements if an external threat emerged in the foreseeable future. Bonn viewed the Czech Republic as an important regional actor because it maintained a border with Germany and was perceived to be located in a 'strategic no-man's land' along with other states in ECE.

⁴⁴'Erklärung des Bundesinnenministers', *Bulletin*, no. 104 (10 November 1994), p. 957.

⁴⁵For the Czech Republic, see 'Deutsch-tschechisches Regierungsabkommen über die Rückübernahme von Personen an der gemeinsamen Staatsgrenze', *Bulletin*, no. 104 (10 November 1994), pp. 953-957.

⁴⁶Vladimir Handl, 'Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation', *German Politics*, vol. 6, no. 2 (August 1997), p. 151.

Regional cooperation entailed a comprehensive ECE strategy that focused on the dynamics and benefits of regional cooperation among the new transition states. The Cracow Declaration (6 October 1991) was the preliminary framework for expanding ties between the Visegrád states and NATO.⁴⁷ Bonn encouraged these ties. The founding agreement for the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA), signed by the four Visegrád states (1 March 1993) was motivated by political and economic concerns but it also had implications for promoting security in the region and preparing the member states for future integration into Western international institutions. The CSFR, Hungary, and Poland had realised that the successes of their respective political and economic transition processes were intimately linked, although each state viewed the importance of this cooperation differently.⁴⁸ Consequently, there was a significant amount of competition amongst all states in ECE to gain entry into the EU and NATO in the fastest possible manner.⁴⁹

The Czech path to Western and European international institutions was widely believed to be via Germany. This was the case in the security sphere but this did not dispel the fears of one segment of Czech's foreign policy elite who considered it possible that 'Germany might loosen its ties with existing institutions, and reaffirm its position as the 'land in the centre – between East and West'.⁵⁰ A report issued by Prague's Institute of International Relations acknowledged the 'German factor' in Czech foreign and security policy calculations: 'Germany was and will always remain the most important neighbour of the Czech nation'. The report also urged caution by warning: 'it is of course impossible to rule out the theoretical possibility of the transformation of an economically strong Germany into an imperial superpower with aspirations of creating a

⁴⁷Cooperation amongst the Visegrád states, however, began to wane. This became more apparent after the dissolution of the CSFR and Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus' interest in obtaining Czech memberships in international institutions via unilateral measures which did not rely on regional cooperation efforts. See Ryszard Zieba, 'New Frameworks of Co-operation in East-Central Europe' in Andrzej Dumała and Ziemowit J. Pietras (eds.), *The Future of East Central Europe* (Lublin: Marie Curie-Skłodowska University Press, 1996), p. 267.

⁴⁸Andrew Cottey, *East Central Europe after the Cold War: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary in Search of Security* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).

⁴⁹This competition was actually welcomed by Bonn. See Rühle's views on competition and *Nachbarschaftsstabilität* (neighbourly stability) in *Bulletin*, no. 15, 14 February 1996, pp. 168-171.

⁵⁰See Vladimir Handl, 'The Czech Perception of Germany: Hopes and Apprehensions' in Tamas Szemler (ed.), *Relations between Germany and East Central Europe until 2000: Prospects and Policy Options* (Budapest: Institute for World Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1996), p. 12.

‘German Europe’.⁵¹ These sentiments were echoed by Antonin Sverak who wrote: ‘Germany is the European power which most substantially influences the security climate on our continent. It is the only one of our neighbours which is a member of the EU, the WEU, and NATO’.⁵² From 1993 to 1998, this political reality significantly influenced Prague.

The Polish Factor in Germany’s *Sicherheitspolitik*

Poland was always a pivotal security actor in Europe’s history. Sandwiched between Germany and Russia – two of the most important continental powers – it has struggled to survive and maintain its independence throughout its one thousand year history. In the two hundred years preceding 1989, Poland enjoyed only 21 years of political independence from foreign powers. Having been partitioned three times was as an enduring reminder of how fragile and threatened Poland’s security was throughout its history. According to Adam Michnik, it was possible that ‘Poland could disappear from the political map of Europe, as history shows. Poland needs to maintain a dialogue with Russia, with any Russia – that is the law of Poland’s geopolitics’.⁵³ After the Cold War’s end, Poland’s leadership concentrated on safeguarding its security and independence from foreign powers. Germany and Russia played a crucial role in the achievement of this objective. After communism’s demise in ECE and German unification, Poland was the most important security actor on Germany’s Eastern frontier because of its crucial geographic position. As with the CSFR and Germany, the withdrawal of the Soviet WGF from the former GDR through Poland and the Northern Group of Forces (NGF - 50,000 strong) from Poland was a controversial political issue until all Soviet troops had left Poland by the end of 1991. The Soviet military’s presence in Poland was perceived by Warsaw as a high-risk security threat to its

⁵¹IIR, *The Security Policy of the Czech Republic* (Prague: IIR, 1997), p. 16.

⁵²Antonin Sverak, ‘The Foreign Activities of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic’, *Perspectives: The Central European Review of International Affairs*, no. 10 (Summer 1998), p. 16.

⁵³Michnik quoted in Anatoli Frenkin, ‘Russland und Polen: Verschärfung des Konflikts’, *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 1 (1997), p. 46, MT.

interests.⁵⁴ Only after the Soviet Union's permanent withdrawal from Poland and the former GDR could Poland pursue a normal existence.

When Bonn looked eastwards and contemplated its security dilemmas, Poland came to mind. Poland evolved into Germany's security cornerstone in the East. Unlike the Czech Republic, Bonn viewed Poland's external security environment as precarious and unstable. Poland's environment improved when the Soviet Union removed its military from Polish territory but deep-seated strategic vulnerabilities plagued Poland's security discussions. Historically, Poland was a major invasion route through Europe between central and Western European states and Russia. Its flat physical terrain and exposed borders (over 800 kilometers) made it difficult to defend if an external threat emerged. An external threat from Russia in the East would need to pass through Lithuania, Belarus or Ukraine. With the Soviet Union's disintegration, Poland bordered seven states, six of which were former communist states (not including Eastern Germany) and four of which were former Soviet republics. It was located at a crucial juncture between Germany and the FSU. Poland also had a border with the tiny Russian Kaliningrad (Königsberg) *oblast*, the home of Russia's Baltic Fleet. Kaliningrad is completely encircled by Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic Sea.

For Polish Foreign Minister Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, Poland's security concerns were shaped by three factors: first, Poland's borders with new states that had emerged from the FSU and, second, Poland's position as a reunited Germany's neighbour and, third, its membership in the EU and NATO.⁵⁵ Poland's political and military leadership agonised over four issues at the outset of unification: first, the future direction of German military power; second, the implications of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) which would create a potential imbalance of Polish and German armed forces; third, that Poland might have to face a unified Germany alone, and finally, fourth, the possibility of a second Treaty of Rapallo (1922).⁵⁶ Poland

⁵⁴Douglas L. Clarke, 'Poland and the Soviet Troops in Germany', *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, vol. 2, no. 4 (25 January 1991), pp. 40-44.

⁵⁵Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, 'Polen und seine Nachbarn: Bemerkungen zur polnischen Aussenpolitik', *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 43, no. 1 (1996), p. 68.

⁵⁶See Ronald D. Asmus and Thomas S. Szayna, *Polish National Security Thinking in a Changing Europe: a Conference Report* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand/UCLA Centre for Soviet Studies, 1991), pp. 15-17.

was potentially caught between a unified and more powerful Germany and an imperialist, unstable and unpredictable Russia.⁵⁷ According to Krzysztof Miszczak, how to escape this trap successfully was the 'cardinal question' of Poland's security dilemma.⁵⁸ Confronting the spectre of the Rapallo Treaty – a potentially fatal rapprochement between Germany and Russia after 1990 – was to be avoided at all costs if Poland was to protect its political independence. In the aftermath of unification and the Soviet Union's collapse, Germany and Russia continued to dominate Poland's threat perceptions.

Poland was bordered by the tiny Russian enclave of Kaliningrad, Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania, all of which were potential sources of instability for Germany. Poland's external security threats existed on its Eastern and Northern frontiers. The main threat to its external security was located in the possible collapse of the transition and democratisation processes in Russia. Domestic instability or political turmoil in Russia which gave rise to nationalist movements seeking to re-establish Russia's former hegemony in ECE threatened Poland, ECE and Germany.

The Russian national elections (12 December 1993) exposed the fragility of its political and economic climate and demonstrated how political parties pandering to nationalist themes benefited from promoting political chaos and exposing the Kremlin's leadership vacuum. Any ripple of tension from Moscow would also impact the tiny Russian enclave of Kaliningrad, an area of historical significance for Germany. Russia's potential use of Kaliningrad as a base to promote unrest or stage an attack threatened German and Polish interests.

Polish fears about Belarus and Ukraine's integration into a Russian dominated CIS were also legitimate. After assuming independences, Belarus forged closer political, economic, and security closer ties with Russia whereas Ukraine remained largely indifferent to Russian overtures about consolidating the CIS. Unresolved ethnic tensions in the region, i.e. the uncertain status of Polish minorities in Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus also plagued the bilateral relations of these states. The status of the Belarusian and Ukrainian minorities in Poland was a source of concern,

⁵⁷J. Stefanowicz, 'Central Europe between Germany and Russia – A View from Poland', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 26, no. 1 (March 1995), pp. 55-64.

⁵⁸Krzysztof Miszczak, 'Russland und Polen: Spielball gegen den Westen?', *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 9 (1995), p. 42.

although Poland signed agreements with Belarus and Ukraine (1992) and Lithuania (1994) to ensure that the rights of all ethnic minorities were protected.

German-Polish relations after 1990 entered a difficult time, especially in the domain of security. After achieving independence, Poland was the most geographically exposed state with the largest population in ECE (38 million). Bonn was fixated on Poland's domestic political and economic environment for several reasons. The status of Poland's Western border, the uncertain peaceful evolution of Russia, intra-Western differences on the future design of a European security architecture, and Polish insecurities about its environment all played a role in German-Polish security discussions.⁵⁹ The *raison d'être* of Germany's eastward orientation was the need to protect the domestic transformation processes of its Eastern *Länder*. Joachim von Arnim noted that 'the reconstruction of the new German states would hardly be possible if it was not connected to the reconstruction processes of neighbouring states like Poland or the Czech Republic'.⁶⁰ For Germany, Poland represented what Sherman Garnett described as a 'bulwark' against the eruption of ethnic conflicts and instabilities in the East.⁶¹ ECE was a buffer zone, or as Jochen Thies argued, a 'threefold *cordon sanitaire*', which protected Germany from three factors: the dangers posed by the collapse of Soviet communism, the collapse of transformation processes in ECE, and the revival of a Russian threat in ECE.⁶² To counter these sources of instability, Bonn pursued a strategy aimed at incorporating the Visegrád states into Western international institutions, although from 1990-1998 this aim was only partially achieved.

⁵⁹Friedbert Pflüger, 'Die deutsch-polnische Interessengemeinschaft' in Karl Kaiser and Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik: Interessen und Strategien*. Vol. 3 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996), pp. 145-148.

⁶⁰See Joachim von Arnim, 'Deutsche und polnische Sicherheitsinteressen im gesamteuropäischen Kontext: die deutsche aussenpolitische Sicht' in Lennart Souchon and Kai Hirschmann (eds.), *Die Deutsche-Polnische Kooperation in Fragen der Sicherheitspolitik*. Diskussionspapiere des 1. Deutsch-Polnischen Workshops vom 28.-30. November 1994 in Berlin/Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (Bonn; Berlin; Hamburg: Mittler, 1995), p. 69, MT.

⁶¹See Sherman W. Garnett, 'Poland: Bulwark or Bridge?' *Foreign Policy*, no. 102 (Spring 1996), pp. 66-82.

⁶²See Jochen Thies, 'Germany and Eastern Europe, Past and Future' in Arnulf Baring (ed.), *Germany's New Position in Europe: Problems and Perspectives* (Oxford; Providence, RI: Berg, 1994), p. 73.

Bilateralism and Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik*

Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* vis-à-vis the Czech Republic and Poland also included important and often underestimated bilateral security instruments which complemented multilateral ones. A vast array of German bilateral security instruments were used to foster closer military ties with ECE. These entailed annual military exchange programmes, joint and multilateral military manoeuvres, especially within NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), economic assistance in military education and training, the education of German officers in ECE, and the German civilian models of *Innere Führung* (moral leadership and civic education) and *Staatsbürger im Uniform* (citizen in uniform) which evolved into extremely popular concepts in the militaries of ECE. According to Thomas-Durrell Young, these models were the product of a combination of the

liberal traditions of German military history and 19th century Prussian reformers' designed to promote a strategic culture in the Bundeswehr which 'would embody the institutional spirit of the state, uphold the immutable human rights of those serving it, and recognise soldiers' responsibilities to a higher purpose—all in the pursuit of national defence.⁶³

German-Polish and German-Czech cooperation on military and security matters was viewed as litmus test for the successful pursuit of a political rapprochement between Germany and both states. Military-to-military cooperation reduced tensions. The introduction of confidence-building measures and transparency in the German *Bundeswehr's* internal and external operations created an atmosphere of trust that had been lacking during the Cold War. Overcoming the overwhelmingly negative Czech and Polish political-military stereotypes of Germans which had dominated the Cold War was important if Germany was to be able to successfully pursue 'normal' relations with its Eastern neighbours. Germany's ability to achieve this objective was also an important barometre of the state of Germany's bilateral relations with its two neighbours.⁶⁴ The foundations for all bilateral and trilateral military activities between Germany and its Eastern

⁶³Thomas-Durrell Young, 'Defence Planning and the Bundeswehr's New Search for Legitimacy' in Thomas-Durrell Young (ed.), *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1996), p. 56.

⁶⁴See Sven Bernhard Gareis, *Verständigung und Stabilität in Europa: Stand und Entwicklungsperspektiven der deutsch-polnischen Sicherheitskooperation* (Strausberg: Akademie der Bundeswehr für Information and Kommunikation, 1996), p. 10.

neighbours were rooted in treaties and agreements, general declarations, and military cooperation agreements designed to promote the mutual security objectives of the signatories.⁶⁵

Germany's bilateral military agendas concentrated on the establishment of civilian control in states where defence policies had been largely dictated by defence planners in Moscow. This was a starting point towards transforming the armed forces and strategic cultures of those states undergoing transformation. Germany was also keen to gain more insights into the defence structures of its Eastern neighbours and to benefit from their experiences in UN peacekeeping operations.⁶⁶ The military and security components of ECE's economic revival and transformation efforts also required attention. There was also a German interest in the arms procurement and production mechanisms in ECE.⁶⁷ This was largely motivated by economic self-interest but it highlights the nexus between this particular domain and Germany's position as a major exporting and trading nation in the global economy. Finally, the FRG's civilian control of the military, with the development of a new strategic culture in the FRG after the Second World War, included the adoption of democratic practices and transparency in its entire military and security infrastructures. Bonn hoped that a similar model could be applied to its Eastern neighbours.

Military Cooperation with the Czech Republic

The Treaty on Good Neighbourliness and Friendship between Germany and the CSFR (27 February 1992) included a short but important commitment on the part of the signatories to expand military ties and pursue joint security objectives in Europe.⁶⁸ Under the headline of promoting peace and stability on the European continent, Germany and the CSFR committed themselves to upholding the provisions of the Paris Charter (21 November 1990). Article VIII stipulated the need to expand bilateral and multilateral measures that would increase stability and

⁶⁵Eckart Lohse, *Das sicherheitspolitische Engagement Deutschlands in Osteuropa* (Sankt Augustin: Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung, 1996), p. 11.

⁶⁶*FAZ*, 16 September 1994, p. 4, FBIS-WEU-94-181, 19 September 1994, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁷Elmar Rauch, 'Rüstungszusammenarbeit mit osteuropäischen Staaten', *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 2 (1999), pp. 33-36.

⁶⁸'Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Tschechischen und Slowakischen Föderativen Republik', *Bulletin*, no. 24 (2 March 1992), pp. 233-238.

mutual trust and promote transparency.⁶⁹ This was relevant in the sphere of military cooperation. Article XI(4) provided for increased contacts between the defence ministers and officials of both governments.

The preamble to the German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development (1997) stated 'that the Federal Republic of Germany strongly supports the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance because it is convinced that this is in their common interest'. In this context, Germany reaffirmed its commitment to assist the Czech Republic's efforts to become a permanent member of the EU and NATO. In the latter's domain, bilateral military cooperation between Germany and the Czech Republic played an important role in achieving this goal.

The following agreements represent the foundations of bilateral military cooperation between Germany and the Czech Republic: Agreement between the Federal Ministry of Defence (MoD) of the CSFR and the BMVg of the FRG on Securing the Presence of Members of the Czechoslovak Army in the FRG and Members of the Forces of the FRG in the CSFR in the Course of their Official Visits signed in Prague on 8 November 1990; Agreement between the MoD of the CSFR and the Federal BMVg of the FRG on Ensuring the Exchange of Information on Flights by Military Aircraft on Areas Close to the State Border between the CSFR and the FRG, signed in Prague on 25 June 1992.

The Agreement between the Czech Republic MoD and the German BMVg on Cooperation in the Military Sphere (24 May 1993) was the formal recognition of the close ties between the *Bundeswehr* and the Czech armed forces which had been developing on a low level since 1989. Between 1989 and 1993, Germany and Czechoslovakia were involved in small military, personnel, and educational exchanges which served as forums for discussing ideas and promoting trust between the forces. Between 1989 and 1992, 98 Czech military officers attended German universities and military academies in Koblenz and Hamburg. Between 1993 and 1998, 240 officers completed similar courses. In military-to-military contacts (cross-border exercises)

⁶⁹This particular article was the same as article 6, paragraphs 2 and 3, of the German-Polish Treaty on Good Neighbourliness and Friendship.

between Germany and the Czech Republic, there were 60 military exercises in 1995, 90 in 1996, 150 in 1997 and 350 in 1998.⁷⁰

For the German military, these exercises and exchanges were classified as effective confidence-building measures which played a role in changing the Czech Republic's perceptions of Germany's *Bundeswehr*. The Czech Republic was intent on gaining more knowledge about the *Bundeswehr*'s internal decision making and leadership structures and encouraging the transfer of Western technological know-how. Exchanges and military agreements also permitted the Czech and German militaries to gain more knowledge about each other's strengths and weaknesses and created opportunities for forging a joint strategy to meet their mutual security objectives in ECE, especially within NATO and the PfP framework. Finally, a Treaty on Cooperation in the Sphere of Education was signed as well as an Agreement on Cooperation in the Research and Development of Defence Material (June 1997).⁷¹

Military Cooperation with Poland

After unification, the pursuit of close military ties between the *Bundeswehr* and the Polish Armed Forces was a key component of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* vis-à-vis Poland. The principles of this cooperation were enshrined in a 'Program for the development of political-military relations and contacts between the armed forces of Germany and Poland' (24 August 1990). This program highlighted ten specific measures for intensifying ties between both parties on a troop and ministerial level.⁷² The Treaty on Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation (17 June 1991) between Germany and Poland also acknowledged common German-Polish security objectives in Europe and the bilateral and multilateral tools required to achieve these objectives.⁷³

⁷⁰Source: German official in Prague.

⁷¹Antonin Sverak, 'Germany's Military Policy vis-à-vis the Central and East European Region' in Vladimir Handl *et al*, *Germany and East Central Europe since 1990* (Prague: IIR, 1999), p. 140.

⁷²Gareis, *Verständigung und Stabilität in Europa*, pp. 11-12.

⁷³See 'Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Republik Polen über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit', *Bulletin*, no. 68 (18 June 1991), pp. 541-546.

In the German-Polish friendship treaty, the articles dealing with peace, security and the expansion of bilateral military ties were similar in nature to the articles included in the German-CSFR friendship treaty. The pertinent articles are III, V, and VI. Article III(1) stipulated that both parties would undertake regular consultations to promote a deepening of their bilateral relations in all areas, including military ones. Article III(4) stated that there should be regular meetings and increased contact between the defence ministers and officials of the two countries. Article V(1) states: 'The treaty parties reinforce that they will desist from making threats or using force which is directed against the territorial integrity and the political independence of the other party or is not compatible with the goals and principles of Charta of the United Nations and the Helsinki Act'. In Article VI(3), 'The parties commit themselves, and together, for the multilateral and bilateral expansion of trust-building, stabilising, and other arms control measures which strengthen stability and trust and lead to greater transparency' in German-Polish civil-military relations.⁷⁴ These aims were to be pursued under the Paris Charter provisions and ensure the continued state of peace and stability on the European continent. Until the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in 1991, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (now OSCE) served as the principal forum for joint German-Polish military activities.⁷⁵ Contacts between German and Polish defence officials (summer of 1990) laid the foundation for future cooperation between the two states until a formal defence agreement could be negotiated and implemented.⁷⁶

The Treaty on Preventing Conflicts at Sea (27 November 1990); the Agreement on Cooperation of the Air Force in the Event of an Emergency (5 March 1992); Agreement on the Search and Rescue Service (5 March 1992); Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Anti-Aircraft Defence and the Agreement on the Conditions of Arrangement of Official and Working

⁷⁴Rauch, 'Rüstungszusammenarbeit mit osteuropäischen Staaten', p. 36.

⁷⁵Dieter Korger, *Die Polenpolitik der deutschen Bundesregierung von 1982-1991* (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1993), p. 115.

⁷⁶The 'Programme for the Development of Political-Military Relations between the Armed Forces of Poland and Germany' was the first to delineate the nature of future military contacts. See Sven Bernhard Gareis, 'Stabile Beziehung: Sicherheitskooperation zwischen Deutschland und Polen', *Information für die Truppe: Zeitschrift für Innere Führung*, nos. 7-8, (1997), p. 18.

Visits (27 November 1992) formed the first tranche of bilateral military treaties signed between the Bundeswehr and the Polish Armed Forces.

A formal defence agreement between Germany and Poland, however, remained elusive and was not discussed by the Germans until Stoltenberg visited Poland (23-25 March 1992). One of the principal foundations of bilateral military cooperation between Germany and Poland is the Agreement on Cooperation between the Defence Sectors which was eventually signed by Rühle and his Polish counterpart Janusz Onyskiewicz in Bonn (25 January 1993).⁷⁷ The agreement was a watershed in German-Polish military relations since it was the first comprehensive agreement on bilateral military cooperation to be negotiated and implemented by Germany with a former Warsaw Treaty member state.⁷⁸ Several important areas were highlighted: promotion of increased contacts between the Bundeswehr and Polish Army; internal military issues ranging from training to the organisation of the armed forces; the intensification of military consultations on subjects of mutual interest; military training; environmental issues, and plans for the deployment of troops in times of catastrophe.

Three levels of cooperation formed the backbone of German-Polish military cooperation efforts: (1) official meetings between the directors of ministerial departments and the chiefs of staff, (2) exchange of information in the fields of science, means of education, human resources, medicine, military history, and sociology, and (3) logistics and the promotion of military activities.⁷⁹ At the level of chiefs of the general staffs, the Outline Agreement on Military Cooperation of 1994 was the foundation for the conclusion of partnership between units and formations of the Bundeswehr and the Polish Army. On 5 November 1996, an Agreement on

⁷⁷BMVg, *Vereinbarung zwischen dem Bundesminister der Verteidigung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und dem Minister für Nationale Verteidigung der Republik Polen über die Zusammenarbeit im militärischen Bereich von 25 Januar 1993* (Bonn: BMVg, 1993).

⁷⁸Jaroslav Drozd, 'Poland's Relations with the Federal Republic of Germany' in Barbara Wizimirska (ed.), *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 1993/1994* (Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, 1994), p. 118.

⁷⁹*Information für die Truppe: Zeitschrift für Innere Führung*, 'Optimistischer Blick in die Zukunft. Militärische Zusammenarbeit zwischen Deutschland und Polen - Fragen an Oberst i.G. Stefan Janus, Verteidigungsattaché der Republik Polen in Deutschland, 1992-1995'. No. 8 (1995), pp. 22-27.

Arms Cooperation was signed, whose aim was to institutionalise military relations, especially in the fields of arms procurement and production.⁸⁰

Promoting more bilateral military cooperation between Poland and Germany was important for several reasons. According to the German Military Attaché in Warsaw, Captain Hartmut Spieker, and the Acting Director of the Planning Staff at Poland's Ministry of Defence, Lieutenant Pawel Seydak, this cooperation

constituted a concrete form of preparation for Poland's eventual integration. ... The pronounced interest of Poland for a complete integration into the West's security structures is based on the notion that in this manner it can contribute to the stabilisation of the situations of the central and east European reform states and can stabilise and secure the democratic development of Poland.⁸¹

Military cooperation between the two states also helped break down national stereotypes which had dominated mutual relations since 1949, a problem not uncommon in Germany's bilateral military relations with the Czech Republic.⁸² Germany was a pivotal supporter of Polish interests within NATO and steadfastly assisted Polish efforts to achieve inter-operability and compatibility with NATO forces.⁸³ Nonetheless, the expansion of military ties between Germany and Poland was not uncomplicated and without tension. Initially, language barriers and disputes involving the availability of surplus arms and munitions from the NVA for the Polish Armed Forces strained Germany's military ties with Poland after 1990, but not for a long period of time.⁸⁴

The Trilateral Foundations of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik*

The Weimar Triangle

The Weimar Triangle was a useful consultative forum for the Germans, French, and Poles to address their mutual security concerns in ECE. The triangle itself did not have any institutional

⁸⁰Rauch, 'Rüstungszusammenarbeit mit osteuropäischen Staaten', pp. 33-34.

⁸¹Hartmut Spieker and Pawel Seydak, 'Deutschland und Polen: ein Beispiel für die Normalisierung einer schwierigen Nachbarschaft', *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 6 (1997), p. 38. MT.

⁸²Eva Feldmann and Sven Bernhard Gareis, 'Polens Rolle in der NATO: zur Bedeutung externer Hilfen bei der Stabilisierung Osteuropas', *Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, vol. 8, no. 3 (1998), p. 991.

⁸³Hartmut Spieker, 'Klischees verlieren an Bedeutung – Fragen an Dr Andrzej Karkoszka, 1. Stellvertreter des polnischen Verteidigungsministers', *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 11 (1997), p. 8.

⁸⁴Jaroslav Drozd, *Probleme der militärischen Sicherheit in den polnisch-deutschen Beziehungen* (Frankfurt am Main: HSFK, 1995), p. 6.

characteristics since it did not function as a decision-making body. Its creation was symbolic as it focused exclusively on fostering Poland's development after the end of the Cold War. As a security instrument, the triangle was focused on Poland's immediate security environment: its relations with Belarus and Ukraine and their democratic evolution in the post-Soviet order. The significance of the triangle as a trilateral security instrument for meeting German, French, and Polish foreign and security policy objectives in ECE cannot be underestimated.⁸⁵

The Polish Foreign Minister Wladyslaw Bartoszewski explained the Weimar Triangle's significance for Poland as follows:

Cooperation among Poland, Germany and France within the Weimar Triangle is an example of the creation of new structures to overcome former divisions and pacts. This particular form of cooperation between European Union countries and a country from the former area of the Soviet bloc constitutes a symbol uniting three great European nations. The former zone of great European wars is being transformed into a pillar of security on the continent.⁸⁶

The triangle's dynamics offered a mechanism by which Poland could intensify its relations with two of the most important states in the EU: France and Germany. Warsaw believed the Weimar Triangle was an instrument through which Poland could involve another Western European power, France, besides Germany, to play a more active role in the region. For Germany, the Weimar Triangle's significance could be measured by its position as a 'point of stability in the middle of the European house' and as a political instrument for pursuing 'normal' relations with the Poles.⁸⁷ By playing an active role in the triangle, Germany would allay external concerns about its interests in ECE, especially Poland and put fears to rest in the East and the West about the re-emergence of a German hegemon or creation of a German sphere of influence in its political and economic hinterland.⁸⁸ The French were motivated by assisting Poland's reform

⁸⁵Helena Boguslawska and Aleksandra Konieczka, *Die politisch-militärische Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen des Weimarer Dreiecks und des Dreiecks Polen-Deutschland-Dänemark* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszalek for Polish Ministry of Defence, 1998).

⁸⁶Bartoszewski quoted in Stanislaw Parzymies, 'The Interests of Partners in Weimar Cooperation', *Central European Review*, vol. 5, nos. 20-21 (February 1998), p. 74.

⁸⁷Kinkel quoted by Krzysztof Skubiszewski, 'Deutschland: Anwalt Mitteleuropas', *Internationale Politik*, no. 2 (1997), p. 30.

⁸⁸Horst Teltschik even proposed a joint 'Ostpolitik' with the French. Genscher added that 'it was particularly important that Germany and France attempt to coordinate their policy toward the East during this significant phase in German history'. See *DPA*, 16 May 1991, FBIS-WEU-91-097, 20 May 1991.

efforts but, more importantly, the triangle was a useful mechanism to examine and monitor Germany's objectives vis-à-vis Poland and also ECE.

After 1993, simultaneous meetings of the defence ministers complemented the yearly meetings of the French, German and Polish foreign ministers. Following the initiative taken by the foreign ministers of the Weimar Triangle in Warsaw (11-12 November 1993), Germany and France declared their support for Poland to become an associate member of the WEU: a step to integrate Poland more into the Euro-Atlantic security structures.⁸⁹ The first trilateral military meetings between the triangle's defence ministers convened in Paris (18-19 July 1994). In the military sphere of their relations, the meeting's main ostensible aim was to support Poland's integration into the EU and expand its military contacts with NATO and the WEU. The next military trilateral meeting did not convene until February 1997. The initiative of the defence ministers of Germany (Volker Rühle), France (Charles Millon) and Poland (Piotr Kolodziejczyk) on the intensification of political-military and military co-operation (2 February 1997) was essential in deepening and enhancing trilateral military contacts. It also played an instrumental role in providing an institutional foundation for co-ordinating military co-operation projects and furthering military ties. This initiative had four main objectives: (1) to provide support for integrating Poland into the Atlantic Alliance, (2) to create a foundation for a common defence policy for the three states, based on the Franco-German model, (3) to coordinate expansion of the input of the three states into the European Security and Defence Initiative (ESDI), and finally (4) to strengthen peace and stability in Europe. The security aspects of the Weimar triangle also played a paramount role in preparing Poland for its admission into NATO.

The German-Danish-Polish Corps

The second major dimension of Germany's trilateral military cooperation with Poland was with Denmark. Unlike the Weimar triangle which had political, economic, and military dimensions, the German-Danish-Polish corps was focused exclusively on intensifying military cooperation (participating in joint exercises, creating twin units, and intensifying daily contact

⁸⁹See Adam Halamski and Mariusz Kazana, *Politische und militärische Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen des Weimarer Dreiecks* (Warsaw: Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997), pp. 54-55.

between soldiers) amongst the three actors, preparing Poland for NATO membership, and achieving the security objectives of the three participants in ECE and the Baltic Sea region.⁹⁰ Bonn viewed this form of trilateral cooperation as additional proof of its support for Poland's integration in NATO and unwillingness to pursue unilateral military initiatives in ECE or in the Baltic Sea. This form of trilateral cooperation reassured Poland, and like the Weimar triangle, was a vehicle for the Poles to overcome negative historical experiences with their German counterparts in a military context. For the Danes, the corps' formation prepared Poland for NATO membership and re-channelled German interests into the Baltic Sea region, a geographical area not immediately recognised by Bonn as a priority after unification.

The impetus for this trilateral military cooperation began at a meeting of the Danish, German and Polish defence ministers on the German island of Rügen (12-13 May 1994). Following these consultations, an 'Agreement on Military Cooperation' was signed on the island of Aeroe in Denmark (17 August 1995). The agreement allowed for an extension of the bilateral and trilateral military projects which had been conducted amongst the Danes, Germans and Poles before 1995. It also formed the basis for promoting further military cooperation after 1996. Cooperation between the Danish, German, and Polish naval units was formally enshrined in an agreement signed in Gdynia, Poland (2 June 1997). Cooperation between the air forces of the three states went into effect after 22 September 1997.

The defence ministers of Denmark, Germany, and Poland took the most important decision concerning the creation of the Danish-German-Polish corps in Skagen, Denmark (6-8 May 1997). An agreement was subsequently signed on 30 August 1997 whose aim was to institutionalise further military cooperation in the form of a trilateral Danish-German-Polish corps by 1999. A Convention on the Multinational Corps North-East and Agreement on the Tasks of the Multinational Corps North East was signed in Szczecin, Poland (5-6 September 1998). Each of these measures was a stepping stone towards instrumentalising and institutionalising the military relationships between Denmark, Germany and Poland in the form of a trilateral corps.

⁹⁰For a historical assessment of the FRG's role in the Baltic Sea region, see Hans-Jochen Meyer-Höper, 'The Significance of the Baltic Sea in the Security and Defence Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1950-1989' in Gunnar Artéus and Bertel Heurlin (eds.), *German and Danish Security Policies towards the Baltic Sea Area: 1945 until Present* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Affairs & National Defence College of Sweden, 1998), pp. 35-51.

The Multilateral European and Transatlantic Security Dimensions of Ostpolitik

Germany and the Evolution of a European Security Architecture, 1990-1992

Germany's decision-makers exerted influence via numerous bilateral and multilateral frameworks to achieve their regional foreign and security policy objectives. German multilateralism within NATO is crucial to our understanding of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* towards ECE after unification. The purpose here is to examine the multilateral frameworks which Bonn used to promote its security interests vis-à-vis ECE, the Czech Republic and Poland in particular.

In December 1990, Kohl strongly warned against the creation of a 'new and dangerous prosperity border becoming consolidated in the centre of Europe after the overcoming of the Iron Curtain. ... Failure of political and economic reform in central, Eastern, and south-Eastern Europe would have serious consequences for the rest of Europe, including us'.⁹¹ This was not an isolated warning from Germany's political leadership. Kohl often reiterated the necessity to offer a 'European perspective' to its Eastern and South-Eastern neighbours in Europe. This was easier said than done as Germany was to find out. Mustering support from Germany's European and transatlantic allies for the transition processes in ECE was not a goal everyone shared by everyone.⁹²

Bonn's answers to the security dilemmas on its Eastern frontier relied on promoting more intense co-operation between ECE and Europe's multilateral institutions. From 1990-1992, NATO membership was not on the cards for the new transition states in ECE as the contours of a new European security architecture had not yet been defined. The first German foreign minister after unification, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, played an important role in crafting Bonn's position on the future evolution of this architecture. Already in early 1991, Bonn indicated that it did not advocate NATO's extension to the East, although it had been instrumental in tying its Eastern

⁹¹Kohl's remarks in *DPA*, 30 December 1990, *FBIS-WEU-90-251*, 31 December 1990.

⁹²Kohl's remarks in *Bulletin*, no. 11 (31 January 1991), p. 61.

neighbours to the EC via the European Agreements.⁹³ Instead, Genscher offered the following 'temporary' and non-committal solutions to ECE's security conundrums:

It will be important for us to create all-European security structures in which the CEE [Central East Europe] states will find their own place. Thus, it is advisable for the CEE states not to seek membership in the Western alliance. This also corresponds to the alliance's attitudes because it is not in our interest that the changes in Europe lead to a new division of the continent, a division that would run along the Western border of the Soviet Union.⁹⁴

The emphasis of Genscher's all-European security structure was based on the foundations of the CSCE (at the expense of NATO⁹⁵) and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, signed by the CSCE heads of state and government (21 November 1990), the EC, and eventually the WEU.⁹⁶ Genscher believed that only these organisations could safeguard the security of Germany's Eastern neighbours. Genscher also advocated that the Soviet Union be included and not isolated from the creation of any future European institutional structures.⁹⁷ This was a common theme voiced by the Kohl government from 1990 to 1998. The CSCE, however, did not have the appropriate institutional structures at its disposal to shape a European security architecture after unification. Not all member states, in particular the United States, were keen to adopt the CSCE as a substitute mechanism which included the Soviet Union but might consequently signal NATO's death.

The Treaty on the European Union negotiated at the Maastricht European Council (9-10 December 1991) laid the groundwork for the development of a Common Foreign and Security

⁹³During the Two Plus Four negotiations in early 1990, fundamental disagreements on the future nature of the Alliance were raging between the German foreign and defence ministries. See Werner Weidenfeld, *Außenpolitik für die deutsche Einheit: die Entscheidungsjahre 1989/90* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998), pp. 260-263.

⁹⁴*Cologne Deutschlandfunk Network*, 31 March 1991, FBIS-WEU-91-062, 1 April 1991.

⁹⁵Kohl distanced himself from this approach. See Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung* (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 182

⁹⁶The adoption of the 'Prague Theses' with the Czechoslovak government (11 April 1991) is important. This document contained a list of ten points concerning German and Czech perceptions on the development of new structures for European security and stability. See German Foreign Office (ed.), *Beitrag des Auswärtigen Amtes zum Jahresbericht der Bundesregierung 1991* (Bonn: German Foreign Office, 1991), p. 48. The text of the 'Prague Theses' is in Berlin *ADN*, 11 April 1991, FBIS-EEU-91-071, 12 April 1991.

⁹⁷As Genscher notes in his memoirs, the failure of this strategy was apparent at the World Economic Summit in London in 1991 where the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was treated in a 'cool' manner. See Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Erinnerungen*, (Berlin: Siedler, 1999), p. 970 and Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs* (London: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 613-617.

Policy (CFSP) and included a reference to the WEU as a major component of the Treaty which was to enter force only on 1 November 1993. The CSCE framework, with the EC's and WEU's Forum on Consultation, however, did not have the appropriate mechanisms in place to address Germany's as well as NATO's security concerns in ECE.

NATO had formed the bedrock of German security since 1955. It was unlikely that Bonn would sever its links with NATO to embrace the creation of new security structures in Europe. On the contrary, Bonn advocated that the Alliance should transform itself to meet numerous and new security challenges in the post-Cold War era. Bonn considered NATO the ideal multilateral security framework for advancing German and ECE interests. The Alliance had to devise the consultative frameworks necessary to address issues of stability and security in ECE and the Soviet Union. NATO, under the leadership of Secretary-General Manfred Wörner, was already redefining its mission in the post-Cold War era and that included a more extensive focus on the countries in ECE and the Soviet Union.

Germany's passionate support for NATO's proactive engagement with its Eastern neighbours was a central component of its foreign relations with the CSFR and Poland. The Heads of State and Government at the London Summit (July 1990) acknowledged the need for NATO to re-launch itself in the absence of an acute Soviet threat and the presence of a unified Germany firmly embedded in NATO's institutional framework. The London Summit also began a consultation exercise on the development of a future Strategic Concept for the Alliance and extended offers to the governments of the Soviet Union and ECE to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO and promote the intensification of cooperation and dialogue between itself and these states.

NATO's Strategic Concept was published at the Rome Summit Meeting (November 1991). Besides focusing on the Alliance's future role and reaffirming the transatlantic link within NATO, the Strategic Concept acknowledged that a new European security architecture was dependent on NATO's involvement and a plethora of other international institutions and frameworks in the Euro-Atlantic area: WEU, EU, CSCE, and the Council of Europe. Only mutually reinforcing institutions could address the security challenges faced by their member states. Bonn supported this objective and Genscher acknowledged that security and stability throughout Europe could

only be supported with a three-tier approach to European security: a European tier focused on the EC and the WEU; a transatlantic tier focused on NATO; and a CSCE/Council of Europe tier that included the Atlantic to the Urals.⁹⁸ Using the London Declaration, NATO created a formal institutional structure for its relations with nine countries in Eastern Europe. The NACC's creation (December 1991), although highly controversial in Paris, evolved into a new consultative forum designed to address the security concerns of all participating countries.⁹⁹

Given this three-tiered approach to European security, Bonn was not able to pursue unilateral options in ECE, although it was possible to advocate and pursue German objectives with other partners and within the confines of European security institutions.¹⁰⁰ Bonn expressed an interest in formulating and implementing its foreign and security policy with its European partners, in particular, France. Deflecting any criticism of German *Sonderwege* in ECE by proposing a Franco-German Ostpolitik was a priority in the region.¹⁰¹ The Weimar Triangle's creation (August 1991) served this purpose well.¹⁰²

Despite Bonn's efforts to multilateralise its foreign and security policy, it was frustrated by the general lack of support and apathy displayed by its European and transatlantic partners when it came to assisting the transition efforts in ECE from 1990-1992. Managing Germany's Eastern conundrums were goals not every European country viewed with the same intensity and urgency as Germany. Indeed, other states became increasingly wary of German motivations and intentions in the region. Berghahn, Flynn, and Lützel articulate the fears expressed by many of Germany's allies in Western Europe and ECE:

⁹⁸*Bulletin*, no. 81 (12 July 1991), p. 656.

⁹⁹The NACC was replaced by the EAPC on 30 May 1997 at a meeting of the NATO and Cooperation Partner Foreign Minister's meeting in Sintra, Portugal. According to Peter Schmidt, the French viewed the NACC 'as a German-American attempt to provide NATO with new political missions in Central and Eastern Europe'. See Peter Schmidt, *Germany, France and NATO* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, October 1994), p. 14.

¹⁰⁰It was unconstitutional for Germany's armed forces to participate in missions exceeding common self-defence within the geographical areas defined by the EU and NATO. This constraint disappeared with the Federal Constitutional Court's ruling on 12 July 1994 that Germany was no longer bound by this law.

¹⁰¹See Genscher's comments in *DPA*, 16 May 1991, *FBIS-WEU-91-097*, 20 May 1991, and Genscher, *Erinnerungen*, p. 970.

¹⁰²See 'Gemeinsame Erklärung der Aussenminister von Deutschland, Frankreich und Polen in Weimar', *Bulletin*, no. 92 (3 September 1991), pp. 734-735.

The problem is thus not that Germany will voluntarily go into Eastern Europe by themselves and set up a comfortable sphere of influence that will be perceived by others as a threat. Rather the dilemma is that German leaders feel that the problems in the region must be dealt with, will be seeking partners to that end, and others may not follow.¹⁰³

Bonn called for more 'solidarity' in ECE and, on several occasions, Germany's leaders acknowledged that they had reached the limits of their generosity in ECE.¹⁰⁴ For Bonn, Germany and Europe's stability were contingent on having security in ECE. The German President Roman Herzog captured the essence of this important link by arguing quite forcefully that 'if we do not stabilise the East, the East will destabilise us'. He also noted that instability in Eastern Europe affects France as much as instability in the Mediterranean affects Germany.¹⁰⁵ This link became one of the dominant themes in Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* after 1990 and played an important role in shaping Germany's future position on the Alliance's enlargement.

The debate on the future of Europe's security was not conducted solely in Germany or by NATO's member states. From 1991-1992, it had become clear to the NACC members that the new independent states in ECE were keen to become permanent members of the Alliance and not just partners alongside Russia in a consultative framework which did not provide extensive security guarantees. Kohl vaguely acknowledged these concerns in February 1993 when he stressed the NACC's importance and advocated the adoption of a 'cautious' approach to the region, which highlighted the security dilemmas in the region but failed to provide any substantive guarantees that would allow the ECE members of the NACC to become permanent Alliance members.¹⁰⁶ The fear of Russian imperial revisionism in ECE and a potential re-emergence of German revisionist thinking had sparked a concerted effort on the part of the ECE

¹⁰³Volker Berghahn, Gregory Flynn and Paul Michael Lützel, 'Germany and Europe' in Konrad Jarausch (ed.), *After Unity: Reconfiguring German Identities* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1997), p. 185.

¹⁰⁴See Kohl's comments in *Bulletin*, no. 35 (3 April 1992), p. 335; President Richard von Weizsäcker's remarks in *DPA*, 9 January 1992, FBIS-WEU-92-006, 9 January 1992, p. 6, and Finance Minister Theo Waigel's comments in *Wirtschaftswoche*, 6 September 1991, FBIS-WEU-91-187, 26 September 1991, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵Roman Herzog, 'Die Grundkoordinaten deutscher Aussenpolitik', *Internationale Politik*, no. 4 (1995), p. 7.

¹⁰⁶*Bulletin*, no. 13 (10 February 1993), p. 103.

governments to return to the West and become permanent members of the Alliance, a concern Bonn was aware of.¹⁰⁷

Bonn's NATO Enlargement Agenda, 1993-1998

The internal German and NATO debates on the evolution of NATO's relationship with ECE fundamentally changed with a speech delivered by Rühle at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture, 1993) in London (26 March 1993).¹⁰⁸ Whereas the BMVg was extremely conscious of the security dilemmas Bonn faced, the Foreign Office and the Chancellor had not engaged in any substantive discussions on how Bonn was to face external security vulnerabilities on its Eastern frontier. Within NATO, the NACC had become the cornerstone of NATO's relations with ECE but a coherent strategic vision on the part of the member states for how the Alliance would manage future security challenges in ECE and the CIS was missing. Rühle pushed the debate forward in a public fashion by stating: 'the Atlantic Alliance cannot remain a closed society. I cannot see one main reason why future members of the European Union should be prevented from becoming members of NATO'.¹⁰⁹

According to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff at the BMVg, Vice-Admiral Ulrich Weisser, Rühle was motivated by three main concerns: (1) the inconclusive debates in the NACC on the prospects of offering permanent memberships to Germany's Eastern neighbours, (2) the need to promote further European integration efforts and include Poland and other Eastern neighbours in Western international institutions, and (3) the need to ensure that Germany's Eastern border was not contiguous with that of NATO or the EU.¹¹⁰ Poland was the most important factor in Germany's strategic thinking, especially for Kohl and Rühle. In a meeting with President Clinton in February 1995, Kohl noted: 'We need to enlarge to Central and Eastern

¹⁰⁷Michael Radu, 'Why Eastern and Central Europe Look West', *Orbis*, vol. 41, no. 1 (Winter 1997), pp. 39-57 and Gerhard Wettig, *Central European Security after the End of the Soviet Empire* (Cologne: BI-Ost, 17-1994), p. 19.

¹⁰⁸The strategy underlying the BMVg's and Rühle's position on enlargement had been conceived as early as September 1992. Rühle had not consulted the Foreign Office or the Chancellery about the speech's contents.

¹⁰⁹*Bulletin*, no. 27 (1 April 1993), pp. 229-233, especially pp. 231-232.

¹¹⁰Ulrich Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa: die Atlantische Allianz in der Bewährung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999), pp. 24-25.

Europe. The issue, of course, is Poland, not Hungary or the Czech Republic...They [Poland] are our closest neighbour'.¹¹¹ Rühle noted:

I had the feeling, and I still have, that we owe a lot to Poland. We owe them in a negative sense for what we did to them during the war. And we owe them in a positive sense for their courage in the 1970s and the 1980s. Their liberating themselves was really the key to overcoming the division of Europe. We need to understand that there would have been no Leipzig without Gdansk.¹¹²

His sentiments towards ECE had also been shaped by his political experiences as the foreign and security policy spokesman for the CDU in the 1980s when he had met the dissidents who were responsible for overthrowing communist leaders in their respective countries.

Kinkel echoed these concerns by acknowledging that 'the peoples in the reform countries have struggled for their freedom, we have called on them, even urged them to come into our free community, and now we must not leave them in a lurch. Germany is their advocate.'¹¹³ Germany's historical obligation or 'special responsibility' towards Poland and the Czech Republic¹¹⁴ was rooted in two processes: (1) the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany against these states throughout the Second World War, and (2) the roles played by both in facilitating German unification. Germany's *Verantwortungspolitik* towards ECE can be explained 'in part by pangs of conscience in realising that Germany's own postwar prosperity was built on Soviet victimization of East Europeans and erection of an iron curtain that let modernization proceed in Western Europe without being overstrained by claims from the East'.¹¹⁵

The main leitmotifs of Rühle's historical speech were 'integration' and 'cooperation'. 'Integration' was the implicit recognition that European unity could not be achieved if ECE was excluded from the design of a future European security architecture. On the other hand, the

¹¹¹Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 102.

¹¹²Rühle quoted in Frederick Kempe, *Father/Land: A Search for the New Germany* (London: Profile Books, 1999), pp. 111-112.

¹¹³*FAZ*, 11 September 1993, FBIS-WEU-93-178, 16 September 1993, pp. 16-17.

¹¹⁴The U.S. also urged the Czech Republic to face up to its historical responsibilities by mending their relations with Germany over the issue of the German expellees from the Sudetenland after World War Two. See Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, p. 147, quoting 'Ambassador Holbrooke's meeting with Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec', Prague 006216, August 18, 1994.

¹¹⁵Elizabeth Pond, 'Germany Finds its Niche as a Regional Power', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 1 (Winter 1996), pp. 32-33.

intensification of 'cooperation' with those states not willing or ready to join Western international institutions was vital in reducing the fears of a future division of Europe into blocks of stability and instability. Russia was the key player here. These concepts' dual application highlighted one of the main features of Germany's classic Eastern conundrums: promoting the further integration of ECE into Western international institutions versus the probable exclusion of Russia from similar institutions. Germany was forced to simultaneously balance its interests in ECE with those of Russia. This problem was exacerbated by what Richard Kugler described as incompatible German and Russian foreign and security policy objectives in ECE in the post-Cold War period:

The long term worry for their (Germany and Russia) relations is that the two countries may be shaping incompatible strategic agendas for major parts of ECE. Germany wants the heart of the region brought into the Western community. Russia wants the region to remain a neutral zone, unless it too can get equal membership in Western institutions. Germany does not want Russia brought into these institutions anytime soon. These separate agendas do not add up to strategic harmony in the long run.¹¹⁶

Having publicly addressed the security concerns and membership aspirations voiced by Germany's Eastern neighbours, Rühle's controversial speech marked the genesis of the dual German and NATO debates on the enlargement of the Alliance to the East, especially to the Visegrád states: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Both debates were similar in many ways as they ran parallel to each other. They were also heavily influenced by Washington and Moscow's positions on enlargement, and they exposed Bonn's difficulties in devising a common strategy and position on shaping the dynamics of enlargement: the timetable, choice of new members, and the significance of Moscow in the intra-German and NATO debates.

Amongst NATO's key members: the United States, France, and Britain, the timing of Rühle's speech was met with some scepticism since there was no consensus in the NACC on the feasibility of opening up the Alliance to outside members and what impact the process would have on Russian politics. There were also many unanswered questions about the motives behind Germany's support for enlargement.¹¹⁷ For Bonn, the reasons were self-evident. There was, however, a divergence of opinions amongst the member states in the NACC on this major

¹¹⁶Richard L. Kugler, *Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1996), p. 166.

¹¹⁷See Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa*, pp. 37-39. For a more sceptical view, see Lanxin Xiang, 'Is Germany in the West or in Central Europe?', *Orbis*, vol. 36, no. 3 (Summer 1992), pp. 411-422.

strategic proposal. The proposal also exposed policy differences amongst the main foreign and security policy actors in Bonn which had surfaced in the latter half of 1993 lasting almost uninterrupted until the Madrid Summit (July 1997). The political discussions on enlargement were dominated by two schools of thought in the summer of 1993: (1) proponents of the transfer of stability to ECE through extensive cooperation but without the provision of membership, especially in NATO, and (2) proponents of a step-by-step, selective integration of new members into Western international institutions in combination with increased cooperation.¹¹⁸

Bonn's official stance on enlargement, however, fluctuated between three positions: the 'aggressive' BMVg approach which highlighted the military aspects of enlargement and the legitimate right of any state in ECE to join NATO if they fulfilled the membership criteria¹¹⁹; the 'cautious' approach by Kinkel and the Foreign Office which promoted extensive cooperation arrangements with ECE but not at the expense of prematurely isolating Russia from Europe¹²⁰, and the 'reticent' approach adopted by Kohl which lent favour to the strategies adopted by Kinkel but did not actively hinder the BMVg and Rühle from advocating Germany's interests to enlarge the Alliance.

At a meeting of the NATO defence ministers in Travemünde, Germany (20-21 October 1993), Rühle's ideas for a future ministerial summit that would set an enlargement timetable for all states in ECE were tempered by a US-sponsored Partnership for Peace (PfP) plan (officially launched at the North Atlantic Council (NAC) Brussels Summit) which received strong support from the other member states since it postponed major decisions about enlargement. After nine months of public disagreement amongst Bonn's main foreign and security policy actors on the feasibility of NATO enlargement and the Russian response, the Brussels Summit (January 1994) eventually yielded a compromise solution which appeased the concerns of both parties in the

¹¹⁸Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa*, p. 39.

¹¹⁹The BMVg's position on enlargement had been formulated with some assistance by Rand, in particular, Ronald D. Asmus who was partly responsible for shaping the conceptual framework underlying NATO enlargement. For a discussion of the enlargement framework, see Ronald D. Asmus, Richard L. Kugler, and F. Stephen Larrabee, 'Building a New NATO', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 4 (September/October 1993), pp. 28-40, and Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

¹²⁰French ministers, along with Kinkel, were of the opinion in 1993 that the NATO enlargement process would take at least ten years to complete. See IISS, *Strategic Survey, 1993-1994* (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1994), pp. 112-113.

enlargement debate. The creation of PfP enabled the Alliance to postpone any major enlargement decisions until after the publication of its *Study on Enlargement*. On the other hand, member states viewed the PfP as a new initiative to promote stability on the European continent. PfP offered NATO's partner states the prospect of strengthened political consultation; the opportunity for the military forces of partner states to plan, train, and exercise with NATO; the implementation of co-operative measures designed to promote transparency in defence planning, and closer liaison with NATO through a Partnership Coordination Cell based in Mons, Belgium. One of the most important decisions reached at the NAC Summit was an agreement that NATO's member states would commit themselves to studying the 'why' and 'how' of future admissions throughout 1995 – an exercise which culminated in the publication of NATO's *Study on NATO Enlargement* (September 1995).¹²¹

Whilst PfP was not Rühle's ideal solution for addressing the security concerns of Germany's Eastern neighbours, it, nonetheless, included a clear commitment from the Alliance to open its doors to new members. In the German debate on enlargement, the PfP solution was a success for Kohl and Kinkel who had managed to delay important decisions on the NATO's future evolution. Bonn used the PfP as a policy instrument to prepare for enlargement but also to apply suitability tests to aspiring Alliance members. According to Thomas Szayna and Ronald Asmus, Bonn's attitudes toward PfP were based on the following logic:

German policy-makers have come to view PfP as an all-purpose instrument for pursuing multiple objectives vis-à-vis different countries. For those countries that the Germans consider firm candidates for Alliance membership, PfP is the path to enlargement. For those countries that the Germans view as possible candidates but where they are less sure, PfP is an antechamber where Germany can pursue cooperation and provide political reassurance and still keep its options open. For those countries that the Germans consider non-candidates, PfP is the alternative to expansion.¹²²

There was also hope that the PfP states would benefit from their mutual partnership with NATO before applying for permanent membership.¹²³

¹²¹NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement* (Brussels: NATO, 1995).

¹²²Ronald D. Asmus and Thomas S. Szayna, *German and Polish Views of the Partnership for Peace*, p. 11.

¹²³Volker Rühle, 'The Future of European Security: A German View', *Central European Issues: Romanian Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1995/96), p. 17.

The delay, however, to relegate important decisions on the future of Europe's security had important consequences for Germany's Eastern neighbours who were unhappy about Germany's as well as the United States' reluctance to offer them 'solid' prospects for becoming future Alliance members. Warsaw was particularly scathing in its criticism of the agreements reached in Brussels, for the PfP did not offer any firm security guarantees for those states consumed with fear about their internal and external stability.¹²⁴ According to Christopher Bertram:

The program failed to address not only the matter of whether, when, and how to extend NATO membership to Eastern European countries, but also of how to define NATO's relationship with Russia. Its ambiguity generated uncertainty in Moscow and in Eastern European capitals, inviting Russia to try to block these countries from membership and inciting the latter to regard membership as the only durable form of future relationship with the Western Alliance.¹²⁵

The delay also exacerbated domestic German tensions on future membership questions which the Alliance would have to address in the near future.

Making matters more complicated, Germany's foreign and security policy actors had several competing visions about the roles of NATO and the EU vis-à-vis ECE. There was also no common position on the process and timetable for the Alliance or EU's enlargement. This became clear when under U.S. President Bill Clinton's leadership in 1994 the United States launched an energetic campaign to prepare Poland and other states in ECE for future membership in NATO by 1996-1997. Bonn's support was found wanting in this crucial area because it was unclear, based on the policy statements of several major actors, where it stood on the questions facing the Alliance in the enlargement debate.

Despite having played a forceful role behind the WEU's offer of 'associate partner' status with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania in May 1994, Bonn's position on NATO enlargement was muddled. The BMVg and Rühle's positions were blatantly pro-enlargement but there was some concern about the Foreign

¹²⁴Kinkel's remarks highlight Polish concerns about the nature of the PfP arrangement. See *FAZ*, 21 January 1994 in FBIS-WEU-94-015 (24 January 1994), pp. 31-32. See Krzysztof Miszczak, 'Die Sicherheitspolitik der Tschechischen Republik', *Europäische Sicherheit*, no. 12 (1994), p. 636.

¹²⁵Christopher Bertram, *Europe in the Balance: Securing the Peace Won in the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1995), p. 43.

Office and Kohl's *blasé* stance on the issue.¹²⁶ The issue was also about timing. This state of affairs culminated in the creation of an interagency working group coordinated by the Chancellor on 6 September 1994 to address this issue. The main aim of the working group, in anticipation of major NATO summits in the fall, was to devise an official German position on enlargement. The working group was to define the conditions which potential membership candidates had to meet before they were considered for entry. It was also agreed that the Visegrád states were the preferred first-tier candidates for membership and that the Alliance should form a strategic partnership with Russia to alleviate any Russian fears about enlargement. Discussions on the timetable for enlargement were once again postponed to allow for the adoption of a policy that complemented the EU enlargement process.¹²⁷ The decisions taken by the working group were confirmed in the coalition agreement negotiated by the CDU, CSU, and the FDP, released on 14 November 1994.

Paradoxically, after months of indecision in Bonn, the working group, under extreme pressure from Kohl, reached a common position on enlargement only to be informed by the United States that it wanted to push for a more ambitious enlargement timetable which actually set deadlines for the admission of new members. In American eyes, the Germans were suddenly looking like an obstructive alliance partner with no discernible enlargement agenda.¹²⁸ Bonn was aware that any future solutions for solving the political, economic, or security concerns of Germany's Eastern neighbours within NATO required the consent of the United States. If the enlargement agenda was driven by Washington, then it was only logical that Bonn would be asked to play a major role in implementing Washington's enlargement vision.

¹²⁶The enlargement of NATO had not been declared *Chefsache* (priority issue for the chancellor). See Berthold Meyer, 'Deutsche Aussenpolitik und die NATO-Osterweiterung', *Wissenschaft und Frieden*, no. 2 (1996), p. 9. In addition, Chancellor Kohl's suggestion of a moratorium on NATO enlargement – for the purpose of allaying Russian concerns – to U.S. Secretary of Defence Bill Perry in February 1996 raised alarm bells there although Bonn quickly back-tracked on the Chancellor's comments. See Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, p. 142.

¹²⁷Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa*, pp. 66-67, and Christian Hacke, 'Die Haltung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur NATO-Osterweiterung' in August Pradetto (ed.), *Ostmitteleuropa, Russland und die Osterweiterung der NATO* (Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1997), pp. 231-249, especially pp. 240-242.

¹²⁸Karen E. Donfried, 'German-American Relations in the New Europe.' *Congressional Research Issue Brief*, no. 91018 (5 December, 1996).

The role of the United States in Germany's enlargement policy cannot be underestimated. Already in May 1991, Germany had joined the United States as 'partners in leadership'. Washington wanted to use this partnership to formulate a joint US-German strategy for addressing Germany as well as NATO's Eastern security dilemmas. Achieving a consensus in this partnership was crucial if the enlargement process was to proceed.¹²⁹ The Americans were operating from the somewhat 'dangerous' assumption, from a German and ECE perspective, that the United States, through NATO, would seek to pursue a strategic partnership with Russia before initiating discussions with the Visegrád states about their future membership prospects. For the Visegrád states, NATO's strategic priorities were clearly misplaced in that too much attention was being placed on Russia's strategic interests.

Given these apprehensions, Bonn struggled to define a coherent policy that suited all parties and achieved a balance between advocating the legitimate security interests of its Eastern neighbours and the need to include Russia in the design of a future European security architecture. According to Weisser, Bonn was guided by the following principles in its relations with Russia and ECE:

For the federal government, it was important to counter the impression apparent in ECE that a new and strengthened focus on Russia would not relegate enlargement to a lesser priority. On the contrary, it was important to inform the potential new members that it should be in their own security interests if a constructive relationship with Russia was maintained. It was necessary to find a right balance between the participation of Russia in the Euro-atlantic processes on the one hand and securing the integrity and freedom of the Alliance in internal matters, including the acceptance of new members ...¹³⁰

Bonn was torn between the priorities of both parties, especially after the decision taken by the Allied foreign ministers in December 1994 to discuss the modalities of enlargement, including the key questions of 'why' and 'how' enlargement should proceed. NATO's *Study on Enlargement* stated that by enlarging the alliance, NATO hoped to further 'the Alliance's basic goal of enhancing security and stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area, within the context of a broad

¹²⁹Joshua B. Spero and Frank Umbach, *NATO's Security Challenge to the East and the German-American Geo-strategic Partnership in Europe* (Cologne: BI-Ost, 39/1994).

¹³⁰Weisser, *Sicherheit für ganz Europa*, p. 91. MT.

European security architecture'.¹³¹ The PfP, NACC, and Article X of the North Atlantic Treaty were instrumental in facilitating the Alliance's enlargement. According to the study:

NACC/PfP will continue to provide the fundamental framework for developing relations with partner countries. Dynamic NACC/PfP cooperation is an integral part of the European security architecture, deepening interaction and extending security and stability throughout Europe, and as a means to strengthen relations with partner countries, whether possible new members or not.¹³²

From the perspectives of future members, it was important that the study acknowledge that the 'Alliance remains open to further accessions by countries not amongst the earliest to be invited to join'. Secondly, it was made clear that 'no country outside the Alliance should be given a veto or *droit de regard* over the process and decisions'. This measure was particularly aimed at Russia, the subject of increased attention during late 1995 and the first half of 1996.

Bonn's position on the Alliance's enlargement was not always clear, in part, because of the lack of leadership shown by Kohl and his apparent reluctance to declare the issue as *Chefsache*. The German domestic debate on devising a policy that would, first, reassure Russia about NATO's intentions in ECE and, second, conclude a strategic partnership between Russia and NATO, was coherent and remarkably well-coordinated amongst the major actors. The Chancellor with the Foreign Office and BMVg took an active role in promoting the dual-track paths of opening the Alliance to new members and forging a strategic partnership with one of the most important actors on the European continent: Russia. The interagency working group of the government concluded on 2 October 1996 that Germany's *Allianz* (Alliance) and *Russlandpolitik* would be guided by three main leitmotifs which had been agreed by the Chancellor, Foreign Office, and BMVg: (1) the acknowledgement of Russia's interests in forging a stronger relationship between itself and NATO, (2) the provision of a mandate for the Alliance and the secretary-general in their future negotiations with Russia¹³³, and (3) an agreement that Bonn

¹³¹NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement*, p. 1.

¹³²Ibid., p. 11. All members of PfP are also members of EAPC. However, PfP retains its own separate identity within the framework of the EAPC.

¹³³NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana was given a mandate to explore a strategic partnership with Russia (NATO Brussels Summit December 1996) but member states sought to influence Russian political and military opinion through a host of bilateral and multilateral diplomatic contacts. Consequently, a flurry of diplomatic activity vis-à-vis Russia was evident in the months leading up to the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act in Paris on 27 May 1997 and the creation of the Permanent Joint Council.

would not reach a concrete position on enlargement by December 1996 but would set a NATO Summit date for 1997, when the member states would adopt decisions on accepting new members, the content of a NATO-Russia Charter, and the Alliance's internal reform. There was an internal German consensus that Russia could not be excluded from any future European security arrangements if there was to be lasting peace on the continent and NATO was to proceed with its fateful decision to accept new members.

The negotiations leading up to the Madrid Summit raised numerous questions about preferred candidates and the timetable for extending invitations to new potential members. Whereas Bonn's decision to support the Alliance's enlargement was not questioned, there were uncertainties about which states should be invited to enter accession talks with NATO at the July summit. Bonn wanted to enlarge the Alliance to include the Visegrád Three: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. There were, however, open question marks amongst Alliance members, including Germany, about the feasibility of extending similar invitations to Romania and Slovenia and sending positive signals to the Baltic States about their future prospective memberships in the Alliance. For the United States, there was a consensus for accepting three new members but not five. How other countries felt was not clear until all the parties had convened for the Madrid Summit. For American policymakers participating in Madrid Summit, the quality of support for the German plan was uncertain. Ron Asmus noted the following:

While German Defense Minister R  he was solidly behind us, Foreign Minister Kinkel was all over the map on the issue. President Clinton seemed confident that Chancellor Kohl would support him. But Kohl had yet to take a public position. And France, too, was invoking its special relationship with Bonn to gain German support.¹³⁴

Germany eventually supported the U.S. position when Kohl acknowledged at the Summit that 'One miracle has already come true...There is agreement on membership of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic...There would not be agreement on more than three countries'.¹³⁵

The timetable for the Alliance's enlargement was set as follows. In Madrid, NATO officially invited the Visegrád Three to become permanent members of the Alliance. Between July and December (1997), NATO and the prospective member states completed their accession

¹³⁴See Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, p. 239.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 243.

negotiations and signed an accession protocol. Throughout 1998, the accession protocol was ratified by NATO's member states and at the Washington Summit (4 April 1999), the fiftieth anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty, the Visegrád Three became permanent members.

Germany's return to the *Mittellage* in Europe had profound implications for its *Sicherheitspolitik*. Although there were no direct military threats to German security, the principal non-military risks in ECE stemmed from the potential eruption of turbulent domestic developments resulting from the collapse of transformation processes in neighbouring Eastern states. Bonn feared that the collapse of economic transition processes in ECE might serve as a catalyst for what Kohl characterised as 'political instability, economic need, social discontentment, even revolutionary developments among our Eastern neighbours [which] would have a direct impact on Germany's internal situation'.¹³⁶ If the states bordering Germany's Eastern frontier were located in a sea of instability, Bonn's Ostpolitik, especially the political reconciliation and economic dimensions, would be undermined. Germany's perceptions of impending instability on its Eastern frontier after 1990 and the need to safeguard its own unification processes are central to understanding why a unified Germany became an active security agent for ECE in particular the Czech Republic and Poland. But they do not explain in their totality why Germany relied on bilateral, trilateral and multilateral security instruments, including NATO, to address minimal threats to its security on its Eastern frontier. As discussed, a combination of actor/agential and structural factors played a role in shaping Germany's response to the security debates that reigned from 1990-1998.

Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* was intricately linked to its multilateralism which was regarded as the preferred method for meeting Bonn's goals in the region. Not surprisingly, the emerging transition states in ECE favoured this strategy. The Czech Republic and Poland focused extensively on Germany, as well as other European and non-European states, as a point of reference in their attempts to return to the West and gain memberships in its international institutions. However, both states remained wary of German solutions to for Europe's security problems. On the other hand, they enthusiastically welcomed German initiatives which highlighted their security interests. In the eyes of Germany's Eastern neighbours, Lord Ismay's

¹³⁶ *Bulletin*, no. 35 (3 April 1992), p. 335. MT.

adage that NATO was created to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down was still viewed as extremely accurate and current, especially with regard to tying the Germans down in multilateral institutions. By defining its foreign and security policy objectives from within international institutions such as NATO and the EU, Germany avoided any criticisms of 'bilateralism' in the conduct of its foreign affairs towards ECE.

Consequently, one of the principal cornerstones of Germany's *Sicherheitspolitik* towards ECE was a German contrived but multilateral executed initiative: NATO enlargement. Support for this complex process despite numerous domestic and external obstacles was perceived by Bonn to be the ideal mechanism for integrating ECE into the West's foremost political-military alliance. NATO was regarded as the most effective political-military organisation for providing the instruments and tools needed to address Germany's security concerns on its Eastern frontier. What was primarily conceived as a German idea, the Alliance's enlargement, was ultimately transformed and repackaged as a US driven initiative because of the absence of a coherent German policy on enlargement. For a country struggling to define its *raison d'être* in the post-Cold War world, this should not come as a surprise.

CONCLUSION

Johann Wolfgang Goethe once remarked that the 'Germans make everything difficult, both for themselves and for everyone else'.¹ His declaration aptly characterises the complex multi-level dynamics of Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland before and after unification. Germany's perennial quest for national unity and its ambition to dominate the European balance of power system were the principal sources of Europe's malaise in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through different incarnations, the two traits dominated Germany's *Staatsräson* from 1871 until 1990. The unified Germany that emerged after the Second World War and forty-five years of division and occupation, however, was the heir to entirely different socio-political and institutional impulses than its predecessors. Steered by its leaders through the potential pitfalls of the Cold War, the FRG was remarkably successful in achieving its principal domestic policy priority: unification. The foreign and security policy strategies used to do so were rooted in the FRG's extensive *Westbindung*. A proactive Ostpolitik had been discredited by Nazi Germany's expansionist strategies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. After 1949, finding solutions to German problems in the East was not perceived by Germany's post-war leadership to be the appropriate strategy for achieving its most important objectives.

During the Cold War, relations between the FRG, Czechoslovakia, and Poland could only be described, at best, as apathetic. Nazi Germany's brutal occupation of both states between 1938 and 1945 left deep wounds. The bipolar nature of the Cold War and the Soviet Union's political-military hegemony in Czechoslovakia and Poland precluded the resumption of normal relations between the FRG and these states after its creation in 1949. Between 1949 and 1969, there was a remarkable absence of political will in the FRG to address Nazi Germany's historical legacy in Eastern Europe. Ostpolitik remained constrained by German and Eastern European perceptions of Germany's past in Mitteleuropa. This state of affairs persisted throughout the entire Cold War and even continued after unification in 1990.

Nazi Germany's domination of Czechoslovakia and Poland between 1938 and 1945 continued to cast its shadow over Germany's relations with its Eastern neighbours. The FRG's

¹Gordon A. Craig. *The Germans* (New York: Penguin, 1991), p. 15.

post-war Ostpolitik flowed from the political fallout and disgust generated by Nazi Germany's policies vis-à-vis both countries. The unified Germany was not immune to these historical sensitivities, especially the pervasive presence of anti-German sentiments in both countries, which resulted in the visible lack of political will in the FRG, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to address outstanding bilateral questions and disputes stemming from the conclusion and immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The domestic and foreign policy implications for the conduct of Ostpolitik after 1990 were profound.

The FRG, however, was not the only country burdened by domestic and historical constraints in the pursuit of its foreign and security policy objectives. Czechoslovakia and Poland were forced to address their communist legacy and, after forty-five years, their complicity in cruelly expelling ethnic Germans from the land they had called their home for generations. The political reconciliation processes between Germans, Czechs, and Poles placed an immense amount of emphasis on simultaneously acknowledging Germany's war guilt and crimes, and Czechoslovakia's and Poland's culpability, in defiance of the Potsdam Agreement, in not expelling ethnic Germans 'in an orderly fashion'.

In 1956, Elisabeth Wiskemann made an insightful remark which could have echoed in the minds of the Czechoslovak and Polish political leaderships after 1990. Anticipating the implications of unification for Germany's Eastern neighbours, she noted:

In the eyes of many Germans the phenomenal experience of Western Germany in the last five years calls clearly for German economic leadership in Eastern Europe. And yet nothing might do greater harm to German-Slav relationships than for Poles and Czechs to feel that, no sooner are they free of the Communist yoke than they must go into German economic harness. It would call for exquisite tact for this impression to be avoided ...²

Having achieved unification on 3 October 1990 and full sovereignty on 15 March 1991, Germany had the potential to evolve into an unimpeded and unchallenged regional power in ECE. On the other hand, given Germany's extensive historical, cultural, and economic links with the region, it was clear after 1990 that old patterns and dependencies could and would be revived. Germany's neighbours in the east and west were acutely aware of its economic potential, which had become sufficiently evident throughout the Cold War. The FRG's rise as one of the world's principal

²Elisabeth Wiskemann, *Germany's Eastern Neighbours: Problems Relating to the Oder-Neisse Line and the Czech Frontier Regions* (London; New York; Toronto: Oxford University Press for RIIA, 1956), p. 295.

economic powers after Second World War (albeit with massive political and economic assistance) was a foreboding sign that a united Germany would have few difficulties in maintaining and consolidating its position as the pre-eminent *Handelsstaat* (trading state) in Europe, let alone in ECE.

One of the questions this thesis asked is whether a unified Germany was prepared to confront the domestic and foreign challenges posed by its new geopolitical position in Europe's centre. Immediately after unification, the answer is negative because of Germany's preoccupation with integrating GDR structures into West Germany's. It took several years for Germany's leadership to adapt to new domestic and international realities. Complicating matters, Bonn could not estimate the nature of the future international responsibilities that external powers such as the United States would expect and demand. This is somewhat surprising given Bonn's newly won freedoms in the sphere of conducting its foreign and security policy operations. *Deutschlandpolitik* no longer governed Germany's Ostpolitik. The father of national unity, Chancellor Kohl, had successfully solved the 'German question', a goal which had eluded all his predecessors since 1949. The Berlin Wall no longer stood as a physical barrier between the two Germanies although a new 'psychological' wall between *Wessies* and *Ossies* (West and East Germans) emerged. The foundations for exercising more power and influence were created but not used extensively.

It is hardly surprising that the response to the aforementioned question should be negative given the immense domestic and external challenges faced by Germany's political leadership after 1990. The radical internal and external transformation of the German state after 1990 tested the German political leadership's ability and capacity to manage not only complex unification processes but also demands of a rapidly fluid and unpredictable international environment. This was evident in early 1990 when Bonn hesitated and acted slightly overconfidently on the question of recognising the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's Western border, thus provoking a national outcry in Poland.

Trends and Determinants in Germany's Eastern Diplomacy

Chancellor Kohl's comment that had he been asked in 1989 which country in ECE Germany would enjoy the best relations with he would not have named Poland first is not surprising given the nature of Germany's Ostpolitik after unification.³ He would more likely have elevated Hungary to the premier tier of countries Germany enjoyed unencumbered relations with. Furthermore, Czechoslovakia would have probably been placed before Poland. In fact, the reverse occurred. Whereas Hungary enjoyed excellent relations with Germany, Poland became the most critical actor for Bonn after unification. Although the bilateral issues burdening German-Polish relations were far more complex and potentially damaging for its Ostpolitik, Bonn placed increased emphasis on engaging Warsaw in its efforts to achieve political reconciliation. The unsolved border question was the prime catalyst. Poland's role in the negotiations of the Two Plus Four Accords also played a part in placing Polish concerns within Germany's Ostpolitik priorities. There was a historical precedent for this prioritisation in Ostpolitik; between 1969 and 1974, Bonn employed a similar strategy under different international conditions. During the negotiation of the Eastern Treaties, Moscow, for obvious reasons, was the pivotal power and required the most diplomatic efforts to conclude a friendship treaty. The Moscow Treaty paved the way for an agreement with Poland whereas Germany took an additional two years to negotiate a similar treaty with Prague.

The foundations for a unified Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards Czechoslovakia and Poland were shaped and, in some cases, held hostage by historical processes and foreign perceptions of Germany's past which predated the creation of the Federal Republic's creation in 1949. Indeed, the collective memories of Germany's Nazi past affected its capacity and willingness to act in ECE after unification.⁴ The fear in Western and Eastern Europe was that Germany, if history was a guiding light, might strive to become Mitteleuropa's dominant power.

³See Janusz Reiter, 'Germany and the Eastern Enlargement Problematic: A View from Warsaw' in Carl Lankowski (ed.), *Break out, break down or break in? Germany and the European Union after Amsterdam* (Washington, DC: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1998), p. 55.

⁴Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich. "The Contemporary Power of Memory: The Dilemmas for Germany." *Communication Review*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1997), pp. 89-119. This trend has become less apparent after Kohl's demise in September 1998.

Whether Mitteleuropa already included Germany is an interesting question, which has been the subject of extensive debates throughout history. As Ole Waever noted:

In Germany, the Central Europe debate was transformed into a debate about Mitteleuropa. This was more than a matter of translation. Whereas for Milan Kundera, Central Europe was the area between Germany and Russia – an area eternally weak and constituted by resistance to uniformisation – the Mitteleuropa discussed in Germany was one that (surprise!) contained Germany.⁵

Observers in ECE remained sceptical about the contours of a unified Germany's national interests and how this would affect its future objectives in Mitteleuropa. An examination of Germany's role in ECE suggests that Germany did not play the Mitteleuropa card although it undoubtedly was viewed in Western and Eastern Europe as the primary actor in the region's political and economic development.

Bonn's Ostpolitik was constructed with three main interests in mind: achieving political reconciliation with its Eastern neighbours; providing political and economic support for ethnic Germans living in the Czech Republic and Poland and for the transformation processes in ECE, and finally, safeguarding its Eastern frontier despite overwhelming challenges and risks. Each of these priorities entailed an element of self-interest in German calculations, although the Czechs and Poles clearly benefited from them as well. Germany was in an excellent geographical and political position to meet all of its objectives. One of the most physical manifestations of unification was the extension of Germany's Eastern frontier into the heart of Mitteleuropa. In the context of examining Germany's Ostpolitik, especially its foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland, this factor was paramount in the eyes of Germany's political leadership. Germany's return to the *Mittellage* and its close geographical proximity to the Czech Republic and Poland coupled with the transfer of the German capital from Bonn to Berlin in 1999 pre-ordained an increased German focus on ECE. Pursuing a strategy of domination in ECE, however, was not an option, given Germany's Western orientation and domestic and external constraints inherited from the FRG's operational environment.

The FRG clearly contended with the most domestic and external constraints during the Cold War. Once it was over, the parameters for pursuing a more independent foreign policy were

⁵See Ole Waever, 'Three Competing Europes: German, French, Russian', *International Affairs*, vol. 66, no. 3 (July 1990), p. 480, and Iver B. Neumann, 'Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other', *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 349-369.

certainly changed. That Germany's political leadership did not choose to alter its foreign and security policy orientations is revealing. The FRG's Western orientation, especially its membership in international institutions, was an incontrovertible fact of Germany's national existence. Nonetheless, the power and lasting influence of the FRG's historical legacy as a loyal ally and member of European and transatlantic institutions was conveniently forgotten by some states after unification. Germany's future Ostpolitik became a *cause célèbre* in France, Britain and the United States. Germany was locked into a critical catch-22 situation. Bonn was damned if it was too proactive – a move reawakening fears of German dominance in the region – in the political, economic, and military spheres of its relations with ECE yet it was also damned if it was not proactive enough in addressing the complex political and economic problems inherent in the independent states' reform processes. Given Germany's historical record, many analysts drew pessimistic conclusions about its future development after unification without even thinking that its newly won sovereignty and enhanced geographic position in the *Mittellage* of Europe might prove to be a positive asset for both its Western and Eastern neighbours.

To avoid this impression and achieve its Ostpolitik objectives, Germany's West- and *Einbindungspolitik* (policy of self-binding) became a dominant feature of its foreign and security policy apparatus. One of the principal features of German foreign policy after unification was what Gunther Hellmann described as the 'continuity of the rhetoric of continuity'. This stipulated that the main coordinates of German foreign policy, despite internal and external changes to its environment, did not profoundly alter the main determinants of its foreign policy.⁶ Germany's preference for *Berechenbarkeit* (reliability) was important in its efforts to project foreign and security policies, which offered continuity and did not entail unnecessary surprises. Kohl's political philosophy as chancellor after 1982 served as the main foundation for the FRG's aspirations during the Cold War: achieving German and European unity and maintaining an Atlantic community based on common ideals. The political philosophy adopted by Kohl's

⁶See Gunther Hellmann, 'Nationale Normalität als Zukunft? Zur Aussenpolitik der Berliner Republik', *BfdiP*, no. 7 (July 1999), p. 837, and David Schoenbaum and Elizabeth Pond, *The German Question and Other German Questions* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 211.

political mentor, Konrad Adenauer, became the foundation for the FRG's and unified Germany's foreign and security policy *raison d'être*.⁷

Germany's multilateralism within the EU and NATO was the principal focal point of its political, economic, and military relations with the Czech Republic and Poland. West Germany's institutional bedrocks during the Cold War played just as important a role after unification. The evolution of a German foreign and security policy agenda, although not always clear and coherent, especially between 1990 and 1993, was already discernible. Only a combination of bilateral and multilateral instruments could be relied upon to achieve Germany's prime objective in ECE: securing the territorial integrity of its Eastern frontier by ensuring the success of the transition and reform efforts in the Czech Republic and Poland. Multilateral instruments within the EU or NATO were viewed as effective tools even if Germany's capacity to act in these institutions would be constrained by the interests of other actors who not only entertained different foreign policy objectives but also sought to limit German power in ECE. Although Germany's foreign and security policy capabilities were enhanced after unification, its actions were restricted by its firm anchor in international institutions. They subjected Germany to a variety of norms, rules, and procedures that ultimately shaped its behaviour. It is important to note, contrary to some opinions, that German objectives in ECE were not exclusively pursued within an institutional framework. Nevertheless, the application of the 'European' or *Europapolitik* approach for explaining and predicting German foreign policy behaviour remained the preferred option for Germany's policy-makers. It was the easiest, most convenient, and least controversial strategy to apply.

Chancellor Kohl's Ostpolitik within the EU, however, was paradoxical in the sense that Bonn simultaneously supported the rapid enlargement of the EU to include the Visegrád states, then refused even to contemplate the reform of the bureaucratic and complex Common Agricultural Policy (an area of immense concern to the Czech Republic and Poland) and advocated a decrease in Germany's membership contributions to the EU. The three aims were incompatible. In addition, the rationale for the further institutionalisation of German power and

⁷See William A. Paterson, 'The Chancellor and Foreign Policy' in Stephen Padgett (ed.), *Adenauer to Kohl: the Development of the German Chancellorship* (London: C. Hurst, 1994), p. 151.

increased integration of its political systems into EU structures often uttered by Germany's leaders – Germany needs to endure further integration to be protected against itself – was paradoxical given the FRG's peaceful evolution after 1945. Germany's political leadership underestimated one of the country's main political foundations after 1949, and its memberships in Western international institutions. The frequently made comparison that European unity was a matter of 'war and peace' naturally raised eyebrows in other European capitals such as Paris and increased apprehensions about Germany's real motives for ceding its national sovereignty to the EU, especially its currency, the Mark.⁸

Germany, however, successfully managed to pursue its national aims and goals within multilateral institutions. Unlike many of its political counterparts in Western Europe, Germany's future was intimately linked to the political and economic stability of its Eastern neighbours. The German strategy focused on integrating the Visegrád states into Western institutions such as the EU and NATO. Moreover, these states preferred this multilateral strategy as they chose to negotiate with the West through international institutions and not on a bilateral or collective basis with Germany. Bilateralism raised fears of German unilateral interests and the creation of German-dependent states in ECE. On the other hand, the expansion of bilateral contacts allowed Germany to convince its Eastern neighbours that its intentions in the region were well-meaning. The application of bilateral instruments, for instance, in the field of military co-operation, served to highlight the transparency of Germany's security policy machinery and reassure its neighbours about its military objectives.

Given the dramatic and complex changes in the international system after 1989, Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland became locked into a *ménage à trois* characterised, like all marriages, by high and low points. All were central to each other's vision in Europe; in several cases, their foreign policy objectives were compatible but in some cases, they were not. A powerful East and Central European *Drang nach Westen* (Westward urge) accompanied Germany's Eastward urge. Often, the latter went via Germany. It was perceived to be a natural magnet for ECE because of its powerful position in the EU and NATO, and its potential as a

⁸Daniel Vernet, 'Europäisches Deutschland oder deutsches Europa? Deutsche Interessenpolitik in Europa', *Internationale Politik*, no. 2 (1997), p. 17.

major economic and trading partner. The Czech Republic and Poland, somewhat reluctantly, relied extensively on Germany as an advocate for their interests in Western Europe. Both were presented with relatively few foreign policy options given the apparent reluctance of Germany's European and transatlantic partners to understand Bonn's perceptions about the urgency of the transition and transformation problems in ECE.⁹

Foreign Policy after Helmut Kohl

After unification, Germany's foreign relations with the Czech Republic and Poland functioned as a barometer for measuring its commitment to *Westbindung*, domestic political and economic development, and role as a bridge between its Western allies and Russia. After Kohl left political office in October 1998, each of these factors were closely watched and commented upon by its Western allies and Eastern neighbours. Unsurprisingly, the domestic and external determinants of Germany's Ostpolitik continued to play a significant part in the foreign and security policy deliberations of Kohl's successor, Gerhard Schröder, and his successor Angela Merkel.

With Chancellor Schröder's rise to power, the tone of Germany's Ostpolitik changed. The end of the Kohl era led to the emergence of a group of Social Democratic politicians who were not intent on letting historical factors rooted in the Second World War obstruct their relations with their neighbours. The '1968' generation, embodied primarily by Schröder and the Green/Alliance 90 Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer did not pursue an Ostpolitik excessively bound by the concepts of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, *Verantwortungspolitik*, and *Wiedergutmachung*, like previous chancellors. Karl Dietrich Bracher gives several reasons:

The negative lessons from the period 1933-1945 were certainly decisive for the older generation, foremost as negative lessons of an earlier period of history. They were motivated [sic] to make efforts to do it better; they stood in constant contrast to the experiences of the Weimar era and the German dictatorship. Of course, the same does not apply to that majority of the population that has since been born. The majority has another historical-political point of reference. Their different breadth of experience coincides with a natural desire to want positive orientation points, even in a fractured history.¹⁰

⁹UN/ECE, *Economic Bulletin for Europe*. Vol. 45 (New York; Geneva: UN/ECE, 1993), p. 1.

¹⁰See Bracher quoted by Michael J. Inacker, 'Power and Morality: On a New German Security Policy' in Thomas-Durell Young (ed.), *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1996), p. 103.

Chancellor Schröder's generation was not apathetic to the historical and political impulses which shaped the Federal Republic; however, it did not see any reason why Germany, after proving itself as a democratic, peaceful, and loyal state to Western causes, should continue to be haunted by ghosts from the past. Assessing the impact of different German generations on foreign policy, Henry Kissinger noted that

... Germany will insist on the political influence to which its military and economic power entitle it and will not be so emotionally dependent on American military and French political support. These trends will not be fully apparent so long as Helmut Kohl, the heir of the Adenauer tradition, is in office. The emerging generation has no personal recollection of the war or of America's role in the rehabilitation of the devastated post-war Germany. It has no emotional reason to defer to supranational institutions or to subordinate its views either to America or France.¹¹

Schröder's government, unlike his predecessor's, was influenced to a great extent by the 1968 student protests, and the anti-nuclear and pacifist movements.

Ironically, however, it was the Schröder government – despite the pacifist and anti-military roots of many members of the coalition party arrangement – which intervened in Kosovo, under a NATO mandate, in the spring of 1999. The German troops witnessed battle for the first time since the Second World War. Germany's participation marked a clear break from post-war rejection of external military engagements not directly affecting German security interests. It was also a fundamental shift in Germany's desire to act like a 'normal' state with legitimate foreign and national security interests and assume a role more befitting its prominent stature on the international scene. These developments prompted one analyst to ask whether the 'German question', which had bedevilled the international community throughout the Cold War, was back on the table.¹² In his foreign and defence policy speeches, Schröder routinely spoke about the emergence of a more 'self-confident country' and 'grown-up nation' which would not hesitate to pursue a more active defence policy that would catapult the Bundeswehr into more military deployments outside of Germany than ever before.

One of the most prominent theoretical frameworks for analysing Germany after unification, the 'civilian power' paradigm, was seemingly under threat and could not offer the

¹¹Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 821.

¹²Werner Schäfer, 'The German Question Resolved: Making Sense of Schröder's Foreign Policy', *Harvard International Review*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer 2001), p. 39.

appropriate tools for assessing Germany's foreign policy behaviour during this particular conflict.

It is not easy to explain why Schröder decided to overtly remove Germany's foreign policy shackles so that it could pursue its interests more forcefully. His interpretation of Germany's *Europapolitik*, for example, has different historical roots:

The generation of Helmut Kohl thought that we Germans must be European because otherwise the fear of the '*Furor teutonicus*' would re-appear. His words 'Europe is a question of war and peace' could only be understood in this way. I argue that we must also be European, but regard this as a natural fact of life which we have freely chosen, rather than as a question of historical duty. The advantage of this is that one can then be less taciturn about pursuing one's interests than was the case in the past.¹³

In contrast, Kohl rarely spoke of German national interests per se but, in reality, never shunned from pursuing them under the cloak of a bilateral and multilateral foreign policy.

The intense focus on Germany by other powers in the international system will not abate in the twenty-first century. Policy-makers in ECE and Western Europe will continue to grapple with Germany's evolution in the European order and remain apprehensive about perceived increases in German levels of influence, especially in the economic domain. Harnessing Germany's political, economic, and military power in international institutions will remain firmly on the agenda of its Western and ECE neighbours despite undeniable evidence suggesting that Germany's evolution in the latter half of the twentieth century has been positive for Europe and the world.

Where does this leave the Czechs and Poles? They will remain in a difficult position vis-à-vis Germany. Immediately after unification, German-Czech and German-Polish relations were incredibly intense and ambitious despite problems rooted in their mutual history. In the case of German-Polish relations, there was a quick German rush to address outstanding issues in bilateral forums, although Germany's recognition of the Oder-Neisse line was influenced and decided by external actors within the Two Plus Four Accords. In the case of Czechoslovakia, political reconciliation efforts took somewhat longer but nonetheless, a bilateral treaty was signed in 1992, followed by a mutual declaration in 1997. After a flurry of visits and agreements in 1990 and 1991, German-Polish relations quickly returned to a state of normalcy as far as major issues were concerned. Similar political reconciliation processes with Czechoslovakia took more time and

¹³See Gerhard Schröder quoted by Adrian Hyde-Price, *Germany & European Order: Enlarging NATO and the EU* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 41.

required more political energies, but with the signing of a friendship treaty in 1992 the foundations, although not one hundred per cent satisfactory for both sides, had been set for a 'normal' relationship. In contrast with the Polish relationship, German-Czech relations after 1992 continued to be burdened by the past, thus necessitating the negotiation and implementation of a mutual declaration in 1997. The unsubstantiated fear in both states, which already became apparent in the mid-1990s, was that after Germany had successfully solved its bilateral problems, especially its political reconciliation objectives in ECE, it would pay less attention to issues concerning the region's political, economic, and military development. Nothing could have been further from the truth as chapters five and six show. Political reconciliation processes, however, are not completed overnight; indeed, Germany's reconciliation processes with France and Israel are cases in point and show they often require decades of hard work and mutual understanding.

It will be extremely important for the new chancellor, Angela Merkel, to continue to nurture Germany's political and economic relations with ECE but not under the shadow of a larger German-Russian relationship which was sometimes apparent in Schröder's Ostpolitik. There are signs that Chancellor Merkel will re-orientate her country's foreign policy away from Russia in an effort to concentrate more on its political and economic relations with ECE, especially Poland. As far as the past is concerned, it will be incumbent on all parties in ECE to accept that Germany will no longer necessarily view its foreign relations through a historical prism with the same intensity as during the Kohl era, for example. To Chancellor Kohl's credit, his government confronted the difficult challenges inherent in reaching a political rapprochement with the Czech Republic and Poland at great domestic political odds, a fact even acknowledged by one of his fiercest Czech critics, Václav Klaus, when referring to the negotiation of the 1997 Czech-German Declaration on Mutual Relations:

By exerting pressure for the Declaration's approval we complicated the political life for the right-wing coalition and did not win great sympathies for Czech-German relations at the given moment. It needs to be said, however, that Chancellor Kohl was a great politician who did not hesitate to use his own authority and pushed through the Declaration on the German political scene without regard for his momentary gains or losses.¹⁴

¹⁴*Prague Hospodarske Noviny*, 'Klaus Sceptical about Solving Czech-Sudeten German Issue by Means of Declaration', 25 January 2002, EUP20020128000021.

The Czech Republic, more than Poland, seems bent on preventing Germany from forgetting its past crimes to gain domestic political advantages in its bilateral relations with Berlin and this has been reflected in the hierarchy with which Germany. Kohl's government did the same. But how can one expect to achieve any success at political reconciliation if the provisions of treaties and declarations are discarded for the purpose of political expediency? Czech Prime Minister Milos Zeman's remarks in January 2002 about Sudeten Germans being compared to 'traitors' and Hitler's 'fifth column' hardly improved relations. These remarks, largely attributed to the cancellation of a proposed visit by Chancellor Schröder in March 2002, prompted the press secretary at the German Embassy in Prague to comment that 'Prime Minister Zeman's statements have thrown us back to the period before the Czech-German declaration was signed' in 1997.¹⁵ The expellee organisations, especially the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*, were also to blame for scuttling any political rapprochement processes between Berlin and Prague.

In Germany's relations with ECE, Schröder increasingly focused on the future whereas Germany's Eastern neighbours concentrated on the past. This was the principal foreign policy dilemma of Schröder's Ostpolitik: managing different and often competing internal and external perceptions of Germany's role in the world. The solution, as Christopher Coker argues, was to adopt a common approach to end the antagonisms which plagued the European order from 1945 to 1989:

If a common culture can be forged between Germany and its neighbours (predicated this time on the fact that they all share a common democratic political culture) then the chances will be correspondingly high of a final elimination of the discontinuities between East and West which Mackinder identified at the turn of the century.¹⁶

Only in concert with other partners, including the Czech Republic and Poland, could Germany achieve its multiple foreign and security policy objectives in the region and thus secure its position in the European *Mittellage*. The Berlin Republic has gradually become more assertive in international politics. Claiming that this phenomenon was not apparent under Kohl would be mistaken. In the current political and economic climate, Germany's relations with its Eastern

¹⁵Mlada Fronta Dnes, 'German Embassy in Prague Confirms Schröder Thinking of Canceling Czech Visit', 25 January 2002, EUP20020125000285.

¹⁶See Christopher Coker, 'The Geopolitical Implications of the Expansion of Europe' in Piotr Dutkiewicz and Robert J. Jackson (eds.), *NATO Looks East* (Westport, CT; London: Praeger, 1998), p. 12.

neighbours are subjected to more strenuous tests whose outcome at this stage remains unclear. The enlargement of the EU and NATO, with German support, has obviously been crucial for the Czech Republic and Poland.

Both countries have spent enormous political capital on preserving Germany's strong economic presence in their respective countries. On the other hand, the perception, especially amongst older generations, is that too much German influence is negative. Consequently, to offset Germany's preponderance in economic affairs in both countries, it is therefore necessary to engage more Western European and transatlantic powers in the region. After fifteen years of transition in ECE, a reassertion of German nationalist sentiments and a subsequent decrease in its multilateral and bilateral engagements in ECE are still feared. The Berlin Republic will undoubtedly need to strike the right balance to curb these fears and try to remain committed to pursuing its foreign and security policy interests in the region. This process will continue to be complicated by what can only be perceived as three competing and often contradictory priorities: promoting the 'deepening' and 'enlargement' processes of the EU; spearheading the political and economic construction of ECE; and the strengthening of its relations with the United States and NATO.

Germany's future position in ECE will continue to depend on the effective implementation of EU enlargement. The completion of NATO's enlargement to include the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland was viewed as a successful German driven initiative, which secured the territorial integrity of its Eastern frontier. Despite the tempting and uncontroversial power of multilateral instruments in pursuing its objectives, Germany will undoubtedly, as it did between 1990 and 1998, not forfeit the right to use bilateral instruments to implement its foreign and security policy objectives in ECE. Bilateral instruments will complement multilateral ones. This is an important point which often flies in the face of those observers who continuously view Germany through a multilateral lens when examining its foreign and security policy behaviour. The bilateral dimension of Germany's foreign relations with ECE cannot be ignored; indeed, there is some cause for concern that it should be monitored closely, especially in the economic sphere of Germany's relations with the Czech Republic and Poland.

This thesis demonstrates that a combination of agential and structural factors have played a fundamental role in determining the course of Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification, especially its Ostpolitik. International Relations theorists have struggled to define Germany's enigmatic foreign policy behaviour for two reasons. First, Germany was engaged in an exercise of self-introspection and transition after unification which did not readily facilitate the use of traditional International Relations tools to explain its behaviour. Second, this thesis asserts that each of the major schools in International Relations theory offers insight into how to explain one or several facets of Germany's Ostpolitik after unification. A concentration on using the theoretical tools of one school would naturally preclude us from gaining a better understanding of all the variables that have shaped Germany's Ostpolitik. For a comparative study of Germany's foreign policy behaviour towards the Czech Republic and Poland a different approach was required, one that took into account the multi-level nature of the internal and external determinants that influenced Germany diplomacy. The German use of bilateral and multilateral instruments must be viewed as two sides of the same coin.

The Liberal view of examining a state's foreign policy behaviour through a domestic lens, i.e. with a focus on individuals or political leaders is an appropriate one. Germany's political leaders, such as Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher and President Richard von Weizsäcker, were crucial factors in setting the tone for Ostpolitik before and after unification. They were responsible for shaping Germany's interests and managing powerful international and domestic constraints, which in turn influenced the German state's behaviour. It is also important not to underestimate the power of social constructivist tools, such as Germany's historical record and the power of citizens' collective memory as potent forces in the development of German interests in the post-Cold War era. Historical processes shaped Germany's political institutions, its political leadership, and the creation of a German identity. These processes had a tremendous impact on Germany's reconciliation efforts with the Czech Republic and Poland. The role of international institutions, such as NATO and the EU, in defining and shaping German interests after the Second World War, during the Cold War, and after unification cannot be underestimated in defining Ostpolitik. Germany successfully achieved its objectives in ECE under the aegis of a proactive *Europapolitik* but its political leadership also relied extensively on

bilateral frameworks to meet its foreign policy objectives. This trend has become even more apparent in the current German government as Berlin pursues explicit interests in ECE, even against the backdrop of a resurgent Russia.

As this chapter demonstrated, scholars in International Relations have used numerous theoretical tools to interpret Germany's foreign policy behaviour after unification. Germany's transition from a 'semi-sovereign' to a 'sovereign' state after the end of the Cold War has presented them with multiple, unanswered questions sixteen years after unification. There is general agreement that a unified Germany experienced fundamental internal and external changes, which influenced its foreign policy behaviour, especially towards the CSFR and Poland. However, there is fundamental disagreement on whether primarily internal or external factors are responsible for shaping a state's interests, strategies and conduct. Despite the dramatic changes which occurred in the international system after 1989, two crucial facts still apply: states coexist in an anarchic realm (since there is no higher authority they can depend on to ensure their security), and states continue to put national before supranational interests. Germany's relations with the Czech Republic and Poland offer us a glimpse of this reality.

Germany emerged as the primary political and economic power in both states between 1990 and 1998. Moreover, its position in the region has been abetted as other European and transatlantic actors have been slow to become more politically and economically engaged in the region, despite great promises after the peaceful revolutions of 1989-1990, and to the great consternation of Czechs and Poles. Post-unification Germany has slipped into a role which it plays comfortably without raising too many suspicions abroad. As a proactive advocate of Czech and Polish interests, Germany has been allowed to play a dominant role in both countries' political and economic development. Although often seen as controversial, it has provided more benefits than disadvantages to the Czech Republic and Poland. Unfortunate to be close neighbours with Nazi Germany, they are fortunate to be closer now to a united Germany which can be the neighbour they deserve to have.

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