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Germany and War : Understanding Strategic Culture under the Merkel Government

Sophia Becker

GERMANY AND WAR: UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIC CULTURE UNDER THE MERKEL GOVERNMENT

The aim of this study is to analyse whether German strategic culture has undergone significant change during the time of the Merkel government between 2005 and 2012. The author suggests that German strategic culture is made up of two fundamental elements, antimilitarism and multilateralism, which continue to inform Germany's foreign policy. The two elements have, however, entered into a conflict, so that Germany faces a security policy dilemma inherent to its strategic culture. This fact puts German foreign policy makers in a delicate situation of having to reconcile two contradictory elements of their own strategic culture. Recent developments of the international environment have increased the external pressure for more German responsibility while experiences like the war in Afghanistan tarnished the *Bundeswehr's* image as a "force for good" and caused the scepticism towards military interventions to grow. These developments intensified the inherent conflict of German strategic culture and made the formulation of German security policy all the more complicated.



Sophia BECKER

IRSEM

Ecole militaire

1 place Joffre

75700 Paris SP 07

www.defense.gouv.fr/irsem

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Sophia BECKER

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse whether German attitudes towards the use of military force have undergone significant change during the time of the Merkel government between 2005 and 2012. In order to shed light on recent German security behaviour, the concept of strategic culture will be used as the theoretical framework. This concept enables to reflect on security and defence policy by including specific historical, institutional, normative, and ideational predispositions with regard to the threat, use, and perception of military force. The author suggests that German strategic culture is made up of two fundamental elements, antimilitarism and multilateralism, which continue to inform Germany's foreign policy. The two elements have, however, entered into a conflict, so that Germany faces a security policy dilemma inherent to its strategic culture. This fact puts German foreign policy makers in a delicate situation of having to reconcile two contradictory elements of their own strategic culture. Recent developments of the international environment have increased the external pressure for more German responsibility while experiences like the war in Afghanistan tarnished the *Bundeswehr's* image as a "force for good" and caused the scepticism towards military interventions to grow. These developments intensified the inherent conflict of German strategic culture and made the formulation of German security policy all the more complicated.

SYNTHÈSE

L'objectif de cette étude est d'analyser les attitudes de l'Allemagne vis-à-vis de l'usage de la force pendant la période du gouvernement de Merkel entre 2005 et 2012. Ont-elles connu un changement notable? Afin d'examiner le comportement allemand en matière de sécurité et de défense, le concept de culture stratégique sera utilisé comme cadre théorique. Ce concept permet de refléter la politique de sécurité et de défense en incluant des spécificités historiques, institutionnelles, normatives et idéologiques concernant la menace, l'usage et la perception de la puissance militaire. L'auteur avance que la culture stratégique de l'Allemagne est constituée de deux éléments fondamentaux, l'antimilitarisme et le multilatéralisme, ces derniers continuant d'influencer la politique étrangère allemande. Ces deux éléments sont, cependant, entrés en conflit, et par conséquent, la politique de sécurité allemande fait face à un dilemme inhérent à sa culture stratégique. Les décideurs allemands sont alors dans une situation délicate, puisqu'ils doivent réconcilier deux éléments contradictoires de leur culture stratégique. Les changements récents de la situation internationale ont augmenté les pressions extérieures sur l'Allemagne afin qu'elle s'engage davantage sur la scène internationale; alors qu'au même moment, des expériences telles que la guerre en Afghanistan ont terni l'image de la *Bundeswehr* considérée auparavant comme une force œuvrant pour le bien et ont accru le scepticisme vis-à-vis des interventions militaires. Ces changements ont intensifié le conflit inhérent à la culture stratégique de l'Allemagne et ont ainsi complexifié davantage la politique de sécurité de l'Allemagne.

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■ INTRODUCTION

"There is a wedge sticking out of the building, one as brutal as the thorn of war in the German psyche. The gigantic wedge, made of steel and glass, passes through the sandstone façade of the old arsenal building in Dresden, like a projectile that has penetrated a soldier's chest, or like the phalanx of British bombers that laid waste to Dresden on Feb. 13, 1945"

These are the first lines of the cover story of the German weekly newspaper, *Der Spiegel*, about "The Germans and the War" published on the 25th of March 2013. It is the description of the Bundeswehr Military History Museum, designed by the American architect, Daniel Libeskind, which reopened in 2011 and that is supposed to represent Germany's problematic relationship with its military history and war. The Spiegel Article appeared under the title "*Das ewige Trauma*" (the eternal trauma), the bottom line: "Almost seven decades after World War II, one still can't take anything for granted when discussing Germany's relationship with war."¹ No talk about a new assertive Germany, no talk about normalcy. Instead there is confusion about Germany's apparently renewed timidity with regard to the use of force, visible in the non-participation in the Operation Unified Protector (OUP) in Libya or the minimal effort in Mali. The German foreign policy puzzle is, however, not new. Over the past twenty years, German foreign policy and especially its security and defence policy has recurrently been the object of political as well as scientific debate. Especially after the end of the Cold War and with German reunification, questions about Germany's future role in the world arose. Neo-realists like John Mearsheimer were convinced that Germany would reassert great power politics once it regained full sovereignty.² But those expectations were proven wrong. Instead, Germany's security policy was marked by continuity and unchanged restraint with regard to the use of military force. Numerous works using constructivist theory challenged the realist point of view and explained Germany's culture of restraint based on historical, cultural and ideational factors. Only a few years later, in 1994, the first participation of German soldiers in NATO out-of-area interventions, triggered a new discussion about German "normalisation"³ and regenerated the question of change in Germany's security policy. Ever since, the German security policy continues to puzzle politicians, journalists and scholars alike. Especially in recent years, the German hesitance has time and again provoked widespread criticism and concern. The international as well as domestic calls for more German commitment, the assumption of greater responsibility and burden-sharing have grown louder and more explicit as a statement of Polish foreign minister R. Sikorski during a speech in Berlin shows: "I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity."⁴ The last major puzzle is indeed Germany's abstention from the United Nations Security Council vote on the resolution 1973 on March 17th, 2011 authorising a no-fly zone over Libya. Criticism of the German decision was evoked internationally as well as domestically. The Guardian titled "Germany has marginalised itself over Libya"⁵, former foreign minister Joschka Fischer stated "The German policy has lost its credibility in the United Nations and in the Middle East"⁶ and former NATO General Klaus Neumann said "Germany has turned the idea of a unified European Union foreign policy into a

¹ HOFFMANN, Christiane; NEUKIRCH, Ralf; REPINSKI, Gordon; VON ROHR, Mathieu. "Merkel's Caution: Berlin Reverts to Old Timidity on Military Missions", *Der Spiegel*, 25.03.2013.

² MEARSHEIMER, John J. Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War, *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer, 1990), pp. 5-56.

³ The hypothesis of normalisation of Germany was for example defended by Gunther Hellmann and Rainer Baumann who argue that "Germany is finally joining ranks with other Western states in terms of its attitudes towards and practices of war." (BAUMANN, Rainer and HELLMANN, Gunther, "Germany and the Use of Military Force: 'Total War', the 'Culture of Restraint' and the Quest for Normality", in Webber, Douglas (ed.) *New Europe, New Germany, Old Foreign Policy? German Foreign Policy Since Unification*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 2001) German normalisation therefore refers to a German attitude with regard to the use of force that is converging with those of its international partners. The term normalisation, however, is highly debatable since it emanates from the assumption that the attitudes of "other Western states" are completely homogeneous and that there is a definition of what a "normal" attitude is. Both postures seem questionable.

⁴ SIKORSKI, Radek. *Poland and the Future of the European Union*, Speech in Berlin, November 28, 2011.

⁵ WEILAND, Severin and NELLES, Roland. "Germany has marginalised itself over Libya", *The Guardian*, 18 March, 2011.

⁶ "Die deutsche Politik hat in den Vereinten Nationen und im Nahen Osten ihre Glaubwürdigkeit eingebüßt" FISCHER Joschka, "Deutsche Außenpolitik - eine Farce", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24.03.2011.

farce.”⁷ While newspapers such as the New York Times, Foreign Policy or The Economist analysed Germany's behaviour as part of the historically rooted German "pacifist reflex", this view is challenged by Joschka Fischer who points out that the decision on Libya had, unlike Iraq, nothing to do with a foreign policy guided by moral values, but was "a scandalous mistake".⁸ Fischer's criticism suggests a discontinuity between the basis of the Libya decision and former decisions concerning the use of military force. If Fischer is right, the Libya decision was either an exception and out of line with former German strategic behaviour or it was the expression of a long-term change of Germany's security policy. A third possibility that counters Fischer's argument is that Libya was the logical result of an unchanged German security policy.

Hence, the object of this study is to analyse recent change or continuity in Germany's strategic behaviour. As the particular German security policy behaviour is especially apparent in the country's attitude towards the threat and use of military force, the focus of this study shall lie herein. I will analyse decisions of the Federal Republic of Germany to employ or refrain from the use of military means, as well as the role and the perception of the German armed forces under the two Merkel governments between 2005 and 2012. In order to shed light on recent German security behaviour, the concept of strategic culture will be used as the theoretical framework of this study. Within the field of security studies the concept tries to understand national security policy by analysing specific historical, institutional, normative, and ideational predispositions with regard to the threat, use, and perception of military force. It therefore focuses on a domestic explanation of security policy. Considering the explanatory limits of neorealist theory in the past and the widely acknowledged impact of the German history on its policy behaviour, the use of strategic culture as a conceptual framework for this thesis seems apt. Considering the focus of this study on an analysis of change or continuity in German strategic behaviour, the research question guiding this study will be:

Do recent German decisions between 2005 and 2012 to employ or refrain from the use of military force and the public attitudes towards the armed forces and security policy in general indicate change or continuity in German strategic culture?

I) A Conceptual Framework : Strategic Culture

Strategic culture is a highly debated concept. It can be inscribed in a long line of cultural approaches to security studies that can, for example, already be found at the time of the Second World War when the USA conducted anthropological "national character studies" in order to explain German and Japanese strategic choices. At the time, the Office of War Information employed anthropologists like Gregory Bateson, Ruth Benedict and Geoffrey Gorer, who were the first researchers to apply an anthropological approach to International Affairs.⁹ In International Relations theory, the cultural approach was, however, long disregarded due to the dominance of realism which saw states as identical black boxes whose behaviour is determined by systemic constraints.¹⁰ It was only when rational choice theory and game theory approaches seemed to be of limited use to explain the Soviet Union's behaviour that Jack Snyder published a study in 1977 concerning Soviet nuclear strategy that used a new concept called strategic culture. In a RAND Cooperation report Snyder defined strategic culture as "the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy."¹¹ Ever since Snyder adopted this rather broad definition of strategic culture, the concept has been the subject of a heated scientific debate. To this day, there is still no consensus about four main issues related to strategic culture: Who is the referent and carrier of a strategic culture? What is the relationship

⁷ Klaus Neumann cited in ERLANGER, Steven and DEMPSEY, Judy. "Germany Steps Away From European Unity", The New York Times, March 23, 2011.

⁸ FISCHER, op cit.

⁹ LANTIS, Jeffrey S. *Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism*, SAIC, October 2006, p.4.

¹⁰ SONDHAUS, Lawrence. *Strategic Culture and Ways of War*, Routledge, 2006, p.4.

¹¹ SNYDER, Jack L. *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, The Rand Cooperation, September 1977, available under <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2005/R2154.pdf> (12.05.2013).

between culture and behaviour? What is the scope of the concept? And can strategic culture change? Especially concerning the question about the relation between strategic culture and behaviour, the literature can generally be divided in three different generations of authors.¹² The first generation comprises authors that focused on the explanation of diverging Soviet and American nuclear strategies, such as Jack Snyder, Colin Gray and David Jones. They generally presume diverging macro-environmental variables such as geography, history, and political culture that produce a unique strategic culture that influences decision-making. Therefore they conclude that "elites socialized in different strategic cultures will make different choices when placed in similar situations."¹³ The second generation assumes that political decision-makers can use strategic culture "as a tool of political hegemony in the realm of strategic decision-making."¹⁴ Second generation authors like Bradley S. Klein¹⁵ detach strategic culture from behaviour and assert that political decision-makers have the ability to voluntarily escape the constraints of culture. Authors of the third generation, among which Johnston counts himself, started their work in the 1990s simultaneously to the rise of constructivism in the field of International Relations. They tried to establish a concept of strategic culture that makes competitive theory testing possible. Their aim is therefore to establish a falsifiable theory of strategic culture. On this basis, a heated scientific debate concerning the relation between culture and behaviour broke out between Colin Gray and Alistair Johnston. Colin Gray, a first generation strategic culture theorist, sees culture as context that is inseparable from behaviour. This view is contested by Alistair Johnston who tries to establish a positivist theory of strategic culture. He sees culture as one independent variable among others such as material variables that may influence behaviour. He points out the tautological nature of Gray's argument, being a concept that is not falsifiable as behaviour is seen as a constituent part of culture. Hence, Johnston argues that in this version of strategic culture everything may be brought back to culture, which could then explain all and nothing. Gray responded, "Anyone who seeks a falsifiable theory of strategic culture (as does Johnston) commits the same error as the doctor who sees people as having entirely separable bodies and minds."¹⁶

Being aware of the pitfalls Johnston outlined, I nevertheless choose to adhere to a concept close to the first generation of literature on strategic culture as culture constitutes in my opinion an overarching framework that continuously constrains and influences behaviour. Similar as Kerry Longhurst and Colin Gray, I believe that culture is indeed context¹⁷ because actors cannot consciously free themselves of its influence. Longhurst argues that the influence of strategic culture on behaviour becomes especially visible at times "when the strategic culture itself is under pressure".¹⁸ In times of stability, however, the influence might be less perceivable. This leaves room for the influence of other factors on behaviour. I side with authors like Martha Finnemore and Christopher Meyer who don't dispute the importance of material variables for foreign policy decision-making but these factors are also viewed through a "cultural lens".¹⁹ Therefore I also refute the second generation's claim that strategic culture can be completely detached from behaviour and used as a political tool in form of discourse. The political elites are socialised in a certain society and therefore cannot escape the influence of strategic culture on their own behaviour. Like Neumann and Heikka, I think that "discourse and practices are mutually constitutive, and may be said to add up to culture."²⁰

A strategic culture has a formative or inception period in which its fundamental constitutive elements are developed.²¹ This period may occur after a major shock or crisis that put the fundamental norms and ideals a

¹² The typology was introduced by Alistair Johnston in JOHNSTON, Alistair I. "Thinking about Strategic Culture", *International Security*, Vol. 19 (4), pp.32-64.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.39.

¹⁵ KLEIN, Bradley S. "Hegemony and Strategic Culture: American Power Projection and Alliance Defence Politics", *Review of International Studies*, Vol.24 (2), April 1988.

¹⁶ GRAY, Colin S. *Modern Strategy*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p.132-133.

¹⁷ GRAY, Colin S. "Strategic Culture as Context: The first Generation of Theory strikes back", *Review of International Studies*, 1999, Vol.25, pp.49-69; LONGHURST, Kerry. *Germany and the Use of Force*, Manchester University Press, 2004.

¹⁸ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.21.

¹⁹ MEYER, Christopher O. *The Quest for a European Strategic Culture. Changing Norms on Security and Defence in the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p.18.

²⁰ NEUMANN, Iver B.; HEIKKA, Henrikki. "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice : The Social Roots of Nordic Defence", *Cooperation and Conflict*, 2005, Vol.40 (5), pp.5-23, p.11.

²¹ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.10.

society was previously based on into question. This new strategic culture can be passed on to the next generations through institutionalisation of strategic culture and through societal learning processes. The referent and carrier of a strategic culture is a collective at large. The political elites are nevertheless an apt object of study as they are often seen as the "gatekeepers" of strategic culture who are the link between the domestic and the international realm. Public opinion and society should be considered as a constraining element that may influence elite discourse and behaviour. Due to the focus of this study on German policy behaviour, it will adopt a national scope, despite being fully aware of the fact that different national security policies may influence and adapt to each other. There is, for example, a substantial number of works investigating the development of a European strategic culture.²² The literature also debates the existence of regional "subcultures".

What is most interesting and important for the scope of this study is Longhurst's approach to the question of change of strategic culture concerns. She sees change in strategic culture as constant and continuous. However, strategic culture is made up of three different layers that have different grades of resilience to change. The first layer consists of the foundational elements, the second layer are the security policy standpoints that refer to "interpretations as to how best core values are to be promoted through policy channels,"²³ and the third layer are regulatory practices. While the foundational elements can only be altered through major crisis and traumatic experiences, the regulatory practices are constantly adapted to external and internal dispositions, or as Longhurst calls "fine-tuned". The second layer is situated in between the two, gradual change is possible over time. This vision of strategic culture takes into account that culture in itself can never be static. As James Clifford said, "'Cultures' do not hold still for their portraits."²⁴ With Longhurst's three layer approach, however, an adaptation of strategic culture does not equal a change of its fundamental elements. I will therefore work with Kerry Longhurst's definition of strategic culture:

*"A strategic culture is a distinctive body of beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding the use of force, held by a collective and arising gradually over time through a unique protracted historical process. A strategic culture is persistent over time, tending to outlast the era of its inception, although it is not a permanent or static feature. It is shaped and influenced by formative periods and can alter, either fundamentally or piecemeal, at critical junctures in that collective's experiences."*²⁵

On a methodological level I will, besides the existing literature on German foreign and security policy, mainly rely on qualitative content and discourse analysis of relevant political speeches, interviews and important parliamentary debates. Apart from that, journalistic articles make an important contribution in order to understand media coverage and public opinion of an event. I will furthermore base myself on empirical studies conducted by the Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr (SOWI) who regularly publishes surveys about the climate of opinion concerning security and defence policy. The selection of sources is limited to the considered time period between 2005 and 2012. For an historical overview of Germany's strategic culture in Chapter I, I will rely on existing literature on the topic.

II) Argument and Working Hypothesis

The existing literature on German foreign and security policy proposes different elements that constitute German strategic culture. Martin Florack, for example, states that German security policy is based on an antimilitarist consensus defended by the German political elite on the basis of alliance solidarity

²² See for example GIEGERICH, Bastian. *European Security and Strategic Culture. National Responses to the EU's Security and Defence Policy*, Nomos, 2006; MEYER, Christopher O. *The Quest for a European Strategic Culture. Changing Norms on Security and Defence in the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

²³ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.17.

²⁴ CLIFFORD, James. "Introduction Partial Truths", in CLIFFORD, James and MARCUS, George E. *Writing Culture: Politics and Poetics of Ethnography*, University of California, 1986, p.10.

²⁵ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.17.

(Bündnissolidarität) and the historic fundamental narrative (historische Basiserzählung).²⁶ Kerry Longhurst identifies three core elements of German strategic culture: delegitimation of the use of force, redundancy of militarism, and exhaustion of statism and nationalism²⁷, whereas John S. Duffield counts four pillars of German national security culture: skepticism about the use of military force, preference for multilateralism, being perceived as a reliable partner, and aversion to leadership. In my opinion, these different propositions concerning Germany's political, political-military, national security or strategic culture (depending on which concept is used) can be broken down to two fundamental pillars of German strategic culture: antimilitarism and multilateralism.

Antimilitarism can be defined in opposition to militarism which the Oxford Dictionary describes as "the belief or desire of a government or people that a country should maintain a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote national interests."²⁸ The traditional concept of militarism is an ideological one "that glorified war, military institutions, and the prevalence of martial values in society."²⁹ Antimilitarism should be clearly distinguished from pacifism which rejects the use of armed force in general. The German antimilitarism manifests itself as scepticism towards the use of force as a foreign policy tool and results in very unique civil-military relations that stress the importance of the citizen soldier.

Multilateralism is the second constituent element of German strategic culture. Multilateralism is classically defined as "...the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states"³⁰ Multilateralism does, however, not only have a quantitative dimension, but also a qualitative one. Especially constructivists like John Ruggie insist on a normative dimension of multilateralism. He states, "What is distinctive about multilateralism is not merely that it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, which is something that other organizational forms also do, but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states."³¹ The German multilateralism clearly has this normative dimension as it stands in clear opposition to unilateralism which is associated with the nationalist expansionist objectives of the past. There is a widely shared consensus that a new German *Sonderweg* (separate path) has to be avoided at all costs. Therefore, Germany chose a close integration into the Western Alliance system, namely the European Union and NATO, which still are the cornerstones of German alliance policy. Within these frameworks, Germany is eager to gain the trust of its allies by being a reliable and predictable partner, attributes that stand in contrast to German foreign policy before 1945.

Ever since the end of the Cold War, these two elements have been in constant conflict. While the security environment changed, Germany's strategic culture remained based on its traditional antimilitarism and multilateralism. But due to a new nature of security challenges Germany's partners demanded that the country take on more responsibility in international security policy including international interventions. Due to its multilateral commitment, Germany was inclined to respond to these expectations. However, this created a security dilemma between multilateral commitments and antimilitarist predispositions that included a widespread scepticism with regard to the use of force.

Based on Longhurst's approach to change of strategic culture, the hypothesis that will be put forward is that German strategic culture did not fundamentally change since its inception period. While the constitutive elements may have been adapted, or "fine-tuned" to internal and external pressures in terms of "regulatory practices" or "security policy standpoints", the two fundamental elements of German strategic culture - antimilitarism and multilateralism - are still clearly discernible. Since external pressure for greater German international engagement is rising and there are no signs for a weakening or fundamental shift in the German

²⁶ FLORACK, Martin. *Kriegsbegründungen*, Tectum Verlag, Marburg 2005.

²⁷ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

²⁸ Oxford Dictionaries, entry "militarism", available under <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/militarism> (09.05.2013).

²⁹ STAVRIANAKIS, Anna and SELBY, Jan. Militarism and international relations in the twenty-first century, in STAVRIANAKIS, Anna and SELBY, Jan (eds.) *Militarism and International Relations : Political Economy, Security, Theory*, Routledge, 2013, pp.3-18, p.12.

³⁰ KEOHANE, Robert O. Multilateralism. An Agenda for Research, *International Journal*, 1990, Vol. 45, pp. 731-764.

³¹ RUGGIE, John G. Multilateralism: the Anatomy of an Institution, *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 3 Summer 1992, pp. 561-598.

antimilitarism, the inherent German security dilemma is likely to have become even stronger during the period of the Merkel government.

In order to test these hypotheses, the first chapter will be dedicated to an analysis of the formative period and the development of German strategic culture. The aim is to point out what constitutes German strategic culture at the arrival of Angela Merkel in the Chancellor's office. I will deconstruct the two foundational elements of strategic culture and show their adaptation and development over time. The formative period can be traced back to the postwar period and the early years of the Federal Republic of Germany. Due to the traumatic experience of the Second World War and the total defeat, Germany developed a culture of antimilitarism on the one hand and committed itself fully to an integration into the West which became the German multilateralism. This strategic culture remained intact throughout the Cold War and beyond. While there is some perceivable "fine-tuning", the foundational elements of German strategic culture remained unchanged.

The second chapter will assess change and continuity of Germany's multilateralism under the Merkel government. For this purpose I will take a closer look at Germany's engagement in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and in particular Germany's commitment to the EU Battlegroup concept, its engagement in EUFOR RD Congo and the non-participation in EUFOR Chad, the German contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, as well as the German abstention from vote on the UN Security Council Resolution 1973(2011) and the following non-participation in OUP. While Germany remains committed to its multilateralism, most of the time, Germany's military engagement is rather a response to international pressure than a deep conviction about the rightfulness of the respective intervention. Its antimilitarist stance puts serious constraints on Germany's multilateral engagement, so that German foreign policy makers have to continuously balance between these two conflicting elements of Germany's strategic culture.

The aim of the third and last chapter is to analyse change and continuity in German antimilitarism in the period under investigation. The first part of the chapter examines at the transformation of the German armed forces, its current advancement, the pitfalls and the criticism. The analysis will show that the resilient German strategic culture seriously hampered the success of the reform. The second part of the chapter will be concerned with the German society and its relationship to security policy. I will analyse how the societal image of the German army as an ideal-type "force for good" was shattered by the experience of the Afghanistan mission and the Kunduz airstrikes in particular. This development led to an ever growing scepticism towards international interventions. The last part of the chapter is dedicated to the question why this situation has not led to a debate about Germany's foreign and security policy. It can on the one hand be traced back to a general public disinterest in foreign affairs and on the other hand to the high political costs such a debate would engender, due to the resilient antimilitarism of the German society.

■ CHAPTER I : GERMAN STRATEGIC CULTURE THROUGH THE DECADES

"The Germans are thus condemned to bear a burden of guilt, one that cannot be mastered, and that remains fresh thirty-five years later."³²

The purpose of this first chapter is to briefly lay out the creation and evolution of Germany's strategic culture from the end of World War II to the German "No" to the Iraq War. The aim is to create a point of reference for the analysis of Germany's use of force under the two Merkel governments from 2005 - 2012. Given the limited space of this thesis, my demonstration aspires in no way to be exhaustive. Nevertheless, I hope to provide a good overview and extract the main elements of what influences German security policy today.³³ I will show that it was the specific post-war environment of total defeat and occupation that formed the breeding ground for Germany's strategic culture. Very early on, the two constituent elements of German strategic culture - antimilitarism and multilateralism - could be identified. They were a response to the atrocious experiences of the World War II, which led to a scepticism towards the military and the use of force in international relations. The German multilateralism was on the one hand a rejection of nationalism and unilateralist policies of the past. On the other hand, it was also born out of necessity since Germany was an occupied country, deprived of its sovereignty. Therefore, the integration into supranational institutions was the only way to have some leverage and eventually regain autonomy. These two foundational elements of German strategic culture were solidified during the time of the Cold War. Germany was firmly integrated into the Western Alliance with a military whose primary purpose was territorial defence. With the end of bipolarity, the international environment changed dramatically, removing most of the structural constraints that had bound the Germans to their special security policy. Initial fears of a return to power politics were dispelled by an eager continuity discourse that was challenged, however, by the emergence of new security risks in the Gulf region and on the Balkans. Germany's newly gained sovereignty and unity created expectations that this new powerful country would play a more active role in international security policy. Germany had developed from a security taker into a security provider and therefore faced demands of its partners to make substantial contributions including the deployment of German armed forces. Germany found itself caught in a dilemma of being a reliable partner and cherish its multilateral engagements on the one hand and being marked by a culture of antimilitarism on the other. The conflicts in the Balkans eventually led to a more frequent and expanded use of the Bundeswehr outside of NATO territory. While some authors interpreted this as a sweeping change of Germany's relation to the use of force, I assert that Germany's strategic culture has not been fundamentally altered but rather adapted to new expectations and challenges. The core beliefs of antimilitarism and multilateralism based on Germany's historic experiences remain intact throughout the decades and are only adapted to a changing security environment.

³² KOVACH, Thomas A. and Walser, Martin. *The Burden of the Past. Martin Walser on Modern German Identity: Texts, Contexts, Commentary*, Camden House, Rochester 2008.

³³ For more a detailed analysis of the evolution of German Strategic Culture during this time period see for example BANCHOFF, Thomas. *The German Problem Transformed. Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy, 1945-1995*, The University of Michigan press, Ann Arbor, 1999; BERGER, Thomas U. *Cultures of Antimilitarism. National Security in Germany and Japan*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.; DUFFIELD John S. *World Power Forsaken. Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification*, Stanford University Press, 1998; LONGHURST, Kerry. *Germany and the Use of Force*, Manchester University Press, 2004.

I) 1945 : Rising from the Ashes

If one was to determine the generation period of German strategic culture, it would be safe to put down May 1945 as a starting point. In 1945, Germany lay in ashes. The country that once laureated itself with its military grandeur was reduced to rubble - destroyed, defeated, and demoralised. Without a doubt, the disastrous World War II and its end were traumatic experiences for the German population: most major German cities lay in ruins, millions of Germans lost their lives and almost 12 million people had to flee their homes in the former Eastern parts of Germany. In addition to the physical destruction and the occupation of German territory, the end of the war had important psychological effects as it put into question the very essence of German identity. For this reason, the year 1945 is often referred to as Stunde Null (zero hour), which does not only describe the unconditional surrender of the Wehrmacht on 8th of May, 1945 but also implies in a metaphorical dimension the end of German norms, ideas and collective beliefs that had constituted the German identity before. Hence, Kerry Longhurst speaks of a "collective infancy (...)" which signified a strategic cultural discontinuity and social trauma so profound that 'affective and evaluative schemes had to be re-learned' (...).³⁴ It is at this point that a thoroughly new German strategic culture could be formed. Even though the conditions of so-called Stunde Null are a very important conceptual prerequisite for the consideration of the creation of a new German strategic culture, the term can be misleading. It suggests a political, military, and sociological tabula rasa which is a very simplified image of postwar Germany.³⁵ "Those who remember the end of the Third Reich, associate very different personal feelings with it. Some felt liberated from the national-socialist rule, but for others the focus of their retrospection lay on the division, the loss of their homes, the destruction of their cities, the horrors of escape and expulsion or their long captivity."³⁶ The experiences and the memories of the war and its aftermath are so diverse and heterogenous that one should bear in mind that the break with the past may not have been as clean and clear as Stunde Null suggests.³⁷ Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the ideological foundations of the German society were delegitimised which gave room for new norms, ideas and beliefs to gain ground. The experience the occupation by the allied forces is also of crucial importance. Deprived of their sovereignty, the Germans had to find ways to rebuild a political life, domestically and internationally. It was in this particular post-war environment that a new German strategic culture started to develop. The cruelty of the war and the experience of the occupation gave rise to a German culture of antimilitarism³⁸ that caused a deep skepticism towards the use of force in international relations and marked the relationship between the German society and the military. Due to its lack of sovereignty, Germany's only way to gain leverage on the international scene was to act within multilateral frameworks. Therefore, multilateralism and international cooperation became the foundation of German foreign and security policy.

A) Antimilitarism

1) Rejection of the Use of Force

By the end of the war, the German population was exhausted and disillusioned. Since the catastrophic defeat of the 6th Army at Stalingrad in February 1943, many Germans came to realise that the war could not be won. What followed from the side of the NSDAP leaders was a wave of aggressive propaganda proclaiming the total war until the very end. Against the backdrop of ruins and rubble, children and seniors were forced to join the

³⁴ LONGHURST, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

³⁵ See entry on Mythos "Stunde Null", FISCHER, Torben und LORENZ Matthias N. *Lexikon der "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in Deutschland. Debatten- und Diskursgeschichte des Nationalsozialismus nach 1945*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2007, p.42.

³⁶ "Diejenigen, die sich an das Ende des Dritten Reiches erinnerten, verbanden damit höchst unterschiedliche persönliche Empfindungen. Manche fühlten sich von der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft befreit, für andere aber standen die Last der Teilung, der Verlust der Heimat, die Zerstörung ihrer Städte, die Schrecken von Flucht und Vertreibung oder der noch viele Jahre dauernden Gefangenschaft im Mittelpunkt ihres Rückblicks." STEINBACH, Peter. Geschichte und Politik - nicht nur ein wissenschaftliches Verhältnis, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* (B 28/2001).

³⁷ Stefan Berger argues for example that there was a "continued commitment to the nation-state in the works of leading historians" as well as a continued commitment to the nation in public debates. BERGER, Stefan. *The Search for Normality. National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany since 1800*, Berghahn Books, 1997., Christian Hacke verwendet den Begriff Vernunft-Bundesrepublikaner.

³⁸ See e.g. BERGER, Thomas U. *Cultures of Antimilitarism. National Security in Germany and Japan*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

Volkssturm as a last suicidal attempt to defend the Third Reich against the allied forces. Klaus-Dittmar Henke describes how this fanatical terrorism against the own population was "to a certain degree a denazifying shock therapy and a healthful lesson about the true character of the regime."³⁹ He argues that the escape and the wave of suicides of leading NSDAP figures, including Hitler himself, upon arrival of the allied forces contradicted their own heroic ideology which had a sobering effect on the population and led to an ex post delegitimation of everything the regime stood for including the ruthless militaristic culture.⁴⁰ Equally important for the consolidation of German antimilitarism was the period of occupation. The allies were not only determined to completely demilitarise the country and hamper any attempt of rearmament, they also had a mission to denazify and reeducate the German society on the basis of democratic principles in order "to convince the German people that they have suffered a total military defeat and that they cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves, since their own ruthless warfare and the fanatical Nazi resistance have destroyed German economy and made chaos and suffering inevitable."⁴¹ The basis for this endeavour was the Potsdam Agreement reached at the Potsdam Conference held from the 17th of July to the 2nd of August, 1945. The three heads of state of the USSR, the United Kingdom and the USA decided on a postwar order for occupied Germany. The Potsdam Agreement most famously established the so-called four Ds comprising four policies to be carried out in all occupation zones: demilitarisation, denazification, democratisation and decentralisation. One important instrument of denazification and reeducation were the Trial of the Major War Criminals and the subsequent military trials held at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg between 1945 and 1949. The trials were public in order to unravel the crimes of the Nazi regime for everyone to see and to convince the German population of their collective guilt.⁴² But the trials were highly controversial from the very beginning. The legal aspects of convicting war criminals on the basis of ex post facto law were hotly debated especially among lawyers and politicians. Furthermore, the trials did not have the desired effect on the population either. Even though 72% of the Germans indicated in a survey in 1946 to follow the Nuremberg Trials in the press, only 30% said to believe that the Germans were responsible for World War II.⁴³ In fact, many Germans rejected the undertakings of the Allies to convince them of their collective guilt. Instead, Hitler and the NSDAP leaders were demonised whereas the population was depicted as a pawn in their diabolic enterprise. The Nuremberg Trials helped to point out the culprits and to relieve the collective conscience. Hence, the emphasis lay on the proper suffering and the own victimhood.⁴⁴ However, it is important to retain that the Germans did not actively oppose any of the allied policies of demilitarisation and denazification. On the contrary, denazification for example was soon successfully conferred upon German local authorities and demilitarisation was supported by a large part of the population. This was strikingly proven by the fierce opposition to rearmament in the 1950s. The Ohne-Mich-Bewegung (count-me-out movement) illustrated the German war weariness and the complete rejection of the militarist culture of the past.⁴⁵ This is when "Nie wieder Krieg!" (never again war) became a widely accepted norm.⁴⁶ The German war weariness transformed into a general skepticism towards the use of force as a legitimate foreign policy instrument. The German constitution the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law), adopted exactly four years after the unconditional surrender on the 8th of March, 1949, reflected this attitude. At this point Germany did not have an armed force and therefore the *Grundgesetz* "did not plan or make provisions for future armed forces."⁴⁷ The Articles concerning armed force

³⁹ "Für die Bevölkerung, die der Nation bis zum Schluß ungeheure Opfer gebracht hatte, war das ein fortwirkender, gewissermaßen 'entnazifizierender' Erfahrungsschock und ein heilsames Lehrstück über den wirklichen Charakter des Regimes." (p.31) translated from HENKE, Klaus-Dittmar. Die Trennung vom Nationalsozialismus. Selbsterstörung, politische Säuberung, "Entnazifizierung", Strafverfolgung, in HENKE, Klaus-Dittmar and WOLLER, Hans (eds) *Politische Säuberung in Europa. Die Abrechnung mit Faschismus und Kollaboration nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, dtv, 1991, pp. 21-83.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Potsdam Agreement, Protocol of the Proceedings, August 1, 1945

http://www.nato.int/ebookshop/video/declassified/doc_files/Potsdam%20Agreement.pdf.

⁴² HOFFMANN, Christa. *Stunden Null. Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland 1945 und 1989*, Bouvier Verlag, Bonn/Berlin, 1992, p. 96.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 92.

⁴⁴ See entry on Kollektivschuldthese, FISCHER, Torben und LORENZ, Matthias N. *op.cit.*, p.43.

⁴⁵ COOPER HOLMES, Alice, *Paradoxes of Peace - German Peace Movements since 1945*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1996, p.71.

⁴⁶ LONGHURST, *op.cit.* p.28.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

and the military were only added in 1956,⁴⁸ when rearmament appeared to become necessary. Even then, the Bundeswehr was established as a defence army (*Verteidigungsarmee*), limited to the protection of German territory. Article 87a⁴⁹ anchored this purpose in the constitution, and constrained Germany's deployment of forces outside the NATO territory throughout the Cold War. This prevented Germany from contributing to UN peace missions in the 1970s for example,⁵⁰ which could be seen as the first friction between its antimilitarist stance and its multilateral engagement. It was only after the ruling of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* (Federal Constitutional Court) on the 12th of July, 1994 that the Bundeswehr could be deployed in out-of-area missions.

2) Rearmament : Forming the Citizen in Uniform

At the birth of the Federal Republic of Germany, it was a state without a military. When the German constitution was adopted on the 8th of May, 1949, it did not include any articles providing a framework for the creation of armed forces. Instead, it reflected the antimilitarist nature of the young democracy. Article 26 (1) is a good example: "Acts tending to and undertaken with intent to disturb the peaceful relations between nations, especially to prepare for a war of aggression, shall be unconstitutional. They shall be made a criminal offence."⁵¹ The Articles concerning the use of armed force and the military were only added in 1956,⁵² when rearmament appeared to become necessary. Until 1950 the main concern of the Allies had been security on the European continent by containment of Germany in order to prevent the resurgence of German militarism and expansionist militarism. However, with the eruption of the Korean War the security of Germany itself suddenly became an issue.⁵³ The proxy war hardened the fronts between East and West and gave rise to fears that a similar situation could occur between the two German states. This new international context made German rearmament a necessity,⁵⁴ which was also recognised by the Allies. Harry S. Truman stated, "Without Germany the defense of Europe has a rear-guard action on the shores of the Atlantic ocean. With Germany there would be a defense in depth, powerful enough to offer effective resistance to aggression from the east."⁵⁵ But it would take another five years until Germany had a new armed force. Initially, German rearmament was to be realised within a European Defence Community, but with the failure of the Plevin-Plan, Germany started to build up a national army subordinated to the NATO allied command. This multilateral integration was crucial to German rearmament to ease domestic and international fears of a return to expansive nationalism. The constitutional basis for the German integration into the Western security framework was Article 24: "With a view to maintaining peace, the Federation may enter into a system of mutual collective security; in doing so it shall consent to such limitations upon its sovereign powers as will bring about and secure a lasting peace in Europe and among the nations of the world."⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Adenauer's rearmament plans triggered fervid debates within German society. As stated above, the Ohne-Mich-Bewegung peace movement was a direct reaction to the rearmament plans and an expression of the German opposition to war and the use of force in general. Additionally, among the political elites, the controversy was no less heated. Parts of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) were categorically opposed to rearmament and the German adhesion to NATO, while the rest viewed the plans with scepticism. They

⁴⁸ BECKEBANZE, Maren; KUHN, Lena; MENZENBACH, Steffi; NETTERSCHIEDT, Anja, *Änderungen des Grundgesetzes seit 1949*, Deutscher Bundestag. http://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/analysen/2009/aenderungen_des_grundgesetzes_seit_1949.pdf (12.05.2013).

⁴⁹ Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany in the revised version published in the Federal Law Gazette Part III, classification number 100-1, as last amended by the Act of 21 July 2010 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 944).

⁵⁰ HAFTENDORN, Helga. *Deutsche Außenpolitik zwischen Selbstbeschränkung und Selbstbehauptung*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart München, 2001, p.392.

⁵¹ Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, *op.cit.*

⁵² BECKEBANZE, Maren; KUHN, Lena; MENZENBACH, Steffi; NETTERSCHIEDT, Anja, *Änderungen des Grundgesetzes seit 1949*, Deutscher Bundestag. http://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/analysen/2009/aenderungen_des_grundgesetzes_seit_1949.pdf (12.05.2013).

⁵³ HAFTENDORN, *op.cit.*, 2001, p.31.

⁵⁴ HACKE, Christian. *Die Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Weltmacht wider Willen?*, aktualisierte und erweiterte Neuauflage, Ullstein, 1997, p.66.

⁵⁵ Cited in NOACK, Paul. *Deutsche Außenpolitik seit 1945*, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1972, p.32.

⁵⁶ Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, *op.cit.*

promoted German neutrality out of fear that a rearmed Germany would irritate the Soviet Union and make reunification even more improbable.⁵⁷

Another major concern was the compatibility between democracy and the military. Because of Germany's troubled past with the military and militarism, the rearmament was regarded with unease. People feared that rearmament would revive the old traditions of militarism of Prussia and Nazi Germany. Especially since the experiences during the years of the Weimar Republic were still a vivid memory. At the beginning of the century, the young democracy had been under attack from undemocratic forces - with the army being among them. Because of its distance to the democratic government of the Republic, the army was seen as a "state within the state" (Staat im Staate).⁵⁸ Therefore, it seemed crucial to link the new German armed forces as closely to society and democracy as possible. "The Bundeswehr should become a military organization with all the ideological features of armed forces of citizen soldiers."⁵⁹ Thus, when the new Bundeswehr was established, the terms, *Primat der Politik* (primacy of politics), *Innere Führung* (inner guidance) and *Bürger in Uniform* (citizen in uniform) formed the guidelines of the the new armed forces. They were supposed to mark a clear difference between Reichswehr and Wehrmacht on the one hand and the new Bundeswehr on the other. Several institutional anchors were supposed to ensure a democratic devotion of the armed forces and its integration with the civilian society. Primarily, the Bundeswehr was placed under the command of the civilian Federal Defence Minister. In case of a crisis, the command was to be transferred to the chancellor.⁶⁰ Another important pillar of the Bundeswehr was conscription. It was not only introduced as a recruitment method, but was another instrument to keep the military close to society. It was supposed to ensure that soldiers were Bürger in Uniform and not an alienated professional army. Hence, Theodor Heuss called conscription "the legitimate child of democracy."⁶¹ The first version of the constitution already included that "(n)o person shall be compelled against his conscience to render military service involving the use of arms."⁶² The conscientious objection was fundamental to the new democratic stance of the armed forces. Article 4 grants every person freedom of faith, conscience, and believe, which is a basic right that cannot be overridden by any legislation. Therefore young men could object to conscription on the basis of conscientious considerations about the use of arms. About a decade later Article 12a (2) was added to the constitution stating that "any person who, on grounds of conscience, refuses to render military service involving the use of arms may be required to perform alternative service."⁶³

Innere Führung was destined to ensure an inner control of the armed forces by educating the soldiers and officers as responsible citizens of the Federal Republic devoted to the democratic principles that the state is based upon. Therefore the soldiers had to swear an oath of loyalty to the constitution. The responsible citizen soldier was not to be blindly obedient to orders but was supposed to make democratically educated decisions on the basis of his own conscience.⁶⁴ This principle clearly guided the defence legislation as for example the law on the legal position of the soldier (*Soldatengesetz*) or the directive on the regulation of the relationship with military seniors.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the status of the Bundeswehr as a Parlamentsarmee (parliamentary army) was of the utmost importance. Not only did the *Bundestag* obtain the right and duty to watch over the commitment to *Innere Führung* and the basic rights of the citizen soldier,⁶⁶ it was also upon the parliament to decide on the state of defence, hence, at what time the armed forces were to be used.⁶⁷ The civilian control over the military was also

⁵⁷ BERGER, *op.cit.* p.43.

⁵⁸ VON BREDOW, Wilfried, *Militär und Demokratie in Deutschland. Eine Einführung*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden, 2008, p.71.

⁵⁹ VON BREDOW, Wilfried, *Conscription, Conscientious Objection, and Civic Service : The Military Institutions and Political Culture of Germany, 1945 to the Present*, Journal of Political and Military Sociology 1992, Vol. 20 No.2 (Winter), pp 289-303.

⁶⁰ Article 65a and Article 115b, Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, *op.cit.*

⁶¹ Cited in VON BREDOW, Wilfried, *Militär und Demokratie in Deutschland. op.cit.*, p.114.

⁶² Article 4 (3), Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, *op.cit.*

⁶³ Article 12a (2), *ibid.*

⁶⁴ BERGER, *op.cit.*, p.52.

⁶⁵ VON BREDOW, Wilfried. *Militär und Demokratie in Deutschland, op.cit.*, p.121.

⁶⁶ Article 45a " and Article 45b, "A Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces shall be appointed to safeguard basic rights and to assist the Bundestag in exercising parliamentary control over the Armed Forces. Details shall be regulated by a federal law.", Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, *op.cit.*

⁶⁷ Article 59a, Basic Law after the amendment BGBl. I 1956, today this article as been repealed and replaced by article 115a.

ensured by the decentralisation of the German military apparatus. In order to avoid another "state within the state", the German army did not have a joint General Staff, only command headquarters at the corps level who reported directly to the civilian Federal Minister of Defence.⁶⁸

The German antimilitarism was born out of the disastrous experiences of World War II. Never again should such cruelty and misery emanate from German soil. Never again should a German army invade, occupy and oppress another people. Never again should Germany start a war. Those were the lessons learned from the past. They influenced Germany's relationship towards its military enormously. The Bundeswehr was constructed for defence purposes only and was staffed with *Bürger in Uniform* (citizens in uniform) committed to the democratic and peaceful principles of the Federal Republic.

B) Multilateralism : Integration into the West

The first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, influenced German foreign and security policy for decades to come. His policy marked the foundation of German strategic culture. Especially the German multilateralism is influenced by Adenauer's stern insistence on *Westintegration* (integration into the West), which was based on two considerations: on the one hand Adenauer saw *Westintegration* as the only way to regain German sovereignty. Step by step he wrenched competences from the Allies until the FRG formally became sovereign in 1955.⁶⁹ On the other hand, his policy was also informed by his beliefs and the lessons he had drawn from Germany's past. Adenauer was convinced that a new disastrous war could only be avoided by an integration of Western Europe. He was also deeply concerned about the democratic conscience of his fellow citizens and believed that only a firm integration into the community of Western democracies would keep Germany from returning to old power politics. *Westintegration* therefore emanated as much from practical concerns as from Adenauer's historical and ideological convictions. It was a quest for sovereignty and self-restraint at the same time. Adenauer's wish for integration happened to converge with the Allied policies as they saw the integration of Germany as means to ensure a security from Germany and with Germany at the same time. The multilateral integration into the Western Alliance became solidified during the Cold War. Adenauer's successors continued, redefined and completed his policy of *Westintegration* creating a stable institutional framework that is the basis for Germany's multilateralism.

1) Between Realism and Idealism : A Quest for Sovereignty and Self-Restraint

At the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany the country was not only a state without an army, it was also a state without an official foreign policy. At the time, Germany was far from being a sovereign country as the Allied High Commission had the final say on every international as well as domestic issue. Germany's foreign policy was under firm control of the Allied forces. Therefore, the FRG had neither a foreign ministry nor a foreign minister. However, the German government under Konrad Adenauer obviously had relations with the Allies which could technically be described as foreign policy. All competences of negotiating with the Allies lay in the hands of Konrad Adenauer. He attended most meetings himself and insisted on personally negotiating deals and treaties with the occupation forces.⁷⁰ His main concern was to regain German autonomy and to increase step by step the FRG's room to manoeuvre. Adenauer was convinced that the only way he could realistically achieve this goal was through an integration into the Western Alliance system. Not only did the Federal Republic economically depend on the United States' financial and material aid, but Germany also needed the Western security umbrella since it did not have any own defence facilities. Despite Adenauer's firm conviction, *Westintegration* was a domestically contested policy, politicians from the whole political spectrum and most prominently Kurt Schumacher and Jakob Kaiser were a lot more sceptical about taking sides. Especially Jakob Kaiser pledged for German neutrality in order to play a mediating role between East and West. However, authors like Wolfram Harnrieder doubt that Germany had an actual choice in

⁶⁸ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, Anja, *Germany, Pacifism and Peace Enforcement*, Manchester University Press, 2006, p.133.

⁶⁹ See HACKE, *op.cit.*, or HAFTENDORN, *op.cit.*

the matter, since the division of Germany and Europe became evident rather quickly and West Germany was faced with a hostile Eastern bloc.⁷¹

Adenauer's policy of *Westintegration* was also strongly linked to his personal world view and his interpretations and lessons of World War II. Unlike other politicians of his time, Adenauer did accept a German responsibility for the war. He saw a major reason for the catastrophe that had unfolded itself in the 1930s in the German glorification of statism and nationalism.⁷² He criticised that the Germans had made the state a false god and he believed that an exaggerated nationalism was the root of all evil.⁷³ In his first government declaration in 1949 he affirmed that the "rivalry that dominated European politics for hundreds of years and has caused so many wars and so much destruction and bloodshed must be abolished once and for all."⁷⁴ Furthermore, he was concerned about the democratic consciences of the Germans and feared that without the constraint of being tied to other liberal democratic countries, Germany could easily return to expansionism and power politics. Paul Henri Spaak commented on Adenauer's integration policy "He sees this policy as the most effective and maybe the only measure to protect Germany from itself."⁷⁵ Consequently he was deeply convinced that the European integration, and especially the reconciliation with France was the only way to create a sustainable peace in Europe. While the European project emanated from his ideological beliefs, the Alliance with the United States was more of a practical, strategic consideration due to the occupation and the security situation in Europe.⁷⁶ His views were not shared by the whole German political elite. His colleague Jakob Kaiser criticised him for giving up on Eastern Germany. Politicians like him would have preferred a neutral Germany in order to keep the door for reunification open. Throughout his time in office Adenauer would therefore repeatedly express his concern that once he would be gone, his successors might trade *Westintegration* for national unification.

Westintegration was made possible because it met the interests of the Western Allies. Firstly, it was a possibility of containing the new Federal Republic by integrating it firmly into the multilateral community of Western democracies and secondly the FRG soon became a crucial element of the security order of the European continent. France in particular was highly sceptical of the political and economic recovery of Germany. The "German threat" continued to fuel French fears and influenced their policy towards Germany. France was not only opposed to merging the three occupation zones of France, Great Britain and the United States, but also tried to prevent the very creation of the West German state at first. Even though they were overruled by their partners, distrust continued to dominate French-German relations in those first years of the FRG.⁷⁷ The French propositions for the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Defence Community (EDC) of 1950, also known as the Schuman Plan and the Pleven Plan, have to be put in this perspective as well. While Schuman himself was probably a true European, led by the belief in a supranational European community,⁷⁸ other parts of the French government agreed due to less ideological and more political and economic considerations. The ECSC for instance did not only promise economic advantages for France but it was most importantly also a way of controlling German heavy industry, the basis for any defence industry. Adenauer was well aware of these fears and security concerns of Germany's neighbouring countries. He explained the need for an economic integration and remarked, "The French and Belgian longing for security can only be satisfied by an economic integration of West Germany, France, Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands."⁷⁹ The United States also still felt the need to restrain the new German state. During this time, the Americans followed a security policy of double containment,

⁷⁰ HACKE, *op.cit.*, p.63.

⁷¹ HAFTDORN, *op.cit.*, p.5.

⁷² NOACK, *op.cit.*, p.22.

⁷³ HACKE, *op.cit.*, p.63.

⁷⁴ Adenauer cited in BANCHOFF, *op.cit.*, p.43.

⁷⁵ "Er sieht in dieser Politik das wirksamste Mittel und vielleicht das einzige, um Deutschland vor sich selbst zu schützen." cited in HACKE, *op.cit.*, p.53.

⁷⁶ BANCHOFF, *op.cit.*, p.43.

⁷⁷ LYMAN, Stanford M. *NATO and Germany. A Study in the Sociology of Supranational Relations*, The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville, 1995, p.48.

⁷⁸ NOACK, *op.cit.*, p.33.

⁷⁹ "Dem Verlangen Frankreichs und Belgiens nach Sicherheit kann auf die Dauer nur durch wirtschaftliche Verflechtung von Westdeutschland, Frankreich, Belgien, Luxemburg, Holland wirklich Genüge geschehen." cited in NOACK, *op.cit.*, p.23.

deterrence and reassurance, which aimed at containing West Germany and the Soviet Union at the same time, as well as to deter their enemies and reassure their partners of their commitment to the security of the European continent.⁸⁰ Hence, the integration of Germany into the Western Alliance system was a crucial part of the American security policy, as the containment of the former and the future enemy were two sides of the same policy.

The German volition to be a reliable and predictable partner can be partly derived from this experience of mistrust on the side of the partners. The paradigm of reliability and predictability shaped the German strategic culture fundamentally and is a reoccurring concept in German foreign policy discourse until today. It is also often paraphrased with the word *Verantwortung* (responsibility).

2) Early Steps of Westintegration

Due to this convergence of interest, Adenauer's triumphed, and very early on, he actively searched the integration into the West as a quest for German sovereignty and German self-restraint. After his election he immediately campaigned for a German membership in the Council of Europe.⁸¹ This highly disputed endeavour⁸² was supported by the Allied forces so that Germany was able to join the Council in 1950. The international development of the late 1940s and early 1950s played into Adenauer's hands. As the division between East and West became increasingly entrenched, and concerns over the Korean War arose, a security with Germany rather than from Germany became gradually accepted. It was in this context that Konrad Adenauer first proposed a German defence contribution in an interview with the Cleveland Plain Dealer in December 1949. He realised that in the context of the Cold War that was fully unfolding at the time, the Allies would eventually have to rely on Germany for a security contribution. Adenauer was by no means a militarist or overly excited about West German rearmament, he rather saw it as a bargaining chip in his quest for German sovereignty. From the very beginning, he linked German rearmament to the principles of equality and integration. A future German military force should be on the one hand integrated into a European army and on the other hand, would only be possible if Germany was recognised as an equal partner of the Western Alliance. Adenauer hoped to increase Germany's leverage within the Western Alliance in order to advocate German interests such as reunification more successfully. As a result, "[t]he rearmament of Germany became the linchpin that held together the entire foreign policy of the Bonn-Government with fundamental implications for the entire range of the foreign policy projects the Adenauer administration was committed to."⁸³ Initially, France vehemently opposed the prospect of German rearmament. But due to pressure by the United States they gave in and in 1950 they came up with the Schuman and the Plevin Plan to create the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and a European Defence Community (EDC). According to the Plevin plan, Germany would not have a national army but would contribute to a European army under joint command. The French opposed the American proposition to make Germany a member of NATO. Instead they wanted to integrate the European army in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The negotiations about German rearmament dragged on for years. As German rearmament was seen as a necessity for European security by the Allies, Germany found itself in a comfortable bargaining position. Adenauer tightly held on to his principle of equality and got the Allies to grant Germany concession after concession.⁸⁴ On the 26th of May, 1952, Germany and the Western occupation forces - France, Great Britain, and the United States - signed the so-called

⁸⁰ HARNRIEDER, Wolfram F. *Germany, America, Europe. Forty Years of German Foreign Policy*, Yale University Press, 1989 p.31.

⁸¹ BANCHOFF, *op.cit.*, p.24.

⁸² Especially parts of the SPD issued concerns regarding the membership of the FRG because the Saar region was a member as well. They feared that a membership of the FRG could be interpreted as an acceptance of the territorial loss and would therefore solidify the fragmentation of the country.

⁸³ Wolfram Hamrieder cited in NOACK, *op.cit.*, p.34.

⁸⁴ LYMAN, *op.cit.*, p.52.

General Treaty, which would officially end the occupation status and restore German sovereignty.⁸⁵ However, the coming into force of the treaty was linked to the ratification of the treaty on the EDC, which was rejected by the French Assemblée nationale on the 30th of August, 1954. As a result, German sovereignty was not restored until 1955 with the signature of the Paris treaties and Germany's joining of NATO. Even then, the Allies kept certain controls over German politics and especially the situation in West Berlin. Full sovereignty could only be established with the Two Plus Four Agreement after German reunification. Nevertheless, Adenauer had succeeded in integrating Germany into the Western alliance and to restore German autonomy. Adenauer shaped the institutional framework in which the German foreign and security policy would operate in the future. He integrated Germany into the Western Alliance system, most notably as a member of the European Community and NATO. Due to his strong rejection of nationalism he rejected a unilateralist approach of foreign policy and embraced multilateralism which should form one of the two essential elements of German strategic culture.

3) The Cold War : Solidifying Multilateralism

Throughout the Cold War, German foreign policy was based on the strategic culture that Adenauer had outlined in the first years of the FRG. Even though several crises and controversies arose during the three decades of East-West confrontation within the Western alliance, the multilateral framework of German foreign policy that had been established by Adenauer's *Westintegration* was never called into question. This was partly due to the international circumstances of the Cold War but also because of a domestic foreign policy consensus that stretched out over the entire political spectrum. Kerry Longhurst describes the Cold War as a cocoon in which German strategic culture was tightly wrapped. In this cocoon of the bipolar system, the elbowroom of the FRG was limited. They continued to depend on the American nuclear umbrella and the NATO defence system. Faced with a communist bloc on its Eastern border, they were also economically dependent on the Western Alliance.⁸⁶ The image of the cocoon seems adequate, as this situation represented protection and limitation at the same time. Domestically, a far reaching foreign policy consensus was established after the quarrels of the early years of the FRG. A crucial step in this direction was the SPD convention in Bad Godesberg on the 15th of November, 1959. After the party had suffered painful election defeats against Adenauer's CDU in 1953 and 1957, they felt the need to fundamentally change the party's political program. At Bad Godesberg, the SPD took on a modernised, pro-Western stance. It did not only comply with the free market economy but also accepted the need for national defence.⁸⁷ The SPD took a step to the right and made Adenauer's foreign policy framework of *Westintegration* a cross-party consensus. As a result of the international circumstances and the new policy consensus, German strategic culture was fortified and only little change could be perceived during the Cold War. Different crisis and conflicts could not alter the fundamental commitment to the Western Alliance and the multilateral approach to security policy.

The first quarrels arose with growing differences between Paris and Washington under the De Gaulle's nationalist policy. He aimed at a more independent security policy from the United States. In the early 60s, Adenauer and De Gaulle began talks about a closer relationship and held mutual official visits. Within Germany this sparked a debate between Gaullists and Atlanticists. While the former supported De Gaulle's more independent approach to European defence, the latter urged to stick to a close relationship to the USA and were for a British membership in the European Economic Community (EEC).⁸⁸ In practice, Germany was caught in the middle and

⁸⁵ Vertrag über die Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den Drei Mächten,["Deutschlandvertrag"], 26. Mai 1952, Fassung vom 23. Oktober 1954, <http://www.documentarchiv.de/brd/dtlvertrag.html> (19.03.2013).

⁸⁶ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p. 50.

⁸⁷ Godesberger Programm. Grundsatzprogramm der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, Bad Godesberg 13. - 15. November 1959, http://www.spd.de/linkableblob/1816/data/godesberger_programm.pdf (20.03.2013).

⁸⁸ WINKLER, *op.cit.*, p.197.

had no real choice.⁸⁹ While Adenauer searched deeper collaboration with France, he also reaffirmed the importance of NATO and Germany actively supported a British membership of the EEC. The transatlantic relationship as well as the European integration continued to play important roles for German foreign policy. This also continued under successive administrations. The consensus about *Westintegration* was never put into question. The quarrels between the two camps should rather be interpreted as differences in the relative importance that was given to different aspects of the Western Alliance system.⁹⁰

While the controversies between Atlanticists and Gaullists continued to influence the German foreign policy debate over several issues during the Erhard and Kiesinger administrations, a new problem emerged in the 1960s. Adenauer's Hallstein doctrine and the quasi ignorance of the East German state had become an anachronism. The German public and the media began to demand a more supple policy towards the East, and Washington wanted the German government to join the international détente efforts as well. While the German administration was careful to let go of the old policies,⁹¹ change came with Willy Brandt, former mayor of Berlin who developed an entirely new approach to policy towards the East. When he arrived in the office of foreign minister of the Kiesinger administration he heralded his *Neue Ostpolitik* (new policy towards the East) which he fully carried out as chancellor from 1969 to 1974. Even though Brandt's policy caused some scepticism in Washington and Paris about the new German assertiveness and some also feared a return to a Bismarckian seesaw policy, Brandt's *Ostpolitik* was never a contradiction to *Westintegration*. In his government declaration on the 28th of October 1969, he had announced "Wir wollen ein Volk der guten Nachbarn sein im Innern und nach außen."⁹² This statement describes the aspiration of his chancellorship. While he was revolutionising Germany's policy in the East, he pushed for further European integration in the West at the same time.⁹³ In fact, he saw *Westintegration* as the basis for a successful *Ostpolitik*. It can be understood as a continuation and extension of Adenauer's integration and reconciliation efforts in order to create trust and cooperation with former enemies. Hence, Brandt's policy of "*Ausgleich*" (reconciliation) was in line with German strategic culture of multilateralism.

During the 1970s, major debates arose concerning the stationing of the neutron bomb on German soil. German chancellor Helmut Schmidt was sitting on the fence between East and West, trying to mediate contrasting interests while having to deal with massive peace protests in Germany. Even though Carter dropped the issue of the neutron bomb, new tensions arose following the NATO double-track decision in 1979, causing not only considerable pressure from Moscow but also a revival of the peace movement. Nevertheless, Schmidt was able to maintain a close relationship to the Western Alliance and push for more European integration with the creation of the European Monetary System in 1979. Meanwhile he continued Brandt's *Ostpolitik* even though the end of détente between the two superpowers made this task more difficult.

Also under chancellor Helmut Kohl there was no major shift in German foreign policy. Whereas Schmidt had tried to play a mediating role between East and West, Kohl focused more on the transatlantic partnership. He strengthened the NATO and European framework of German foreign policy with acts like creating the franco-german brigade and signing the Single European Act in 1987.⁹⁴ Hence, Germany was very closely tied to the Western Alliance in the late 1980s, when the fall of the wall and the downfall of the Soviet Union brought about a fundamental change of the international environment that jolted the foundations of German strategic culture.

⁸⁹ HARNRIEDER, *op.cit.*, p.12.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p.56.

⁹¹ CREUZBERGER, Stefan. *Westintegration und neue Ostpolitik. Die Außenpolitik der Bonner Republik*, be.bra verlag, Berlin, 2009, p.87.

⁹² We want to be a people of good neighbours, within Germany and beyond its borders. cited in CREUZBERGER, *op.cit.*, p.109.

⁹³ HACKE, *op.cit.*, p.193.

⁹⁴ BANCHOFF, *op.cit.*, p.126.

II) Post Cold War : Strategic Culture on the Move

A) Pursuing Continuity in a Changed Environment

1) *Germany and the New International Order*

If you asked people in the summer of 1989 if they believed in reunification, most of them would have answered, "not any time soon!" When the Berlin Wall came down on the 9th of November 1989, it came as a surprise. It triggered a chain of events that led the end of bipolarity that had shaped the international order for almost half a century. Deep and cataclysmic changes that challenged long established theories and beliefs took place in a very short amount of time. Classical International Relations theory could not account for the peaceful and democratic character with which these transformations took place. It was the silent end of an era, the non-violent downfall of a superpower. The fall of the wall had fundamental implications for the European continent and especially for Germany. All of a sudden Germany did no longer face a hostile Eastern bloc anymore but found itself at the heart of a peaceful European continent, surrounded by friends instead of enemies. The iron curtain that had divided the continent for decades disappeared and opened the way for German reunification in 1990. Not only did Germany's population grow from 63 million to 80 million and its territory increase from 248.000 square kilometres to 375.000 square kilometres, it also regained full sovereignty. Germany had been a semi-sovereign state ever since the end of World War II, bound to follow the political line of the Allies. When the Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany" - better known as the "Two plus Four Treaty" - was signed in 1990, Germany reached the most important foreign policy goal of the postwar era. It was the culmination of German foreign policy efforts since Adenauer.⁹⁵ As much as it was a success for Germany, it also provoked concerns within and outside of the country. All of a sudden, Europe was confronted with bigger, more powerful Germany at the heart of the continent which raised questions about how this independent country would behave. Therefore, other European leaders were initially strongly opposed to the prospect of German reunification. While Spain and Ireland supported the project, Margaret Thatcher ardently tried to hinder the reunification process.⁹⁶ The French President at the time, François Mitterrand was also very careful. Even though he had a good relationship with Helmut Kohl, he was afraid of what would become of Germany in the long run. "The chancellor is serious. (...) He's a man of very high standards. But what comes after him? We have to strap Germany, dissolve her in the European Union before Kohl is replaced. Otherwise the German arrogance, this time a bavarian and not a prussian one, will again threaten the peace in Europe."⁹⁷ In his opinion, even the Soviet Union was more predictable. He supposedly said to Gorbachev, "Germany is our friend, but I'm almost calmer with you."⁹⁸ These anxieties were also reflected in classical realist predictions about the behaviour of unified Germany. John S. Mearsheimer predicted a re-nationalisation of Europe and a return to old power politics. In this newly insecure environment, Germany would return to an aggressive foreign policy.⁹⁹ Authors like Hacke, Schöllgen, and Schwarz also argued that Germany would return to great power status now that external constraints were gone.¹⁰⁰ Even though these predictions might have appeared very dark and pessimistic, they were indicative of the fears of the time: Now that their primary foreign policy goal was reached - unification and the gain of full sovereignty, would the Germans abandon their policy of *Westintegration* and return their old *Schaukelstuhlpolitik* (seesaw policy) between East and West? What would become of the European project and the Transatlantic Alliance if they did? Would they return to a more assertive, independent foreign policy? Would they shed their role conception of a civilian power? Would it cause a re-nationalisation and a remilitarisation of the country? Would they aspire to become a nuclear power?

⁹⁵ HYDE-PRICE, Adrian, *Germany & European order: Enlarging NATO and the EU*, Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 105.

⁹⁶ VOLKERY, Carsten. The Iron Lady's Views on German Reunification: "The Germans Are Back!", *Der Spiegel*, 11.09.2009; WEBBER Douglas, Introduction: German European and Foreign Policy Before and After Unification in WEBBER, Douglas (ed.) *New Europe, New Germany, Old Foreign Policy? German Foreign Policy Since Unification*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 2001, p.1-18.

⁹⁷ "Le chancelier est sincère. (...) C'est un homme de très grande valeur. Mais après lui ? Il faut arrimer l'Allemagne, la dissoudre dans l'Union politique de l'Europe avant que Kohl ne passe la main. Sinon, l'arrogance allemande, cette fois bavaroise et non plus prussienne, menacera de nouveau la paix en Europe." cited in ATTALI, Jacques. *Verbatim*, Paris, Fayard, 1995, tome 3, p. 606.

⁹⁸ "L'Allemagne est notre amie, mais je suis presque plus tranquille avec vous." *ibid.*, p.501

⁹⁹ MEARSHEIMER, *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁰ HYDE-PRICE, *op.cit.*, p.112.

Obviously these concerns were strongly influenced by realism, which dominated international relations theory at the time.¹⁰¹ Seeing only the geopolitical and structural situation of the new European security environment, they did not take into account the institutional constraints of the Western alliance system, nor the changed domestic character of the FRG. It had become a mature liberal democracy that profoundly diverged from Bismarck's or Hitler's Germany. Soon it became clear that all these predictions were mistaken. Contrary to Mearsheimer's expectations Germany did not fundamentally change its foreign policy. Instead, the German government insisted on continuity. They stressed the continued German dedication to the European project and the importance of the Transatlantic Alliance. Adrian Hyde-Price therefore describes Germany's new geo-strategic situation as a "multilaterale Mittellage."¹⁰² Hence, one of the German government's main goals was to reassure the Allies and to dispel the concerns issued by their neighbours. As Gunther Hellman stated "the most prominent feature of German foreign policy after 1990 has been the continuity in the rhetoric of continuity."¹⁰³

2) The Gulf War and the Emergence of the Out-of-Area Debate

Germany's complacent continuity discourse was soon questioned by the beginning of the Gulf War. It was the first major foreign policy challenge after the end of the Cold War and brought the problems underlying Germany's new post-Cold War situation to the surface. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on the 2nd of August, 1990, Germany was asked to deploy troops for the planned American led coalition against Iraq. While they were still eager to stress their continued peaceful nature, they were suddenly confronted with demands to participate in a military intervention outside NATO territory, which lay clearly outside the long-established comfort zone. The government under Helmut Kohl first contemplated a direct contribution but they soon decided against it. Especially the SPD thought that any deployment of the German army out of NATO territory was unconstitutional because of a violation of Article 87a of the Basic Law and the coalition partner FDP was equally persuaded by the unconstitutional character of such a step.¹⁰⁴ Instead, Germany fell back on logistical, financial and rhetoric support of the mission. Kohl allowed unrestricted use of the American military bases in Germany and also sent ships to the Mediterranean to replace the American naval presence which was now needed in the Gulf. Germany spent a total of 18 billion Deutsche Mark on the Gulf War, which constituted around 10% of the total war expenditures. At the same time, Germany officially raised concerns about a military answer to the conflict and advocated a peaceful solution. This contradictory behaviour of support of the military intervention and the discourse for a peaceful solution to the crisis reveals the German fundamental foreign policy dilemma for the very first time. The German public was very sceptical if not strictly opposed to the war. The intervention managed to revive the German peace movements that were also accompanied by an anti-American feeling.¹⁰⁵ This shows that antimilitarism and the opposition to the use of force in international relations continued to play an important role in German foreign policy. On the other hand, Germany was suddenly confronted with the demand of its Allies to support them militarily. Due to the great importance given to their multilateral engagement and the norm of "Nie wieder Sonderweg" (never again a special path) the German government could not entirely reject their partners requests. The result of the emergence of this dilemma was an intense debate about future German military interventions since the CDU began to question the pure defence character of the German army while the opposition parties SPD and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen were clearly opposed to any military intervention. Opponents of the Gulf War still stressed the antimilitarist lessons from Germany's troubled past. Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul for example clearly advocated the "Nie wieder Krieg" (never again war) norm when she states, "War must not be an instrument of politics. (...) We, the Germans, know how much human suffering and terrible sacrifices were caused by two World Wars. Among our people, there's therefore a strong feeling of responsibility to advocate peaceful, non-military

¹⁰¹ WEBBER, *op.cit.*, p.6.

¹⁰² HYDE-PRICE, *op.cit.*, p.107

¹⁰³ Cited in HYDE-PRICE, *op.cit.*, p.122.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* p.178.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* p.180.

solutions."¹⁰⁶ The supporters of the intervention, on the other hand, suggested a very different interpretation of the past. Instead of rejecting military intervention in general, they point towards the disastrous appeasement policy towards Hitler in the late 1930s. Even though Helmut Kohl recognised recourse to military force as an instrument of last resort he stated, "At the same time we also know about the fatal consequences of an appeasement policy that accepts the violation of international law and therefore encourages further aggressions."¹⁰⁷ Martin Florack argues that the debate about the Gulf War lay down the basis for a reinterpretation of the German lessons of history. As Jürgen Habermas analysed in *Die Zeit*: "Almost instinctively the break with the past is expressed in two reflexes: Never again Auschwitz and a violation of citizens' rights; never again nationalism and war. The Gulf War brought these two affects into conflict."¹⁰⁸ In order to be able to respond to such crisis and to fulfil German alliance obligations, parts of the CDU therefore saw a need to enable a deployment of *Bundeswehr* in out-of-area missions. Volker Rühle's statement during his tenure as Secretary General of the CDU reflected this sentiment when he said, "The Gulf War casts a bright light on the need to redefine united Germany's international role, particularly insofar as our readiness to commit our forces beyond the NATO area is concerned."¹⁰⁹ As a justification, an increased responsibility towards the enforcement of international law and towards Germany's partners was invoked. It provoked an out-of-area debate that was concerned with questions about the type and scope of future German military interventions and how the constitution could be amended in order to allow such deployments. "The Gulf War made plain that between the excesses of pacifism and militarism there was a potential option for the use of German military force; that new security challenges could not be defined so neatly as it had been, (...)."¹¹⁰ The Gulf War caused a deep rift through the long established German foreign policy consensus.

B) Becoming a Normal Power ?

1) Flash Point Balkans

Only shortly after the Gulf War, the out-of-area debate gained momentum through the worsening conflict in the Balkans. On the 25th of June, 1991 both Slovenia and Croatia declared independence which triggered the outbreak of violent conflict between the secessionists and the Serb Yugoslav People's army. The German government was appalled by the conflict in the Balkans and rejected the violence. Additionally, Germany faced thousands of refugees at its borders, giving the conflict a proximity and urgency that the Gulf War had lacked. The government therefore undertook extensive diplomatic efforts to end the violence and to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. They proposed for instance, a peace conference by the European community and tried to urge the Security Council to take action, but to no avail.¹¹¹ As political and diplomatic tools seemed to fail, German politicians began to consider a wider range of foreign policy tools, including the use of military force. In a government declaration in July 1992, Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said: "We are talking about human beings, we are talking about children, women, old people, innocents. It shocks us, revolts us; in the end, however, we are powerless, impotent. And that is embittering. (...) The traditional instruments of our peace policy are insufficient."¹¹² It was in this context that the German government embarked a mission to engage the *Bundeswehr* in more and more demanding NATO and UN operations in order to set precedents for military deployment and to

¹⁰⁶ "Krieg darf kein Mittel der Politik sein. (...) Wir Deutschen wissen, was zwei Weltkrieg an menschlichem Leid und schrecklichen Opfern bedeutet haben. In unserem Volk gibt es deshalb ein tiefes Verantwortungsgefühl für friedliche, nicht-militärische Lösungen.", Wieczorek-Zeul cited in FLORACK, Martin. *Kriegsbegründungen. Sicherheitspolitische Kultur in Deutschland nach dem Kalten Krieg*, Tectum Verlag, Marburg 2005 p.51.

¹⁰⁷ "Zugleich wissen wir aber auch um die fatalen Folgen einer Beschwichtigungspolitik, die sich mit dem Rechtsbruch abfindet und damit zu weiteren Aggressionen ermutigt." cited in FLORACK, Martin, *op.cit.*, p.53-54.

¹⁰⁸ "Fast instinktiv drückt sich der Bruch mit der faschistischen Vergangenheit in zwei Reflexen aus: nie wieder Auschwitz und Verletzung der gleichen staatsbürgerlichen Rechte; nie wieder Nationalismus und Krieg. Der Golfkrieg bringt diese beiden Affekte in Widerstreit.", Jürgen Habermas, *Wider die Logik des Krieges*, cited in FLORACK, p.55.

¹⁰⁹ Cited in DUFFIELD, *op.cit.*, p.181.

¹¹⁰ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.59.

¹¹¹ DUFFIELD, *op.cit.*, p.188.

¹¹² Cited in DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.54.

ease the public into a more active role of the German army. This policy, often referred to as "salami tactics"¹¹³ was accompanied by the opposition of the FDP and, especially the Left, who did not only see the presence of German troops in the Balkans as historically problematic, but also regarded the deployments as unconstitutional.¹¹⁴ They brought a series of complaints to the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* (Federal Constitutional Court) that eventually led to the ruling of July 1994 allowing German out-of-area interventions. The first step was a contribution to the monitoring of the embargo against Serbia and Montenegro in July 1992. The political left reacted with a complaint to the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*, claiming a violation of Article 87a. Three months later, the German government deployed 500 German AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) personnel to monitor the UN-imposed no-fly zone over Bosnia. When an enforcement of this no-fly zone became necessary in March 1993, the government coalition of FDP and CDU split on the constitutionality of a participation of German soldiers in an indirect combat mission. For the first time in the history of the FRG a German government sued itself when the FDP brought a complaint to the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*. Similar debates surrounded the deployment of the *Bundeswehr* to the UNOSOM II mission in Somalia, when the SPD claimed again that parts of the mission had no constitutional basis. The out-of-area debate was finally resolved on the 12th of July, 1994 when the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* ruled a *Bundeswehr* deployment outside of NATO territory was indeed constitutional based on Article 24(2). An important condition for any further deployment of German forces was the consultation and agreement of the *Bundestag*, which had to be obtained prior to deployment.¹¹⁵ The ruling of the court finally clarified the contested constitutional situation of German military interventions and made way for future German contributions to NATO and UN missions.

As we have seen, the conservatives and liberals of the government coalition had contemplated and pushed for an expanded German participation in multilateral military interventions since the Gulf War, while the German left had always advocated a more pacifist stance, excluding the use of military force as a foreign policy tool and therefore adhering to the norm "never again war." This traditional position was shaken to the core when the situation in Bosnia deteriorated drastically. In particular the news about the massacre in Srebrenica in 1995 was arguably a turning point in Germany's relation to the use of force. All of a sudden, the actual morality of strict non-violence was put into question and the German left was caught in a moral dilemma. In the face of genocide, it appeared wrong to advocate pacifism and therefore become guilty of being a bystander. This experience caused the Left and especially Bündnis 90/Die Grünen under Joschka Fischer to change their moral attitude. On the 30th of July, 1995 he argued in an open letter to his party colleagues that the principle of non-violence had to be reconsidered and that the prevention of genocide justified multilateral intervention.¹¹⁶ This brought about a major shift in the interpretation of Germany's lessons of the past. Instead of "Nie wieder Krieg", "Nie wieder Auschwitz" (never again Auschwitz) became the new moral norm.¹¹⁷ It also brought about a new foreign policy consensus about the role of the *Bundeswehr* in international interventions. The humanitarian cause was now able to mobilise support for German out-of-area missions. The first major contribution of German forces was granted to the NATO-led "Implementation Force" (IFOR) that was charged with the supervision of the peace process following the Dayton Agreements on the 14th of December, 1995. The German government dispatched a total of 4000 troops to IFOR, but the contribution came with serious limitations. All German troops were strictly bound to non-combat roles such as logistical and medical support and were stationed outside of Bosnia.¹¹⁸ These limitations were lifted when IFOR was transformed into the "Stabilisation Force" (SFOR) in December 1996. Germany dispatched 3000 troops to the NATO mission including a combat division within the Franco-German Brigade. None of these contributions were seriously opposed by the political Left which indicates an actual shift in the attitudes towards

¹¹³ See e.g. WILKE, Tobias M. *German Strategic Culture Revisited. Linking the past to contemporary German strategic choice*, LIT Verlag, Münster, 2007.

¹¹⁴ See DUFFIELD, *op.cit.*, Chapter 8, p.173.

¹¹⁵ Urteil des Bundesverfassungsgerichts, BVerfGE 90, 286, <http://www.servat.unibe.ch/dfr/bv090286.html> (01.04.2013)

¹¹⁶ HYDE-PRICE, *op.cit.*, p.149.

¹¹⁷ FLORACK, *op.cit.*, p.89.

¹¹⁸ DUFFIELD, *op.cit.*, p.216

the use of force and the formation of a new foreign policy consensus. Instead of categorically rejecting military intervention, it could now be justified under a humanitarian cause.

This new security policy stance culminated in the Kosovo War in 1999. It was the first time that German soldiers participated in a large scale combat mission against a sovereign state since World War II. The German participation in the Kosovo War had two major surprising features: it was the newly elected Red-Green government coalition that pledged for the deployment of German forces to a NATO mission that had no UN mandate.¹¹⁹ Germany had tried to solve the conflict by peaceful means since 1997, being for example member of a Contact Group including the United States, Italy, France, the United Kingdom and Russia. When the diplomatic efforts showed no signs of success, NATO began to threaten the use of force. The Kohl government had already advocated a German contribution to such a mission and the pledge was repeated by the new government under Chancellor Schröder in October 1998.¹²⁰ When the Rambouillet talks in early 1999 also failed, NATO carried out its threat and started its Operation Allied Force against Serbia on the 24th of March 1999. Germany contributed with fourteen Tornados and participated actively in the airstrike against Serbian targets. The mission caused a vivid political debate within the country about the German responsibility. The participation in Operation Unified Protector was largely justified by invoking the reinterpretation of German history discussed earlier. As Klaus Kinkel phrased it, "those who do not stop evil become guilty of evil themselves."¹²¹ Especially regarding the questionable legal situation of the operation, German politicians tried to give their discourse a legal stance by invoking the implementation of human rights and international law, pointing towards the democratic commitment of Germany prescribed in the Basic Law. Another important justification was the will to be a reliable partner in NATO.

Among political scientists, the German participation in the Kosovo War triggered an extensive debate about the possible "normalisation" of German security policy. First of all, the use of the word "normal" is problematic as it is unclear what is understood by "normal" and what the point of reference for normality is. Therefore the question whether Germany has become "normal" is misleading. A question that can be asked, however, is whether German security policy and its strategic culture fundamentally changed as a result of this new dynamic. Baumann and Hellmann argue for example that "Germany is finally joining ranks with other Western states in terms of its attitudes towards and practices of war."¹²² Even though it is true that Germany shed its complete rejection of the use of force, I side with interpretations of a modified continuity as proposed by Adrian Hyde-Price for example.¹²³ There were still recurrent references to the German past and the responsibilities that derive from it which indicated the need to stress the continuity in German security policy. The new military side of German foreign policy was not to be interpreted as a deviation from the old "*Verantwortungspolitik*" (politics of responsibility) but was rather the logical consequence of a German foreign policy committed to peace and stability.

It is also important to point out that during the Kosovo War, Germany followed a double strategy of engaging in military action and continued diplomatic efforts. Germany especially sought to maintain close contacts with Russia by sending a steady stream of diplomats to Moscow.¹²⁴ As Germany had the EU Presidency at the time, Fischer took the initiative to develop the 'Stability Pact for Southeast Europe'. Alistair Miskimmon argues that these efforts were also vital in order to keep the domestic support for the mission alive. "(...) without the efforts made by Fischer and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to achieve a diplomatic solution, German policy-makers would

¹¹⁹ The use of "all means necessary" was blocked by Russia and China in the Security Council, therefore NATO could only fall back on two previous UN Resolutions 1160 and 1199 that rejected the conflict as a threat to international peace and made the Yugoslavian government responsible for the situation., see e.g. FLORACK, *op.cit.*, p.102.

¹²⁰ LEITHNER, Anika, *Shaping German Foreign Policy. History, Memory, and National Interest*, FirstForumPress, 2009, p.22.

¹²¹ Cited in LEITHNER, *op.cit.*, p.31.

¹²² BAUMANN, Rainer and HELLMANN, Gunther, Germany and the Use of Military Force: 'Total War', the 'Culture of Restraint' and the Quest for Normality, in WEBBER, Douglas (ed.) *New Europe, New Germany, Old Foreign Policy? German Foreign Policy Since Unification*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 2001.

¹²³ HYDE-PRICE, 2000; see also BERGER; DUFFIELD; FLORACK; LEITHNER; LONGHURST.

¹²⁴ HYDE-PRICE, Adrian, Germany and the Kosovo War: Still a Civilian Power?, in WEBBER, Douglas (ed.) *New Europe, New Germany, Old Foreign Policy? German Foreign Policy Since Unification*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 2001, pp.19-34.

not have been able to maintain domestic support for Germany's involvement in Operation Allied Force."¹²⁵ This indicates a continued preference for non-military means among the German public.

2) Germany and the War on Terror : Afghanistan and Iraq

In the light of the terrorist attacks of the 11th of September, 2001, Germany once again found itself confronted with the prospect of a military intervention outside of NATO territory. This time the theatre would be Afghanistan and the mission the American-led "War on Terror". After the terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, NATO Article V was invoked for the first time in the history of the Transatlantic Alliance. Only a week later the German parliament granted its unconditional solidarity to the United States that would be accompanied by concrete support, of political, economic and material nature. With the exception of the Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS), there was a cross-party consensus concerning the solidarity with the United States. Therefore, on the 16th of November, 2001, the *Bundestag* debated on the deployment of the *Bundeswehr* to "Operation Enduring Freedom" (OEF) in Afghanistan that had started about a month earlier. The German government proposed a deployment of 3.900 troops maximum including counter ABC units, sanitary and transportation units as well as 100 soldiers of the special unit Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK).¹²⁶ Despite the wave of solidarity among the German population and the political elite, the government faced strong opposition by the PDS who called for a "critical solidarity"¹²⁷ and rejected the use of military means. There were also some concerns in the ranks of the government parties SPD and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen. Therefore Chancellor Schröder feared for the Red-Green majority and he linked the question to a Vertrauensfrage (vote of confidence). This brought some of the sceptics to vote in favour of the deployment in order to save the government. On the other hand, there were some conservative and liberal members of parliament who supported a German contribution to OEF in principle but voted against the demand because of the vote of confidence. As a result, the demand of the government was adopted by the *Bundestag* with a very tight majority of 336 in favour and 326 against the contribution of German forces. Very much like the participation in the Kosovo War, the German commitment of forces to the war in Afghanistan could, at first glance, look like a profound change of Germany's security policy. But on further examination, the case of Afghanistan shows on the one hand the enormous importance of multilateralism and on the other hand also reveals "the intricacy of the German perspective on the use of force."¹²⁸ One of the most important justifications for a German contribution was the solidarity with the Allies. Supporters of the intervention did not only base themselves on the invocation of Article V of the Northatlantic Treaty, but they also referred to the historical responsibility to stand behind their American friends. Since Germany's security had depended on the protection of NATO for decades it was now a question of honour to show their commitment to the Alliance. Gerhard Schröder argued, "The willingness to secure peace with military means is an important testimony of Germany's commitment to its alliances and partnerships."¹²⁹ This multilateralism discourse clearly picked up the traditions of Westbindung and placed Germany at the centre of the multilateral framework built by Adenauer and his successors. A second interesting argument for the deployment of the German army was the moral obligation and the humanitarian cause. Joschka Fischer stated, "We have a responsibility that cannot only be based on the imperative to avoid the use of force by all means. We rather have to confront violence when it endangers the most elementary principles of peaceful coexistence."¹³⁰ The discourse during the 90s had placed emphasis on the use of force as an ultima ratio to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. Especially politicians of the Left felt the need to link the Afghanistan War to a humanitarian cause as well. "In Operation Enduring

¹²⁵ MISKIMMON, Alistair. *Germany and the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. Between Europeanisation and National Adaptation*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p.102.

¹²⁶ Deutscher Bundestag, Antrag der Bundesregierung, Drucksache 14/7296.

¹²⁷ LEITHNER, *op.cit.*, p.63.

¹²⁸ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.78.

¹²⁹ Cited in LEITHNER, p.67.

¹³⁰ "Insofern haben wir eine Verantwortung, die sich nicht nur auf den Imperativ gründen kann, alles zu tun, um Gewalt zu vermeiden. Vielmehr müssen wir der Gewalt dort entgegentreten, wo sie die elementarsten Grundsätze des friedlichen Zusammenlebens gefährdet." cited in FLORACK, *op.cit.*, p.123.

Freedom, however, military measures did not primarily serve a humanitarian purpose (...)”¹³¹ This indicates that the use of force was still only acceptable in a very narrowly defined framework of humanitarian intervention. Chancellor Schröder also emphasised that the German contribution would not serve combat purposes and would remain limited.¹³² Hence, he still felt the need to downplay the use of force in order to rally a majority behind the project.

The support behind the US-led war became weaker and weaker as US rhetoric on the war on terror became more and more assertive. US politicians envisioned pre-emptive strikes and justified US unilateralism. This discourse clashed with deeply ingrained German beliefs about the just use of military force. Even though there had been a shift in the German attitude towards the use of force in the 90s, it was never automatic, had important limitations and was always an instrument of last resort.¹³³ There was no apparent justification for the war in Iraq and therefore it would not sit well with the public's scepticism towards intervention in general. Hence, when George W. Bush focused on Iraq as the next rogue state, the unconditional German solidarity had disappeared. Gerhard Schröder was the first Western leader to unequivocally oppose the planned intervention in Iraq. This move was probably a strategic one: Schröder faced elections that he was likely to lose. His attitude towards the Iraq War was very well perceived by the German public which was increasingly sceptical about American neo-conservative ideology. Therefore it was welcomed that Schröder announced, Germany would not get involved in any foreign policy adventures. The plan worked out, the Red-Green coalition could secure a close victory in the 2002 election, but Schröder's Iraq policy sparked a heated debate. While the government coalition revived the "Nie wieder Krieg!" discourse and played on the traditional German antimilitarism, the opposition accused the government of turning its back on *Westintegration* and the lessons of history. According to CDU/CSU and FDP, Schröder violated the German principle of multilateralism by going a new *Sonderweg*. Criticism also came from the United States, especially from the American media.¹³⁴ In response to the opposition on all fronts, the SPD and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen were eager to affirm that Germany was still an integral part of the Western Alliance. They emphasised Germany's past achievements and contributions. Peter Struck assured for example that, "Germany has proven itself to be a very reliable ally in the past years, through many conflicts and crises, as well as in the fight against terrorism."¹³⁵ As Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen argues, Schröder also immediately sought European support for his position in order to avoid international isolation.¹³⁶ The "German way"¹³⁷, which he proclaimed at first, felt uncomfortable and was not in line with German strategic culture of multilateralism. Especially the harsh American criticism that followed the German "no" abashed the government. They immediately tried to mend fences with the US but the issue seriously strained the American-German relations for the next couple of years.¹³⁸ The event had also serious consequences for EU policy, since the Union was not able to find a consensus on the matter, paralysing the efforts to find a common foreign policy. Alister Miskimmon also notices that Schröder weakened his ability to influence policies in multilateral institutions.¹³⁹ Apart from the evaluation of the consequences of the Iraq issue, it definitely shows that the two main elements of German strategic culture are still major points of reference for political discourse. The Iraq War showed once again that antimilitarism and multilateralism may conflict with each other and create a foreign policy dilemma inherent in German strategic culture.

The German strategic culture is based on two fundamental elements: antimilitarism, that translates itself into a scepticism towards the use of force and the military as an institution, and multilateralism, that manifests itself through Germany's profound commitment in international organisations and especially the European Union, NATO and the United Nations. Both of these elements have been born out of Germany's postwar situation of total defeat and occupation. Germany was a war-weary country that had experienced the disastrous impacts of

¹³¹ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.88.

¹³² FLORACK, *op.cit.*, p.123.

¹³³ DUFFIELD, *op.cit.*, p.218.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.87.

¹³⁵ Cited in *ibid.*, p.97.

¹³⁶ See also MISKIMMON, 2007, *op.cit.*, p. 147.

¹³⁷ HOOPER, John, German leader says no to Iraq war, *The Guardian*, 06.08.2002.

¹³⁸ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.89.

¹³⁹ MISKIMMON, 2007, *op.cit.* p.146.

exaggerated militarism and nationalism. Therefore it adopted an antimilitarist stance. In addition to that, Germany was deprived of its sovereignty, subject to the will of the Allies. Adenauer chose an incremental approach to regain German sovereignty and unity, based on a firm integration into the Western Alliance. His goal was to gain the trust of Germany's partners through integration, modesty and restraint. Those are the principles that the German multilateralism is built on: being a predictable and reliable partner, and showing restraint and responsibility.

During the Cold War these two elements remained largely unchanged and were consolidated as a German cross-party foreign policy consensus. The German strategic culture was very much in line with the interests of its Allies. Their interest in Germany's integration into the Alliance system was equally motivated by a security with and a security from Germany. Therefore the German antimilitarism and the culture of restraint perfectly served their security interests. In other words, Germany's antimilitarism and multilateralism were compatible and mutually reinforcing. After the end of bipolarity, however, this dualism started to develop into a conflict. Germany became a fully sovereign, reunited country at the heart of a fundamentally changed European continent. As new security threats arose out of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Germany's allies expected that this new more powerful country would take on greater responsibility in international security. The first demands for a German military contribution came as early as 1990 during the Gulf War. It was at this time that the fundamental dilemma of German strategic culture first surfaced. Germany found itself in a situation where its commitment as a reliable partner contradicted its antimilitarist principles. This external pressure combined with the atrocities witnessed in the Balkans led to an adaptation of the German antimilitarism from "Nie wieder Krieg!" to "Nie wieder Auschwitz!". Instead of rejecting the use of force (except for defence) in principle they now accepted it as an instrument of last resort to serve strictly humanitarian purposes. While some people see this as a fundamental change of Germany's relation to the use of force, I agree with authors like Kerry Longhurst, Hanns W. Maull or Adrian Hyde-Price who interpret these developments as adaptations to an altered situation rather than a sweeping change. Even though Germany is now able and ready to use military force, it is in no way a belligerent country. German use of military force is usually combined with great hesitations, important limitations and a fair amount of skepticism, especially in the German public opinion. Even after the decisions on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq these observations remain valid. With the arrival of Angela Merkel in the chancellor's office in 2005, Germany is therefore still characterised by a strategic culture of antimilitarism on the one hand and multilateralism on the other.

■ **CHAPTER II : MULTILATERALISM – RESPONDING TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE**

As we have seen in Chapter I, the two fundamental elements of German strategic culture came into conflict after the end of the Cold War. It is this contradiction between Germany's aspiration of pursuing a multilateral security policy and its resilient scepticism towards the use of force that marks German foreign policy under the two Merkel governments. In this chapter I will show that Germany's military engagement is mostly rather a response to international pressure than a deep conviction about the righteousness of the respective intervention. This hypothesis will be corroborated by several case studies. As the European Union and NATO are the backbones of Germany's multilateralist security policy, I will assess Germany's military engagement in both organisations during the Merkel government. The first part of the chapter, which deals with Germany's engagement in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), tries to shed light on Germany's theoretical approval of military capacity building in the European Union that stands in contraction with the hesitance when it comes to using them. The EU Battlegroups created by the Headline Goals 2010 are an illustrative example. The same hesitance can also be perceived with regard to the EU crisis management missions in the DR Congo and in Chad. While Germany reluctantly took on a leadership role in the former it refused to take part in the latter. Both cases illustrate that it was rather multilateral pressure that pushed Germany to engage in EUFOR RD Congo while domestic attitudes towards the use of force remain sceptical if not dismissive. Germany's military engagements with NATO, which will be discussed in the second part of the chapter, show similar characteristics. The case studies

chosen are Germany's participation in ISAF (Afghanistan) and the German abstention from vote on UN Security Council Resolution 1973(2011) on Libya. Both cases show that German antimilitarism continues to play an important role and informs German security policy choices. Germany therefore has to continuously perform a balancing act between the two elements of its strategic culture which might be perceived by its partners as a capricious, inconsistent security policy.

I) Germany and the Common Security and Defence Policy – An Unwilling Leader

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)¹⁴⁰ were an answer to the changed security situation of the European continent after the end of the Cold War. Germany itself faced some fears and concerns from its allies about its continued commitment to the Western Alliance system. CFSP was therefore another instrument to prove its continued commitment to its partners and its multilateral security policy.¹⁴¹ Hence, it is a direct prolongation of Adenauer's efforts of *Westintegration*. It is therefore no surprise that Germany was also at the forefront of advancing the concrete development of CSDP when it started to take shape in 1998 after the French-British summit at St. Malo. From the very beginning, Germany used its agenda setting power during its EU and WEU presidency in 1998 to influence its development.¹⁴² After the crisis on the Balkans, "Germany sought to evolve its foreign policy to react to new international developments as part of an expanded CFSP/ESDP, whilst still maintaining many of the central components of German foreign policy."¹⁴³ Despite this rhetorical enthusiasm in the development stages of CSDP, Germany remains rather unwilling when it comes to putting theory into practice. In 2004 for example, the European Union created the EU Battlegroups as part of the Headline Goal 2010. But until now, this capacity has never been employed - a fact that is also due to German reluctance to do so. In theory, Germany is also a fervent supporter of multilateral missions of the European Union, but as EUFOR RD Congo and EUFOR Tchad/RCA show, Germany proved to be very hesitant to participate in these real life crisis management missions.

A) EU Battlegroups : Political Success, Practical Failure

The first step for the implementation of common military capabilities was made with the development of the Helsinki Headline Goal (HHG) in December 1999. It was adopted by the European Council and made provisions for the creation of a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) by 2003, made up of 60,000 troops, deployable within 60 days and sustainable for at least one year. They were to have the capacity for carrying out the full range of Petersberg tasks including humanitarian, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement missions. On the 22nd of January 2001 the European Council also agreed on the creation of military structures such as the European Military Committee (EUMC) the European Union Military Staff (EUMS), and the Political and Security Committee (PSC).¹⁴⁴ Even though member states made substantial commitments to the ERRF, it soon became clear that crucial facilities such as strategic airlifts and transportation facilities were missing. In addition, the commitment process was so complicated and opaque, that it was almost impossible to be certain about what facilities would be available and which were missing. This made strategic planning difficult for the EUMS and an actual deployment of the ERRF highly unlikely.¹⁴⁵ By May 2003 the GAERC confirmed these shortfalls and it was agreed that the Petersberg tasks should be revisited and new headline goals should be established. Therefore the old process was concluded in

¹⁴⁰ Formerly called European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), for the sake of convenience I will refer to it as CSDP throughout the thesis even though it was only renamed with the coming into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009.

¹⁴¹ MÜLLER-BRANDECK-BOCQUET, Gisela. Deutsch-französische Beziehungen und das Projekt 'Friedensmacht Europa', in SCHLOTTER, Peter, Nolte, Wilhelm und Grasse, Renate (Hrsg.) *Berliner Friedenspolitik? Militärische Transformation - Zivile Impulse - Europäische Einbindung*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2008, p.242.

¹⁴² MÜLLER-BRANDECK-BOCQUET, *op.cit.*, p.247.

¹⁴³ MISKIMMON, 2007, *op.cit.*, p.103.

¹⁴⁴ Council Decision of 22 January 2001 setting up the Political and Security Committee, 2001/78/CFSP; Council Decision of 22 January 2001 setting up the Military Committee of the European Union, 2001/79/CFSP; Council Decision of 22 January 2001 setting up the Military Staff of the European Union, 2001/80/CFSP.

¹⁴⁵ QUILLE, Gerrard, *The European Security and Defence Policy: from the Helsinki Headline Goal to the EU Battlegroups*, European Parliament Note, September 2006, p.10.

December 2003. Meanwhile, the European Union had agreed on the European Security Strategy (ESS) in December 2003.¹⁴⁶ In order to fulfil "the role it wants to play in the world, supporting an international order based on effective multilateralism within the UN"¹⁴⁷ defined by the ESS, the European Council endorsed the Headline Goal 2010 in June 2004. It was meant to rectify the problems encountered with the HHG. One of the most important innovations was the creation of the EU Battlegroups. From the very beginning, Germany played an important role in the creation of this new rapid reaction force. Since then, however, Germany has also been one of the main obstacles for the use of this CSDP instrument.

The EU Battlegroup concept goes back to a French-British initiative at the Franco-British summit in Le Touquet in February 2003, which was further specified at a summit in London later in the year.¹⁴⁸ In early 2004 Paris and London approached Germany with the concept, who subsequently endorsed it in February 2004. The three countries then submitted a "Food for Thought Paper" to the PSC. It was finally adopted by the European Council in June 2004 as part of the Headline Goal 2010. Battlegroups are defined as the smallest self-sufficient military entities. They should be more effective, more credible, and more rapidly deployable than the ERRF. A Battlegroup consists of 1500-2500 troops and can be a national or a multinational entity lead by a framework nation who provides the Operational Headquarter and the needed framework facilities. As the EU Battlegroups are primarily designed for a rapid reaction to crisis response, the decision to deploy a Battlegroup has to be taken within 5 days and then lead to a deployment within 10 days. Between 2005 and 2007, there was always one Battlegroup on stand-by with a 6 months rotation system. Since 2007, there have always been two Battlegroups on stand-by which may be deployed together or independently. The the experience of the French-led EU mission Artemis in Congo in 2003¹⁴⁹ heavily influenced the design of the Battlegroup.

1) Theoretical Support for a Multinational Rapid Reaction Force

Germany joined France and Great Britain in their proposal for the Battlegroup concept very early on. By supporting the Battlegroup concept Germany hoped to advance several policy goals: (1) enhance the development of a political integration of the European Union, and (2) prove their commitment to "effective multilateralism".

- (1) They saw it as the logical consequence of the subsequent efforts made in the field of CSDP. The Battlegroups finally provided the European Defence with the necessary military capacities.¹⁵⁰ For Germany, it was overall a political project that could potentially enhance the cooperation between EU member states in the field of security policy and defence capabilities and thus allow for deeper integration. As Laura Chappell argues, "Clearly German policy-makers have looked to shape the Battlegroup Concept politically which coincides with their traditional motor role within the EU."¹⁵¹
- (2) The Battlegroup concept also serves Germany's multilateral commitment. Germany fully endorsed the provisions of the Headline Goal 2010 to support "effective multilateralism within the UN". The idea of multinational forces is also perfectly in line with Germany's security policy traditions regarding their relationship to armed forces. The *Bundeswehr* had always been integrated in the NATO framework and its use was only imaginable as part of a multilateral intervention. The multinational Battlegroups would therefore be another instrument to take on their new international responsibilities but in a multinational framework alongside other nations. Germany also supported the inclusion of smaller European member-states in multinational Battlegroups. This aspect allowed

¹⁴⁶ A Secure Europe in a Better World - European Security Strategy, Brussels, 12 December 2003.

¹⁴⁷ Council of the EU, Headline Goal 2010. Approved by General Affairs and External Relations Council on 17 May 2004. Endorsed by the European Council in Brussels, 17 and 18 June. <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/2010%20Headline%20Goal.pdf> (visited on 14.04.2013).

¹⁴⁸ MAJOR, Claudia. "Europe is what member states make of it". *An assessment of the influence of nation states on the European Security and Defence Policy*, Doctor of Philosophy, European Research Institute, The University of Birmingham, September 2008, p.207.

¹⁴⁹ The mission was a first in the history of the European Union since it was the first autonomous EU mission out of European territory.

¹⁵⁰ MAJOR, "Europe is what member states make of it", *op.cit.*, p.217.

¹⁵¹ CHAPPELL, Laura. Differing member state approaches to the development of the EU Battlegroup Concept: implications for CSDP, *European Security*, 18:4, pp. 417-439, p.433.

countries, who normally would not be able to deploy substantial forces, to contribute niche capabilities.¹⁵² Germany saw this as an empowering act for smaller member states that actively promoted the principles of multilateralism.

Since Germany had an interest in the Battlegroups, it tried to influence their design. It was of utmost importance to Germany, that the Battlegroups would not harm the EU-NATO relationship. The country has always seen itself as a third way between the Europeanist French position and the Atlanticist British attitude and the mediating role is deeply ingrained in Germany's strategic culture due to its traditional commitment to both the European Union and NATO (see Chapter I).¹⁵³ Therefore Germany insisted that the EU Battlegroups should in no way undermine the transatlantic relationship and violate the Berlin Plus agreement about the cooperation between CSDP and NATO. Germany therefore promoted a clear division of tasks and saw the Battlegroups as a pure crisis management instrument not suited for territorial defence.¹⁵⁴ Germany also opposed an African focus of the EU Battlegroups proposed by France and Great Britain.¹⁵⁵ They were concerned that member states could use CSDP as a way of sharing their colonial responsibilities both financially and politically.¹⁵⁶ These concerns also reemerged in the run-up to the EUFOR missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Chad as will be discussed later on. Unlike France and Great Britain, Germany does not have a substantial interest in Africa and military deployments are therefore even more difficult to justify to the German public.¹⁵⁷ Traditionally Germany has a more regional focus in its security policy. They also rejected the initial French and British proposition of creating purely national EU Battlegroups and promoted the "2+1" formula of multinational Battlegroups, a cooperation between two smaller member states and one larger member state.¹⁵⁸ The reason is twofold. First of all, the thought of intervening in a conflict with a German Battlegroup, even if it within an EU framework, caused some unease among German politicians. This fear of a purely German intervention was demonstrated, for example, during the debate over EUFOR RD Congo when Germany made the participation of other European states a prerequisite for the German intervention.¹⁵⁹ The second reason that can be put forward is the lack of experience of the *Bundeswehr*. Unlike the French and the British armies who are very familiar with international interventions, the German army is still in the process of transforming from a defence army into a crisis management force.

As we have seen, Germany actively shaped the design of the EU Battlegroups and was one of the largest contributors of troops from the very beginning.¹⁶⁰ The Battlegroup concept is politically as well as militarily attractive for Germany because it is exactly the kind of multilateral military structure that Germany prefers to work in, due to its specific strategic culture.¹⁶¹

2) Strategic Culture vs. Operability

A lot of the expectations about what the Battlegroups could achieve were actually met, at least on a political level. It did for example lead to a closer coordination and cooperation of national military facilities.¹⁶² But on the military level there are some serious deficiencies in terms of deployability and efficiency that can to a certain extent be traced back to conflicting strategic cultures. One obvious sign for the problem is the non-use of

¹⁵² MAJOR, Claudia; MÖLLING, Christian, *EU-Battlegroups. Bilanz und Optionen zur Weiterentwicklung europäischer Krisenreaktionskräfte*, SWP-Studie, August 2010, p.18.

¹⁵³ JONAS, Alexandra; VON ONDARZA, Nicolai. *Chancen und Hindernisse für die europäische Streitkräfteintegration. Grundlegende Aspekte deutscher, französischer und britischer Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik im Vergleich*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010, pp.121-122.

¹⁵⁴ MAJOR, "Europe is what member states make of it", *op.cit.*, p.217.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.218.

¹⁵⁶ CHAPPELL, *op.cit.*, p.428.

¹⁵⁷ MAJOR, "Europe is what member states make of it", *op.cit.*, p. 218.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.219.

¹⁵⁹ See for example, STEINMEIER, Frank-Walter. *Rede vor dem Deutschen Bundestag zum geplanten EU-Einsatz im Kongo*, Berlin, 19.05.2006.

¹⁶⁰ There were initially thirteen Battlegroups. Germany participated in four of them while France participated in three and the United Kingdom in two. See for example LINDSTROM, Gustav. *Enter the EU Battlegroups*, Chaillot Paper Nr 97, EU ISS, 2007, Annex 1.

¹⁶¹ MAJOR, Claudia; MÖLLING, Christian, *op.cit.*, p.13.

¹⁶² for a detailed analysis of the achievements and shortfalls of the EU Battlegroups see MAJOR and MÖLLING, *op.cit.*

the Battlegroups. Since the creation of the Battlegroup concept, almost ten years have passed, and so far not a single Battlegroup has been deployed. This is clearly not due to the lack of possible missions. For example the mission EUFOR RD Congo as well as another UN demand for support to MONUC in the DRC in 2008 would have been model missions for a Battlegroup deployment. Both were thought to be short term, interim military intervention for the temporary support of UN missions - exactly the job that the Battlegroups were created for.¹⁶³ In both cases, it were German Battlegroups, among others, who were on stand-by and in both cases Germany refused to deploy them.

The official German justification was the economic constraint. In the case of EUFOR RD Congo, France suggested the use of the EU Battlegroup. The BG on stand-by was the French-German force with Germany as a lead nation. Germany provided around 1500 soldiers to the group while France deployed four. The mission would therefore have been de facto German. Not only would it come with a considerable financial burden for Germany because of "the costs lie where they fall" principle, but Germany's political elite felt some unease at the thought of an almost exclusively German intervention in Africa even if it would have been within an EU framework. Therefore Germany refused and found a compromise with France.¹⁶⁴ The second argument concerns military capabilities. German political leaders have repeatedly expressed their concern about the operability of the Battlegroups. Angela Merkel stated at the Munich Security Conference in 2009, "We have the principle of the "Battle Groups", but when it comes to practical mission, we still have a long way to go."¹⁶⁵ As Marchi Balossi-Restelli argues, the Chancellor as well as her Defence Ministers Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg and now Thomas de Maizière call for greater efforts for pooling and sharing within NATO and EU.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, in the various debates concerning the EU missions in Congo or in Chad, Germany was always concerned about a potential military overstretch. Since there is already a substantial number of German soldiers dispatched to various international missions, further deployment becomes increasingly difficult.¹⁶⁷

Besides these official justifications there are, however, some problematic features that are inherent in German strategic culture. This is illustrated, for example, by Germany's insistence on the creation of multinational forces. France and Great Britain promoted the idea of national Battlegroups in an EU framework. Their primary motivation to launch the project was to achieve a more effective burden sharing of EU crisis management. Since they were the only two countries with effective intervention capabilities, they had to bear the lion's share of European intervention expenditures. This very practical aim stands in conflict with the German political apprehension regarding issue. Germany sees the multinational Battlegroups as mechanisms to support European cooperation and integration as it enables poorer, smaller member states to participate and have say in European crisis management. Experts doubt, however, that some of the Battlegroup cooperations, such as the Czech-Slovakian group, are actually operational.¹⁶⁸ If push comes to shove it will therefore be the military heavyweights - France, Great Britain and to a lesser extent Germany - who will have to fill the void.¹⁶⁹ The Battlegroups are therefore an instrument for the promotion of multilateral ideas while the actual deployability comes only second on the list of Germany's priorities.

The conflict between the two elements of German strategic culture that has been shown in Chapter I also causes problems for institutions like the EU Battlegroups. The increasing external pressure for greater German responsibility in international crisis management was only able to bring about an adaptation of the German relation to the use of force. Despite an increasing number of international deployments Germany stays very hesitant. Every possible intervention is the issue of heated debate in the German parliament as well as in the

¹⁶³ MARCHI BALOSSI-RESTELLI, Ludovica. Fit for what? Towards explaining Battlegroup inaction, *European Security*, 2011, 20:2, pp.155-184, p.155.

¹⁶⁴ BRUMMER, Klaus. The Reluctant Peacekeeper: - Governmental Politics and Germany's Participation in EUFOR RD Congo, *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2013) 9, pp.1-20, p.11.

¹⁶⁵ "Wir haben das Prinzip der "Battle Groups", aber wenn es zum praktischen Einsatz kommt, haben wir noch viele und lange Wege zu gehen.", MERKEL, Angela. *Rede auf der 45. Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz*, 07.02.2009

¹⁶⁶ MARCHI BALOSSI-RESTELLI, Ludovica, *op.cit.*, p.172.

¹⁶⁷ See for example GATHMANN, Florian. Tschad - Merkel lobt Frankreichs Mission - will aber keine Truppen stellen, *Spiegel Online*, 18.07.2007.

¹⁶⁸ MAJOR and MÖLLING, *op.cit.*, p.18.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

media. While in France and Great Britain the governments can decide on the use of military force, Germany is bound by a *Parlamentsvorbehalt* (parliamentary reservation). This means that the continued German antimilitarism impacts multilateral structures such as the Battlegroups. The Battlegroup concept calls for a quick reaction and an EU decision within five days. This short time frame might be problematic as some member states such as Ireland, the Netherlands and also Germany need parliamentary approval before they can deploy any troops. Given the German scepticism towards the use of force, this is not a mere formality.

The Battlegroup concept reveals a major problem with Germany's foreign policy. The eagerness with which Germany tried and still tries to prove its continued multilateralist policy triggers increasing external pressure on Germany to join ranks with the security providers instead of being a security taker. The same allies that were once so eager on German containment and satisfied with Germany's policy of restraint now want it to actually use its armed forces. Germany's support of institutions such the Battlegroups within the CSDP framework does not only create another multilateral handcuff for Germany's armed force but it also quite naturally increases external expectations that these new institutions will actually be used. The development of CSDP therefore deepens the conflict between Germany's two fundamental elements of strategic culture. It nourishes Germany's multilateral commitment and challenges its traditional antimilitarism at the same time. The result is a very eager Germany during the development of new institutions and instruments, and a very reluctant Germany when it comes to putting those new capabilities to the test. This may lead to an increasing frustration on the side of Germany's partners, as they may perceive German initiatives and promises in the field of CSDP as nothing but hot air. The Federal Republic runs the risk of becoming exactly what it tries to avoid, an unpredictable partner for its allies. The Franco-British Lancaster House treaty of 2010 can be seen as a result of these concerns. Germany was sidelined "(...) because of concerns that Germany could not be relied upon (...)"¹⁷⁰

B) From Hesitation to Refusal : EUFOR RD CONGO and EUFOR Chad/CAR

1) EUFOR RD Congo

Mission EUFOR RD Congo perfectly illustrates the continued security policy dilemma that Germany is caught in due to its specific strategic culture. Germany deployed 780 troops to EUFOR RD Congo and took on the operational command. However, the German public as well as large parts of the political elite were less than enthusiastic about the mission. They had serious concerns about the utility, the planning and the strategic framework of the operation. Because of these domestic hesitations, the German government was very reluctant to take on the leadership of EUFOR RD Congo. But due to substantial international pressure, especially from France, and a strong feeling of responsibility towards the viability of the multilateral institution of the European Security and Defence Policy, they nevertheless accepted the leadership role.

The request for the mission in Congo came from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2005, who was unable to rally the Security Council's support for a reinforcement of the Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en RD Congo (MUNOC) in order to supervise the upcoming elections in the country. The distinct possibility for violent confrontation between the supporter groups of the two candidates, Joseph Kabila and Jean-Pierre Bemba, ran the risk of developing into a civil war. Therefore, on the 27th of December 2005, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, officially addressed a letter to the European Union, asking to provide a "visible and credible force that could enhance MONUC's quick reaction capabilities in the DRC during and immediately after the electoral process."¹⁷¹ It was hoped that the presence of European forces would deter possible rebels so that a peaceful election process could be guaranteed. On the 23rd of March 2006, the European Council agreed to send a European military force to Congo. The mission was backed by UN Security

¹⁷⁰ MISKIMMON, Alister. German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis, *German Politics*, 2012, 21:4, pp.392-410, p.401.

¹⁷¹ United Nations Security Council, Annex I: Letter dated 27 December 2005 from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, S/2006/219.

Council Resolution 1671 (2006)¹⁷² which welcomed the European support and authorised a European-led multinational support. On the 27th of April, the EU agreed to the "joint action" which designated Germany as the lead nation with General Karlheinz Viereck as commander, and Potsdam as Operation Headquarters.¹⁷³ The mission was perfectly in line with the European Security Strategy¹⁷⁴ that defined the ESDP as an instrument for effective multilateralism and specifically mentioned the EU's support of UN efforts.¹⁷⁵ There were, however, serious difficulties in the decision and planning phase that revealed discord between EU-member states. It proved to be rather tedious to find participants for the mission. Great Britain immediately refused to participate, pointing towards its engagement in Afghanistan and arguing that they could not afford any further deployments. Initially, France suggested using an EU Battlegroup which Germany refused for reasons explained above. Instead, Paris and Berlin announced at the Franco-German summit on the 23rd of January in Versailles that they would each provide one third of the necessary troops for the mission in Congo. A problem arose, however, concerning the leadership of the mission. Only five member states can provide an Operational Headquarter to EU missions: Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Greece. Since Great Britain had already excluded itself from participation and France had already led the EU mission Artemis in the DR Congo in 2003¹⁷⁶, options were rather limited. It was therefore Germany who was asked to head the new mission in Congo. This request put Germany in a difficult situation as especially Defence Minister Franz-Josef Jung had previously announced that Germany would not take the lead of the mission.¹⁷⁷ However, the refusal of the other European states left them with little choice if they did not want to harm the EU's credibility as well as their.¹⁷⁸ They also did not have convincing arguments to reject the demand of the United Nations.¹⁷⁹ Such a move would have been in extreme contradiction with Germany's multilateral principles. Additionally, Angela Merkel wished to send a signal to France in order to support the French-German relationship.¹⁸⁰ On the 6th of March, Defence Minister Franz-Josef Jung therefore announced at a meeting of the EU-Defence ministers that Germany would provide the Operational Headquarter under five fundamental conditions: Germany insisted on the need of an agreement of the Congolese government, the existence of a UN mandate, and the participation of other European member states. In fact, EUFOR was set up as a co-leadership as Germany had the operational leadership, but France assumed the leadership on the ground. They also stressed that the mission would have to be limited to the capital Kinshasa and would not exceed the time frame of four months.¹⁸¹ Thomas Jäger describes this stance of the German government as a "Politik der Risikovermeidung"¹⁸² (policy of risk avoidance). He claims that the goal of keeping the risks of the mission as low as possible was even more important than the operation's success. The insistence on the withdrawal on the 30th of November illustrated the significance of this objective. Even though the elections had been delayed and there had been some agitations in Kinshasa at end of November, the German government was unwilling to discuss a prolongation of the mission. Jäger sees this stance as a clear contradiction of the stabilisation goal of EUFOR RD Congo.¹⁸³

Supporters of the mission used traditional elements of German strategic culture in order to justify the intervention. This phenomenon was particularly discernible in Frank-Walter Steinmeier's speech in front of the German parliament on the 19th of May 2006, in which he defended the government's pledge to deploy forces to Congo.¹⁸⁴ First and foremost he reassured that even though EUFOR RD Congo would be a military mission, it was

¹⁷² United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1671, S/RES/1671, 25.04.2006.

¹⁷³ Council Joint Action of 27 April 2006, 2006/319/CFSP.

¹⁷⁴ European Union, European Security Strategy. A Secure Europe in a Better World, Brussels, 12.12.2003.

¹⁷⁵ TULL, Denis M. EUFOR RD Congo: ein Erfolg, aber kein Erfolgsmodell, in ASSEBURG, Muriel und KEMPIN, Ronja (eds.), *Die EU als strategischer Akteur in der Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik? Eine systematische Bestandsaufnahme von ESVP-Missionen und -Operationen*, SWP Studie S32, Berlin, Dezember 2009, pp. 50-61.

¹⁷⁶ Another French lead missions could have put EUFOR's neutrality into question.

¹⁷⁷ Keine Führungsrolle bei Kongo-Einsatz, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 24, 28.01.2006, S. 5.

¹⁷⁸ JÄGER, Thomas. EUFOR RD Congo: Defizite eines glücklich verlaufenen Einsatzes, in GIESSMANN, Hans J.; WAGNER Armin (eds), *Armee im Einsatz, Grundlagen, Strategien und Ergebnisse einer Beteiligung der Bundeswehr*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 2009, pp.353-360, p. 355.

¹⁷⁹ TULL, EUFOR RD Congo: ein Erfolg, aber kein Erfolgsmodell, p. 53.

¹⁸⁰ LEERSCH, Hans-Jürgen. Deutschland schickt Soldaten in den Kongo, *Die Welt*, 10.02.2006.

¹⁸¹ JÄGER, EUFOR RD Congo: Defizite eines glücklich verlaufenen Einsatzes, *op.cit.*, p. 355.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p.357.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.358.

¹⁸⁴ STEINMEIER, Frank-Walter. *Rede vor dem Deutschen Bundestag zum geplanten EU-Einsatz im Kongo*, Berlin, 19.05.2006.

inscribed in a larger stabilisation process serving the peace and stability of the whole central African region. He therefore stressed the wider humanitarian purpose of the intervention and the crucial role of successful election in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He emphasised that especially Germany would be well accepted as a neutral, unbiased arbitrator in this situation. Steinmeier also urged the parliament to consider Germany's multilateral responsibility as a member of the United Nations. Due to this responsibility, Germany would not be able to ignore events on the African continent anymore. Steinmeier tried to reconcile both German elements of strategic culture by emphasising the German multilateral responsibility and by reassuring the parliament that EUFOR RD Congo was supposed to be a stabilisation mission restricted to the capital Kinshasa where the security situation was described as calm and stable. This reassurance was also repeated by other members of the governing coalition. Rainer Arnold of the SPD affirmed for example, "The soldiers are not going in a hostile country, but will find a friendly environment, where the people will welcome the soldiers."¹⁸⁵ It seemed to have been of utmost importance to highlight the unlikelihood with which German troops would get engaged in an actual combat situation which points towards continued reservations with regard to the use of force.

However, Denis M. Tull criticises that the reasoning for the missions were very poorly communicated. Neither the European Union nor the German government could provide credible and strong arguments for an intervention in the DRC. Therefore the information of the public and the parliament was insufficient and resulted in a widely spread skepticism about the mission.¹⁸⁶ Hence, EUFOR RD Congo triggered a long and heated debate that draws on the traditional elements of German strategic culture.¹⁸⁷ During the parliamentary debate over the *Bundestag* approval of the governments pledge to deploy forces to EUFOR RD Congo on the 1st of June 2006¹⁸⁸, opposition arose from all sides of the political spectrum. The debate proved that scepticism towards the use of force was still alive among German politicians. Die Linke, who is traditionally against the use of military force, pledged for a deployment of civilian election monitors and civilian stabilisation instruments instead. Similar concerns were raised by the FDP who also expressed their concerns about the use of force. Wolfgang Hoyer insisted that the use of military means should only be an instrument of last resort. He doubted that all other means had been exhausted in the case of Congo.¹⁸⁹ FDP and Die Linke also claimed that the mission was neither supported by the German society, nor by the *Bundeswehr*, nor by the majority of parliament. Birgit Homburger even accused the government not being convinced by the mission themselves.¹⁹⁰ As Wolfgang Gehrcke phrased it, "Do not confuse majorities here in this room with majorities in real life. You do not have the consent of the German society for this mission."¹⁹¹ And indeed, according to a survey of the magazine Stern, 57% of the German citizens were opposed to the mission in Congo.¹⁹² Representatives of the *Bundeswehr* were also sceptical about the utility of the mission. Bernhard Gertz, the head of the *Bundeswehrverband* (association of the *Bundeswehr*), described EUFOR RD Congo as "pure show, that wasn't worth risking the lives of soldiers."¹⁹³ The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces wrote, "I claim that the Bundeswehr is not prepared for Africa."¹⁹⁴ He expressed a widely shared concern that the German army did not have the necessary experience to lead or even take part in missions on the African continent. This concern had previously been raised by Defence Minister Jung himself, when he had argued against a German leadership of the mission.¹⁹⁵ Another range of arguments concerned the poor preparation of the mission. Several members of parliament called it chaotic, opaque and

¹⁸⁵ "Die Soldaten gehen nicht in ein feindlich gesinntes Land, sondern sie finden ein freundliches Umfeld vor, wo die Menschen die Soldaten begrüßen." Rainer Arnold (SPD), Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁸⁶ TULL, Denis M. Die Führung und Beteiligung der Bundeswehr an EUFOR RD Congo, in MAIR, Stefan (Hg.) *Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr. Leitfragen, Entscheidungsspielräume und Lehren*, SWP Studie S 27, Berlin, September 2007. pp.68-77, p.70.

¹⁸⁷ MISKIMMON, *op.cit.*, 2007, p.158.

¹⁸⁸ See Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁸⁹ Intervention of Dr. Wolfgang Hoyer (FDP), Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹⁰ Birgit Homburger (FDP), Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹¹ "Verwechseln Sie Mehrheiten hier im Saal nicht mit Mehrheiten im Leben. Sie haben für diesen Einsatz keine Zustimmung in der Gesellschaft."

Wolfgang Gehrcke, Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹² Mehrheit gegen Kongo-Einsatz der Bundeswehr, *stern.de*, 30.05.2006.

¹⁹³ Cited in MISKIMMON, 2007 *op. cit.*, p.163.

¹⁹⁴ "Ich behaupte, die Bundeswehr ist nicht vorbereitet auf Afrika." cited in the intervention of Birgit Homburger (FDP), Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹⁵ MISKIMMON, 2007, *op.cit.* p.159.

dilettantish. Even representatives of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, who favoured the mission in principle, expressed concerns. They especially criticised the lack of information and transparency of the negotiation process and the poor inclusion of the *Bundestag* in the deliberations. Fritz Kuhn also had strategic concerns about the limitation of the mission to four months and to the capital of Kinshasa since it was not clear whether the situation could be stabilised within this time frame.¹⁹⁶ The relatively small number of troops was subject of some debate as well as many questioned whether they would be sufficient to effectively deter rebel groups.¹⁹⁷

In the end, the deployment of 780 *Bundeswehr* soldiers was accepted by 440 members of parliament. 135 voted against and 6 members abstained. Even though the mission was accepted by a large majority of the *Bundestag*, reservations remained - even among those who had supported the mission. The debate and the initial hesitations by German politicians showed that even the government, which had promoted the intervention, was less than enthusiastic about the mission in the DRC. But because of international pressure and Germany's multilateral commitment they did not only agree to take part in the mission but also to play the leading role. The case of EUFOR RD Congo shows that German strategic culture with its two conflicting elements of antimilitarism and multilateralism remains intact. The scepticism towards the use of force was overridden by multilateral concerns which led some critics to argue that Germany was drawn into a military mission against its own will.¹⁹⁸ Denis M. Tull argues that in the case of EUFOR RD Congo, the domestic costs of a participation in the mission were not nearly as high as the international costs of a refusal would have been. German non-participation would have called the efficacy of the European Union into question, seriously harmed Germany's international credibility, and challenged the German commitment to their principle of effective multilateralism. Germany's leading role in EUFOR RD Congo was therefore the expression of Germany's multilateral commitment rather than a growing ease with the use of military force. In a different situation, the German participation in EU missions would therefore not necessarily be automatic as was proved by EUFOR Tchad/RCA where Germany decided not to deploy any troops.

2) EUFOR Chad/CAR

One year later, the European Union was considering sending another mission to Africa, this time to Chad and the Central African Republic. The initiative came from the newly elected President Nicolas Sarkozy and his Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, who were both determined to do something about the conflict in Darfour.¹⁹⁹ Because of their longstanding relationship with the government in Chad, Paris would have a greater ability to influence the conflict in the region by an operation in Chad. Therefore, they proposed to send an EU force to the East of Chad at the border with Sudan. The EU operation was thought to be a so-called bridging mission until UN forces would take over. When France officially asked the EU member states for support for their pledge, many of them showed concerns about an instrumentalisation of ESDP for a French agenda.²⁰⁰ Germany revealed itself to be even hostile towards the idea.²⁰¹ At the Paris Conference on Darfur in June 2007, the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union supposedly forbade Foreign Minister Kouchner to raise the issue.²⁰² Concerns about the neutrality of the mission with France as a framework nation were also shared by members of the European parliament.²⁰³ Angelika Beer, member of the European parliament, feared that a military force primarily composed of French soldiers would be perceived as biased.²⁰⁴ The backdrop for these accusations was the long standing French military presence in Chad with its operation Epervier which had repeatedly helped the regime under

¹⁹⁶ Intervention of Fritz Kuhn (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹⁷ E.g. intervention of Birgit Homburger (FDP), Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 37. Sitzung, 16/37, 01.06.2006.

¹⁹⁸ TULL, op. cit., 2007, p.70.

¹⁹⁹ SEIBERT, Bjoern H. *Operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA and the European Union's Common Security and Defense Policy*, Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, October 2010, p.9.

²⁰⁰ KOUNGOU, Léon. *Französischer Einsatz mit EU-Etikette*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 08.02.2008.

²⁰¹ Les risques politiques de l'opération Eufor, *La Lettre du Continent*, 22.11.2007.

²⁰² BERG, Patrick. EUFOR Tchad/RCA: Die EU als Agent französischer Interessen, in ASSEBURG, Muriel und KEMPIN, Ronja (eds.), *Die EU als strategischer Akteur in der Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik? Eine systematische Bestandsaufnahme von ESVP-Missionen und -Operationen*, SWP Studie S32, Berlin, Dezember 2009, pp.62-76, p.65.

²⁰³ UE/TCHAD Les Eurodéputés doutent de la neutralité de la mission, *Europolitique*, 08.11.2007.

²⁰⁴ KOUNGOU, op.cit.

President Déby to fight back rebel groups. The denial of such a support through the French government was not very credible.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the European Union agreed to a military operation in Chad and the Central African Republic. The mission was backed by Security Council Resolution 1778²⁰⁶ adopted on the 25th of September 2007 which supported a military presence of the European Union in order to protect about half a million of refugees on the Eastern border of Chad and the Central African Republic. The resolution also stated that EUFOR was thought as a bridging mission for a following UN intervention. From the very beginning, however, EU member states were not enthusiastic about the operation. As Patrick Berg writes, this was already perceivable in the "joint action" text, which limited the operation to 12 months and fixed that only 1/5 of the total costs would be borne by the community. France also had difficulties finding participants for EUFOR RD Tchad/RCA. Germany and Great Britain had announced early on that they would not contribute any troops to the mission. Other countries were also hesitant. France had to increase their share of troops from 1500 to 2000 soldiers and was forced to provide the necessary logistical support such as helicopters themselves. It took over half a year to gather the necessary personnel and material support for EUFOR RD Tchad/RCA which does not speak for the popularity of the mission among the member states.

In a press conference in July 2007, Angela Merkel had announced that Germany would support such a mission politically but would not take part in it.²⁰⁷ The political support came in the shape of four officers sent to the Operational Headquarters at Mont Valérien near Paris. This was probably a symbolic gesture to the new French President for the sake of the French-German friendship. According to the newspaper *Le Figaro* this behaviour, however, caused some infuriation in Paris.²⁰⁸ The official justification for Berlin's non-participation was the *Bundeswehr's* limited capacities which were already strained through Germany's commitment in Afghanistan. Jürgen Trittin, deputy chairman of the parliamentary group of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen declared, "Such an intervention would be the right thing to do, but we doubt that the capacities of the *Bundeswehr* would be sufficient."²⁰⁹ And the SPD affirmed, "We surely cannot always say no - but on the other hand, we cannot always say yes either."²¹⁰ As we can see, the German position was very cautious and rather sceptical.

Even though military overstretch was identified as the primary reason for Germany's non-participation, it is likely that a rejection of France's behaviour had an impact on the decision as well. The mission was harshly criticised by leading German think tanks such as Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Außenpolitik (DGAP) who did not only express concerns about the poor planning of the mission, but also about the neutrality of EUFOR RD Tchad/RCA and claimed that the mission primarily served French interests. In their opinion this could endanger the credibility of the European Union and harm the ESDP project in the long run.²¹¹ If this opinion was widely shared by intellectuals in Berlin, it is very probable that it also reflects the position of Berlin's political elite. This was confirmed by a study conducted by Olivier Schmitt who did several interviews with German diplomats and military officers affirming that Germany had no interest to intervene in Chad. One diplomat supposedly said, "We clearly had no interest involved in the area. For us, it was a French mission, under an EU cover. Why should we be involved when we are not concerned?"²¹² An EU mission, instrumentalised by the French government would be a unilateral intervention in European disguise and would clearly run counter the German ideas of a cooperative multilateralism. Or as Patrick Berg puts it, "EUFOR Tchad/RCA cannot be described as a genuine action of a common European foreign policy, because it was neither based on a generally accepted

²⁰⁵ See TULL Denis M. *Tschad-Krise und die Operation EUFOR Tschad/ZAR*, SWP Aktuell 15, Februar 2008, p.2; and KOUNGOU, Léon. *Französischer Einsatz mit EU-Etikette*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 08.02.2008.

²⁰⁶ Security Council, Resolution 1778 (2007), S/RES/1778 (2007).

²⁰⁷ GATHMANN, Florian. Tschad - Merkel lobt Frankreichs Mission - will aber keine Truppen stellen, *op.cit.*

²⁰⁸ Keine deutschen Soldaten für EU-Friedenstruppe im Tschad, *AP German Worldstream*, 11.01.2008.

²⁰⁹ "Ein entsprechender Einsatz im Tschad wäre richtig - aber wir bezweifeln, ob die Kapazitäten der Bundeswehr dazu ausreichen." Jürgen Trittin cited in GATHMANN, Florian. Tschad - Merkel lobt Frankreichs Mission - will aber keine Truppen stellen, *Spiegel Online*, 18.07.2007.

²¹⁰ "Sicher kann man nicht immer nein sagen - aber andersherum kann man auch nicht immer ja sagen" SPD Fraktion cited in GATHMANN, Florian. Tschad - Merkel lobt Frankreichs Mission - will aber keine Truppen stellen, *Spiegel Online*, 18.07.2007.

²¹¹ E.g. BERG 2009, TULL 2008 (SWP), BROCKMANN Kathrin und GÖLER, Daniel. *Europäische Streitkräfte im Treibsand*, DGAP Standpunkt, Mai 2008.

²¹² See SCHMITT, Olivier. Strategic Users of Culture: German Decisions for Military Action, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.33(1), pp.59-81, p. 75.

assessment of the situation nor was its goal the advancement of common European interests." ²¹³Hence, adherence to Germany's strategic culture of multilateralism could not be used to justify an intervention. As they had already played a leading role in EUFOR Congo and their scepticism about the mission in Chad was widely shared among other member states, the international costs of a refusal and the chances of a reputational damage were not very high. Germany, therefore, had little incentive to engage in a costly mission whose utility and effectiveness were openly questioned.

II) Germany in NATO : A Passenger Rather Than the Driver

A) Afghanistan : Reconstruction in "War-Like Circumstances"²¹⁴

The German involvement in Afghanistan is often used to prove to the general public and especially to the allies that the FRG is indeed an important player in international security policy, being the third largest troop contributor to the mission in Afghanistan and playing a leading role in the Northern territories of the country. However, Germany is often criticised for its half-hearted contribution to Afghanistan and, upon further examination, it becomes clear that the German mission in Afghanistan is actually a perfect illustration of Germany's security policy dilemma between multilateralism and antimilitarism. Throughout the operation from 2001 until today, Germany has proven that both conflicting elements of its specific strategic culture are very much alive which puts the Federal Republic in an uncomfortable situation, being caught between domestic and international criticism.

1) Germany's Conditional War Effort

Ever since Germany assured the United States of its "unconditional solidarity" in September 2001, the Federal Republic has been part of the international alliance in the War on Terror in Afghanistan. On the 16th of November, 2001, the *Bundestag* agreed to a maximum deployment of 3.900 troops to the American-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in response to the terror attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on the 11th of September 2001. In Chapter I, I have already explained that the justifications for Germany's participation in Afghanistan were mainly driven by its commitment to multilateralism. Germany's political elite declared having a responsibility towards its allies and to fully stand behind its special friend, the United States. Time and again, the German participation was also used to prove Germany's increasingly important role in international security policy. Especially after the fallout with the Americans due to Germany's "no" to the Iraq War, German politicians countered international criticism by pointing towards the important involvement in Afghanistan. Germany took on greater responsibilities in Afghanistan in order to mend fences with the United States.

Germany is involved in Afghanistan in three different dimensions: development aid, a police training program, and the military engagement.²¹⁵ Germany is the fourth-largest bilateral donor of aid to Afghanistan. They concentrate their efforts on the Northern parts of the country and the capital Kabul. Until 2007, Germany was also responsible for the establishment and training of the Afghan police force. 41 German police officers were dispatched for this task. As this turned out to be insufficient, Germany was supported by the EU with mission EUPOL Afghanistan who deployed another 120 trainers on top of the Germans who stayed in place.²¹⁶ Germany's military commitment has gradually increased over the years. The initial maximum of 1200 soldiers who could be

²¹³ "EUFOR Tchad/RCA kann nicht als genuine Maßnahme einer gemeinsamen europäischen Außenpolitik bezeichnet werden, denn weder baute sie auf einer allgemein akzeptierten Lagebeurteilung auf noch hatte sie die Förderung gesamteuropäischer Interessen zum Ziel." BERG, op.cit. p.73.

²¹⁴ Terminology used by former Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg in 2009, see e.g. Guttenberg: "Kriegsähnliche Zustände", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 03.11.2009.

²¹⁵ NOETZEL, Timo and RID, Thomas. Germany's Options in Afghanistan, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 2009, 51:5, pp.71-90, p.73.

²¹⁶ MORELLI, Vincent and BELKIN, Paul. NATO in Afghanistan: A test of the Transatlantic Alliance, in USSERY, Easton H. (ed) *War in Afghanistan, Strategy, Military Operations and Congressional Issues*, Nova Science Publishers, 2010, pp.1-32, p.11.

deployed to ISAF amounted to 2650 troops in 2003, 4500 soldiers in 2008 and 5350 by 2010. Since then, the number of deployable troops as decreased as part of the larger NATO withdrawal strategy and currently lies at 4900.²¹⁷ The German government plans for the transition of power to the Afghan forces by the end of 2014.²¹⁸ Brück, De Groot and Schneider estimate that the annual costs of the German contribution to the war in Afghanistan amount to around 2 billion Euros while the total costs until 2011 lie between 17 and 32 billion Euros.²¹⁹

Despite Germany's extensive engagement in Afghanistan, the country repeatedly came under heavy criticism from its allies. There were not only calls for an increase in the number of German troops, but also - and most importantly - complaints about Germany's national caveats. National caveats are restrictions imposed by governments on their troops in the field. They may limit their movement, the area where they can be deployed and the operations they may engage in. NATO commanders in Afghanistan have repeatedly complained about the negative effects of national caveats on the missions. As some troops lack the necessary equipment, others may only be deployed in certain areas and the rest can only fulfil a certain task-range, the flexibility and the spontaneity of a commander's military planning are seriously hampered. NATO General James Jones complained, "It's not enough to simply provide forces if those forces have restrictions on them that limit them from being effective. (...) They limit the on-scene commanders from having the capability and manoeuvrability that they need."²²⁰ The issue has been a point of contention for several years. Especially those countries who paid a heavy price engaging in counter-insurgency operations in the South of Afghanistan called for more assistance by their partners. They complained about the unjust distribution of responsibilities and risks and asked for a more equitable share of the burden. At the NATO summit in Bucharest from the 2nd to the 4th of April 2008, Germany was in particular blamed for harming the effectiveness of ISAF due to its restrictions on the use of the *Bundeswehr*.²²¹ Even though, it was not the only country that has imposed national caveats on its armed forces, the Germans came into the frontline of criticism. The Schröder government had been opposed to any form of combat mission of the German ISAF forces except for purely self-defence purposes. The deployment of the *Bundeswehr* was also strictly limited to the northern regions of the country, which were considered largely quiet and stable. Demands for a broader German deployment to other parts of the country were repeatedly rejected by the government.²²² Since 2005 however, the security situation in Afghanistan has worsened in general. The security incidents have risen from 2.600 in 2006 to 4000 in 2007.²²³ The northern regions were not excluded from this development and the *Bundeswehr* was also increasingly attacked. This has, however, not led to a substantial shift in Germany's Afghanistan policy. Even though Angela Merkel has moderately loosened the German caveats and allowed troops to be dispatched to the South in case of emergency,²²⁴ they are restricted to defence missions and not allowed to take part in counter-insurgency operations.²²⁵ Consequently, reports accumulated about the overly careful behaviour of German troops.²²⁶ "German troops reportedly patrol only in armoured personnel carriers, and do not leave their bases at night."²²⁷ The Canadians who had carried out a lot of counter-insurgency missions in the South were especially critical of the German effort to keep their troops out of harms way at any costs. Berlin was openly attacked in the Canadian media by Peter Worthington for example, who accused the Germans to have "chickened

²¹⁷ Überblick: Die Afghanistan-Mandate des Bundestages, bundeswehr.de, 26.01.2012.

²¹⁸ Deutscher Bundestag, Antrag der Bundesregierung, Drucksache 17/8166.

²¹⁹ BRÜCK, Tilman; DE GROOT, Olaf J. and SCHNEIDER, Friedrich. The economic costs of the German participation in the Afghanistan war, *Journal of Peace Research*, 2011, Vol. 48, pp.793-805, p.803.

²²⁰ Cited in MORELLI and BELKIN, *op.cit.*, p.7.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² RYNNING, Sten. *NATO in Afghanistan. The Liberal Disconnect*, Stanford University Press, 2012, p. 95.

²²³ EHRHART, Hans-Georg und KAESTNER, Roland, Afghanistan: Scheitern oder Strategiewechsel?, in GIESSMANN, Hans J.; WAGNER Armin (eds), *op.cit.*, pp.318-327, p. 318.

²²⁴ MORELLI and BELKIN, *op.cit.*, p.18

²²⁵ SCHREER, Benjamin, Political Constraints: Germany and Counterinsurgency, *Security Challenges*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Autumn 2010, pp. 97-108, p.99.

²²⁶ Afghanistan-Einsatz: Nato-Partner wütend über deutsche Kampf-Hemmungen, *Spiegel Online*, 16.11.2006.

²²⁷ MORELLI and BELKIN, *op.cit.*, p.7.

out of the heavy peacemaking process, and won't let its troops near the danger zone."²²⁸ And Marcus Gee asked "Where are our allies? Where is Germany?"²²⁹ The criticism can also be heard on the American side. Among American troops, the abbreviation ISAF is often sarcastically translated with "I Saw Americans Fight", "I Suck At Fighting", or "I Sunbathe At FOBs (Forward Operating Bases)"²³⁰

2) The Political Discourse on Afghanistan

These restrictions on the German armed forces can be explained by Germany's domestic predispositions. As shown in Chapter I, the support of the war in Afghanistan stood on shaky ground from the very beginning. Over time, critical voices have grown louder and louder and the majority of the German population does not believe in the success of the mission anymore.²³¹ It would therefore be domestically very risky to deliberately send German troops in combat operations. Another reason for the focus on reconstruction and the refusal to take part in active counter-insurgency missions in the south, is the conviction that the combatting the Taliban with military means is not a solution but part of the problem. Many Germans are convinced that military force is a counter-productive response to Afghanistan's instability²³² - a clear sign for Germany's continued scepticism towards the legitimacy of the use of force as an instrument of foreign policy. It has been a German characteristic to emphasise the importance of a comprehensive approach (Vernetzte Sicherheit) to the mission in Afghanistan. Germany supports and actively advocates the position that military and civilian instruments must be used in combination in order to lead the operation to success.²³³ It has led the German government to emphasise the civilian character of the mission, insist on the reconstruction side and downplay the fact that Germany is at war in Afghanistan.²³⁴ The Afghanistan concept 2008 of the German government exemplifies this stance.²³⁵ (Annex III) The cover of the strategic document already reflects the focus of the concept on stabilisation and reconstruction. We can see Germans training Afghans in the use of industrial machines, a German police trainer with its Afghan trainees, an Afghan school, and a German soldier surrounded by a crowd of smiling children. The German government communicates quite clearly: "we are working for the reconstruction of Afghanistan." The word "war" is not used in relation to the German involvement in Afghanistan. Germany is not at war in Afghanistan. It is stabilising and reconstructing a war-torn country. This becomes evident in the acknowledgements by the government, "We thank the many women and men - soldiers, police officers, diplomats and civilian reconstruction and development workers - that contribute every day and under great risk to the German effort of stabilisation and reconstruction of Afghanistan."²³⁶ The military mission is mostly circumscribed with the term "security". While the concept contains a long list of detailed operational goals for the reconstruction and stabilisation side of the operation, the strategy for the "security" side remains short and vague. Even though growing insecurity is recognised as a problem and there is awareness about the continuing threat of terrorism, this task is completely ascribed to OEF.²³⁷

²²⁸ Cited in HAGLUND, David G. "Afghanistan and the Limits of "Unlimited Solidarity: A Farewell to Schicksalsgemeinschaft", in EHRHART, Hans-Georg and PENTLAND, Charles C. (eds) *The Afghanistan Challenge. Hard Realities and Strategic Choices*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009, pp.175-187, p. 176.

²²⁹ Cited in KAIM, Markus. Germany, Afghanistan, and the Future of NATO, *International Journal*, Summer 2008, pp.607-623, p.608.

²³⁰ MULRINE, Anne. In Afghanistan, the NATO-led Force is 'Underresourced' For the Fight Against the Taliban, *U.S. News & World Report*, June 5, 2008.

²³¹ See for example LOMBARDI, Ben. All Politics is Local. Germany, the Bundeswehr, and Afghanistan, *International Journal*, Summer 2008, pp.587-605.

²³² KAIM, *op.cit.*, 2008, p.618.

²³³ See for example BEHR, Timo. Germany and Regional Command-North. ISAF's weakest link?, in HYNEK, Nik and MARTON, Péter. *Statebuilding in Afghanistan. Multinational contributions to reconstruction*, Routledge, 2012, pp. 42-64, p.47.

²³⁴ SADAT HADJER, Tahmina. *Die Bundeswehr in Afghanistan. Zivil-militärische Zusammenarbeit*, Bouvier Verlag, Bonn, 2009, p.65.

²³⁵ Die Bundesregierung, *Das Afghanistan-Konzept der Bundesregierung*, September 2008.

²³⁶ "Wir danken den vielen Frauen und Männern, die als Soldaten, Polizisten, Diplomaten sowie als zivile Aufbau- und Entwicklungshelfer jeden Tag in deutschem Auftrag unter Inkaufnahme hoher Risiken ihren Beitrag zur Stabilisierung und zum Wiederaufbau Afghanistans leisten.", *Das Afghanistan-Konzept der Bundesregierung*, p.6.

²³⁷ "In Afghanistan besteht weiterhin die Notwendigkeit gegen terroristische Aktivitäten und Gruppierungen vorzugehen. Die Stabilisierung Afghanistans durch ISAF wird daher auch weiterhin von einer parallelen Anti-Terror-Operation (OEF) flankiert werden müssen." *Das Afghanistan-Konzept der Bundesregierung*, p.38.

This distinction between the American-led OEF mission and the NATO-led ISAF mission has been an interest of the German government for the whole duration of the involvement in Afghanistan.²³⁸ They have been very eager to reinforce the image of ISAF as a reconstruction mission while OEF is doing the dirty work of hunting down terrorists. Thus, the idea of a "good" ISAF mission and a "bad" OEF mission who is responsible for collateral damage and civilian casualties has been established in the German consciousness.²³⁹ The fact that around 100 soldiers of the special unit KSK were involved in OEF until 2008 and that the German navy is still contributing to the Operation Active Endeavour, the maritime arm of OEF, is largely unknown to the public.²⁴⁰ The work of the six German Tornados that support OEF is said to be limited to surveillance and intelligence purposes and therefore not directly engaged in combat. This division between the two missions in Afghanistan has often been criticised as artificial and counter-productive and became especially problematic once the security situation in Afghanistan worsened. In 2008, former US Secretary of Defence, Robert Gates stated, "The Alliance must put aside any theology that attempts clearly to divide civilian and military operations. It is unrealistic. We must live in the real world...in NATO, some allies ought not to have the luxury of opting only for stability and civilian operations, thus forcing other Allies to bear a disproportionate share of the fighting and the dying."²⁴¹ On top of that, both OEF and ISAF command were taken over by US General McChrystal in 2008 so that the "clear-cut division of labour between civilian and military matters"²⁴² became irrelevant.

This stance has not only provoked international criticism, but has also led German intellectuals to condemn the German restrictions and to warn against possible harm to their international reputation. Alexander Skiba and Jan Techau claim for example, "The decision by Germany's coalition government to dismiss the Pentagon's request for the deployment of German combat troops in the south of Afghanistan is a grave foreign policy blunder. Not only will Berlin's refusal create serious damage in the relationships with its closest NATO allies; it will also reduce Germany's room for manoeuvre on other security challenges."²⁴³ Tahmina Sadat Hadjer observed, "At the moment, it seems like *Bundeswehr* interventions are led by domestic criteria of reasonability. A membership in an Alliance comes with burden and risk sharing, the German government, however, seems to be only partly ready to do so and shies away from risk."²⁴⁴ It undermines Germany's rhetoric about its alliance solidarity and casts doubt concerning its reliability. Markus Kaim even fears that it "undermines solidarity in the alliance and fosters that internal functional division of NATO, (...)"²⁴⁵ The result could be a further alienation of the partners.

The German government did not remain indifferent to this criticism. The complaints from German soldiers especially showed that there was a desperate need to loosen the restrictions on the German forces in Afghanistan. Since 2009, the rules of engagement for the *Bundeswehr* have been altered. German soldiers are now allowed to use a larger range of weapons, may use force preemptively and also have a mandate to pursue enemies.²⁴⁶ However, this development should not be judged as a fundamental shift in the Germany's Afghanistan strategy. The new policy was rather discreetly introduced without being overly publicised. The German government still emphasised stabilisation and reconstruction as the main purposes of the German involvement.²⁴⁷ And as Schreer argues, the *Bundeswehr* still remains ill-prepared to take part in large-scale counter-insurgency missions.²⁴⁸ At the eve of the strategy conference in London in 2010, Germany developed a concept that focuses on transition of

²³⁸ RYNNING, *op.cit.*, p.95.

²³⁹ FREUDING, Christian. Die Operationen Enduring Freedom und Active Endeavour - Deutschlands militärischer Beitrag zum Kampf gegen den internationalen Terrorismus, in GIESSMANN, Hans J.; WAGNER Armin (eds), *op.cit.*, pp.340-352, p.341.

²⁴⁰ SADAT HADJER, *op.cit.*, p.66.

²⁴¹ GATES, Robert, *Speech at the 44th Munich security conference*, 10 February 2008, cited in Kaim, 2008, p.619.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ SKIBA, Alexander and TECHAU, Jan. Germany must pull its weight, *The New York Times*, 07.02.2008.

²⁴⁴ "Momentan scheint es so, als erfolgen die Bundeswehreinätze nach innenpolitischen Zumutbarkeitskriterien. Eine Bündnismitgliedschaft beinhaltet Risiko- und Lastenteilung, jedoch ist die Bundesregierung hierzu nur begrenzt bereit und scheut das Risiko." SADAT HADJER, *op.cit.*, p.65.

²⁴⁵ KAIM, *op.cit.*, 2008, p.619.

²⁴⁶ BEHR, *op.cit.* pp. 42-64, p.53.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.54.

²⁴⁸ SCHREER, *op.cit.*

responsibility to Afghan institutions. Therefore Germany increased its development aid and its troop contribution order to work for further stabilisation and to provide additional personnel for the training of Afghan security forces.

From the very beginning of the Afghanistan War, Germany felt a great responsibility to show its commitment to the Alliance and stand side by side with its partners. This reflects Germany's strategic culture of multilateralism and the volition to present itself as a reliable partner. It also explains why Germany has been the third-largest contributor of troops and the fourth-largest donor of development aid to Afghanistan. At the same time, the mission in Afghanistan has not fundamentally altered Germany's relation to the use of force. As the strict national caveats imposed on the *Bundeswehr* and the clear focus on reconstruction show, even at war, Germany is still deeply averse to the use of military means and stresses the civilian components of the mission. Germany's behaviour in Afghanistan can be summarised in the words of Harald Müller and Jonas Wolff, "Germany is 'a little bit at war' - it shows the necessary, symbolic solidarity with the Alliance and takes on the international responsibility, it makes references to human rights and the desire for democracy, but at the same time it does its best to keep its civilian identity, to keep its forces out of harm's way and to limit its overall commitment to the war."²⁴⁹ The handling of the Afghanistan War is a clear sign for muddling through a dilemma between multilateral commitments and antimilitarist convictions. The result has been a German involvement with largely undefined goals and a lack of comprehensive strategy.

B) Libya : Alienation by Accident

The latest puzzle of German security policy has been its abstention from voting on UN Security Council Resolution 1973(2011) on the crisis in Libya that authorised a military intervention of the international community in order to establish a no-fly zone over Libyan territory and to protect the civilian population. The German decision to abstain was harshly criticised on all fronts, internationally as well as domestically. While foreign newspapers such as the New York Times, Foreign Policy or The Economist analysed Germany's behaviour as part of the historically rooted German "pacifist reflex", this view is challenged by domestic critics such as Joschka Fischer who points out that the decision on Libya had, unlike Iraq, nothing to do with a foreign policy guided by moral values, but was "a scandalous mistake".²⁵⁰ Even though critics claim that the German government has moved away from the international norm of multilateralism, I argue that the domestic debate within Germany shows that arguments by both critics and supporters of the government's decision are actually proof of continuity of Germany's deeply ingrained strategic culture.²⁵¹ The decision and the debates surrounding it do not indicate a shift in Germany's two fundamental security policy norms. I would rather consider the de facto alienation from Germany's allies as a foreign policy accident that has nothing to do with a normative shift.

1) Official Justifications for the Abstention on Resolution 1973(2011)

When the Libyan revolution started in beginning of 2011, within a few weeks it became clear that the situation was fundamentally different from those in Egypt and Tunisia where the Arab Spring had taken its course.

²⁴⁹ "Deutschland führt also „ein bisschen Krieg“ – es zeigt die notwendige symbolische Allianzsolidarität und internationale Verantwortungsübernahme, es macht eine moralische Referenz gegenüber den Menschenrechten und der Wünschbarkeit der Demokratie, zugleich wahrt es nach Kräften seine zivilistische Identität und versucht, die eigenen Einsatzkräfte vor dem Schlimmsten zu bewahren und den Gesamteinsatz für den Krieg begrenzt zu halten." MÜLLER, Harald und WOLFF, Jonas. Demokratischer Krieg am Hindukusch? Eine kritische Analyse der Bundestagsdebatten zur deutschen Afghanistanpolitik 2001–2011, *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 2011, Vol. 4, pp.197–221, p.217.

²⁵⁰ FISCHER, Joschka, Deutsche Außenpolitik - eine Farce, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24.03.2011.

²⁵¹ This opinion is also expressed by Constanze Stelzenmüller in a comment in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*: STELZENMÜLLER, Constanze. Libyen, Eine Deutschstunde, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 15.04.2011.

When the protests spread throughout the country, the opposition gained ground especially in the eastern parts of Libya. Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, only parts of the Libyan army joined the opposition forces, so that Colonel Gaddafi still had large segments of the military and a loyal elite to crush the protests. It was in mid-February when the demonstrations turned violent. The armed opposition was organised and directed by the National Transition Council (NTC), which was formed by the Libyan opposition, defected diplomats and parts of the Libyan army. From the very beginning, UN officials were worried about the situation in Libya and warned the international community about the possibility for mass atrocities. The international community, including the Arab League and the African Union, condemned the actions by the Libyan regime. The country was suspended from the League and the United Nations Human Rights Council²⁵², who also sent an independent international commission of inquiry to Libya in order to evaluate the situation on the ground. The worst misgivings became true when Gaddafi called the rebels "cockroaches" and announced that his forces would "clean Libya house by house" with "no mercy". On the 26th of February, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1970(2011) by unanimity. The resolution established an arms embargo, travel bans for Gaddafi and his family, freeze of financial assets and decided to pass the situation to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It also urged the Libyan government to bring violence against civilians to a halt and reminded the government of its "responsibility to protect its population."²⁵³ Since the Libyan regime failed to comply with the demands of the international community, the Arab League called on the Security Council to "assume its responsibilities with regard to the situation in Libya, including taking the necessary measures to impose a no-fly zone"²⁵⁴ Five days later, on the 17th of March, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1973(2011) establishing the no-fly zone expressly demanded by the Arab League and allowing "Member States (...) to take all necessary measures, (...) to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack"²⁵⁵ The Resolution was adopted with ten votes and five abstentions by Brazil, China, India, Russia, and Germany. While the abstentions of the BRIC states can be explained with their traditional concerns regarding military interventions and could even be interpreted as indirect approvals - especially on the part of Russia and China who did not use their veto power - the German position rather signals a "no". Looking at the conditions of the military intervention that followed - imminent threat of mass atrocities, Security Council mandate, and regional support - the German abstention is indeed a puzzle. All of the factors usually required for a German approval of a military intervention were at hand, a humanitarian cause, compliance with international law and a multilateral approach. Yet, the German government chose to abstain. The justification for this move given by German representative Peter Wittig immediately following the vote was as follows, "Decisions on the use of military force are always extremely difficult to take. We have very carefully considered the option of using military force - its implications as well as its limitations. We see great risks. The likelihood of large-scale loss of life should not be underestimated. If the steps proposed turn out to be ineffective, we see the danger of being drawn into a protracted military conflict that would affect the wider region. We should not enter into a militarily confrontation on the optimistic assumption that quick results with few casualties will be achieved. Germany therefore decided not to support a military option, as foreseen particularly in paragraphs 4 and 8 of the resolution. Furthermore, Germany will not contribute to such a military effort with its own forces. Germany therefore decided to abstain in the voting."²⁵⁶ Wittig's argument can be broken down to a concern about the unknown evolution and outcome of a military intervention. Germany's concern is here twofold: on the one hand it is afraid to be drawn into a "protracted military conflict" and on the other hand it fears that such an intervention will do more harm than good, causing many civilian casualties. Similar arguments had been made by Foreign Minister Westerwelle in the parliamentary debate on the 16th of March, 2011. "We do not want and we must not become a party in a civil war in North Africa. We do not want to lose our way at the end of which German soldiers become part of a war in

²⁵² General Assembly, General Assembly suspends Libya from Human Rights Council, GA/11050, 01.03.2011.

²⁵³ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1970 (2011), S/RES/1970 (2011).

²⁵⁴ The outcome of the Council of the League of Arab States meeting at the Ministerial level in its extraordinary session on 'The implications of the current events in Libya and the Arab position', Cairo, 12.03.2011; English version available under [http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/Arab%20League%20Ministerial%20level%20statement%2012%20march%202011%20-%20english\(1\).pdf](http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/Arab%20League%20Ministerial%20level%20statement%2012%20march%202011%20-%20english(1).pdf) (26.04.2013).

²⁵⁵ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1973 (2011), S/RES/1973 (2011).

²⁵⁶ United Nations Security Council, 6498th meeting, S/PV.6498.

Libya."²⁵⁷ He added that the success of the imposition of the no-fly zone would be less than certain due to the geographic dispositions of Libya. These feasibility concerns were also voiced by Defence Minister Thomas de Maizière, who said on German television, "Although the heart says yes, the cool head says: leave it alone."²⁵⁸ Westerwelle also expressed fears that an external intervention might be counter-productive to the democratic, grass-root nature of the revolution and harm the movements of the Arab Spring as a whole. These statements are a clear sign for the traditional German reservations regarding the use of military means. As an alternative Westerwelle suggested harsher economic sanctions in order to deprive the Libyan regime of its means of existence. He therefore favours diplomatic, non-military means. In both interventions the lessons drawn from recent military interventions (particularly Afghanistan) seem to inform the German position. The fear to be drawn into a long endless conflict is expressed by both Peter Wittig and Guido Westerwelle. The reference to Afghanistan became more evident in Westerwelle's address to the parliament on the 18th of March, on day after the Security Council vote. "There are no so-called clinical interventions. Every military mission will cause civilian casualties. We know this due to painful experience. (...) I therefore have to urge and to remind that we have to draw the lessons from our recent past, even from recent military missions, whenever we have to take such a decision."²⁵⁹ Especially the events in Kunduz, Afghanistan in September 2009 set a precedent here. The fact that over a hundred civilians died due to a counter-insurgency attack ordered by a German commander left deep scars in the German consciousness and eroded the already weak support for the military intervention in Afghanistan even further.²⁶⁰

While the German antimilitarism clearly played an important role in justifying the abstention from Resolution 1973(2011), multilateralism was not forgotten either. Even in the face of a clear disagreement on the need for a military intervention with its major allies in NATO and EU, the German government was very eager to stress that their abstention should by no means be interpreted as a disapproval of the resolution in its substance. It expressed its clear rejection of the crimes committed by Colonel Gaddafi against his own people. It was also important for Guido Westerwelle to stress that Germany was not on a *Sonderweg* (separate path) here and was still a vital part of the international community, deeply concerned with the situation in Libya. In an interview with the German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Rundschau* he said, "We are not isolated and a *Sonderweg* does not exist either. We are taking part in meetings of the international contact group for Libya. The majority of the EU member states do not participate in the fighting in Libya, like us."²⁶¹ Just like in the case of Iraq, Germany tried to align itself with other abstainers and highlighted its international engagement in order to show that there was no unilateral motivation and that Germany was very conscious of its international responsibility. Westerwelle emphasised, "It is not like Germany would not be ready to assume international responsibility. Germany took on responsibility for example by sending 7000 soldiers in international interventions of the *Bundeswehr*."²⁶² In order to turn words into deeds, the German government proposed to replace NATO AWACS personnel by German soldiers in order to free them for the mission in Libya.²⁶³ This proposal shows that the German abstention from vote on Resolution 1973(2011) was not a deliberate abandonment of its multilateral principles. On the contrary, the German Foreign Minister seems to be very well aware of Germany's strategic culture and tries to reconcile the contested decision with existing foreign policy norms.

2) Reactions, Criticism, and Explanations

²⁵⁷ "Wir wollen und dürfen nicht Kriegspartei in einem Bürgerkrieg in Nordafrika werden. Wir wollen nicht auf eine schiefe Ebene geraten an deren Ende dann deutsche Soldaten Teil eines Krieges in Libyen sind." Deutscher Bundestag, Parlamentsprotokoll 95. Sitzung, 17/95, 16.03.2011.

²⁵⁸ GOEBEL, Nicole, Germany Defends Cautious Approach to Libya, Denies Isolation, *Deutsche Welle*, 21.03.2011.

²⁵⁹ "Es gibt keinen sogenannten chirurgischen Eingriff. Jeder Militäreinsatz wird auch zivile Opfer fordern. Das wissen wir aus leidvoller Erfahrung. (...) Ich muss deswegen darum bitten und darf daran erinnern, dass wir die Lehren aus der jüngeren Geschichte, auch aus jüngeren Militäreinsätzen, immer mit berücksichtigen müssen, wenn wir heute vor Entscheidungen stehen." Die Bundesregierung, Regierungserklärung durch Bundesminister Westerwelle vor dem Deutschen Bundestag zur aktuellen Entwicklung in Libyen (UN-Resolution), 18.03.2011.

²⁶⁰ For further analysis see Chapter III, p.73.

²⁶¹ "Wir sind nicht isoliert und einen Sonderweg gibt es auch nicht. Wir nehmen an den Treffen der internationalen Libyen-Kontaktgruppe teil. Die Mehrzahl der EU-Staaten beteiligt sich, wie wir, nicht an den Kämpfen in Libyen." FRAS, Damir, Interview mit Guido Westerwelle, "Wir sind nicht isoliert", *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 14.04.2011.

²⁶² "Es ist nicht so, als wäre Deutschland nicht bereit, international Verantwortung zu übernehmen. Deutschland trägt Verantwortung, auch zum Beispiel, indem 7 000 deutsche Soldaten bei Auslandseinsätzen der Bundeswehr eingesetzt werden.", Die Bundesregierung, Regierungserklärung durch Bundesminister Westerwelle vor dem Deutschen Bundestag zur aktuellen Entwicklung in Libyen (UN-Resolution), 18.03.2011.

²⁶³ Die Bundesregierung, *Pressstatement Bundeskanzlerin Merkel beim Libyen-Gipfel in Paris*, 19.03.2011.

The abstention caused a heated domestic debate in the *Bundestag*, the media, and among German intellectuals. No clear party lines could be drawn because criticism did not only come from the opposition, but also from within the government coalition itself. The critics from the government's own ranks, like Joachim Hörster, did not seem to understand why a support of the Security Council Resolution would have necessarily led to a large-scale German military engagement.²⁶⁴ They argued that Germany could have voted in favour of the resolution without being at the front line of the military intervention. The SPD was also clearly divided on the subject, so that the only firm position was the one of Die Linke who adopts an anti-intervention stance by principle. This led to accusations that neither the government nor the opposition had a clear opinion on the topic. What is most interesting about the criticism voiced on several fronts, however, is that the opponents widely claimed the government's position signified an alienation from German foreign policy traditions. As a logical consequence they also claimed to speak in the name of German foreign policy norms themselves. One of the most important allegations was the claim that Germany had turned its back to multilateralism. For example, former Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said, "What is a loudly proclaimed multilateralism good for, what does all this nice rhetoric about international law mean (...) if Germany refuses to consent to a resolution for the protection of the Libyan citizens from a brutal regime (...)? Nothing. Empty words."²⁶⁵ His statement is also related to another reproach: when protests started in the Arab world, Westerwelle was one of the first and loudest rhetorical supporters of the movement. He even travelled to Egypt and spoke publicly on Tahir Square.²⁶⁶ Now that push comes to shove and one of the people to whom he declared solidarity faces mass murder with announcement, he is twiddling his thumbs. Harald Müller of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt asks, "If you do not consider the responsibility to protect as an imperative for action in such a case, when will you?"²⁶⁷ The same point of view was expressed by Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul during the parliamentary debate on the 18th of March 2011, "We have the internationally accepted principle of the responsibility to protect. I find it shameful that the Federal Government as a member of the UN Security Council abstained in this situation."²⁶⁸ Ruprecht Polenz of the CDU is also sceptical concerning Westerwelle's alternative plan of imposing stricter economic sanctions. He reminded, "(...) sanction are effective in the medium and long-term; usually not immediately. At least I don't know any sanctions that could cause such an abrupt change of behaviour (...)"²⁶⁹ We can see that the two interpretations of Germany's relation to the use of force - "never again war" and "never again Auschwitz" - come into conflict again. Germany is caught in the old dilemma. It clearly shows that the fundamental change which had been proclaimed by some,²⁷⁰ still has not taken place. Fundamentally, the *Bundestag* is having the same debates it had 15 years ago. A look at the German public opinion confirms this impression. While 62% of the population were in favour of Resolution 1973(2011), 65% were against a participation of the German army.²⁷¹ It can be interpreted as a general feeling of "something must be done" in the face of mass atrocities, that was also perceivable during the crisis in the Balkans, but the majority of the German population is still not ready to send the German army to do the job.

As we have seen, both critics and supporters of the German government's decision make references to the two fundamental elements of German strategic culture. While the government justifies its position with

²⁶⁴ VOLLMER M. Interview mit Joachim Hörster: "Deutsche Enthaltung war falsch", available at http://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2011/35500162_kw33_interview_hoerster/ (24.04.2013).

²⁶⁵ "Was nützt denn ein laut vorgetragener Multilateralismus, was sollen all die schönen Reden über das Völkerrecht, (...) wenn Deutschland einer Resolution zum Schutz der libyschen Bürger vor einem brutalen Regime (...) die Zustimmung verweigert? Nichts. Leere Worte." FISCHER, Joschka, Deutsche Außenpolitik - eine Farce, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24.03.2011.

²⁶⁶ EHRENSTEIN, Claudia. Westerwelles bewegender Besuch auf dem Tahrir-Platz, *Die Welt*, 24.02.2011.

²⁶⁷ "Wenn man in einem solchen Fall die Schutzverantwortung nicht zum normativen Gebot des Handelns nimmt, wann dann?", MÜLLER, Harald. *Ein Desaster. Deutschland und der Fall Libyen. Wie sich Deutschland moralisch und außenpolitisch in die Isolation manövrierte*, HSFK Standpunkt, 2/2011, p.6.

²⁶⁸ "(...) es gibt das international (...) akzeptierte Prinzip (...) der Schutzverantwortung, Responsibility to Protect. Ich finde es eine Schande, dass sich die Bundesregierung als Mitglied des UN-Sicherheitsrates in dieser Situation enthalten hat. Gegenüber Despoten kann es bei solchen Entscheidungen keine Enthaltung geben.", intervention by Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul (SPD), Deutscher Bundestag, Parlamentsprotokoll 97. Sitzung, 17/97, 18.03.2011.

²⁶⁹ "(...) Sanktionen wirken mittel- bis längerfristig; sie wirken in der Regel nicht sofort. Mir sind jedenfalls keine Sanktionen bekannt, die sofort eine derart weitgehende Verhaltensänderung bewirkt hätten (...)", intervention by Ruprecht Polenz CDU, Deutscher Bundestag, Parlamentsprotokoll 97. Sitzung, 17/97, 18.03.2011.

²⁷⁰ E.g. BAUMANN and HELLMANN, 2001, *op.cit.*

²⁷¹ SCHÜTTE, Robert. "Just War or just War?" Die Lehren der Libyenintervention und ihre Konsequenzen für die Schutzverantwortung, *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 2011, Heft 4, S. 715-733, p.731.

scepticism towards the use of military force, drawing upon the principle of "never again war", they also eagerly stress their continued commitment to multilateralism. The opponents evoke the norm of "never again Auschwitz" and claim that in the name of Germany's Bündnissolidarität (alliance solidarity) they should have voted in favour of the Security Council decision. However, even though no fundamental shift in norms can be perceived on either side, it still remains a puzzle why the government chose to abstain. As Eberhard Sandschneider puts it, "The hotly debated Libya-decision was not a renunciation of the coordinate system of German foreign policy, but rather an unnecessary and serious mistake."²⁷² Just like him, many German intellectuals and academics such as Harald Müller, Constanze Stelzenmüller, and Hanns W. Maull see the decision on Libya as a mistake and a foreign policy faux-pas that might have harmed Germany's credibility as an international partner. The German newspaper *Der Spiegel* wrote, "It seems like the duo [Merkel and Westerwelle] got caught up in their own course."²⁷³ Harald Müller states, "In the four decades that I have been observing German foreign policy, I have never encountered such a diplomatic disaster. If you ask me "Why?", I do not have an answer."²⁷⁴

Some critics and analysts explained the government's decision with a Schröder-like move in order to gain votes in regional elections in late March. Dr. Rolf Mützenich of the SPD for example imputed electoral opportunism to Guido Westerwelle and his party, the FDP when he said, "I think that you have been guided by domestic motives."²⁷⁵ On the 27th of March there were indeed election to be held in the state of Baden-Württemberg and hence Alister Miskimmon thinks that "The abstention on UN1973 was partly an FDP electoral tactic."²⁷⁶ Joschka Fischer clearly had the same idea in mind when he wrote, "Foreign policy does not mean to count on a bella figura on the international scene and look at provincial elections at the same time. Foreign policy means to make tough strategic decisions even if they are less than popular on the domestic level."²⁷⁷ Others point towards Germany's "pacifist reflex"²⁷⁸ or "pacifist worldview"²⁷⁹ and argue that this tendency grew even stronger in recent years.

In an attempt to answer this conundrum myself, I assert that the German decision to abstain from vote on Security Council Resolution 1973(2011) is indeed linked to its antimilitarism, but I would argue that this antimilitarism has not grown stronger. It always has been very strong. The decision on Libya was the result of the deeply ingrained foreign policy dilemma that Germany has faced ever since the end of the Cold War. It might just be a case of cost-benefits analysis gone wrong. Alister Miskimmon argues that "policy makers in Berlin were caught somewhat by surprise by the USA's decision to support the Franco-British plan."²⁸⁰ It was only on the 16th of March that Washington's position to support the resolution crystallised. German policy makers came under pressure to make quick decisions in the face of a very complex domestic situation in which no consensual solution seemed possible. The result was an accidental alienation from Germany's traditional allies that does not indicate any normative shift in Germany's strategic culture.

Multilateralism is one of the two fundamental elements of German strategic culture. As we have seen in Chapter I, it plays a major role in German foreign policy formulation since the end of World War II. As a reunited country, however, Germany faced increasing pressure to play a more important role in international security policy

²⁷² "Die vieldiskutierte Libyen-Entscheidung war keine Abkehr vom Koordinatensystem deutscher Außenpolitik, sondern ein unnötiger, aber schwerwiegender handwerklicher Fehler.", SANDSCHNEIDER, Eberhard, *Deutsche Außenpolitik. Eine Gestaltungsmacht in der Kontinuitätsfalle, Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 10, 5. März 2012, S. 3-9.

²⁷³ "Es scheint, als habe sich das Duo in seinem eigenen Kurs verfangen." WEILAND, Severin, and NELLES, Roland, *Berlin lässt seine Verbündeten alleine kämpfen, Der Spiegel*, 18.03.2011.

²⁷⁴ "In den vier Jahrzehnten, in denen ich deutsche Außenpolitik beobachte, ist mir kein derartiges diplomatisches Desaster begegnet. Die Frage „warum das?“ kann ich nicht beantworten." MÜLLER, Harald. *Ein Desaster. Deutschland und der Fall Libyen. Wie sich Deutschland moralisch und außenpolitisch in die Isolation manövrierte*, HSFK Standpunkt, 2/2011.

²⁷⁵ "Ich bin der Meinung, dass Sie sich von innenpolitischen Motiven haben leiten lassen", intervention by Dr. Rolf Mützenich (SPD), *Deutscher Bundestag, Parlamentsprotokoll 97. Sitzung, 17/97, 18.03.2011*.

²⁷⁶ MISKIMMON, *op.cit.*, 2012, p. 399.

²⁷⁷ "Außenpolitik heißt doch nicht, vor allem bella figura auf dem internationalen Parkett zu machen und ansonsten auf Provinzwahlen zu starren, sondern harte strategische Entscheidungen zu verantworten, selbst wenn sie in der Innenpolitik alles andere als populär sind.", FISCHER, Joschka, *Deutsche Außenpolitik - eine Farce, op.cit.*

²⁷⁸ ERLANGER, Steven and DEMPSEY, Judy. *Germany Steps Away From European Unity*, *The New York Times*, March 23, 2011.

²⁷⁹ SPECK, Ulrich. *Pacifism unbound: Why Germany limits EU hard power*, FRIDE Policy Brief No. 75, May 2011.

²⁸⁰ MISKIMMON, *op.cit.*, 2012, p. 398.

which put Germany's traditional antimilitarist stance under stress. The result is a foreign policy dilemma between the two fundamental elements of German strategic culture. Chapter II has shown that the creation of new institutions such as the European Common Foreign and Security Policy is on the one hand perfectly in line with Germany's multilateral foreign policy traditions, but on the other hand it exacerbated the internal security policy dilemma. Instruments like the EU Battlegroups are enthusiastically supported by German policy makers as they represent exactly the kind of framework in which Germany likes its armed forces to operate. But when it comes to following words with deeds, Germany is less eager. Its deeply ingrained culture of antimilitarism makes it a very hesitant ally in multilateral military operations. This is strikingly illustrated by the non-use of the Battlegroups, the reluctant leadership in EUFOR RD Congo, and the important restrictions on German armed forces in Afghanistan. When Germany chooses to intervene alongside its allies, they almost never do so out of conviction or with regard to German national interests. Most of the time, German military engagement is the result of multilateral pressure. Therefore Markus Kaim believes that Germany is currently caught in a "Multilateralismusfalle" (multilateralism trap). He argues that, in terms of loss of reputation and credibility, the costs of non-participation are so high that Germany has no choice but to engage in multilateral operations alongside its partners.²⁸¹ The result is what Jäger calls a "Politik der Risikovermeidung" (policy of risk avoidance).²⁸² Germany only engages half-heartedly which does not go unnoticed by its allies who therefore interpret Germany's fervent declarations about multilateralism as nothing but hot air. Whenever the Federal Republic deems the international costs of non-engagement low enough, they stay in the background. This was illustrated by EUFOR Tchad/RCA. The decision on Libya can probably be traced back to a cost-benefit-miscalculation and had far more severe repercussions than expected - both internally and externally. What can be derived from these observations is that the decision to engage militarily is always subject to a case by case evaluation dependent on the respective international and domestic situation at the time. Based on a cost-benefit analysis, Berlin decides whether multilateralism or antimilitarism takes priority at a given time.

Having now analysed the effects of Germany's multilateral engagements, Chapter III will focus on the domestic level and assess the current state of Germany's antimilitarism.

■ CHAPTER III : ANTIMILITARISM – OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

²⁸¹ KAIM, Markus. Deutsche Auslandseinsätze in der Multilateralismusfalle?, in MAIR, Stefan (Hg.) *Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr. Leitfragen, Entscheidungsspielräume und Lehren*, SWP Studie S 27, Berlin, September 2007, pp.43-49.

²⁸² JÄGER, Thomas. EUFOR Congo, *op.cit.*

The nation quarrels with the fact that as a society and a state they also own a military arm. (...) Secretly this country is dreaming about finally being able to declare itself as a military free zone within its own borders." ²⁸³

The previous chapter shed light on how Germany's culture of multilateralism informed its security policy choices. In this third chapter, we will now turn to the domestic side of Germany's security policy dilemma and analyse how Germany's antimilitarism continues to influence actors and instruments of its security policy. In the first part of this chapter I will analyse how the transformation of the German armed forces has been influenced and retarded by a resilience of tradition concerning the armed forces, such as the prevalence of territorial defence and conscription. These problems can be a handicap for the fulfilment of Germany's multilateral obligations. The second part of the chapter will turn towards the German society's view on defence and security policy. I will first analyse how the image of the *Bundeswehr* is characterised by the idea of the soldier as an armed development worker. This archetype was challenged by the experience of the mission in Afghanistan, which was first perceived as a reconstruction and stabilisation mission before the Kunduz airstrikes raised public awareness for the "war-like circumstances" of the intervention. This caused support for the mission in Afghanistan to drop drastically and is very likely to have made the public even more sceptical about future military interventions which amplifies the Germany's strategic cultural dilemma. This dilemma could potentially be overcome by an open public debate about Germany's security policy. But because of a public disinterest and a fear to raise politically costly issues on the part of the political decision makers, this debate has so far failed to take place.

I) The Transformation of the Bundeswehr

The end of the Cold War and German reunification did not only have theoretical implications about Germany's new role in Europe and the world but this new position had very practical consequences for the German armed forces. Overnight the *Bundeswehr's* raison d'être had completely changed. The changed security environment of the post-Cold War era affected most European countries and caused a large reform process of national armed forces. This had mainly three origins: the end of the East-West conflict which made territorial defence largely obsolete, a financial incentive regarding the tight national budgets, and the emergence of intra-state conflicts as the new major security risk. ²⁸⁴ Relative to its European partners, Germany was eager to cut the defence budget and the size of the *Bundeswehr*, but it was less proactive concerning the structural transformation of the armed forces due to a very resilient strategic culture based on territorial defence and the idea of the *Bürger in Uniform* (citizen in uniform), which hampered the transformation of the conscripted defence army to a professional crisis management force. In 2010, the German government launched a new reform called *Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr* (realignment of the *Bundeswehr*) with the aim to turn the German military into a smaller, more efficient, and professional force. The ambitious project, however, has some serious deficiencies that derive from Germany's specific security policy, torn between the conflicting elements of its strategic culture.

A) From a Defence Force to Out-of-Area Crisis Management

In order to understand the current reform it is important to see it as part of a larger process of incremental transformation. As I laid out in Chapter I, the German armed forces were created as part of the larger deterrence strategy against the Soviet Union, which means the *Bundeswehr* was an army that was trained "to fight in order not to have to fight"²⁸⁵. Its purpose was confined to territorial defence, fixed in the German Basic Law Article 87a, as a protection against a conventional Soviet attack. The design of the German armed forces was

²⁸³ "Die Nation hadert tief mit der Tatsache, als Gesellschaft und Staatswesen auch einen militärischen Arm zu besitzen. (...) Heimlich träumt dieses Land davon, sich endlich innerhalb seiner Grenzen als militärfreie Zone deklarieren zu können." Paul Nolte cited in JONAS und VON ONDARZA, *op.cit.*, p.112.

²⁸⁴ MEYER, Berthold. Vom Ende her denken. Bundeswehrreform und Parteidemokratie, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 48/2011, pp.16-23, p.17.

²⁸⁵ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.101.

completely geared to this task. It was a large army comprising around 500.000 troops at the end of the Cold War²⁸⁶ that were completely integrated into NATO and hence did not have an own General Staff. The reverse conclusion is that Germany's armed forces were not at all set out to be an expeditionary army and therefore did not have any power projection forces. On the one hand, this resulted from Germany's strategic culture and its relation to the use of armed force, which was and still is characterised by the "never-again-norm": never again should Germany launch a war and never again should Germany choose a unilateral *Sonderweg*.²⁸⁷ On the other hand, the specific design and the restrictions of the *Bundeswehr* were indispensable conditions for the allies' acceptance of German armed forces. During the Cold War, Germany's strategic culture and the defensive task of the *Bundeswehr* were convergent and mutually reinforcing.

But with the fall of the wall and the end of bipolarity the situation for Germany and its armed forces changed dramatically. All of a sudden the *Bundeswehr* was an *Armee ohne Feindbild*²⁸⁸ (an army without an enemy perception). Germany did not face a potential frontline anymore and was surrounded by friends at the heart of a peaceful continent. Hence, there was no immediate threat to German territory, which put the very essence of the *Bundeswehr* into question. This caused some left-wing politicians to question the existence of the German armed forces in general.²⁸⁹ But the euphoria about a new peaceful world order and "the end of history"²⁹⁰ soon faded. With the outbreak of the Gulf War and the conflicts in the Balkans it quickly became clear that the world faced new risks and challenges. In the face of this new security situation, Germany's allies increasingly expected Germany to take on greater responsibility in the new international order, notably to take part in international peace missions. This did not only constitute a challenge for German strategic culture as discussed in Chapter I, but also raised some issues for the German armed forces that existed purely for the purposes of defence and, therefore, poorly equipped for out-of-area missions.

In order to live up to the new challenges, in the mid-1990s the slow process of the transformation of the German armed forces from a defence army to a crisis management force started. However, Germany's specific strategic culture and especially its antimilitarism was a clear obstacle for the reform. Even though the juridical basis was laid down with the ruling of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* in July 1994, politically, it turned out to be difficult to let go of the primacy of territorial defence as the *Bundeswehr's* main purpose. While the *Weißbuch 1994* (White Paper 1994) takes note of the changed security situation and enlists the main challenges that the Federal Republic faces, it also asserts, "The foremost objective of German defence policy remains that of preventing an attack against Germany and its allies." even though it admits immediately afterwards, "While this is the most threatening risk to Germany's security it is today also the most unlikely."²⁹¹ The unlikelihood of a large scale attack on German territory did not lead to a restructuring of the army but rather made cuts in the number of troops. The German military was divided in smaller *Krisenreaktionskräfte* (crisis reaction forces) and larger *Hauptkräfte* (main defence forces). The divide shows that the new realities were acknowledged but consequences were only half-heartedly drawn.

With Germany's engagement in the Kosovo War, military deficiencies of the German army became painfully obvious. The Schröder government therefore charged an independent commission to conduct a study about the necessary reforms of the *Bundeswehr*. The *Kommission "Gemeinsame Sicherheit und Zukunft der Bundeswehr"* (Commission "Common Security and Future of the *Bundeswehr*"), better known under the name Weizsäcker-Kommission, published their report in 2000 in which they recommended a radical reform of the

²⁸⁶ Bundeswehr, Die Geschichte der Bundeswehr, Teil I: Anfänge und Kalter Krieg, [\(01.05.2013\)](http://www.bundeswehr.de/portal/a/bwde/!ut/p/c4/DcgxDoAgDADAt_iBdnfzFpWoJQGUGIU_b7ktsMTJ6NXhVwvo4Y7HIHX8EH4Es-Pwzuq1E2dnkP5YaiRsIDxi0VjmkmViE8a7bssPcobChA!!).

²⁸⁷ THEILER, Olaf. Bundeswehr und NATO, in GIESSMANN, *op.cit.*, pp.186-199, p.186.

²⁸⁸ LONGHURST, *op.cit.*, p.55.

²⁸⁹ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.104.

²⁹⁰ FUKUYAMA, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press : Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992.

²⁹¹ German Defence White Paper 1994 available under <http://www.resdal.org/Archivo/d0000066.htm> (01.05.2013).

Bundeswehr in order to turn it from a defence army into a capable crisis management force.²⁹² The result of the commission's report caused a lot of debate in Germany because of diverging threat perceptions.²⁹³ Therefore the Federal Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping clung to the traditional purpose of territorial defence and did not abandon conscription as proposed by the commission. Scharping effectively only achieved a further reduction of personnel and more efficient procurement mechanisms. The *Bundeswehr* still lacked a sweeping transformation. It was only when Peter Struck took the office of Federal Minister of Defence that things began to change. In 2003, he published the *Verteidigungspolitischen Richtlinien* (Defence Policy Guidelines) which finally admitted that since Germany found itself in a different security environment, the tasks of the *Bundeswehr* had changed. Though, even Struck was not able to completely let go of the defence principle. The territorial defence is not only deeply ingrained in German strategic culture but it is also fixed by the German constitution as stated earlier. In order to reconcile the *Bundeswehr's* new tasks with German strategic culture and constitutional obligations Struck stretched the meaning of territorial defence²⁹⁴ when he stated with reference to the War in Afghanistan, "Germany's security will also be defended at the Hindu Kush." This sentence has become a winged word by now and was the subject of much debate and criticism, but it also served as the justification for the reform of the armed forces. Consequently the German army developed guidelines for a transformation of the *Bundeswehr* in 2004 with the aim to improve the operability of the German armed forces. The plan is based on four principles: the first one is the so-called "jointness" that ensures cooperation between different parts of the army. The second principle is based on multinational cooperation and compatibility. The third principle aims at the flexibility of the *Bundeswehr* in order to be able to respond to a multitude of tasks. And the last principle is the Vernetzte Operationsführung (NetOpFü) (network-centric operations).²⁹⁵

B) Reform under the Merkel Governments

The Grand Coalition under Chancellor Merkel confirmed the reform efforts started under the Red-Green government with the publication of the *Weißbuch 2006* (White Paper 2006).²⁹⁶ The document represents the political anchor of the transformation process that was started a couple of years earlier.²⁹⁷ The White Paper puts the emphasis on a broad security concept and underlines that effective security policy is only possible with a comprehensive approach based on an "integration of political, military, developmental, economic, humanitarian, police, and intelligence instruments."²⁹⁸ The *Bundeswehr* is therefore just one "instrument of German security policy" and has six major tasks: (1) International conflict prevention and crisis management (2) Support of Germany's allies (3) Protection of Germany and its citizens (4) Rescue and evacuation (5) Partnership and cooperation (6) Subsidiary help in case of catastrophes and natural disasters.²⁹⁹

As we can see, territorial defence had to cede its place on top of the list to conflict management which is now the defining goal of the reform of the armed forces. As suggested by the Weizsäcker-Kommission six years earlier, the *Bundeswehr* strived to become an "Armee im Einsatz" (expeditionary force). Just like in former attempts, however, the reform ambitions under the Grand Coalition were only partly met. While planned cuts in civilian and military personnel were largely realised, the principles for a structural transformation as defined in 2004 in order to adapt the *Bundeswehr* to their actual missions, lagged behind.³⁰⁰ Germany was still not ready to fully embrace the concept of a professional expeditionary army. "The reasons for this delay are diverse and are a

²⁹² Kommission Gemeinsame Sicherheit und Zukunft der Bundeswehr, 2000 http://www.bundeswehr-monitoring.de/fileadmin/user_upload/media/Weizsaecker-Kommission.pdf (01.05.2013).

²⁹³ KAESTNER, Roland. Risiko-, Bedrohungsanalyse und Bedrohungswahrnehmung in Deutschland, in JÄGER, Thomas; Thiele Ralph (Hrsg.) *Transformation der Sicherheitspolitik. Deutschland, Österreich, Schweiz im Vergleich*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011, pp.59-70, p.63.

²⁹⁴ GEIS, Anna. Militär und Friedenspolitik - Dilemmata der deutschen "Zivilmacht", in SCLOTTER, Peter; NOLTE, Wilhelm, GRASSE, Renate (Hrsg.) *Berliner Friedenspolitik? Militärische Transformationen - Zivile Impulse - Europäische Einbindung*, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 2008, pp.60-82.

²⁹⁵ WIESNER, Ina. Die Transformation der Bundeswehr in Deutschland, in JÄGER, Thomas; THIELE Ralph (Hrsg.) *op.cit.*, pp.91-104, p.94-95.

²⁹⁶ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Weißbuch 2006. Zur Sicherheitspolitik Deutschlands und zur Zukunft der Bundeswehr*, Berlin 25.10.2006.

²⁹⁷ WIESNER, Ina. Die Transformation der Bundeswehr in Deutschland, *op.cit.*, p.95.

²⁹⁸ *Weißbuch 2006*, p.13.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p.12.

³⁰⁰ For a detailed analysis of structural deficiencies and capability shortcomings see WIESNER, *op.cit.*, p.95-100.

mix of political, bureaucratic, and cultural factors.³⁰¹ Even when the experiences in Afghanistan made the shortcomings of the German defence capabilities obvious, the Federal Ministry of Defence under Franz-Josef Jung had "not enough political will (...) to implement reforms which were necessary but controversial back home."³⁰² The German government held on to conscription and reinforced its importance. Therefore, Germany safeguarded an important part of its antimilitarist culture by rejecting a purely professional army alienated from the German society.³⁰³ The *Weißbuch 2006* affirmed, "Even under the changing security circumstances the general conscription has stood the test of time."³⁰⁴ This opinion was not shared by all parties. Especially the FDP, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, and Die Linke had advocated an abolishment of conscription for several years, arguing it was an outdated relic that was not adapted to military realities anymore.³⁰⁵

Change came when the sovereign-debt crisis hit Europe in late 2009. National budgets came under considerable stress which caused governments to cut spending. Defence budgets were quite dramatically affected by this development.³⁰⁶ The German government introduced its four year austerity plan in June 2010. The Federal Ministry of Defence did not only have to share part of the burden but had to deal with the largest cuts. Until 2014, the defence budget was supposed to be reduced by 8,3 billion Euro.³⁰⁷ The result was a renewed taste for reform. In order to deal with the shrinking financial resources, Federal Minister of Defence Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg presented plans for a restructuring of the armed forces. Economisation should be mainly achieved by reducing the size of the *Bundeswehr*, both in terms of personnel and military bases. Guttenberg's reform plans included a reduction of troops from 250.000 to 185.000 soldiers and a cut in civilian personnel from 100.000 to 65.000. The most sweeping change consisted in the suspension of conscription and the introduction of a voluntary military service between 12 and 23 months. Guttenberg's official justification for the reform was the aim to improve the operability of the armed forces. He advocated a smaller, more efficient, and more professional *Bundeswehr* adapted to the international deployment in conflict regions. He argued that conscription, as an institution, had no strategic and political justification anymore.

In early 2011, however, Guttenberg's reform faced pushback. The Chancellor's Office dissociated itself from Guttenberg's plan and criticised the reduction of personnel and spendings for not being fast and comprehensive enough.³⁰⁸ At the same time, many critics deplored that the reform was mostly guided by financial constraints and not by strategic and political considerations. They argued that the draconian austerity plan actually comprised Germany's military operability even further. Jana Pugierin and Svenja Sinjen of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) for example compare Germany's level of ambition outlined by the White Paper 2006 with the reform plans and see great contradictions as ambition and reality simply do not match. They argue, "You cannot have both: optimisation of the *Bundeswehr* and fast economisations."³⁰⁹ A couple of months later, the government realised the cuts were not feasible, revisited its budget plan and loosened the targets.³¹⁰ This was the doing of new Federal Minister of Defence Thomas de Maizière who took office after Guttenberg had to leave because of accusations of plagiarism.³¹¹ Thomas de Maizière harshly criticised the planning and implementation of the reform and therefore launched a reform of the reform, in order to address the deficiencies still evident concerning the transformation of the *Bundeswehr*. His concept, "*Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr*"

³⁰¹ "Die Gründe für diese Verzögerungen sind vielfältig und liegen in einem Mix politischer, bürokratischer und kultureller Faktoren." *ibid.*, p.96.

³⁰² GOTKOWSKA, Justyna. *Bundeswehr 3.0. The Political, Military and Social Dimensions of the Reform of the German Armed Forces*, Point of View Nr.28, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, May 2012, p.13.

³⁰³ See Chapter I.

³⁰⁴ "Die allgemeine Wehrpflicht hat sich für Deutschland auch unter wechselnden sicherheitspolitischen Rahmenbedingungen uneingeschränkt bewährt." *Weißbuch 2006*, p.76.

³⁰⁵ MEYER, *op.cit.*, p.16.

³⁰⁶ MÖLLING, Christian. *Europe without Defence*, SWP Comments, November 2011.

³⁰⁷ Deutscher Bundesrat, Antwort der Bundesregierung. Sparbeitrag der Verteidigungshaushaltes, Drucksache 17/7293

³⁰⁸ BLECHSCHMIDT, P. Kanzleramt rückt von Guttenbergs Wehrreform ab, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25.01.2011

³⁰⁹ "Beides gleichzeitig geht nicht: Optimierung der Bundeswehr und schnelle Einsparungen." PUGLIERIN, Jana; SINJEN, Svenja. Sparen als Staatsräson. Zur Debatte über die Bundeswehrreform, *Internationale Politik*, Januar/Februar 2011, p.60.

³¹⁰ For details see Deutscher Bundesrat, Antwort der Bundesregierung. Sparbeitrag der Verteidigungshaushaltes, Drucksache 17/7293

³¹¹ Allemagne: un soupçon de plagiat coûte sa place à un ministre, *L'EXPRESS.fr*, 01.03.2011.

(realignment of the Bundeswehr), proposes a comprehensive reorientation of the armed forces. The concept is based on 15 basic points.³¹² The most important are:

- (1) Maintenance of the whole range of capacities with reduction of the endurance capacity: "Breite vor Tiefe" (width before depth)
- (2) Suspension of conscription and the creation of a voluntary military service
- (3) Reduction of the *Bundeswehr* to 185.000 soldiers (of which 15.000 are designated to voluntary military service) and 55.000 civilian personnel
- (4) Reduction of military bases and reorganisation of the Federal Ministry of Defence
- (5) Reform of the recruitment process and education of personnel
- (6) Tightening of the command structures, reinforcement of the jointness principle and the civil-military cooperation
- (7) Reform of military procurement policies

As we can see, his concept keeps central points of Guttenberg's reform ambition, such as the suspension of conscription and the important reduction of the armed forces. 32 military bases in Germany will be shut down and another 33 will be dramatically reduced, leaving 263 military bases in Germany. De Maizière is determined to make the *Bundeswehr* apt for deployment abroad. In the future, around 10.000 troops should be able to be deployed in different international missions at the same time (today's capacity lies at 7000 troops). In order to reach this higher level of deployability while reducing the overall number of soldiers, the troop reduction is accompanied by a professionalisation of the German military. As part of this professionalisation the *Bundestag* accepted the suspension of conscription on the 24th of March 2011. Despite initial criticism from within his own party ranks and from parts of the SPD, the suspension came into effect on the 1st of July 2011. Even Defence Minister Thomas de Maizière himself was not overly enthusiastic about the decision. He said, "I do see it with great joy that we are suspending conscription today."³¹³ In order to compensate the end of conscription, about 8% of the posts for military personnel will be reserved to the voluntary military service that replaces general conscription. The service plays an important role in the recruitment process of the *Bundeswehr* since in the past, most of the professional soldiers decided to join the armed forces after their time as conscripts. The professionalisation is also advanced by a reform of the training. Forces are to become more flexible and adapt to the realities of international operations so that every soldier is able to operate in missions from low intensity observation missions to high intensity peace enforcement missions. As well trained soldiers also need the right equipment, de Maizière wants to review old and new equipment and the one currently in planning. This is supposed to counter the purchase of useless and excess equipment ordered in the 90s when the structure of the armed forces and its tasks were very different.

C) Transformation with a Resilient Strategic Culture

When Guttenberg first introduced the reform plans, they were strongly criticised by Berlin's think tankers. As mentioned above, they claimed that the reform had no strategic substance and was purely pursued for economic reasons. This view was shared by Christian Mölling of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) "the measures and the revived discussion about an agenda for reform are missing the security political core of the problem."³¹⁴ The political groundwork was still to be provided by the White Paper 2006.

³¹² Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Die Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr. Nationale Interessen wahren - Internationale Verantwortung übernehmen - Sicherheit gemeinsam gestalten*, Zweite, vollständig aktualisierte Auflage, March 2013, p.16.

³¹³ „Ich finde das keinen Freudenakt heute, dass wir hier die Wehrpflicht aussetzen“ Thomas de Maizière cited in *Deutscher Bundestag, Aussetzung der Wehrpflicht beschlossen*, http://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2011/33831649_kw12_de_wehrdienst/ (12.05.2013).

³¹⁴ "Die bisherigen Maßnahmen und die neu belebte Diskussion um eine Reformagenda für die Bundeswehr verfehlen den sicherheitspolitischen Kern." MÖLLING, Christian. *Bundeswehrreform: Ausgangspunkt, Zwischenbilanz und 10 Punkte für eine Reform der Reform*, SWP Arbeitspapier, April 2011, p.3.

However, it serves as proof of Germany's still very visible and resilient strategic culture and the problems that derive from it. Always torn between multilateral commitment with its reality of international interventions and the domestic antimilitarism, the White Paper 2006 is evidence of the muddling through that cannot provide clear strategic guidelines. To this day, territorial defence plays an important rhetorical role in Germany's strategic documents as it is constitutionally anchored. The White Paper 2006 states, "The defence of Germany against external threats remains the political and constitutional basis and central function of the *Bundeswehr*. (...) The classical defence of the country and the alliance constitute unchanged central tasks of the *Bundeswehr*."³¹⁵ Again, it becomes visible how Germany tries to ride two horses at the same time: external pressures of the security environment push for change while Germany's strategic culture remains very resilient. The White Paper 2006 tries to reconcile the ambition to develop operational crisis management forces and the strategic tradition of territorial defence. It is also quite obvious that the role and responsibilities of the *Bundeswehr* have remained limited. As was confirmed by practice in missions like Afghanistan, Germany has a preference for non-military crisis management tools and therefore puts a lot of emphasis on a broad definition of security and the concept of Vernetzte Sicherheit (comprehensive approach). Security is not seen as an exclusively military domain. This might explain why the restructuring of the armed forces has not been very high on the political agenda. Another cultural factor that most likely hampered the success of the reform was Germany's low threat perception. It is often deplored that Europeans and Germans in particular have a very low threat perception, which puts defence spending very low on the list of priorities.³¹⁶ The preface of the White Paper 2006 by Angela Merkel is a good illustration of this phenomenon as it starts with the words, "Today, Germany lives in freedom, peace, and security."³¹⁷ This secure environment stands in contrast with the "instability and many crisis and conflicts in other parts of the world"³¹⁸ Angela Merkel does not define the conflicts and crisis as threats to Germany's security. It is rather an empathetic approach: we have security and we regret that others do not. This impression was also confirmed by an empirical study of the *Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr* (SOWI). Only 10% of the Germans judge the security situation in Germany to be insecure or very insecure. Compared to 31% of the British who feel insecure or very insecure, the low threat perception in Germany is striking.³¹⁹ The need for operational German armed forces therefore rather derives from Germany's general "responsibility in Europe and in the world."³²⁰ A low threat perception has, quite obviously, a great influence on defence policy choices, as a defuse feeling of responsibility is far less motivating than actual fear. It is one explanation for the notoriously under-financed *Bundeswehr* and the eagerness with which the German government has executed the reduction parts of the reform process in the past while the structural reform is not going as smoothly.³²¹

The reform plans by Guttenberg were not inspired and guided by a change in German strategic culture about the role and the image of the German armed forces. The sole motivation was economisation of defence spending and was only accompanied by a half-hearted redefinition of the *Bundeswehr*. The reform's main problem is the lack of debate about Germany's security policy and the role of the German armed forces.³²² Germany's main strategic documents such as the *Weißbuch 2006* do not provide any specific guidelines for the reform. It is a very broad overview of Germany's security and defence policy. Concerning the reform of the armed forces, it remains therefore rather vague. The details of reform are described by much less visible, often internal *Bundeswehr* documents. "In Germany, (...) the reform seems to be perceived as a technical issue whose significance for the

³¹⁵ "Die Verteidigung Deutschlands gegen äußere Bedrohung bleibt die politische und verfassungsrechtliche Grundlage und Kernfunktion der Bundeswehr. (...) Die klassische Landes- und die Bündnisverteidigung stellen damit unverändert zentrale Aufgaben der Bundeswehr dar." *Weißbuch 2006*, p.11.

³¹⁶ See for example WHITNEY, Nick. *How to Stop the Demilitarization of Europe?*, CER Policy Brief, November 2011.

³¹⁷ "Deutschland lebt heute in Freiheit, Frieden und Sicherheit." *Weißbuch 2006*, p.2.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ BIEHL, Heiko; FIEBIG, Rüdiger; GIEGERICH, Bastian, et al., *Strategische Kulturen in Europa. Die Bürger Europas und ihre Streitkräfte. Ergebnisse der Bevölkerungsbefragung in acht europäischen Ländern 2010*, SOWI Forschungsbericht 96, Strausberg, September 2011, p.102.

³²⁰ *Weißbuch 2006*, p.2.

³²¹ See. for example WIESNER, *op.cit.*, pp.99-100.

³²² See for example MÖLLING, Christian. *Bundeswehrreform: Ausgangspunkt, Zwischenbilanz und 10 Punkte für eine Reform der Reform*, SWP Arbeitspapier, April 2011; or GAREIS, Sven Bernhard. *Militärische Auslandseinsätze und die Transformation der Bundeswehr*, in JÄGER, Thomas; HÖSE, Alexander und Oppermann, Kai (Hrsg.) *Deutsche Außenpolitik*, 2., aktualisierte Auflage, VS Verlag, 2011, pp.148-170, p.164.

national self-conception is rather limited."³²³ Hence, the reform does not spark any domestic debate about the role of the armed forces. The current status and function of the armed forces is rather a role by default, the outcome of external development and pressures, a necessary evil and not the result of a deliberate and conscious decision.³²⁴ Christian Mölling criticises that there has not even been a systematic discussion about the transformation within the parliament let alone sufficient communication of the security political goals of the reform to the general public. He argues that the reform is trying to put the cart before the horse: we are reforming without having defined the strategic aims that the realignment is supposed to reach.³²⁵

There was, however, hope that things would change. In order to obviate the criticism about the missing strategic basis of the reform, Thomas de Maizière published the new *Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien*³²⁶ (VPR) (Defence Policy Guidelines), which are supposed to constitute a strategic document defining Germany's security policy. The VPR seem to put an emphasis on a more direct and honest language. This becomes evident when comparing the new *Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien* with the discourse used in the White Paper 2006. As I laid out earlier, the White Paper defines the *Bundeswehr* as just one instrument of Germany's security policy. In the VPR 2011 they are described as an "indispensable instrument of the foreign and security policy", and "the backbone of the Germany's security and protection."³²⁷ Rhetorically, the VPR grant the *Bundeswehr* a lot more weight in Germany's security policy than did the White Paper or any other German strategic document. De Maizière also unequivocally admits that the goal guiding the reform process, should be "The ability to fight."³²⁸ Considering the strict avoidance of the concepts of war and combat by past governments, the discourse in the new VPR is quite remarkable. This new and unknown way of calling things by its name is part of de Maizière's larger ambition to have a more honest and open debate about Germany's security policy, the *Bundeswehr* and its deployments abroad. In interviews with German newspapers, he talks about war, killing, and death and thus tries to normalise this discourse among the German public. In an interview with the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* he stated for example, "International interventions are part of the task range of the *Bundeswehr* today. This can be dangerous - killing and dying are part of it. This may not be good advertisement, but you have to tell the truth."³²⁹ The importance of a public debate is also underlined in the document outlining the basic points of the realignment. The relationship between *Bundeswehr* and society is seen as a crucial element for the success of the reform and it is specified that "this includes an open and large debate about security policy in general and a discussion about the role and the tasks of the *Bundeswehr* in our society."³³⁰

The success of these ambitions is, however, questionable. The new rhetorical ambition cannot belie the problems and the reality that the reform of the *Bundeswehr* is still facing. De Maizière's reform of the reform is not going as smoothly as planned. Criticism comes from many different sides, including from within the *Bundeswehr* itself. According to a study by the University of Chemnitz who polled 1800 members of the *Bundeswehr*, the majority of the respondents were dissatisfied with the process of the reform and 88% believed that the current reorganisation would not be followed through. Two thirds indicate that they would not recommend their friends or family members to join the armed forces.³³¹ The reform seems to unsettle the troops which the Parliamentary Commissioner for the *Bundeswehr* Hellmut Königshaus ascribes to the lack of communication by the Federal Ministry of Defence.³³² The dialogue that is so important to de Maizière appears to have only limited success.

³²³ "In Deutschland (...) scheint die Reformierung der militärischen Fähigkeiten mehr als technische Angelegenheit wahrgenommen zu werden, deren Bedeutung für das nationale Selbstverständnis eher limitiert ist." JONAS und VON ONDARZA, *op.cit.*, p.101.

³²⁴ GAREIS, *op.cit.*, p.164.

³²⁵ MÖLLING, Christian. Bundeswehrreform, p.5.

³²⁶ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien, Berlin, 27.05.2011, p.10.

³²⁷ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien, Berlin, 27.05.2011, p.10.

³²⁸ "Die Befähigung zum Kampf", *ibid.*, p.12.

³²⁹ "Zum Aufgabenspektrum der Bundeswehr gehören heute auch die Auslandseinsätze. Die können gefährlich sein - Töten und Sterben gehören dazu. Damit kann man nicht werben, aber man muss die Wahrheit sagen." BRÖSSLER, Daniel; FRIED, Nico. "Interview mit Thomas de Maizière "Töten und Sterben gehören dazu"", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 16.07.2011.

³³⁰ "Dazu gehört neben einer offenen und breiten Debatte über Sicherheitspolitik im Allgemeinen auch die Auseinandersetzung über die Rolle und die Aufgaben der Bundeswehr in unserem Gemeinwesen." Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Die Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr. *op.cit.*, p.125.

³³¹ De Maizières Reform frustriert die Truppe, *Der Spiegel*, 07.09.2012.

³³² *Ibid.*

Additionally, the *Bundeswehr* seems to have trouble reaching its own goals of making the armed forces more effective and efficient. The reduction of troops puts great pressure on the forces so that in reality the aim of 10.000 deployable troops can still not be reached. On the contrary, "the number of soldiers available to be sent in a conflict region is decreasing proportionally to the overall size of the troops. We won't be able to do more with less, but rather less with less."³³³ On top of that, the recruitment process without conscription proves to be rather difficult. Even though the realignment of the *Bundeswehr* earmarks 15.000 spots for volunteers per year, only around 5.000 young people can be won for the voluntary military service per annum. It clearly shows that the *Bundeswehr* is not as attractive as it aspires to be or that the German population is still very sceptical about military force. The demographic developments in Germany do not make things easier in this regard. The honest and open debate also did not take place so far. Instead, the large-scale recruitment campaign launched by the *Bundeswehr* to tackle this challenge is criticised by researchers from the University of Freiburg for misleading young Germans.³³⁴ According to the pilot study, the *Bundeswehr* is campaigning with images that do not reflect the reality soldiers face in dangerous missions. "The Bundeswehr tries to reach the youth with emotions rather than arguments."³³⁵ An example is a video campaign from 2012 in cooperation with the youth magazine Bravo called "Bundeswehr Adventure Camps". Various newspapers have accused the *Bundeswehr* of attracting adolescents under false pretences.³³⁶ Instead of informing young people about what the military profession is actually like, they advertised "action, adrenaline, and adventure" in a holiday camp.³³⁷ It puts into question de Maizière's claim, "to tell the truth" and alleviates hopes for an honest debate about the *Bundeswehr's* role.

Since the reform process is still underway, it is impossible to predict whether the transformation will be successful or not. However, regarding past developments, reform went very slowly, very incrementally and largely took place without any strategic debate about the new role of the armed forces. Instead, politicians clung to traditional norms and images of the role of the armed forces and focused on a reduction of size instead of a structural transformation. The result is a persistent antimilitarism and a preference for a traditional role of the *Bundeswehr*. Hence, the government finds itself in the difficult situation of having to reconcile new realities of international interventions and traditional foreign policy norms, which can be broken down to Germany's foreign policy dilemma between multilateralism and antimilitarism. As a result, the ambitious goals announced in Germany's strategic documents can hardly be translated into reality. The reform suffers from a traditional image of the armed forces and from missing communication between the military, the political elite, and the German society.

II) Security Policy and the German Society

A) Foreign Policy Preferences and Image of the Armed Forces

Germany has a very special relationship with its armed forces. As I laid out in Chapter I, the German civil-military relations are marked by an antimilitarism which does, however, not equal a categorical rejection of armed forces or the use of force. It is rather a disregard of the aggressive use of military force, of an over-glorification of the military and of a dominance of the military in the society. In short, it is - as the word suggests - a rejection of militarism. The German *Bundeswehr* is therefore accepted by the German population and deemed necessary. However, military parades, public military distinctions or other kinds of public display associated with a military

³³³ "Die Anzahl an Soldaten, die für einen Konflikt bereitstehen, sinkt proportional zur Gesamtstärke der Truppe. Man wird nicht mehr mit weniger machen können. Sondern eben weniger mit weniger." Christian Mölling cited in KORGE, Johannes. Blitz-Reform verunsichert Soldaten, *Der Spiegel*, 08.08.2012.

³³⁴ VOGEL, Friedemann. *Pilotstudie: Selbstinszenierung der Bundeswehr gegenüber Jugendlichen*, SpeechAct! Blog Uni Freiburg, Institut für Medienkulturwissenschaft, <http://speechact.friedemann-vogel.de/2012/12/die-mediale-selbstinszenierung-der-bundeswehr-gegenuber-jugendlichen-eine-pilotstudie/> (04.05.2013).

³³⁵ "Die Bundeswehr versucht, vor allem über Emotionen und kaum über Argumente an die Jugend anzudocken." Friedemann Vogel cited in SONNBERGER, Heike. Freizeit statt Krieg, *Der Spiegel*, 08.01.2013

³³⁶ See for example SONNBERGER, Heike. Freizeit statt Krieg, *Der Spiegel*, 08.01.2013; SCHULZE VON GLASSER, Michael. Abenteurer in Uniform, *Die Tageszeitung*, 18.09.2012; ZWINSCHER, Felix. Komm zum Bund, da geht's rund, *Die Zeit Online*, 01.06.2011.

³³⁷ "Bravo Bundeswehr Adventure Camps 2012", youtube.com, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O16ziBNBsE> (04.05.2013).

glorification are more controversial. For the Germans, their military should be a reliable, modest, and functional "force for good"³³⁸. The experience of the Afghanistan intervention has caused the reality to depart from this archetypical image of their military when the German population started to realise that the *Bundeswehr* was actually at war.

1) Germany's Armed Development Workers

In the past months, the German media drew a very negative picture of the relationship between Germany and its armed forces. Reports accumulated according to which German soldiers felt ignored by the German society. Comparisons were made with other countries like the United States where citizens welcome their armed forces at airports with banners and posters.³³⁹ Ulrich Kirsch, President of the *Bundeswehrverband* (association of the Bundeswehr) states for example, "It is a matter of fact that the *Bundeswehr* was never a beloved child of democracy."³⁴⁰ Hauke Friederich claims, "The Bundeswehr is a parliamentary army. It is not a people's army"³⁴¹ and attests the German public a lack of trust. But his assessment is wrong or, at least, only tells part of the story. The Germans do not lack confidence in the *Bundeswehr*. The *Bundeswehr* is actually the second most trusted institution in Germany, directly after the police. The German population has more trust in the armed forces than in public schools, the constitutional court, the church or the government.³⁴² This has been the case for more than ten years now. Since 1998, over 80% of the German population claim to have a positive attitude towards the armed forces.³⁴³ In 2010, 88% of the population thought that the *Bundeswehr* is overall doing a good job³⁴⁴ and being asked "What emotions do you associate with the Bundeswehr?" 79% of the respondents claimed to feel "trust", 69% felt "respect" and 68% even affirmed to feel "pride".³⁴⁵ This shows that the *Bundeswehr* is clearly accepted and respected in the German population. It cannot be said that there is a general lack of trust. The perception of the soldiers has, however, clear and detectable sources. Due to Germany's antimilitarist stance, there is no active display of the support and trust that the German population undoubtedly has. For example, only three percent of the Germans would put a "support our troops" bumper sticker on their car. According to a survey by the SOWI, this is the lowest percentage compared to other European countries considered in the study.³⁴⁶ This fact can be explained with the specific German antimilitarism, which rejects a glorification of anything military. The military is not supposed to enjoy a special status. Soldiers are normal people: *Bürger in Uniform* (citizens in uniform). For the same reason Germans are also cautious concerning the introduction of the notion "veteran" for former soldiers of the *Bundeswehr*.³⁴⁷ The word has a very negative connotation and is in general associated with war, and especially the world wars. Only few people see any relation to the *Bundeswehr*. Especially a volitional public display of the armed forces or veterans is seen with scepticism.³⁴⁸ The refusal to glorify the military has also made the commemoration of fallen soldiers a delicate issue. Herfried Münkler therefore ascribes the German society a "post-heroism" that is defined by its rejection of war and of military deaths.³⁴⁹ The death of soldiers is not very present in the public sphere and is to a certain extent also due to the "professional indifference."

³³⁸ See DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, Chapter 6.

³³⁹ E.g. FRIEDERICH, Hauke. Die einsame Armee, *ZEIT ONLINE*, 01.09.2010.

³⁴⁰ "Tatsache ist doch, dass die Bundeswehr nie ein geliebtes Kind der Demokratie war." Ulrich Kirsch, President of the Bundeswehrverband (association of the Bundeswehr) cited in De Maizières: Soldaten gieren nach Anerkennung, *ZEIT ONLINE*, 11.03.2013.

³⁴¹ "Die Bundeswehr ist eine Parlamentsarmee. Eine Volksarmee ist sie nicht." FRIEDERICH, Hauke. Die einsame Armee, *ZEIT ONLINE*, 01.09.2010.

³⁴² BULMAHN, Thomas; FIEBIG, Rüdiger and HILPERT, Carolin. Sicherheits- und verteidigungspolitisches Meinungsklima in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, SOWI Forschungsbericht 94, Mai 2011, p.76.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.67.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.78.

³⁴⁵ BULMAHN, Thomas. Wahrnehmung und Bewertung des Claims "Wir. Dienen. Deutschland.", Image der Bundeswehr sowie Haltung zum Umgang mit Veteranen. Ergebnisse der Bevölkerungsumfrage 2012, SOWI Kurzbericht, Dezember 2012, p.28.

³⁴⁶ In Great Britain for example, 41% of the respondents would do so; BIEHL, et al., Strategische Kulturen in Europa. Die Bürger Europas und ihre Streitkräfte. *op.cit.*, p.23.

³⁴⁷ This idea was introduced by Thomas de Maizières reform plans, see Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Die Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr. *op.cit.*, p.125.

³⁴⁸ BULMAHN, *op.cit.*, p.37.

³⁴⁹ LEONHARD, Nina. Les relations civils-militaires en Allemagne entre "posthéroïsme" et poids du passé : Le monument aux morts de la Bundeswehr", *L'Année sociologique*, 2011/2 Vol. 61, pp. 431-451, p. 448.

The second major reason why soldiers feel neglected is directly related to the Germans security preferences. There is a divergence between the soldiers' attitude towards military interventions and the public's stance on those missions. Several studies show that the soldiers themselves have accepted the new role of the *Bundeswehr* as an intervention force.³⁵⁰ Already in 1995, only 4% of the soldiers refused to be deployed in international missions.³⁵¹ Maja Apelt, for example, interviewed ten *Bundeswehr* soldiers and found that all of them saw international missions as a matter of course. "If I become soldier, I have to accept that I have to go on missions and that I may lose my life in that mission."³⁵² "Many soldiers perceived peacekeeping as more rewarding than the Cold War task of deterrence. (...) The new mandate (...) permitted the soldiers to see and feel immediate and concrete results of their efforts."³⁵³ The German population, however, continues to be very sceptical concerning military interventions. Contrary to what some authors argue, the German public was not suddenly a "normal" society with a "normal" relation towards the use of force. On the contrary, the fact that in the case of the conflicts in the Balkans, Joschka Fischer had to justify a German intervention by comparing the events to one of the most cruel crimes in human history shows to what extent the Germans are reluctant to use force.³⁵⁴ Military instruments are only justified as means of very last resort and only in the face of mass atrocities, crimes against humanity and genocide. It is thus not surprising that a great majority of the German population shows a preference for non-military means. 83% think that Germany should primarily use diplomatic instruments in foreign policy, while only 14% approve of military means for the solution of international crisis and conflict. 65% reject the idea of war as means to obtain justice.³⁵⁵

Germans like to see their armed forces as armed development workers in the service of good. With recent developments in Germany's international missions, most notably in Afghanistan, this image has been shattered. In the 1990s the *Bundeswehr* profited from its changing role in international security policy. With the increased German involvement in international military missions in the mid-1990s, the media showed great interest in the German armed forces due to their involvements in Somalia, KFOR and SFOR. Most of the media coverage depicted the *Bundeswehr's* engagement in a very positive light.³⁵⁶ The *Bundeswehr's* image was very much shaped by the humanitarian purposes of the interventions. The international involvement served a higher cause in order to protect human rights and prevent genocides. Along with the "Nie wieder Auschwitz" norm, they became "a force for good."³⁵⁷ This image was intensified by the mission in Kosovo, which was justified by the same humanitarian reasons as the ones in Bosnia. Additionally, the *Bundeswehr* played an important role during the 1997 Central European Flood.³⁵⁸ Therefore the reputation of the *Bundeswehr* peaked in the late 1990s as soldiers were seen as armed development workers, doing mainly reconstruction work and pursuing humanitarian goals. During these years, the majority of the German population endorsed an active German foreign and security policy. Between 1998 and 2001 an average of 54% were favourable to an active German role in international politics. In general, Germans show a preference for defensive and humanitarian tasks of the *Bundeswehr*. When it comes to more an offensive role of the *Bundeswehr*, Germans are more hesitant. Apart from the defence of the national territory, the German armed forces should mainly be used for humanitarian aid in case of natural catastrophes (95% approval), evacuation of German nationals from danger zones (88% approval), and the prevention of genocides (71% approval). More controversial were tasks associated with active long term military engagements like stabilisation of fragile regions and states (51% approval), the fight against international terrorism (46% approval),

³⁵⁰ See for example LEONHARD, Nina. *Berufliche Identitäten von Soldaten: eine qualitative Untersuchung von jungen männlichen Soldaten der Bundeswehr aus den neuen und alten Bundesländern*. Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr, Heft 3, 2007.

³⁵¹ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, pp.102-103.

³⁵² "Wenn ich Soldat werde, muss ich mich damit abfinden, dass ich in den Einsatz gehe und dass ich vielleicht auch in diesem Einsatz wie auch immer mein Leben verlieren kann." Bundeswehr officer cited in APELT, Maja. "Die Paradoxien des Soldatenberufs im Spiegel des soldatischen Selbstkonzepts", in JABERG, Sabine; BIEHL, Heiko; MOHRMANN, Günter and TOMFORDE, Maren. *Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr. Sozialwissenschaftliche Analysen, Diagnosen und Perspektiven*, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 2009, pp.143-162, p.153.

³⁵³ DALGAARD-NIELSEN, *op.cit.*, p.104.

³⁵⁴ SCHMID, Thomas. Im Wohnzimmer durch die Welt, *Internationale Politik*, November/Dezember 2010, p.120.

³⁵⁵ BIEHL et al. *Strategische Kulturen in Europa*, *op.cit.*, p.48-50.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.105.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ APELT, *op.cit.*, p.143.

and the safeguard of economic resources and free trade routes (33% approval).³⁵⁹ Once deployed in a conflict zone, the armed forces are seen as armed development workers, helping to reconstruct war-torn countries. As analysed in Chapter II, the German contribution to ISAF was also presented that way. It reflects German preferences for the conduct of their armed forces and their foreign policy preferences in general. When asked what tasks the armed forces should fulfil in Afghanistan, 74% of the respondents affirmed that they should mainly do reconstruction work, 64% favoured the training of Afghan security forces while only 20% agreed that the *Bundeswehr* should also take part in combat missions.³⁶⁰ In Afghanistan, this image of the armed development worker could only be credibly maintained during the first couple of years. With the start of the war in Iraq and the worsening security situation in Afghanistan, things began to change. Over the years, support for the German participation continuously declined reaching a definitive turning point with the so-called Kunduz airstrike in September 2009. At this point, the German public realised that it was engaged in something it fundamentally rejected - a war. While in 2008, 63% of the Germans still supported the mission, the newest numbers indicate 38% support.³⁶¹ The mission does not correspond to Germany's image of the *Bundeswehr* soldiers as armed development workers anymore and is therefore rejected. This might be perceived by the soldiers as a disregard for their profession in general, which is not the case.

The *Bundeswehr* continues to be respected, but due to Germany's strategic culture, with its preference for defensive, reactive, humanitarian missions, the population is increasingly disillusioned with the involvement in Afghanistan and fears new missions that could take on an Afghanistan-like character. In addition, Germans reject an over-glorification of the armed forces anyway and have a very sober view of the *Bundeswehr*. For these two reasons, the return of the *Bürger in Uniform* from a mission that the public does not support will probably not be accompanied by banner-waving fans anytime soon.

2) Watershed Afghanistan : the Kunduz Airstrikes

On the 4th of September 2009, two tankers were stranded on a sandbank of the Kunduz river only few kilometres south of Kunduz City. The vehicles, which had been hijacked earlier by the Taliban were attacked by an American F-15 aircraft with one bomb for each tanker at 1.49 am. The attack was ordered by German officer Colonel Georg Klein, commander of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kunduz. He was informed about the two hijacked vehicles a couple of hours earlier. Based on surveillance videos of the two tankers transmitted by several aircrafts, at 1.39 am, he made the decision to launch a counter-insurgency attack against the vehicles that were surrounded by "several persons with weapons"³⁶². The bombs killed 91 to 142 people (accounts vary), among them several dozen civilians including children, who had approached the two stranded tankers out of curiosity and in order to obtain some of the gas that the Taliban were giving out.³⁶³ It was the largest, most aggressive, and deadliest military attack launched by the German army since World War II and therefore a first in the history of the *Bundeswehr*. It became a symbol for a change in the German Afghanistan mission, and it especially altered the way, politicians, the media, and the German public perceived the German mission in Afghanistan. After the event of the Kunduz airstrikes, the German ISAF participation turned from a stabilisation and a reconstruction mission into a war in the public consciousness. Given the German antimilitarist strategic culture and the image of the German soldier as an armed development worker, this new perception of the situation made public support impossible.

The way the German military and German politicians handled the situation is a proof for the persistence of German strategic culture. When the news first reached Berlin, everyone involved did their best to cover up or

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.61-71.

³⁶⁰ BIEHL et al. *Strategische Kulturen in Europa*, op.cit., p.79.

³⁶¹ BULMAHN, Thomas. *Wahrnehmung und Bewertung des Claims "Wir. Dienen. Deutschland."*, *Image der Bundeswehr sowie Haltung zum Umgang mit Veteranen. Ergebnisse der Bevölkerungsumfrage 2012*, SOWI Kurzbericht, Dezember 2012, p.31.

³⁶² RAABE, Thomas, *Erfolgreicher Einsatz gegen Aufständische im Raum Kunduz, Stellungnahme des Sprechers des Bundesministerium der Verteidigung am 7. September 2009*, Berlin, 07.09.2009.

³⁶³ DEMMER, Ulrike; FELDENKIRCHEN, Markus; FICHTNER Ullrich et al. Ein deutsches Verbrechen. *Der Spiegel* 5/2010, 01.02.2010.

downplay the situation. The morning of the 4th of September, the Federal Ministry of Defence published communication about the airstrikes of the night with the title, "Successful intervention against insurgents in the Kunduz area" and specified, "to the best of our knowledge, innocent bystanders did not suffer any harm."³⁶⁴ Despite the fact that on the 5th of September, international sources already spoke about several civilian deaths,³⁶⁵ Defence Minister Franz-Josef Jung declared on the 6th of September, "I cannot confirm this information at this point. To me, it appears to be evident that the large majority were Taliban."³⁶⁶ According to a report of the Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), on the morning of the 4th of September, the German intelligence service Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) had sent an e-mail to the Chancellor's Office that reported about the incident and explicitly mentioned civilian deaths, "The disastrous part is (...) that numerous civilians lost their lives. Numbers vary from 50 to 100."³⁶⁷ It therefore can be assumed that German politicians including the Defence Minister and the Chancellor were fully informed about the situation, but tried to downplay the issue. Extensive publicity of the event could have been politically costly since the German federal election was about to take place on the 27th of September 2009. In the run up to the election, politicians from all parties had done their best to keep Afghanistan out of the election campaign. Public support was dwindling and since all parties, except for Die Linke, stood behind the Afghanistan mission, no one was eager to launch a debate. Hence, when the news about the airstrike reached Berlin, the government downplayed the magnitude of the situation. Member of the *Bundestag* Omid Nouripour speculated, "I have the impression that the election campaign has indeed put great pressure on the responsible persons in the government and led them to treat the truth differently than what would have been appropriate in such a severe case."³⁶⁸ It can be derived that Berlin was afraid of the public reaction, afraid of what would happen if the Germans realised what their soldiers were actually doing in Afghanistan. Until this point, the narrative that had been told to the German citizens focused on a stabilisation and a reconstruction mission. For over a decade, German politicians had nourished the image of the armed development workers, the force for good, and the army for humanitarian purposes in order to legitimise the growing German international interventions. "Especially the idea of "humanitarian intervention" (helping strangers in need) that is highly valued in democracies, has an inherent paradox: the taboo of war is lifted by making the notion of "war" a taboo."³⁶⁹ This idea expressed by Anna Geis characterised the German narrative about *Bundeswehr* interventions. The German army was never at war. On the contrary, they were on peace missions. In the case of Afghanistan, Germany tried to uphold this image. As analysed in Chapter II, the German government emphasised whenever possible the relatively stable Northern Afghan region and reinforced their concept of Vernetzte Sicherheit (comprehensive approach), highlighting the civilian part of the mission while downplaying the military side. But ever since the security situation started to deteriorate in all of Afghanistan, even German soldiers became entangled in fights with insurgents at an increasing rate - a fact that remained mostly unknown to the German public. When the Kunduz airstrike became public, it changed the rhetoric about the German participation in the ISAF mission completely. The fact that German soldiers were partaking in counter-insurgency operations could not be denied anymore. On the 8th of September, Angela Merkel made a government declaration in front of the German parliament and called the German intervention in Afghanistan a "Kampfeinsatz" - a combat mission. Several weeks later, the new Defence Minister Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg called the situation in Afghanistan "war-like circumstances". "Eventually, more than eight years after

³⁶⁴ "Erfolgreicher Einsatz gegen Aufständische im Raum Kundus", "Unbeteiligte sind nach derzeitigem Kenntnisstand nicht zu Schaden gekommen."; Chronologie des Luftangriffs in Kundus, *Stern*, 29.10.2009.

³⁶⁵ See for example CHANDRASEKARAN, Rajiv. NATO Probing Deadly Airstrike, *The Washington Post*, 05.10.2009.

³⁶⁶ "Ich kann bisher derartige Informationen nicht bestätigen. Eindeutig scheint mir, dass auf jeden Fall der überwiegende Anteil Taliban gewesen sind." THIELS, Christian. Debatte um Informationspolitik nach Luftangriff in Kundus, *ARD-Jahresrückblick 2009*, 28.12.2009, available at <http://www.tagesschau.de/jahresueckblick/jahresueckblick154.html> (09.05.2013).

³⁶⁷ "Das Verheerende daran ist, (...) dass dabei zahlreiche Zivilisten ums Leben gekommen sind. Zahlen variieren von 50 bis 100." SCHMIDT, Markus, Kunduz: Was wusste das Kanzleramt über die Luftangriffe, *WDR*, 25.03.2010.

³⁶⁸ "Ich hab den Eindruck, dass die Wahlkampfsituation tatsächlich stark Druck ausgeübt hat auf handelnde Personen in der Bundesregierung, mit der Wahrheit anders umzugehen wie es sich in einem so gravierenden Fall gehört." Omid Nouripour cited in SCHMIDT, Markus, Kunduz: Was wusste das Kanzleramt über die Luftangriffe, *WDR*, 25.03.2010.

³⁶⁹ "Gerade in der in Demokratien moralisch geschätzten Idee der "humanitären Intervention" (Fremden Nothilfe leisten) steckt eine paradoxe Wendung: die Tabuisierung des Krieges dadurch aufzuheben, dass sie den Begriff "Krieg" tabuisiert." GEIS, Anna. Militär und Friedenspolitik - Dilemmata der deutschen "Zivilmacht", in SCHLOTTER, Peter; NOLTE, Wilhelm; GRASSE, Renate (eds.) *Berliner Friedenspolitik? Militärische Transformation - Zivile Impulse - Europäische Einbindung*, Nomos, Baden-Baden, 2008, pp.60-82, p.76.

the establishment of ISAF, Germany was officially taking part in a war in Afghanistan.³⁷⁰ The new use of the term "war" caused Sigmar Gabriel, leader of the SPD, to demand a new vote on the ISAF mandate since, in his opinion, the nature of the intervention had changed. "I can only warn not to obliterate terms out of fear of an open debate."³⁷¹ Even though his request was not considered, it illustrates how German impressions on the nature of the conflict had changed. This realisation caused the support of the intervention to drop drastically. In May 2010, the support was at 22% percent, the all-time low since the intervention had started in 2001.³⁷² It was a direct result of the airstrikes in Kunduz. "Now we lost our innocence,"³⁷³ was a comment by *Bundeswehr* Chief of Staff Wolfgang Schneiderhan after he learned about Kunduz airstrikes. He knew that the event would change the rhetoric about the mission in Afghanistan and about Germany's involvements abroad. He knew that "it marked a new turning point in German history, because it put an end to the illusion one could participate in wars and stay a pacifist at the same time."³⁷⁴ It would, however, be false to assume that it altered German strategic culture in any way. On the contrary, the Germans became aware of an intervention that ran counter to their convictions and deeply ingrained beliefs. The result was a wide rejection of the ISAF mission and made the calls for withdrawal grow louder. It is likely that the events in Kunduz on the 4th of September 2001 did not only change the attitude of the German population about the Afghanistan mission, but made them even more sceptical about military interventions in general since they no longer bought into the humanitarian narrative as easily anymore. This makes the dilemma of German strategic culture between multilateralism and antimilitarism even more pronounced, as the domestic pressure for non-intervention is likely to be even stronger than before.

B) In Search of a Strategic Debate

Even though the Kunduz airstrikes fundamentally changed the way Germans perceived the intervention in Afghanistan and made the public more sceptical about interventions in general, the event was not able to spur a general public debate about Germany's security policy. This is largely influenced by two factors. First, the German population shows a "friendly disinterest" towards matters concerning foreign and security policy. Only highly controversial, publicised events, like the Kunduz airstrikes, are able to draw the public's attention on those subjects for a short time. Second, German politicians have done their best not to ignite this public debate that has long been called for because it might be, politically, very costly.

1) The German "Friendly Disinterest"

In a speech held on the occasion of the *Bundeswehr's* 50th anniversary on the 10th of October 2005, Federal President Horst Köhler identified one of the central problems of Germany's relation to the armed forces, to military interventions and security policy at large: the country is missing an open strategic debate about issues concerning its foreign and security policy. He made the German population responsible for this lack of discussion and ascribes them a "friendly disinterest."³⁷⁵ In his opinion, the Germans are neither very interested, nor very well informed about these subjects, which can be dangerous to the democracy. Köhler warns that an uninformed, disinterested polity is not able to exert democratic control. Furthermore, he fears that it could undermine the relation between the German society and its armed forces. "They (soldiers of the *Bundeswehr*) are entitled to the awareness of the German society about what is demanded from the *Bundeswehr* and what tasks it is supposed to

³⁷⁰ NOETZEL, Timo. The German politics of war: Kunduz and the war in Afghanistan, *International Affairs*, Nr 87 (2), 2011, pp.397- 417, p.407.

³⁷¹ "Ich kann nur davor warnen, aus Feigheit vor der öffentlichen Debatte die Begriffe zu verwischen", *Bundeswehr in Afghanistan: Gabriel fordert von Merkel klare Benennung des Militäreinsatzes*, *Der Spiegel*, 13.04.2010.

³⁷² NOETZEL, Timo. The German politics of war, *op cit.*, p.412.

³⁷³ Wolfgang Schneiderhan cited in DEMMER, Ulrike; FELDENKIRCHEN, Markus; FICHTNER Ullrich et al. Ein deutsches Verbrechen. *Der Spiegel* 5/2010, 01.02.2010.

³⁷⁴ "Er markiert einen neuerlichen Wendepunkt in der deutschen Geschichte, weil er die lange gepflegte Illusion, man könne an Kriegen teilnehmen und dabei Pazifist bleiben, beendet.", *ibid.*

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

fulfil in the future."³⁷⁶ He doubts, however, that this public awareness exists. "The Bundeswehr has come along way in a very short time with its international deployments; but did the public awareness keep up? I have my doubts."³⁷⁷ He expresses concerns that are often raised by a variety of people, ranging from intellectuals, researchers, to journalists. Especially in the wake of the mission in Congo, a lot of people had the impression that Germany was drawn into a mission because of international pressure and not because German interests were at stake.³⁷⁸ Thomas Schmid claims, for example, that the Germans "travel the world in their living room", meaning that international and security policy are not able to spark any interest on the side of the German public. Other domestic issues generally have priority and receive far greater attention. He bemoans the missing debate about important strategic decisions. Schmid claims that neither the transformation of the *Bundeswehr* and the suspension of such a traditional institution as conscription, nor the engagement in Afghanistan were able to get the Germans out of their figurative domestic armchair.³⁷⁹ "When we debate, we debate, whenever possible, about domestic affairs. Germany's role, Germany's obligations and Germany's chances in the world are not worth the quarrel."³⁸⁰ The statistics confirm this impression of a rather disinterested public in international affairs. In a survey conducted by the *Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der Bundeswehr* (SOWI) in 2010, 46% of the respondents indicated that they would prefer a more passive German foreign policy and a focus on domestic issues.³⁸¹ I also mentioned the rather low threat perception of the German public, which plays a role as well. Germans feel a lot more threatened by socio-economic factors than by military-terroristic threats.³⁸² On top of that, The German population is generally poorly informed about the Bundeswehr and its missions. Rüdiger Fiebig analysed the knowledge of the population about international missions.³⁸³ While the ISAF mission in Afghanistan is largely known to the German public, with only 3% of the respondents indicating to never have heard of it, the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon is only known to 19% of the respondents and 66% claimed that they did not know anything or close to nothing about the EUFOR mission in Bosnia. Only 29% were able to place Afghanistan on the world map, 20% of the respondents knew approximately how many German soldiers are stationed in Afghanistan, 18% knew since when the *Bundeswehr* is in Afghanistan and 11% knew how many soldiers lost their lives. Despite the fact that there are important discrepancies between respondents based on education and age for example, the survey shows that in general the public is largely uninformed about the international missions of the *Bundeswehr*.

The reasons for this public disinterest are diverse. As we have seen, the public seems to lack information about *Bundeswehr* missions. One could therefore conclude that the international interventions of the *Bundeswehr* are not sufficiently communicated and explained, which could lead to frustration and disengagement. A second reason is provided by Anna Geis who argues that the growing number of interventions since the 1990s has led to a habituation and a dulling of public opinion.³⁸⁴ She also argues that these missions are often led far away from German territory, so that the German public does not feel directly concerned. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the German population has also a very low threat perception concerning international security issues. They feel a lot more threatened by internal socio-economic issues than by external threats such as international terrorism. Hence, it is only logical that these domestic issues are more salient in the public debate. Another reason is put forward by Detlef Buch who makes the growing professionalisation of the army responsible for the disengagement

³⁷⁶ "Sie haben Anspruch darauf, dass sich die Gesellschaft bewusst macht, was der Bundeswehr abverlangt wird und welche Aufgaben sie künftig übernehmen soll." KÖHLER, Horst, *Einsatz für Freiheit und Sicherheit. Rede bei der Kommandeurtagung der Bundeswehr am 10. Oktober 2005*, Bundespräsidialamt, Berlin, p.6.

³⁷⁷ "Die Bundeswehr hat mit ihren Auslandseinsätzen in kurzer Zeit eine sehr weite Strecke zurückgelegt; aber ist das öffentliche Bewusstsein hinterher gekommen? Ich habe da meine Zweifel." *ibid.*

³⁷⁸ GEIS, Anna. Der Funktions- und Legitimationswandel der Bundeswehr und das "freundliche Desinteresse" der Bundesbürger, in *Friedensgutachten 2007*, LIT Verlag, Berlin, 2007, pp.39-50, p.39; for details see Chapter I.

³⁷⁹ SCHMID, Thomas. Im Wohnzimmer durch die Welt, *Internationale Politik*, November/Dezember 2010.

³⁸⁰ "Wenn wir debattieren, dann möglichst über unsere inneren Angelegenheiten. Deutschlands Rolle, Deutschlands Vpflchtungen und Deutschlands Chancen in der Welt sind uns den Streit nicht wer." *ibid.*, p.119.

³⁸¹ 45% indicate that Germany should have an active foreign and security policy; BULMAHN, *op.cit.*, p.87.

³⁸² BIEHL et al. Strategische Kulturen in Europa, *op.cit.*, p.105.

³⁸³ The following figures are taken from FIEBIG, Rüdiger. Kenntnisse über Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr, in BULMAHN, Thomas; FIEBIG, Rüdiger and HILPERT, Carolin. *Sicherheits- und verteidigungspolitisches Meinungsklima in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, SOWI Forschungsbericht 94, Mai 2011.

³⁸⁴ GEIS, Anna. Der Funktions- und Legitimationswandel der Bundeswehr und das "freundliche Desinteresse" der Bundesbürger, in *Friedensgutachten 2007*, LIT Verlag, Berlin, 2007, pp.39-50, p.48.

of the public. He believes that the *Bundeswehr* is seen just like other professions and is therefore nothing special. He calls the Germans image of the *Bundeswehr* "a professional indifference" that is comparable to the perception of other security professions like the police or the fire brigade for example.³⁸⁵ For many years, even before the suspension of conscription, the military service has been de facto voluntary. Due to the conscientious objection young men did not need to join the army if they did not want to and this was reflected in a growing number of objectors. Therefore less and less people have some sort of personal relationship to the armed forces, be it through first hand experiences as conscripts or as second hand experiences from friends or family. Only a minority of the Germans takes notice of the *Bundeswehr* due to personal contact. For large majority, the media is the main source of information about the armed forces which is a lot more impersonal.³⁸⁶ It seems as if the foreign policy debates that do take place are usually about selected issues and rather short-lived. They are highly influenced by media coverage of certain topics, as for example the Kunduz airstrikes.³⁸⁷ "General publics can only be expected to signal their foreign policy preferences to decision-makers if foreign affairs issues are sufficiently salient to them."³⁸⁸ It is a general trend that security issues need a certain intensity to be widely covered and hence be perceived by the larger public, while the focus lies normally on domestic issues. This leads to partially covered missions and therefore partially informed citizens.³⁸⁹ As a consequence it is very difficult to create a public debate out of the void if it is not accompanied by a major media event.

2) The Political Costs of a Strategic Debate

As mentioned above, various calls for a strategic debate that clearly defines the guidelines of Germany's foreign and security policy - be it by politicians, scientists, or journalists - have not been followed through. There might have been calls for such a debate, but the initiatives were usually half-hearted and failed. The most recent attempt is de Maizière's strategic document about the realignment of the *Bundeswehr* in which he calls again for "an open and large debate about security policy in in general".³⁹⁰ But this sort of request reoccurs regularly in the political sphere without having the desired results. Whenever politicians called for an extensive debate about Germany's foreign and security policy, as did Horst Köhler in 2005 or Franz-Josef Jung in 2006 when he released the White Paper 2006, the initiative failed. In 2006 for example, a possible debate about the Defence White Paper was superseded by a scandal following the publication of German soldiers deployed in Afghanistan posing with skulls.³⁹¹ Apart from a public disinterest in foreign policy matters, the lack of debate about Germany's foreign and security policy can also be imputed to German decision makers. As Hanns Werner Maull put it, "The responsibility for this (lack of debate) lies with the foreign policy decision makers, as well as the political class and the society, who did not call for the long overdue discussion about the deficits of German foreign policy, and who prefers to be lulled in a sense of security or to cultivate its fears."³⁹²

As the analysis in Chapter II has shown, foreign policy makers have always tried to keep Germany's military engagement as publicly acceptable as possible. In the 1990s some critics called the government's effort to slowly ease the public into greater military engagement "salami tactics". Meanwhile, the image of the armed development worker was actively promoted by German politicians as we have seen in the case of the Afghanistan concept in 2008. In their foreign policy discourse various chancellors and foreign ministers have time and again

³⁸⁵ BUCH, Detlef. *Bundeswehr 2.0. Von der Wehrpflicht bis Afghanistan - Reduziert, ignoriert, egalisiert?*, Peter Lang Verlag, Frankfurt a.M., 2011, p.7.

³⁸⁶ BULMAHN, Thomas. *Wahrnehmung und Bewertung des Claims "Wir. Dienen. Deutschland."*, *op.cit.*, p.11.

³⁸⁷ GEIS, Der Funktions- und Legitimationswandel der Bundeswehr, *op.cit.* p.49.

³⁸⁸ OPPERMANN, Kai; VIEHRIG, Henrike. The Public Salience of Foreign and Security Policy in Britain, Germany and France, *West European Politics*, 2009, Nr 32 (5), pp.925-942, p.937.

³⁸⁹ REEB, Hans-Joachim. Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr im Blickfeld der Medien, in JABERG et al, *op.cit.*, pp.257-275, p.270.

³⁹⁰ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Die Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr. *op.cit.*, p.125.

³⁹¹ HILPERT, Carolin. Afghanistan und die Bundeswehr im Spiegel der Medien, in Sicherheits- und verteidigungspolitisches Meinungsklima in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *op.cit.*, p.43.

³⁹² "Die Verantwortung hierfür tragen im engeren Sinne die außenpolitischen Entscheidungsträger, insbesondere aber auch die politische Klasse und die Gesellschaft, die die längst fällige Grundsatzdiskussion über die Defizite der deutschen Außenpolitik (bislang) nicht eingefordert hat und es vorzieht, sich in beschaulicher Sicherheit zu wiegen oder ihre Ängste zu kultivieren." MAULL, Hanns W. Auf leisen Sohlen aus der Außenpolitik?, *Internationale Politik*, 2003 (9), pp.19-30, p.27.

emphasised, "German foreign policy is peace policy."³⁹³ Therefore the German army is also an army for peace since it is an instrument of the said peace policy. This is directly linked to the public's preference for low-intensity crisis management, such as monitoring and classical peacekeeping missions. As a consequence, Germany has always tried to confine the *Bundeswehr's* interventions to these tasks. Looking at past and current military engagements, it is quite obvious that the German military is almost never deployed for actual combat missions. The majority of the times it provides logistical and medical support, or operates in quiet and stable areas of the respective country. There is an abundant number of examples, but it suffices to recall the cases treated in this thesis. Germany actively tries to keep the army out of harm's way in order to keep public opposition as low as possible. The latest example is the German contribution to the French-led mission in Mali where the *Bundeswehr* contributes with transportation capacities, air-to-air fuelling and 180 soldiers for the European Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali).³⁹⁴ As these are non-combat, support and training missions, it keeps controversy in the public sphere down. If Germany sends combat troops, they are mostly small special forces and their deployment is largely unknown to the public. This was the case with the KSK force for Operation Enduring Freedom or Task Force 47, which is a counter-insurgency and counter terrorism force who supports the ISAF mission in Kunduz since 2007. Its existence, however, was only revealed to the public three years later.³⁹⁵

The reason is obviously that the promotion of military interventions is politically costly. Since the antimilitarism is very much alive among the German population, the risks policy makers take in advocating a German participation in an international intervention can be quite high. One example of its costliness is the Kunduz affair involving former Federal Defence Minister, Franz-Josef Jung, who had to resign from his new position as Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs after only 33 days in office after accusations emerged that Jung had concealed information in the Kunduz case.³⁹⁶ At the same time, new Federal Minister of Defence Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg fired Secretary of State Peter Wichert and *Bundeswehr* Chief of Staff Wolfgang Schneiderhan, arguing that they had kept important information from him.³⁹⁷ About half a year later, Federal President Horst Köhler also lost his job over a comment he made in an interview with Deutschland Radio concerning German security policy. Köhler stated that German society needed to understand that a military intervention might be necessary in order to safeguard free trade routes.³⁹⁸ The remark caused an outcry in the German media. Wolfgang Jaschensky, for example, imputed an imperialist position, calling him "Kaiser Horst I."³⁹⁹ (Emperor Horst I.). As a consequence of the media debate, Köhler resigned pointing towards a lack of respect for the office of the Federal President.⁴⁰⁰

Another important factor for the lack of debate in the political sphere about foreign policy issues is cross party foreign policy consensus that characterises German security policy, at least since the ruling of the Constitutional Court on out-of-area deployments of the *Bundeswehr* in 1994.⁴⁰¹ With the exception of Die Linke who is categorically opposed to military interventions, decisions concerning foreign and security policy usually find support from the whole political spectrum. The Greens and the Social Democrats, who were traditionally slightly more cautious with regard to the use of force and had important pacifist branches, all came to agree on international interventions based on the "Nie wieder Auschwitz" norm that has ever since defined the humanitarian standard for German military interventions. Hanns Werner Maull argues that this foreign policy consensus renders a political debate irrelevant. He thinks, "Foreign policy has been and is neglected - with a cross

³⁹³ Auswärtiges Amt, Schwerpunkte deutscher Außenpolitik, Stand 28.03.2013, http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Schwerpunkte_Aussenpolitik_node.html (10.05.2013).

³⁹⁴ Deutscher Bundestag, Beschlussempfehlung und Bericht des Auswärtigen Ausschusses, Drucksache 17/12520.

³⁹⁵ SCHMIDT, Michael. Fast ganz normale Soldaten, *Tagesspiegel*, 13.08.2010.

³⁹⁶ Merkel Cabinet Reshuffle: Minister Jung Resigns amid Afghanistan Airstrike Scandal, *Spiegel International*, 27.11.2009.

³⁹⁷ Guttenberg entlässt Schneiderhan und Wichert Kundus-Affäre: Wann wusste das Verteidigungsministerium von getöteten Zivilisten, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27.11.2009.

³⁹⁸ RICKE, Christopher, Interview mit Bundespräsident Horst Köhler: "Sie leisten wirklich Großartiges unter schwierigsten Bedingungen", Deutschlandfunk, 22.05.2010.

³⁹⁹ JASCHENSKY, Wolfgang. Köhler: Krieg für freien Handel, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27.05.2010.

⁴⁰⁰ Controversy Over Afghanistan Remarks: German President Horst Köhler Resigns, *Spiegel International*, 31.05.2010.

⁴⁰¹ NOETZEL, Timo. The German politics of war, op cit., p.412.

party-consensus indeed - and therefore withers."⁴⁰² Along the same lines, Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer argue that this consensus about international interventions has depoliticised the parliamentary debates and decision about the deployment of the *Bundeswehr*. They warn that the *Parlamentsvorbehalt* (parliamentary prerogative) might become a pure formality. This depoliticisation has been illustrated by the case of the Kunduz airstrikes presented earlier. Even though the incident took place only few weeks before the federal election, it did not spur any debate about the Afghanistan mission or Germany's foreign policy in general. At the time, Christoph Bertram noticed, "The election campaign is almost taking place (...) without foreign policy. (...) Europe's economic and political heavyweight is taking a foreign policy time-out and even feels comfortable about it."⁴⁰³ The government at the time was formed by a Grand Coalition. Therefore, both major parties tried to prevent the Kunduz issue from causing a scandal - to the detriment of a political debate. The opposition parties Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and the FDP, also had no incentive to use the event for the campaign as both parties supported the mission in Afghanistan in principle and hence, the debate would have risked cutting off their nose to spite their face.

The problem is clearly a result of the inherent dilemma of Germany's strategic culture. As laid out in Chapter II, Germany devotion to multilateralism puts increasing external pressure on German foreign policy. The case of Libya illustrated that a German non-participation had important reputational costs. On the other hand, the German population is not less but increasingly more sceptical about military interventions. Hence, German policy makers face a dilemma, being caught between two sides. As a result, Germany's position may seem haphazardly as it is often trying to ride two horses at the same time.

After the end of the Cold War, Germany found itself in a completely new security situation that demanded very different tasks from the *Bundeswehr* than during the time of the East-West confrontation. The role of the *Bundeswehr* shifted from territorial and alliance defence to an army engaged in international interventions alongside its partners. Since the German armed forces did not have the necessary infrastructure for this kind of mission, reform became necessary. The transformation of the *Bundeswehr* is a long and incremental process that started in the 1990s and is still not complete. The reason for this slow adaptation can be found in Germany's resilient strategic culture. Even though external circumstances have made the transformation necessary, internal predispositions remained focused on traditional elements of Germany's defence policy such as territorial defence, which is still the constitutional guiding principle with Article 87a. There also has been a lot of resistance against the complete professionalisation of the army. Especially politicians from the CDU/CSU and the SPD clung to the idea of conscription being a necessary element for the maintenance of a strong link between the armed forces and the German society. It was only in March 2011 that a suspension of conscription has reluctantly been decided by the parliament. This overall reluctance for change becomes more understandable after having a closer look at the relation of the German society towards its security and defence policy. It continues to be marked by an antimilitarist stance with a preference for non-military instruments in security policy. Military force is an instrument of very last resort and can only be justified for defensive and humanitarian purposes. Hence, the German image of its armed forces is marked by the idea of an armed development worker who is doing reconstruction and stabilisation work. Combat missions are largely rejected. The Afghanistan intervention is therefore a crucial experience as the German public realised that its armed forces are engaged in a mission that departs from their ideal-type operation. This caused support for the ISAF mission to drop and increased scepticism towards military missions in general. The result is an exacerbation of the German security policy dilemma between external expectations and internal predispositions. In order to overcome this problem, an extensive and honest domestic debate about Germany's security policy would be needed. But such a debate has yet to take place. It can be explained by a lack of public interest on the one hand and hesitations on the part of politicians due to high political costs on the other. German foreign policy makers continue to muddle through the dilemma.

⁴⁰² "Außenpolitik wurde und wird - in durchaus überparteilichem Konsens! - vernachlässigt, und so verkümmert sie." MAULL, Hanns W. Auf leisen Sohlen aus der Außenpolitik?, *op.cit.*, p.19.

⁴⁰³ "Der Wahlkampf findet (...) nahezu ohne Außenpolitik statt. (...) Das wirtschaftliche und politische Schwergewicht Europas nimmt eine außenpolitische Auszeit und fühlt sich auch noch wohl dabei." BERTRAM, Christoph, Außenpolitik? Nein, danke, *ZEIT ONLINE*, 18.09.2009.

Internationally, they do the bare minimum to satisfy external demands while keeping domestic public opposition as low as possible.

■ CONCLUSION

Especially in the aftermath of the abstention from vote on the Security Council Resolution on Libya, a substantial number of people, including former Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, proclaimed that German foreign policy had deviated from its traditional path. Therefore, the aim of this study was to analyse whether German strategic culture has undergone significant change during the time of the Merkel government between 2005 and 2012. The findings suggest that German strategic culture has not fundamentally changed but was rather marked by continuity. Both constitutive elements, antimilitarism and multilateralism, continue to inform Germany's foreign policy. The two elements have, however, entered into a fundamental conflict, so that Germany faces a security policy dilemma inherent in its strategic culture.

The inception period of Germany's strategic culture can be traced back to the postwar situation of total defeat and occupation. The specific circumstances constituted the kind of traumatic experience that can cause a strategic culture to change completely. Germany's strategic culture was marked by the "Nie wieder"-norms (never again norms): "Nie wieder Krieg" (never again war) and "Nie wieder Sonderweg" (never again a separate path). Germany developed a strong antimilitarism that stood in opposition to its militarist past of Prussia and Nazi Germany. Germans became deeply suspicious of the military and the use of force which was translated into the design of the *Bundeswehr*. The *Bundeswehr* as a parliamentary army consists first and foremost of *Bürger in Uniform* (citizens in uniform) and is thus supposed to be an integral part of the German society. Furthermore, Germany was not a sovereign state at the birth of the Federal Republic. Therefore, the integration into the West became one of the most important pillars of Adenauer's foreign policy. Adenauer's aim was to reassure the Western partners of Germany's new peaceful nature and its reliability as a partner in international relations. In his opinion, this was the only way to incrementally regain German sovereignty. Ever since then, Multilateralism has been a foundational element of Germany's strategic culture.

During the time of the Cold War, this specific strategic culture was consolidated even further. There was not only a cross-party consensus about the design of German foreign and security policy, but Germany's antimilitarism and multilateralism was also in the interest of the Allies. Institutions like the EU and NATO were as much set up for a security from Germany as for a security with Germany. With the end of bipolarity though, things began to change. The new security situation on the European continent with the outbreak of intra-state conflict on the Balkans demanded completely different responses. Germany's allies began to ask for greater German responsibility in international security policy namely in international interventions out of NATO territory. This challenged the defensive character of Germany's security policy and its fundamental scepticism towards the use of force. It was at this time that the inherent dilemma of Germany's strategic culture started to emerge. In order to reconcile the multilateral commitments and the antimilitarist stance, the "Nie wieder"-norm was reinterpreted and completed by "Nie wieder Auschwitz". The new argument was that in the face of mass atrocities and genocide Germany had in fact a duty to intervene, especially with regard to its past. While some people see this as a fundamental change of Germany's relation to the use of force, I agree with authors like Kerry Longhurst, Hanns W. Maull or Adrian Hyde-Price who interpret these developments as adaptations to an altered situation rather than a sweeping change. It should be underlined that Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer had to refer to no less than the most cruel crime in human history in order to convince the Germans of a need for intervention. The foundational elements of Germany's security policy remained intact and the new posture can rather be seen as an adaptation of a "security policy standpoint", as defined by Kerry Longhurst. Military force remained an instrument of very last resort, only acceptable for defensive and humanitarian purposes. This also meant that if a mission would not fulfil these conditions, it would probably be rejected by the majority of the population. To speak of a normalisation would therefore be an exaggeration as Germany still had and continues to have a very complicated relationship with military force.

These tendencies can be confirmed for the period under investigation. Germany is fully committed to its multilateralism within the European Union and NATO. As a consequence, Germany enthusiastically supports

projects like the EU Battlegroups, as they represent the kind of multilateral framework that Germany needs for the pursuit of its security policy due to their anti-unilateral stance. This engagement quite obviously creates new expectations on the part of its allies which Germany cannot easily fulfil due to its culture of antimilitarism. When it comes to following words with deeds, Germany remains very hesitant. Examples are provided by the non-use of the EU-Battlegroups, the reluctance regarding EUFOR RD Congo and the half-hearted engagement in Afghanistan. Germany's military interventions are almost never the result of the defence of German interests or a deep belief in the rightfulness of the cause. Most of the time, Germany engages because of multilateral pressure and to prove its commitment to its partners. Being a reliable partner remains one of the most important principles of German foreign policy. With regard to this situation, it could be argued that Germany currently finds itself in a multilateralism trap. As these engagements often run counter its antimilitarist position, German foreign policy makers are trying to keep the costs of these engagements as low as possible and to avoid any risks. This leads to half-hearted missions, like the highly restricted engagement in Afghanistan, which displeases Germany's allies. The non-engagement in EUFOR Tchad/RCA shows that whenever the Federal Republic deems the international costs of non-engagement low enough, they stay in the background. What can be derived from these observations is that the decision to engage militarily is always subject to a case by case evaluation of the cost and benefits dependent on the respective international and domestic situation at the time. This makes a prediction of German security policy behaviour very hard. Especially after the experience in Afghanistan, German policy makers are likely to be even more hesitant, which was illustrated by the case of Libya. Justifications for the non-participation drew on traditional antimilitarist positions and even directly evoked the Afghanistan mission. The decision had, however, far more severe repercussions than expected - both internally and externally, and is probably the result of a cost-benefit miscalculation.

Germany's multilateral commitment is contrasted by its continued antimilitarism. Due to this conflict it has been very tedious to realise the necessary adaptations of Germany's armed forces. The new security situation after the Cold War demanded a very different role of the *Bundeswehr* than its traditional design as a defence army. But the transformation from a defence to a crisis management force has been slow, incremental and is still not fully accomplished. This is due, to a large extent, to Germany's resilient, and institutionalised strategic culture. Article 87a of the German Basic Law continues to prescribe territorial defence as the main task of the German armed forces and there has been a strong reluctance to implement a full professionalisation of the *Bundeswehr*. Conscription was long seen as an immutable institution until its suspension was reluctantly decided by the German parliament in March 2011 as part of the new reform process started under Defence Minister Guttenberg and continued by his successor Thomas de Maizière. Nevertheless, the reform still has serious deficiencies as the level of ambition and the actual capacities do not converge. Apart from criticism about the shut-down of several military bases and the important troop reduction, the reform did also largely take place without a public debate. This is explainable by assessing the societal attitude towards the *Bundeswehr* and its role. Germans continue to see their armed forces as a "force for good" whose tasks are limited to territorial defence, humanitarian relief missions, reconstruction and stabilisation tasks. "The ability to fight"⁴⁰⁴ and combat missions are not very high on the public's list of priorities. The German image continues to be marked by an antimilitarist stance with a preference for non-military instruments in security policy. Military force is an instrument of very last resort and can only be justified for defensive and humanitarian purposes. Hence, the Germans see their soldiers as armed development workers. The Afghanistan intervention is a crucial experience in this regard as the German public realised that its armed forces are engaged in a mission that departs from their ideal-type operation. As a consequence, support for the ISAF mission dropped drastically and the general scepticism towards military interventions increased. The result is an exacerbation of the German security policy dilemma inherent in Germany's strategic culture. Due to multilateralism, Germany is inclined to answer to external pressures while its antimilitarism is as strong as ever. The long overdue and needed debate about Germany's security policy, that could attempt to reconcile the two opposing postures, has yet to take place. It can be explained by a lack of public interest on the one hand and

⁴⁰⁴ Thomas de Maizière defines the ability to fight as the goal of the reform, see Chapter III, p.68.

hesitations on the part of politicians due to high political costs on the other. German foreign policy makers continue their policy of muddling through. Internationally, they do the strict minimum to satisfy external demands while keeping public opposition as low as possible.

Germany seems to have become more hesitant and cautious with regard to the use of force. That is at least the opinion of former French Foreign Minister, Hubert Védrine, who is convinced that the abstention from Libya and the minimal engagement in Mali are symptomatic for the CDU-FDP coalition.⁴⁰⁵ Compared to Joschka Fischer, Guido Westerwelle seems indeed very cautious and reserved. Chancellor Angela Merkel herself also stays in the background with regard to security policy. After the enthusiastic proclamation of a normalisation of German foreign policy under the Schröder government by some authors, this renewed hesitance seems like a regression. The analysis in this study has, however, shown that this is not due to a fundamental change in German strategic culture but can rather be ascribed to the continuity that has marked German foreign policy for decades. German strategic culture is still marked by two fundamental elements: antimilitarism and multilateralism. But because of the developments since the Cold War, these two elements came increasingly into conflict, which puts German foreign policy makers in a delicate situation of having to reconcile two contradictory elements of their own strategic culture. Recent developments of the international environment have increased the external pressure for more German responsibility while experiences like the war in Afghanistan tarnished the *Bundeswehr's* image as a "force for good" and caused the scepticism towards military interventions to grow. These developments intensified the inherent conflict of German strategic culture and made the formulation of German security policy all the more complicated.

⁴⁰⁵ HOFFMANN et al, "Merkel's Caution", *op cit.*

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