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Power and Power Politics:

Neorealist Foreign Policy Theory and Expectations about German Foreign Policy since Unification

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1. Summary

Though foreign policy analysis is common in neorealist writings, an elaborated neorealist theory of foreign policy remains to be (re-)constructed. This endeavor begins with the assumption that states are instrumentally rational unitary actors. Acting within the anarchic international system, states, above all, have to secure their own survival and will therefore aim at keeping and extending their autonomy and their influence. The foreign policy behavior of a particular state depends on its power position in the international system, i.e. its share in certain capabilities such as GDP, military forces, territory and population. The more powerful a state, the more autonomy for itself and the more influence over other states or collective decision-making it strives for.

In cases where gains in autonomy and gains in influence are at odds (e.g. with respect to policy towards and within international institutions) neorealists themselves disagree on the behavior to be expected. According to traditional neorealism, states act on the basis of worst-case-scenarios because the likelihood of war is always

present. Thus, states will always privilege autonomy over influence. Modified neorealists, however, incorporate variable security pressures on states into their model. The lower the security pressures a state is exposed to, the more willing it will be to sacrifice some autonomy in order to gain influence.

Due to the end of bipolarity and German unification Germany's power position has moderately improved. At the same time, the security pressures on Germany have significantly decreased. Thus, the two strands in contemporary neorealism derive different expectations about German foreign policy after unification. Traditional neorealism predicts a moderate increase in autonomy-seeking policies. Influence-seeking behavior is only expected whenever losses in autonomy are insignificant. Modified neorealists agree that Germany will, in general, aim at extending its autonomy and influence. When Germany has to make a trade-off between autonomy and influence, however, influence-seeking will be its priority.

2. Introduction

Soon after German unification and the end of the East-West-conflict expectations about a more assertive German foreign policy as a result of an improved power position were voiced by politicians and scholars alike. According to various observers, Germany will overcome its "Machtvergessenheit" (H.P.Schwarz), assume a leadership role (cf. Pond 1992) and assert its national interests in a more powerful way (cf. Waltz 1993, Mearsheimer 1995). Explicitly or implicitly, these expectations have been informed by neorealist thinking.

At the same time, the prospects of the neorealist research program itself have been the subject of considerable debate. While critics accused neorealism of inadequacy and indeterminacy (cf. Vasquez 1997, Ruggie 1998:6f.), adherents of neorealism have explored new ways of applying neorealist core assumptions to the post-cold war reality and of advancing neorealist theory (cf., among others, Grieco 1995, Brooks 1997, Schweller/Pries 1997).

Because of Germany's acknowledged gains in power after unification and the end of bipolarity, Germany's post-unification foreign policy is particularly suited for an empirical evaluation of the explanatory power of neorealist foreign policy analyses. Empirical case studies, however, have to be preceded by a thorough elaboration of recent neorealist scholarship and a (re-)construction of general neorealist expectations about post-unification German foreign policy. This paper is dedicated to this endeavor. ([footnote 1](#))

Neorealism should be regarded as a school of thought rather than as a theory. Its central component is Waltz's theory of international politics (Waltz 1979), but this school of thought also includes other studies which attribute government action and the interaction of states to an anarchic state system characterized by a specific distribution of capabilities.

Although neorealists very frequently conduct analyses of foreign policy, neorealism actually lacks an explicit theory of foreign policy. Waltz's theory is one of international politics, not a theory of foreign policy, since its dependent variable is not the behavior of individual states but the properties of various international systems, such as their stability or proneness to war. Waltz himself regards his theory as ill-suited for a theory of foreign policy (Waltz 1996), although he stresses that the structure of the international system encourages states to adopt a certain power-political mode of behavior (Waltz 1993: 61-70). By contrast, Colin Elman has shown in great detail that none of the arguments put forward by neorealists to substantiate the impossibility of a neorealist theory of foreign policy are convincing, and that there is therefore nothing to prevent the formulation of a neorealist theory of foreign policy (Elman 1996a; cf. also Waltz 1996 and Elman 1996b). However, if we are to go beyond explanations of individual cases, in which important variables are sometimes only specified ex post ([footnote 2](#)), and are to arrive at theoretically substantiated and empirically testable hypotheses, neorealist foreign policy theory not only has to be reconstructed but, in certain aspects, still to be constructed.

If a neorealist theory of foreign policy is to be formulated, the systemic variable "international distribution of power" has to be transformed into the positional variable "relative power position" of a given state (cf. Kittel/Rittberger/Schimmelfennig 1995: 75f.). Above all, however, it has to be shown how the relative power position of a state determines its foreign policy behavior. For this purpose, the fundamental assumption of a specific actor disposition (which underlies any foreign policy theory) will have to be explicated (section 2). The assumption that states react rationally to the inducements and pressures of the international system is a central pillar of neorealist foreign policy theory. It is to a certain extent the link between the theory of international politics and foreign policy theory (2.1.). In

addition, neorealists formulate assumptions concerning states' utility functions; i.e. their fundamental interests. In order to arrive at a testable neorealist theory of foreign policy, the relationship between the basic interests that neorealists assume to exist (security, power, autonomy and influence) have to be discussed (2.2.). States' foreign policy behavior as postulated by neorealism depends on their (power) position in the international system, which is thus the independent variable (3.). A state's power position is the function of its share in certain resources available in the international system (3.1.) and the number of (power) poles in this system (3.2.). In the case of the dependent variable, "foreign policy behavior", autonomy-seeking policy and influence-seeking policy can be distinguished as two basic forms of power politics (4.). In order to be able to formulate neorealist prognoses, gains or losses in autonomy and influence must be weighed against each other (5.): to do this, however, we need to distinguish between various types of autonomy and influence and relate them to different policy options (5.2.). However, weighing can only be done from a theoretical perspective. Within the neorealist school of thought, there has recently been a debate about the weighing of gains in autonomy and influence, from which two competing views have emerged. We will attempt to do justice to this development within neorealism when (re)constructing a neorealist theory of foreign policy, and will distinguish between a traditional and a modified neorealism (5.3.). Before any prognoses about German foreign policy can be formulated (6.2.), Germany's power position first has to be determined (6.1.).

3. States' Disposition to Action in Neorealist Foreign Policy Theory

3.1. Rationality Assumption

In the neorealist view, a state's foreign policy behavior is largely determined by its power position in the international system (cf. Waltz 1993: 45). However, for a neorealist theory of foreign policy, it first has to be stated why states gear their foreign policy action to the systemic context. In other words, a relationship between 'power position' and 'foreign policy' can only be established by specifying the state's disposition to action.

Here, neorealism works on the basis of a rationality assumption. [\(footnote 3\)](#) According to this assumption, states make their decisions on the basis of cost-benefit calculations. The structural conditions of the international system create certain restrictions and incentives which states take into account when pursuing their aims. While some neorealists concede that states occasionally violate this 'systemic logic' (for example, when a state fails to protect itself against more powerful states), they emphasize that this behavior will soon have negative consequences for that state, and in an extreme case could mean its disappearance (cf. Layne 1993: 9f.). As states are aware of this danger and are interested in their survival, they will generally act according to the structural conditions of the international system: "The situation provides enough incentive to cause most of the actors to behave sensibly. Actors become 'sensitive to costs' (...), which for convenience can be called an assumption of rationality" (Waltz 1986: 331). A neorealist theory of international politics can work with the underspecified premise that *most* states will *usually* behave rationally, as the forecast interaction patterns are not affected by individual "vagabonds" of state behavior. For a neorealist theory of foreign policy, however, a more unequivocal assumption regarding states' disposition to action is indispensable. For this theory in particular, the assumption of rationality is the decisive link between system structure and actor behavior (cf. Keohane 1986: 167). To be able to make any statements about the concrete action of individual states, however, the utility functions of states must be examined more closely.

3.2. Security, Power, Autonomy and Influence as Fundamental State Aims

In their foreign policy, states can pursue completely different and many-faceted aims. In the anarchic international system, however, all states must first safeguard their own survival, i.e. their security. Pursuit of manifold, issue-area specific aims is only possible on the basis of a sufficient degree of security. In addition, the anarchic structure of the international system means that the greater their power in comparison with other states, the more successfully states can pursue their various aims. As a structural characteristic, therefore, 'anarchy' plays a crucial role in neorealist foreign policy theory, since it determines two fundamental interests of all states' foreign policy: interest in their security and interest in as much power as possible (cf. Gilpin 1986: 304f.; Mearsheimer 1995: 11; Schweller 1996: 106-08; Spirtas 1996: 387-89; 395). [\(footnote 4\)](#) A crucial precondition for the formulation of a neorealist foreign policy theory is that these terms are explicated and their interrelationship clarified from a neorealist perspective.

'Security' means "the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity" (Buzan 1991: 18f.). From the point of view of neorealism there can never be complete security for states in the anarchic international system. Given that this resource is constantly scarce, they will always strive to preserve and increase their own security. The security interest is a fundamental interest for every state, and persistently determines states' behavior. [\(footnote 5\)](#)

In neorealism, security is frequently simply equated with independence or autonomy. 'Autonomy' is understood as *de facto*, rather than simply formal, independence from other actors. The less a state's capacity for action is restricted by other states and international organizations, the more autonomous it is. In the neorealist view, the struggle for autonomy is a consequence of the anarchic structure of the international system, for the lack of a superordinate dispute arbitrator with powers of sanction means that states have to rely on self-help. In order to be able to pursue self-help strategies successfully, states have to safeguard their autonomy (cf. Mearsheimer 1995; Grieco 1995: 27). The less control other states have over a state, i.e. the greater its autonomy, the safer that state will be. Within this self-help system, a state will above all strive for autonomy in those policy areas in which its security is most threatened.

Although 'security' and 'autonomy' are thus closely related, the two concepts have to be separated analytically. This separation is important, as other resources which compete with 'autonomy' may also serve to protect a state's security. 'Influence' is just such a resource, and is frequently named by neorealists. The reason given for this is that every state must pursue its security interests in a competitive and potentially hostile environment. As it is other states that jeopardize a state's security, it will endeavor to gain as much influence as possible over that environment (cf. Gilpin 1981: 94f.).

The concept of power is of central significance for neorealism. However, neorealism frequently uses the term inconsistently. 'Struggle for power' is used both to describe the preservation or extension of the state's own power position in the international system as well as the control over other states and the results of international political interaction. While 'power' is conceived of as *control over resources* when determining the power position of a state, the term is often also used in the sense of *control over actors and control over outcomes*, when attention turns to states' struggle for power. [\(footnote 6\)](#) In this article, we will attempt to differentiate the concepts more precisely by distinguishing 'power' from 'influence'. 'Power' is the ability to assert one's interests in the international system. In the neorealist view, it is based on the possession of means or resources (*capabilities*) suitable for that purpose. The power of a state results from the relationship of its own capabilities to the capabilities of other states. 'Influence', by contrast, is the measure of control a state has over its own environment. Without this conceptual distinction, contradictions would be unavoidable, and it would be unclear whether 'struggle for power' was to be understood as the struggle for additional capabilities or the pursuit of expansionist aims as a result of increased capabilities (cf. Zakaria 1992: 194). Waltz, for example, stresses on the one hand that power allows a state to secure its own independence and to create a greater margin of security vis-à-vis other states (Waltz 1979: 194) and, on the other, that states only struggle for power once they have guaranteed themselves a basic modicum of security (Waltz 1979: 126). Waltz thus assumes on the one hand that power serves a state's own security (and that, as security maximizers, states are thus power maximizers) and, on the other, that power and security are two competing resources between which there can be a trade-off. This is because he uses 'power' in the one case to mean control over resources and in the other to mean 'influence' (*control over actors and outcomes*).

Neorealists assume that power provides a state with the means for securing and extending its autonomy. Autonomy therefore presupposes power. At the same time, the neorealist concept of 'power' in the sense of *control over resources* means that power itself already presupposes a certain degree of autonomy. The territory of a state, for example, can only serve the state as a power resource if it actually possesses sovereignty over that territory. In neorealism, therefore, autonomy is both the precondition and the result of power, which would suggest that its arguments have a certain circularity. However, this circularity only exists in exceptional cases, for example if a state's foreign policy is aimed at ending a status of occupation. The autonomy it gains thereby improves its power position and gives it increased opportunity to strive for further autonomy (in the sense of freedom of action). As a rule, however, gains in autonomy (such as resignation from international organizations) can scarcely increase a state's capabilities and thus cannot improve its power position.

While, in the neorealist view, the autonomy of a state is a measure of how little other states (i.e. its environment) can exercise control over it (control over its actions, its capabilities, its territory, etc.), its influence is a measure of how strongly it can itself impact its environment, and in particular the behavior of other states. This influence includes having a say in collective decisions as well as the opportunity of influencing the foreign policy of another state in one's own interest.

From the neorealist perspective, both the struggle for autonomy and the struggle for influence are bound up with security interests, but while the former is bound up with it immediately, the latter has a more indirect relationship with security interests:

"[A] state is compelled within the anarchic and competitive conditions of international relations to (...) attempt to extend its control over the

international system. If the state fails to make this attempt, it risks the possibility that other states will increase their relative power positions and will thereby place its existence or vital interests in jeopardy" (Gilpin 1981: 86).

A state is therefore interested in influencing the decisions of other states or collective decisions within international institutions to suit its purposes, so as to prevent these decisions being made to the benefit of other states which may threaten it, and thereby running contrary to its security interests. To the extent that the struggle for influence can be attributed to a state's security interests, therefore, a state will struggle for influence, especially in those policy areas which affect its political, economic and military-strategic power position and thus its security. In a competitive international system, a state must even assert those interests which have no immediate effect on its security. [\(footnote 7\)](#) The greater a state's influence on its environment, the more effectively it can also pursue its non-security interests. Beyond its struggle for security, therefore, every state is also interested in transforming its capabilities into influence.

As a state needs autonomy and influence to protect its security, it will strive to attain these. In this process, the greater its power position, the more autonomy and influence it will gain. Here, one can distinguish two approaches within neorealism. They are generally referred to as 'offensive' (some authors also speak of 'aggressive') and 'defensive' neorealism. Offensive neorealists hold that all states must strive for as much power as possible, given the competitive character of the anarchic international system (Mearsheimer 1995: 11f.). Defensive neorealists, by contrast, do not believe that this necessarily follows from the basic assumptions of neorealism. Here again, one can distinguish two positions. Pure defensive neorealists emphasize that these basic assumptions only allow one to conclude that states strive to secure their power position in the international system. Any behavior aimed at increasing power must then be explained by other, sub-systemic variables (Snyder 1991: 10-13; for critical comments cf. Zakaria 1992: 190-96). However, most defensive neorealists hold a different, and rather ambiguous view, according to which all states strive at least to preserve their power position in the system, while some of them go further and pursue offensive- expansionist aims (Waltz 1979; Gilpin 1981: 87-88; Grieco 1988a, Schweller 1996). [\(footnote 8\)](#) In other words, these authors allow a certain indeterminacy concerning states' disposition to action. The structural conditions of the international system require that a state is at least a defensive positionalist, but also create incentives for an offensive-positionalist orientation. States' behavior depends on whether they pursue revisionist aims or are status quo-oriented.

As concerns states' struggle for power in the anarchic international system, therefore, we can distinguish three positions based on neorealism:

- i. the structure of the international system forces all states to strive for as much power as possible.
- ii. Due to the structure of the international system, all states wish to preserve their power position, and at least some states strive for more power.
- iii. Due to the structure of the international system, all states wish solely to preserve their power position.

If one chooses the third, 'most defensive' variant, then one is either left with a theory in which factors other than anarchy and power distribution explain state aggression and the violent conduct of international conflicts (e.g. influential social groupings who hope to profit from expansion) or with a theory which denies the security dilemma (see Herz 1951: 14) and the constant risk of war in the international system, since all states are satisfied with their current position in the system and do not have to fear the expansionist desires of other states (cf. the critical comments made by Schweller 1996). [\(footnote 9\)](#) In both cases, one has then largely abandoned the neorealist position. This is also a reason why defensive neorealists usually choose the second of the above-mentioned variants. In this variant, states' disposition to action remains underspecified: In the international system there is always the possibility that certain states wish to maximize their power, but it cannot be specified ex ante whether a certain state wishes solely to preserve its power position or to improve it. This is acceptable for a theory of international politics, but not for a foreign policy theory. In such a theory it must be possible to take the premises of that theory as a basis for predicting whether a given state is striving to preserve or to extend its power position. [\(footnote 10\)](#)

When formulating a neorealist theory of foreign policy, therefore, it is advisable to assume that all states in the international system are interested in as much power as possible. Not only is this the assumption most suitable for practical research, but it is also the most plausible assumption of a neorealist theory of foreign policy. If a state prefers its current power position M^0 to a weaker power position M^{-1} , because this allows it to assert its security and other interests better, then it will also prefer M^{+1} to M^0 and M^{+2} to M^{+1} . [\(footnote 11\)](#) It must be emphasized that this assumption refers to states' fundamental interest in maximizing power and not to the style of state behavior. Analysts frequently fail to make this distinction. The assumption of interest in as much power as possible does by no means have to imply the expectation of aggressive and expansionist behavior.

So far, we can state that the following are central tenets of a neorealist theory of foreign policy: it follows from the structure of the international system, which is

characterized by anarchy and a varying distribution of capabilities, that all states (as egoistic and instrumentally rational actors) strive for security. States strive for autonomy and influence, as both enhance their security. However, although this disposition to action is the same for all states, it does not result in all states behaving similarly, as states can only pursue a policy geared to autonomy and influence within the possibilities at their disposal depending on their power position. The stronger a state's power position, the more its foreign policy will strive for autonomy and influence; in other words, it will therefore pursue more policies aimed at maximizing autonomy and influence (= power politics).

4. A State's Power Position as an Independent Variable

The neorealist school of thought attributes patterns of interaction in international politics to the structure of the international system. This system has three structural characteristics, two of which (anarchy, states as units of the system) are constant. When explaining variance in cases of international interaction, special significance is attached to the third, variable characteristic, the distribution of *capabilities* between states. When explaining the foreign policy behavior of a state, its relative power position has to be derived from the international distribution of power. A state's relative power position is the product of the polarity of the system and the share of capabilities which the state (in relation to other states) has at its disposal. Taken in combination, they decisively influence the state's foreign policy behavior:

"The behavior of individual states, regardless of their domestic political characteristics, is constrained by their own capabilities and the distribution of power in the system as a whole (...). The external environment will inevitably pressure states to move toward congruity between commitments and capabilities" (Krasner 1993: 21).

4.1. Capabilities

When determining the power position of a state in the international system, crucial importance is attached to its share in those resources available in the system which it needs to assert its own interests in this system. In the neorealist view, power is based on the availability of political, economic and military capabilities which allow a state to assert its own interests in dealings with other actors. This view assumes that capabilities are highly fungible (Waltz 1979: 131; Waltz 1986: 333f.; Art 1996), meaning that a state's possession of various capabilities allows one to draw conclusions as to the general power of that state. In the neorealist view, then, power is a general potential which a state can employ in quite disparate areas of policy in order to pursue its own aims.

Although 'power' takes up a central position in realism, no neorealist author has indicated satisfactorily what exactly has to be regarded as a significant capability, and how this is to be measured. As a whole, when using the concept of capabilities, neorealism does not display any more conceptual rigor than classical realism. Morgenthau (1948) spoke of eight central elements of national power: geography, natural resources (foodstuffs, minerals), industrial capacity, military preparedness (technology, leadership, quantity and quality of armed forces), population, national character, national morale, quality of diplomacy. Waltz names seven different capabilities: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability, competence (Waltz 1979: 131). Neither he nor any other neorealist explicates or operationalizes these terms, let alone brings them together in a coherent and consistent construct. Neither Grieco (1990; 1995) nor Mearsheimer (1990; 1995) provide any clarification, though the latter does emphasize the significance of military power (Mearsheimer 1990: 6). For Gilpin, power is based on a state's military, economic and technical capabilities (Gilpin 1981: 13). He stresses that there are other important factors (which are, however, very difficult to measure) that help to influence political events, such as public morale or the quality of political leadership. He uses the term "prestige" to sum up these factors (Gilpin 1981: 13, 30). And although Waltz's concept of power includes material and immaterial, psychological factors, he only devotes his attention to the former when it comes to their application (cf. Waltz 1986; 1991; 1993).

Joseph Nye investigates immaterial capabilities in more detail. Although he is not a convinced neorealist, his thinking reveals close affinities with realism. He distinguishes between *command power* (or: *hard power*) and *co-optive power* (or: *soft power*) (Nye 1990: 31f.). The former is based on the usual capabilities such as population, territory and economic and military strength, while the latter is based on factors such as the attractiveness of the state's own ideas and its ability of

agenda- setting. *Hard power* can be used to influence the actions of others, while *soft power* is aimed at their preferences (Nye 1990: 267). It can be employed in order to influence what others think and desire. Here it becomes clear that Nye's concept of *co-optive power* is a long way from realism. It includes ideas and values, changeable preferences and inter- subjectively marked conceptions of the world; in other words, categories which neorealists will usually decidedly refuse to consider. It would thus be problematic to include aspects of this *soft power* when determining the power of a state from a neorealist perspective.

When (re)constructing a neorealist theory of foreign policy, therefore, we cannot fall back on a generally accepted canon of capabilities. However, it is undisputed that neorealists attach particular importance to a state's economic and military strength as a power resource. To measure economic strength, neorealists generally consider GNP, export volume and currency reserves, while military spending, troop strengths and the possession of nuclear weapons are often regarded as criteria of military strength. Neorealists also regard population and territory as capabilities. Population size determines how many people can be mobilized as workers and, if necessary, as soldiers. The size and position of a state's territory not only determine how difficult it will be to conquer that state, but may also limit or extend freedom of manoeuvre (e.g. by making nuclear tests possible on that territory).

As 'power' is a relative concept, any measurement of a state's power must always take into account the relative size of its capabilities in comparison with those of other states.

4.2. Polarity of the International System

Neorealists not only regard the polarity of the international system as the decisive determinant of the stability of the system or its proneness to war (Waltz 1979: 134-38), but also vest it with great significance for the power positions of the various states. Polarity is determined by the number of (power) poles, i.e. of great powers in the system. Above all, neorealists distinguish between bipolar and multipolar systems. ([footnote 12](#)) They do not give any criteria as to when a state has sufficient capabilities at its disposal to qualify as a pole in the system. Waltz contents himself with the assertion that it is usually immediately clear who the great powers in the system are (Waltz 1979: 131). Mearsheimer, who attributes particularly great importance to military capabilities, feels that the necessary and sufficient criterion is the "reasonable prospect" of defending oneself independently against the leading state in the system (Mearsheimer 1990: 7).

The polarity of the international system influences a state's power position because the number of great powers determines the freedom for manoeuvre of all states in the international system and thus also how states can employ their capabilities. For most states, for example, increasing their own share in capabilities in the international system under conditions of bipolarity has fewer consequences than if they do so when there is non- bipolarity. In bipolarity, a state with a share in capabilities at its disposal that is significant but remains far behind those of the two leading powers, will have little prospects of itself becoming a pole in the system and thus of being able to independently safeguard its own survival. Its security will therefore remain contingent on protection from one great power by the other. In a multipolar system, by contrast, this dependence is far less in evidence, and the state can act independently to a greater degree. When employing its capabilities it is not (or at least to a lesser degree) restricted by a protective great power. When a bipolar system falls apart, therefore, the power position of such a state improves even if its share of the capabilities available in the international system has not increased.

5. The Forms of Power Politics: Autonomy-Seeking Policy and Influence-Seeking Policy

Turning away from the independent variable 'power position', we now come to the dependent variable of neorealist foreign policy theory. As, in the neorealist perspective, states use their given power position to strive for autonomy and for influence, we will distinguish two forms of power politics: autonomy-seeking policy and influence-seeking policy.

Autonomy-seeking policy serves to preserve or reinforce a state's independence of other states or, to put it in other words, to prevent new or reduce existing dependence on other states. A state can pursue autonomy- seeking policy in contexts in which gains in autonomy vis-à-vis other states are possible or in which there is a risk of losing autonomy. In this context, international institutions are above all significant as restraints on state independence and freedom of action. ([footnote](#)

13) A number of modes of behavior can therefore be seen as autonomy-seeking policy:

- non-compliance with or the dissolution of existing obligations resulting from bilateral or multilateral international agreements
- the refusal to accept new obligations of this nature;
- the refusal to transfer national material resources to international or supranational institutions, or the attempt to win back these resources;
- the refusal to transfer national decision-making powers to international or supranational institutions, or the attempt to win back these powers;
- the formation of an alliance against a threatening third state;
- the refusal to accept cooperation which creates or reinforces asymmetric interdependence, i.e. dependence to the state's disadvantage.

It should be noted that autonomy-seeking policy is to be found here in manifestations of varying strength. In each case, the above list of autonomy-seeking modes of behavior only names their typical, strongest form. The dependent variable can in principle include all values to be found on a continuum between 'no autonomy-seeking policy' (which could of course no longer be forecast by neorealism) and 'strong autonomy-seeking policy'. For example, between the pronounced willingness to accept integration in an international or supranational institution (= no autonomy-seeking policy) and complete rejection of that integration (= strong autonomy-seeking policy) there are usually intermediate stages of more or less autonomy-protecting behavior which can be characterized as more or less extreme manifestations of autonomy-seeking policy.

The formation and maintenance of an alliance against a powerful third state can also be a form of autonomy-seeking policy. This would at first seem to run counter to one's intuition, as this is a case of international cooperation. From the neorealist point of view, the formation of alliances always serves solely to ward off dominance by this third state which is threatening one's independence. In other words, not every form of international cooperation can be regarded as alliance politics conforming with neorealism if only one powerful third state can be distinguished against which this cooperation might be directed. (footnote 14) According to the neorealist alliance theory, states accept the minimum loss of autonomy necessary for the alliance in order to prevent the threat of a far greater loss of autonomy otherwise involved in dominance by a powerful third country.

Selective or even non-cooperation due to the anxiety of becoming (more) dependent on another state also has to be regarded as autonomy-seeking policy. This includes non-cooperation as a result of *relative-gains* considerations. A state will above all wish to avoid relative losses vis-à-vis another state in order to escape the danger of a loss of autonomy. The neorealist literature dealing with relative gains always speaks of a close relationship between anxiety due to relative losses and states' struggle for autonomy. However, what it does not contend is that states forego any cooperation whatsoever because of their anxiety about relative losses. If A emerges from its cooperation with B with an absolute gain, then even if A itself has suffered a relative loss in comparison with B it can still have made a relative gain in comparison with the third parties C, D and E, who were not involved (cf. Milner 1992; Snidal 1991). What is decisive for a state, therefore, is the significance it places in power-position considerations vis-à-vis a specific other state. In Grieco's well-known utility function, this is given as factor k (sensitivity for relative gains and losses) (Grieco 1988b). The higher a state estimates the danger that the other state will limit the state's autonomy (by means of economic, military or other dependence) through its relative gains from cooperation, the greater k will be vis-à-vis that state.

While states use autonomy-seeking policy in their attempt to elude the influence of their environment, influence-seeking policy helps states themselves to exercise influence on that environment. When pursuing influence-seeking policy, states attempt to shape certain interaction processes with other states and the resulting policies emerging from them in their own interest, or they attempt to secure and extend the resources which allow them to exercise this influence. Bilateral influence-seeking policy, i.e. the attempt to gain control over the behavior of another state, is only possible in dealings with weaker states. The control of entire international institutions and the other states participating in them requires a clear position of supremacy. In dealings with more powerful states, influence-seeking policy can be pursued in the form of voice-opportunities-seeking in multilateral institutions (although this also requires that the state's power position is not completely subordinate (Grieco 1995: 34)). Institutions can thus serve as arenas of influence-seeking policy (cf. Rittberger/Mogler/Zangl 1997: 25-45). It cannot, however, be concluded conversely that every strengthening of institutions will increase a state's influence (see below). The following can be regarded as influence-seeking policy:

- the maximization of voice-opportunities in international organisations by increasing the state's own share in intra-organizational resources (personnel, voting rights etc.);
- preference for those multilateral institutions (over others) which bring about the most voice-opportunities;

- securing voice-opportunities regarding the policies of powerful states and groups of states;
- the establishment, maintenance or reinforcement of the dependence of weaker states (i.e. of influence on these states).

Autonomy-seeking policy serves to preserve and increase autonomy, while influence-seeking policy secures and extends influence over other states and within international institutions. The greater a state's power position, therefore, the more the foreign policy of that state will be characterized by these two forms of power politics. In the neorealist view, a small state is too weak to pursue an autonomy- or influence-seeking policy with much success (cf. Waltz 1979: 194). Its interest in autonomy and influence is by no means less than that of a great power, but its opportunities for actually pursuing autonomy- and influence-seeking policy are far fewer.

6. The Relationship Between the Struggles for Autonomy and Influence: Traditional and Modified Neorealism

To be able to formulate neorealist hypotheses and predictions, one must be able to state when a state will prefer autonomy-seeking policy and when it will prefer influence-seeking policy, and in what relationship between autonomy- and influence-seeking policy it will pursue power politics. It thus has to be clarified how the two fundamental dispositions to action, the struggle for autonomy and the struggle for influence, are related to each other. First of all, it cannot be assumed that the struggle for gains in autonomy and the struggle for gains in influence will always prompt states to adopt the same foreign policy behavior, and that an unequivocal expectation of behavior can thus be formulated for all foreign policy situations. At the same time, it also need not be assumed that the maximization of autonomy and influence necessarily conflict with each other, i.e. lead to competing expectations of behavior in all foreign policy situations.

To prevent various modes of behavior being attributed *ad hoc* to either autonomy maximization or influence maximization, and to enable us to make unequivocal predictions even when faced with two possibly competing dispositions to behavior, the aim of the following section is to define as precisely as possible the conditions under which autonomy or influence maximization can be expected. Our first task is to further clarify what neo- realism regards as a gain or loss in autonomy or influence (5.1.). We then want to examine modes of foreign policy behavior systematically for gains or losses in autonomy or influence (5.2.). Thereby, we attempt to identify types of modes of behavior as systematically as possible, so that in applying and testing the theories empirically we can allocate the behavioral options under discussion to the corresponding types, so that gains or losses in autonomy or influence can be determined in uniform fashion. However, a further, third step is necessary for making predictions. Only a weighing of the various forms of gains or losses in autonomy or influence will allow us to deduce neorealist expectations of behavior (5.3.). It will become clear here that a distinction has to be made between two variants of neorealist foreign policy theory, which we would describe as "traditional neorealism" and "modified neorealism".

6.1. Forms of Autonomy and Influence

In order to arrive at as precise an understanding as possible of what neorealists mean by 'autonomy' and 'influence', the following section will present possible forms of autonomy and influence. Without doubt, it would be better to deduce possible forms than to list them in this way, but since neorealist theory does not provide any criteria for a procedure of this kind, this is not possible.

From the list below, it becomes clear that, in a certain respect, autonomy and influence are 'mirror images', since one actor's gain in influence involves another actor's loss in autonomy. Two variants can be distinguished here: in a strictly mirror-image relationship with only two actors, A and B, A's gain in influence is B's autonomy loss and vice versa. However, as relationships between several actors generally have to be considered, this strictly mirror- image relationship tends to be an exception. More frequently, one will encounter cases in which, for example, two states (A and B) lose the same amount of autonomy by devolving competences to an international or supranational organization. An agreement to strengthen the position of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or the European Commission, for example, represents an influence gain for these international bodies and an autonomy loss for all states concerned.

Autonomy can be present (and be striven for by states) in the following forms:

1. Freedom from positive obligations to display a certain foreign policy behavior;
 - Obligations can relate to
 - i. procedural aspects such as
 - the obligation to consult or inform certain other actors (e.g. within the framework of the EU's CFSP);
 - the obligation to accept and implement the decisions of international organizations or bodies (e.g. decisions of the EU Council of Ministers);
 - the obligation to accept and implement judgements of international or supranational courts (e.g. of the ICJ, European Court of Justice, European Court of Human Rights);
 - ii. material aspects, e.g. an obligation to comply with concrete duties (e.g. to reduce tariffs or to pay contributions).
2. Freedom from negative obligations, i.e. from prohibitions of certain modes of foreign policy behavior. Prohibitions can relate to
 - the acquisition of certain goods (e.g. nuclear weapons);
 - the use of certain tools or resources (e.g. certain types of weapons);
 - modes of behavior vis-à-vis a country's own population (e.g. in human rights regimes);
 - modes of behavior vis-à-vis other states (e.g. ban on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction).
3. Freedom from restrictions on the state's own freedom of action. A state's freedom of manoeuvre can be impaired by
 - dependence in the sense of asymmetric interdependence to a state's disadvantage (e.g. with respect to markets for export or imports);
 - (possibility of) military threat;
 - military action (e.g. the mining of a state's ports);
 - economic sanctions.

Influence can be present (and be striven for by states) in the following forms:

1. Obligations for action imposed on other states
 - i. procedural, such as
 - having to be consulted or informed by other states (e.g. within the framework of the EU's CFSP);
 - imposing an obligation to accept and implement the decisions of international organizations or bodies in which that state is involved (e.g. decisions of the EU Council of Ministers);
 - ii. material, i.e. a duty to perform specific tasks.
2. Imposing prohibitions of certain modes of foreign policy behavior on other states. Prohibitions can relate to
 - the acquisition of certain goods (e.g. nuclear weapons);
 - the use of certain tools or resources (e.g. certain types of weapons);
 - modes of behavior vis-à-vis a country's own population (e.g. in human rights regimes);
 - modes of behavior vis-à-vis other states (e.g. ban on the proliferation of nuclear weapons).
3. Restrictions on other states' freedom of action. Their freedom of manoeuvre can be impaired by
 - dependence in the sense of asymmetric interdependence to their disadvantage (e.g. with respect to exports or imports);
 - (possibility of) military threat;
 - military action (e.g. the mining of their ports);
 - economic sanctions.

5.2. Options for Behavior to Maximize Autonomy and Influence

By listing the various manifestations of autonomy and influence, we have now achieved a more precise understanding of the neorealist concept of autonomy and influence. The next step must now be to categorize types of foreign policy behavior according to their implications for a gain or loss in autonomy or influence. Basically, every foreign policy action can cause autonomy or influence to grow, remain the same, or diminish. Any combination of the two variables 'autonomy gain' and 'influence gain' is conceivable. However, different types of foreign policy options will tend to give rise to characteristic combinations of the two variables.

Withdrawal from international organizations or regimes generally involves a loss of influence and a concomitant gain in autonomy. On the one hand, withdrawal means the end of the obligation to comply with the decisions made in the international institution, but on the other hand it also means that the state loses the opportunity to insist on its own preferences being taken into account in negotiations and possibly to oblige other member states to comply with the results of negotiations. [\(footnote 15\)](#) Analogously, non-participation in actions which are organized on a multilateral basis (such as military actions) represents a gain in autonomy, since the deployment of the state's own resources (its troops in this case) is not subject to any multilateral regulation. At the same time, the state loses the opportunity of influencing the execution and results of the action. International institutions such as the UN Security Council, whose decisions are also binding for non-members, are a special case. Withdrawing from this organ will not result in a gain in autonomy, but solely in a loss of influence.

Analogously to withdrawal from international institutions, the strengthening of these institutions þ i.e. the extension of their area of responsibility or increase in the binding nature of their regulations þ will generally mean that a member state will forfeit autonomy and, at the same time, gain influence, since it will be given greater opportunity of codetermination in collective decisions affecting other member states. It is, however, difficult to assess situations in which a state sacrifices a certain amount of autonomy in order to preserve its autonomy in the long run, for example when it forms an alliance against a powerful third state. While an "investment" of autonomy of this nature involves a loss of autonomy vis-à-vis the status quo, the alternative (not joining an alliance) would, from a neorealist perspective, result in a considerably greater autonomy loss. Joining an alliance has therefore to be allocated to the "autonomy loss/influence gain" category, but it has to be considered whether this action does not represent a gain in autonomy in comparison with the other alternatives. Regardless of this, the strengthening of supranational institutions, such as entrusting an international court of justice with the binding interpretation of treaty obligations or transferring decision-making powers to supranational institutions (such as the European Parliament) is always a special case. When supranational institutions are strengthened in this way, there is a considerable loss of autonomy without any concomitant gain in influence. Only the supranational institutions gain autonomy, while it is withheld from all the member states. The same combination of autonomy loss without influence gain will result if states increase the obligations they impose on themselves. Accession to human rights conventions, for example, do not result in any gains of influence whatsoever, but do involve restrictions on states' freedom of action, and thus a loss of autonomy.

A state will always be able to increase its own influence without an attendant loss of autonomy if it is promised a greater share of intra-organizational resources. These inner-organizational resources include shares of votes (given that there is deviation from the unanimity or consensus principle), seats on bodies of an international or supranational institution (in the European Parliament, for example), or an increase in the state's share of administrative personnel working for an international organization. Being able to place one's own nationals in leading positions signifies a gain in influence without any concomitant autonomy loss. As in other administrative authorities, officials working in international organizations can influence many individual decisions which may turn out to the benefit or disadvantage of individual states. Top-ranking officials such as secretaries- or directors-general also have at their disposal a considerable amount of freedom when setting agendas, which may reflect the interests of individual states to a greater or lesser degree. Although officials in international organizations are obliged to respect their organizations' aims, it can be assumed that they will show a bias in favor of the interests of their home country, since the future of their political career will generally be decided there, and because they were socialized in their home country's political institutions.

Relations with weaker states are determined by the dependence of the latter, which will be all the greater the weaker those states are. Powerful states can instrumentalize this dependence, for example, by tying the granting of development aid or the provision of diplomatic support to conditions. By instrumentalizing both positive and negative sanctions, states can increase their influence over weaker states, yet their level of autonomy remains unaffected. If relations with weaker states are coordinated multilaterally between powerful states (e.g. when development aid is granted by multilateral organizations), the more powerful states forfeit

part of their freedom, and thus lose some autonomy. At the same time, they lose opportunities of individually tying payments to weaker states to conditions in their favor, and so there is also a loss of influence (in their dealings with weaker states).

The following diagram systematically structures the types of foreign policy behavior described above according to gains or losses in autonomy or influence. However, it does not claim to give a complete picture of the specific facts of individual cases.

Diagram 1: Options for Foreign Policy Behavior

	Influence gain	Influence stays the same	Influence loss
Autonomy gain	Bilateralization of relations with weaker states	Weakening of supranational institutions	Withdrawal from international organizations/bodies, whose decisions apply to member states only
		Weakening of self-imposed obligations	Non-participation in actions on a multilateral basis
Autonomy stays the same	Joining international organizations/bodies, whose decisions are also binding for non-member states	(Preservation of status quo)	Withdrawal from international organizations/bodies, whose decisions are also binding for non-member states
	Increases of own share of inner-organizational resources		Decrease of own share of inner-organizational resources
	Greater instrumentalization of positive/negative sanctions		Weaker instrumentalization of positive/negative sanctions
Autonomy loss	Strengthening of international organizations/bodies in which the state itself participates	Strengthening of supranational institutions	Multilateralization of relations with weaker states
	Participation in actions on a multilateral basis	Strengthening of self-imposed obligations	

6.3. Weighing of Gains in Autonomy and Influence in Neorealist Foreign Policy Theory

Diagram 1 presents cases where a state's options for behavior only vary in respect of 'autonomy' as well as those where they only vary in respect of 'influence'. In cases such as these it is easy to answer the question as to what form of power politics neorealist theory of foreign policy will predict in relation to a state's power position, since the power-political scale is one-dimensional. In this case, power politics is behavior aimed at maximizing autonomy or influence. In other cases, both the anticipated autonomy gains and the anticipated influence gains vary. In one group of cases, autonomy and influence gains vary in the same direction, i.e. a gain in autonomy is linked with a gain in influence and vice versa (e.g. a bilateralization of development aid). [\(footnote 16\)](#) The maximization of both autonomy and influence would then involve the same foreign policy behavior, and so the power-political scale would again be one-dimensional. It would again be no problem to formulate a neorealist prediction.

As can be seen from *diagram 1*, however, the maximization of autonomy and influence can also occasionally conflict with each other. Within international institutions especially, a policy to increase autonomy can cost a state influence, while a policy to increase influence can lead to a loss of autonomy. For cases such as these, a neorealist theory of foreign policy must specify what importance states (within their power-political possibilities) will attach to gains or losses in autonomy and influence. As we shall see, Waltz's neorealist theory clearly rules in favor of autonomy gains, while the considerations of some other neorealist authors deviate

from this. We therefore have to distinguish between two variants of neorealist foreign policy theory.

A foreign policy theory that closely follows 'traditional' neorealists such as Waltz and Mearsheimer will always give clear preference to the maximization of autonomy and thus to autonomy-seeking policy. From this point of view, a state's own independence is more strongly and immediately linked with its security interests than any possible influence on other actors. As states assume that their security is always under grave threat in the international system, special emphasis is placed on preserving and increasing autonomy. Institutions are above all regarded as constraints on state autonomy, which states should attempt to evade, if possible (cf. Schweller/Priess 1997: 3). According to this theory, a state will pursue influence-seeking policy if, and only if, it either preserves/increases autonomy at the same time or if gains or losses in autonomy are not to be made or feared. In issue areas which are particularly relevant for security, states are especially concerned to preserve and increase autonomy.

A number of neorealists have doubts about granting autonomy such absolute priority. As Brooks (1997) shows, the priority of autonomy over influence which Waltz asserts is only possible because Waltz assumes that states always operate on the basis of *worst-case* scenarios. Here, the potential threat by a state is sufficient grounds for having to protect oneself against this threat. Potential threat already exists if another state or alliance of states has more capabilities at its disposal. By contrast, the intentions of this state or these states are unimportant, as there is no guarantee that they will not change. *Worst-case* scenarios such as these would therefore regard strategies aimed at powers of co-decision with states possessing superior capabilities as extremely risky and unwise. Only a foreign policy which preserves and extends the state's autonomy is regarded as rational.

Brooks goes on to show that this disposition to action is by no means a necessary result of neorealist assumptions about the anarchic structure of the international system. Brooks distinguishes here between 'neorealism' and 'post-classical realism': from a neorealist point of view, the constant possibility of threat and the use of force in the international system means that states operate with *worst-case* scenarios, while from the point of view of post-classical realism they decide on the basis of the likelihood of force being threatened or used. It is not only the distribution of power resources which determines the likelihood of force being threatened or used, as in neorealism à la Waltz, but also other material factors such as technology, geography and economy. The result is that 'post-classical realism' regards the security pressures in the international system as variable (Brooks 1997: 458). Consequently, this view holds that, even in the anarchic international system, there can be situations in which states see a relatively slight immediate threat to their security.

From a heuristic point of view, Brooks's distinction between two variants of modern realist theory on the basis of the disposition to action attributed to states in their cost-benefit calculation is very fruitful when (re-)constructing neorealist foreign policy theory. However, the choice of the term 'post-classical realism' is unfortunate, since realists such as Waltz and Mearsheimer also go beyond the classical realism of Carr and Morgenthau, and are thus 'post-classical'. Instead, we shall speak of 'traditional neorealism' on the one hand and 'modified neorealism' on the other. The second problem with Brooks's method is that he only illustrates on the basis of a few examples how, according to modified neorealism, states do not behave as traditional neorealism would predict. On the whole, it is unclear whether Brooks assumes that, in modified neorealism, even powerful states do not pursue power politics under certain conditions, or whether he simply assumes a different form of power politics for this theory.

Our considerations so far, however, have shown that the connection between a state's power position and its inclination to pursue power politics also applies to a modified neorealist theory of foreign policy. However, the theory can come to different pronouncements as to which form of power politics (autonomy- or influence-seeking policy) a state will primarily pursue in line with its power-position possibilities. The more precarious the security situation of a state, the greater its concern will be to preserve or even extend its autonomy. By contrast, the less immediate the threat to a state's security, the more it may accept a pay-off between gains in influence and a loss of autonomy. For a modified neorealist theory, therefore, it is essential that the 'threat to security' variable be defined, since it is assumed that this plays a role in the decision as to which form of power politics will be chosen.

Various neorealist authors have identified variables that influence the likelihood of force being threatened or used. Reference is often made to technological factors which may temper the acuteness of the security dilemma resulting from anarchy (cf. Snyder 1996: 168-171). Barry Buzan ([footnote 17](#)) introduces "interaction capacity in the international system" as a variable (Buzan 1993: 69-80). This refers first and foremost to the communications and transport technology which is available and usable in the international system. His hypothesis is that, as the interaction capacity increases, the anarchic international system will forfeit its self-help character. Authors such as Robert Jervis and Charles Glaser emphasize the modifying effect of certain military technologies. Security becomes more precarious as the military technology available makes attack more attractive than defense (Jervis 1978; Glaser 1995: 61f.), and as it becomes more difficult to distinguish between

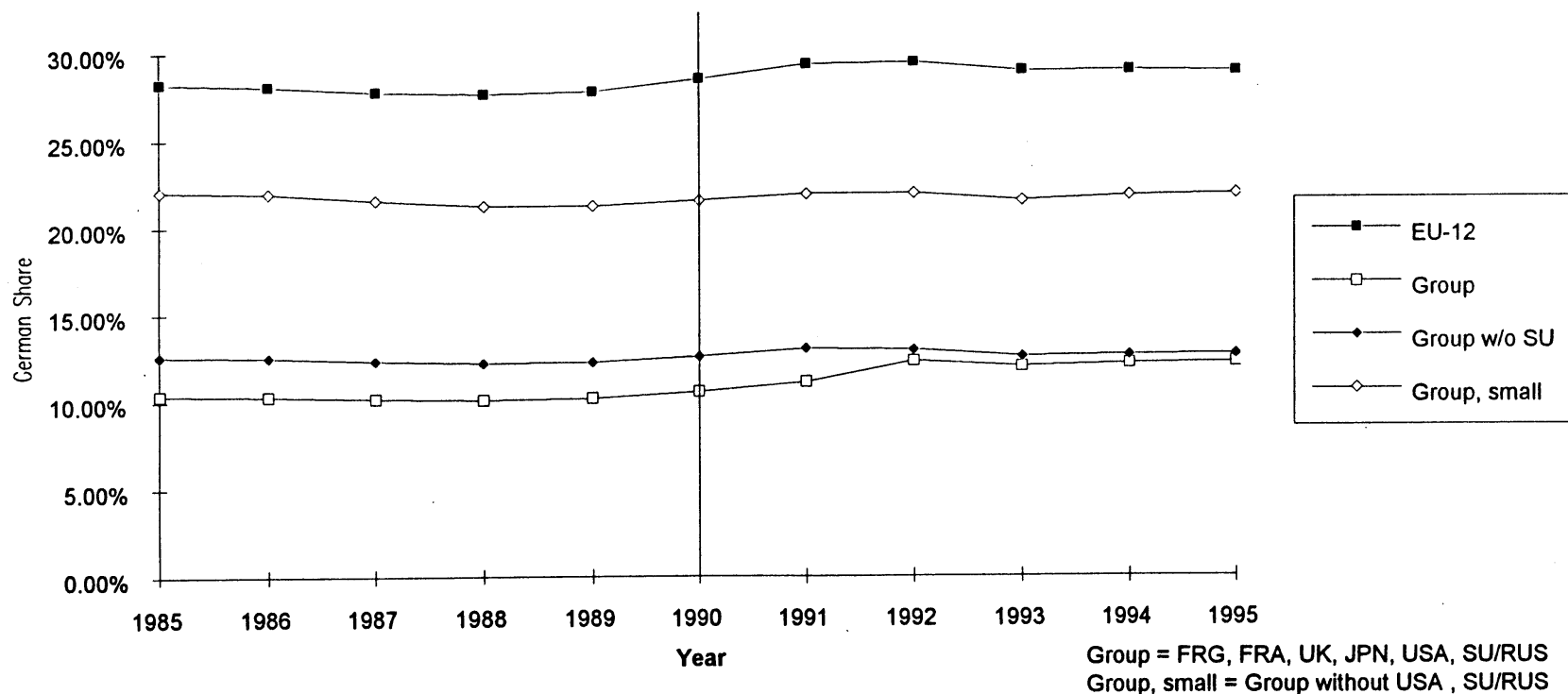
offensive and defensive military potential (Glaser 1995: 62). [\(footnote 18\)](#) Stephen Walt's modification of the neorealist alliance theory, the *balance of threat* theory, also operates with technological factors, but also attributes a significant role to geographical variables for determining the security threat which a state perceives. For Walt, the level of threat which one state represents for another not only results from its relative power but also from its geographical proximity, the capabilities it can deploy offensively and its (perceived) intentions (Walt 1987: 17-33). This means that a state must not necessarily regard another, very powerful state as a serious threat; if, for example, it is far away and/or is a state which has been an ally for a long time. In such a case, autonomy-seeking policy vis-à-vis this state is less necessary than traditional neorealism assumes. We could go further than Walt here and add that, in a case such as this, a state has more room for influence-political forms of power politics. Finally, Robert Gilpin refers to economic factors. He emphasizes that the costs of territorial expansion are very high for industrialized countries which are highly integrated in the global economy, and that for this reason these states primarily attempt to achieve political influence over other states and a dominant position in the global economic system (Gilpin 1981: 132-33). It follows from this argument that, all other things being equal, a state surrounded by modern industrialized nations will be under less serious threat of military attack than one whose neighboring states may expect to gain from territorial expansion.

According to these authors, then, international institutions can, to a greater extent than allowed by traditional neorealism, be used by states as arenas for converting capabilities into influence. This is reminiscent of the variant of the theory of hegemonic stability (Gilpin 1981) which takes the idea of a *coercive hegemon* (cf. Snidal 1985; Hasenclever/Mayer/ Rittberger 1997: 90-92) as its starting point. Stephen Krasner has also pointed out that regimes can themselves be a source of power (Krasner 1982: 506f.; Krasner 1991; cf. Hasenclever/Mayer/Rittberger 1997: 108). Finally, Joseph Grieco's *voice-opportunity* hypothesis stresses that even weaker states may be successfully using institutions to secure influence by integrating a stronger state (Grieco 1995; 1996). [\(footnote 19\)](#)

There are unmistakable similarities between modified neorealism and the rationalist variant of institutionalism (cf. Hasenclever/Mayer/Rittberger 1997: 23-82). The latter claims that international institutions can temper the cooperation-inhibiting effect of anarchy (Axelrod/Keohane 1985; Keohane 1989). Institutions help to solve problems of the provision of collective goods, allow compliance with agreements and international standards to be checked, and help to redress the unequal distribution of gains and losses resulting from international cooperation. Institutions thus allow states to pursue their own interests in coordination with other states. Within a modified neorealist foreign policy theory, too, institutions may have an instrumental character for states. In contrast to rationalist institutionalism, however, modified neorealism always regards the individual state's power position as the decisive independent variable providing the main explanation for its behavior, since the interaction processes within institutions are always determined by power politics (cf. Krasner 1991). Modified neorealism does not therefore necessarily predict cooperative policies within international institutions. Rather, this variant of neorealist foreign policy theory also predicts that the state will pursue power politics as far as its power position will allow. If its security is under acute threat, it will primarily pursue an autonomy-seeking strategy (as traditional neorealism would always predict), and if its security is less under threat it will pursue power politics within institutions, i.e. influence-seeking policy. The state will then attempt to transform power into influence.

As the relative power position is also the decisive independent variable for modified neorealism, the above-mentioned variables from the areas of technology, geography and economics are intervening variables. They affect a state's disposition to action, i.e. whether it will prefer to maximize autonomy or influence. The difference between a traditional neorealist and a modified neorealist theory of foreign policy can be shown as follows (an English text will be implemented soon):

GNP (German Share)



Because influence-seeking policy is afforded greater significance in the modified neorealist theory of foreign policy, the repertoire of modes of behavior which are compatible with neorealism is extended: while neorealism à la Waltz grants priority to gains in autonomy (and thus to autonomy-seeking policy) in cases in which autonomy and influence gains compete with each other, modified neorealism places gains in influence on an equal footing with gains in autonomy, thereby making autonomy- and influence-seeking policy equally rational. This extended repertoire of action allows the modified neorealist approach to open up additional possibilities of reconciling observed state action with neorealist assumptions. (footnote 20) Of course, without precise criteria to determine the security pressures and thus for how the maximization of autonomy and influence are weighed against each other in the individual case, it will simply be more difficult to falsify the modified neorealist approach. However, such criteria are not to be found in the literature and will probably not be easy to develop. In some cases at least, therefore, consideration of the modified neorealist approach involves the risk of being unable to deduce any testable neorealist expectation of state behavior.

It will be possible to deduce clear expectations of behavior if gains in autonomy are given a far greater significance than gains in influence, and vice versa. As, in modified neorealist theory, the significance of gains in autonomy or influence depends above all on the extent of the threat to the security of a state, this theory arrives at clear expectations of behavior for two situations: In situations in which a state's security is under serious threat, losses of autonomy will be extremely significant, while gains in influence will be of very slight importance. The intervening variables identified by modified neorealism will then play a subordinate role, and the predictions of modified neorealism will resemble those of traditional neorealism. Conversely, in situations in which a state is not under any appreciable threat to its security, gains in influence will be very important, and the state's sensitivity to losses in autonomy will be slight. In this case, analogous to traditional neorealism, there are again clear priorities as concerns autonomy and influence; in this case in favor of influence-seeking policy.

Basically, the following can be stated as to the weighing of autonomy and influence gains or losses in modified neorealism: the less a state's security is under threat, the greater the relative importance of influence will be compared with autonomy, and that state will therefore be more willing to accept autonomy losses in return for influence gains.

A series of further criteria can be stated for the evaluations of gains or losses in autonomy or influence:

- material obligations outweigh procedural obligations.
- influence gains vis-à-vis more powerful states are more important than influence gains vis-à-vis less powerful states.
- the autonomy loss involved in the obligation to comply with decisions made by international organizations or bodies of which the state is itself a member is less than that involved in the obligation to comply with decisions made by international organizations or bodies of which the state is not a member.
- the autonomy loss involved in the obligation to comply with decisions made by international organizations or bodies in which the state has a veto right is less than that involved in the obligation to comply with decisions made by international organizations or bodies in which the state can be outvoted.
- the treaty obligation to comply with decisions whose interpretation is a matter for the states parties involves less of an autonomy loss than the treaty obligation to comply with decisions which are interpreted bindingly by an independent judicial authority.

It can also be assumed that the evaluation of gains or losses in autonomy will depend to a substantial degree on the costs that are involved for a state when it implements its various obligations. For example, obligations to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 10% currently only involve low implementation costs for Germany, as emissions are falling anyway due to the closure and modernization of industrial plants in the new Länder. By contrast, an obligation to ban exports of waste would mean considerable implementation costs, as the conditions for complete disposal within Germany would still have to be created. Although from a formal point of view the two obligations involve the same losses of autonomy, the actual restrictions on freedom of action are completely different. A loss of autonomy vis-à-vis a regime which bans exports of waste weighs far more heavily than a loss of autonomy vis-à-vis a regime which obliges its member states to reduce CO₂ emissions by 10%.

7. Traditional and Modified Neorealism: Prospects for German Foreign Policy

Now that we have specified autonomy and influence (5.1.), identified modes of action and their implications for gains in autonomy or influence (5.2.) and discussed some criteria for weighing autonomy and influence (5.3.), we can take these two neorealist theories as a basis for generating predictions about German foreign policy since unification. Before we formulate our general predictions (6.2.), we first have to assess the value of the independent variables; i.e. examine how the German power position has developed from the time before unification and the end of the East-West conflict in the 1980s up to the present (6.1.).

7.1. The Development of Germany's Power Position

In section 3 above, we saw that there are two important factors for a state's power position: first, its capabilities in comparison with those of other states and, second, the polarity of the international system in which the state operates.

Capabilities To assess the development of Germany's power position since unification and the end of the East-West conflict, we first have to look at those capabilities which neorealism regards as decisive, comparing them with those of the "old" FRG. Attention should be devoted not to absolute magnitude but to Germany's share of capabilities in the international system. Following the neorealist approach, other powerful states will be given a benchmark function. When considering capabilities, therefore, we will always examine the German share within a group of states consisting of the U.S.A., Russia/USSR, France, the UK, Japan and Germany. In certain cases, additional reference will be made to the German share within the EU or NATO. In each case, data from the period 1981-1989 will be

compared with those from the period 1991-1995. ([footnote 21](#)) In the case of the indicators "population" and "territory", individual years from each of the periods will suffice. Tables and figures are included in the appendix.

Let us, first of all, look at indicators of *economic capability*. Between 1985 and 1989, German GNP made up an average 10.2% of the total GNP of all the states concerned. Between 1991 and 1995, the average German share came to just under 12%. As the data show, this relative increase is above all due to the collapse of the Russian economy (see Fig. 1, Tab. 1). The German economy's export strength is often cited as an important aspect of Germany's economy-based power. Although exports are already included in GNP, export volumes should briefly be looked at in isolation. Between 1981 and 1989, the German share of exports within the reference group fluctuated between 22.7% and 27.8%, with a mean of just under 25%. Since unification (1991-1995), the German share has undergone similar fluctuations (23.8% to 27.5%), but again with a mean of just under 25%. It is therefore practically identical with the figure for the 1980s (see Tab. 2). In the case of currency reserves, the share held by Germany has fallen slightly overall since the mid-1980s. While it fluctuated between 22.2% and 35% in the years between 1981 and 1989, it was between 20.6% and 30.9% in the years between 1991 and 1995. The mean value of the German share fell from approx. 29% to 25%, which can above all be attributed to the enormous increase in Japanese currency reserves (since 1986/87) (see Fig. 2, Tab. 3). In the area of economic capabilities, it is clear that there is no basis either for the argument that Germany is a new superpower (Bergner 1991) or for the recent assertion that Germany has lost power (Maull 1997: 1249). It can be concluded that a unified Germany has been able to maintain its strong position as concerns economic strength, and indeed has been able to extend it slightly as a result of the economic collapse of the Soviet Union/Russia. Even so, one cannot speak of any clear improvement as concerns this power indicator.

Developments in indicators of *military capabilities* show a comparable pattern. Between 1985 and 1989, the German share of military spending in the reference group averaged 5.7%, while it came to an average of 7.2% in the years 1991-1995. This relative increase (but slight decline in absolute terms) is again (and in this case solely) due to the collapse of the Soviet Union/Russia (see Fig. 3, Tab. 4). Troop strengths show a similar picture. Here, the average German share increased from 6.4% (1981-1989) to 8% (1991-1995). Again, in spite of an absolute decline, this relative gain results exclusively from the dramatic decline in figures for Russia compared with those for the Soviet Union (see Fig. 4, Tab. 5). Although it has the capability to develop and produce such weapons, Germany still has no nuclear weapons of any kind, nor does it have any plans to acquire them in the foreseeable future. On the whole, the indicators of military capabilities also reveal constancy, or show at best slight German growth.

By contrast, the German position has clearly improved as concerns the indicators '*population*' and '*territory*' (see Tab 6. and Tab. 7). Of course, what is more important than the absolute and relative growth in both areas is the fact that, with unification, Germany was for the first time given full control over its own territory after World War II. The 'old' FRG was a state occupied by three Allied powers; in other words, a state whose control over its own territory was limited. In addition, (West) Berlin's special status and exposed position meant that the FRG was particularly prone to threat. Unification put an end to these two considerable disadvantages for Germany.

If one considers that economic and military power are crucial capabilities for neorealism, then it becomes evident that, while on the whole the German share of capabilities has grown, this growth has only been modest.

Polarity of the international system From a neorealist point of view, however, the structure of the international system has changed radically. The 'old' FRG acted within a bipolar system with its two great powers, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. It depended on one of them, the U.S., for protection from the other and, despite its considerable capabilities, had no prospect whatsoever of itself becoming a great power.

Now that this bipolar structure has collapsed, one can best speak of a unipolar transition phase. Layne claims that there is unipolarity, since the U.S.A. currently occupies a clear position of dominance (Layne 1993: 5). Comparing the current system with that of the East-West conflict, Krasner evaluates the international system as both more unipolar and less hierarchical, since the U.S. has also suffered a loss of power (Krasner 1993: 22). Waltz (1993) and Mearsheimer (1990) feel that the bipolar system is drawing to a close. From a neorealist perspective, however, such a unipolar system can scarcely remain stable. Rather, it will now provide other powerful states with an opportunity, or even the necessity, of balancing against the United States. For Germany, the altered polarity of the international system means that it is less dependent on the U.S. and less in need of its protection. Because these *de facto* constraints on action have disappeared, Germany's power position has clearly improved, regardless of any relative increments in its capabilities. *Conclusion* On the whole, we can conclude that Germany's power position has clearly improved; albeit less clearly than realists often assume (cf. Krasner 1993: 22; Layne 1993: 37; Waltz 1993: 62ff.). The development of German capabilities, coupled with the collapse of the bipolar structure of the international system, suggest that one can reasonably speak of a moderate increase in German power. For both variants of neorealist foreign policy theory, this gives rise to expectations of a moderate increase in power politics in Germany's foreign policy

behavior. To arrive at more specific predictions, however, we again have to distinguish between traditional and modified neorealism.

7.2. General Neorealist Predictions for German Foreign Policy

As autonomy is far more important than influence in traditional neorealism, the latter expects that German behavior will be dominated by an incipient *balancing* strategy in its dealings with the U.S.. This is because *balancing* implies a weakening (and indeed in the mid-term a termination) of transatlantic cooperation, as this would allow it to achieve the greatest gains in autonomy. After all, as the sole remaining great power, the U.S.A. with its capabilities is the greatest threat to other states (Layne 1993). For traditional neorealism, the fact that a weakening of transatlantic cooperation would involve a loss of opportunities to influence and share in decisions concerning the U.S. is far less important than gains in autonomy. From this point of view, the attempt to preserve or even extend possibilities of co-decision-making with the U.S. would mean having to rely on U.S. benevolence, although its (so far peaceful) intentions could change at any time. From this point of view, Germany will also be highly sensitive to losses of autonomy in its dealings with European states.

For modified neorealism, by contrast, the crucial point is that Germany is not currently threatened by any state. Admittedly, the U.S.A.'s dominant position of power is also significant for modified neorealism, but as long as the likelihood of a confrontation with the U.S., or indeed of a military attack on Germany, can be regarded as negligible, there is no need for Germany to pursue a *balancing* strategy in its dealings with the United States. Germany will tend to be marginally sensitive to losses of autonomy in its dealings both with the U.S.A. and with European states. Great significance will be accorded to gains in influence. For the time being, therefore, Germany will not attempt to withdraw from common institutions, but attempt to procure greater opportunities of consultation and co-decision within them. This does not mean that preserving and extending autonomy have become insignificant for Germany. Nor can power politics mean that Germany will accept significant losses of autonomy in return for minimal gains in influence. Nevertheless, Germany will above all strive for gains in influence and will also be prepared to surrender autonomy in return for substantial gains in influence.

Thus, the two neorealist theories lead to the following general predictions for German foreign policy:

Traditional Neorealism: As its power position has moderately improved, Germany will moderately step up its pursuit of power politics. By means of moderately intensified autonomy-seeking policy, Germany will try to increase its autonomy, and by means of moderately intensified influence-seeking policy to increase its influence. If there is a conflict between gains in autonomy and gains in influence, Germany will clearly prefer gains in autonomy to gains in influence.

Modified Neorealism: As its power position has moderately improved, Germany will moderately step up its pursuit of power politics. By means of moderately intensified autonomy-seeking policy, Germany will try to increase its autonomy, and by means of moderately intensified influence-seeking policy to increase its influence. If there is a conflict between gains in autonomy and gains in influence, Germany's favorable security situation induces it to clearly prefer gains in influence to gains in autonomy.

It is beyond the purpose of this paper to apply the two theories to specific issue-areas of German foreign policy, let alone conducting proper empirical tests. ([footnote 22](#)) Nevertheless, we shall briefly illustrate the implications of our theoretical discussion for an empirical analysis of German foreign policy.

As regards *Germany's policy on military integration in NATO*, for instance, the distinction of two variants of neorealist theory indeed yields two competing expectations about Germany's foreign policy. The 'old' FRG was highly integrated into NATO structures, having assigned virtually all its troops to NATO and lacking a national military leadership structure, e.g. a general staff. Unified Germany might well change this policy. This is at least what traditional neorealism would expect. From this perspective, Germany will aim at getting rid of some of the restrictions placed upon it by an U.S.-led NATO. By conducting autonomy-seeking policy, it will seize its opportunities to secure that at least some German troops will always remain under national control, as well as developing national command structures. Germany will do so even if that implies some loss of influence on joint decisions within NATO. Modified neorealism yields a different prediction. Being exposed to comparatively low security pressures after the end of the Cold War, Germany is in no need to give autonomy priority to influence with respect to its military integration in NATO. Therefore, it will forfeit an autonomy-seeking policy of renationalization but pursue influence-seeking policy within the NATO structures. Germany will remain highly integrated in NATO, attempting to use its improved power position to increase its share in inner-organizational resources, such as command posts. The case of NATO policy illustrates that traditional neorealist theory may be insufficient to detect foreign policy changes towards

power politics because according to that variant of neorealism, power politics implies the salience of autonomy as a state aim. If, therefore, a maximization of autonomy cannot be observed, traditional neorealists have to conclude that power politics has not taken place. From a modified neorealist perspective, this conclusion seems premature. In the face of low security pressures, gains in influence over NATO decisions may well trump gains in autonomy vis-à-vis NATO and the U.S.. Thus, modified neorealism yields additional insights into the many- faceted faces of power-politics.

By including modified neorealist theory into the empirical analyses of foreign policy, the prospects of neorealist theory to explain state behavior certainly rise. As the following example intends to demonstrate, however, neorealist hypotheses still remain empirically falsifiable, especially when traditional and modified neorealism come to identical prognoses. For example, even if Germany prefers gains in influence to gains in autonomy, neorealists of both variants will agree that Germany is expected to speak up against any *strengthening of the European Parliament*. From the perspective of traditional neorealism, Germany will find the autonomy loss that would follow from the strengthening of the European Parliament unacceptable. Since this autonomy loss would not be countered by any significant influence gains in decision-making within the EU, modified neorealism will lead to a concurrent expectation. Hence, both neorealist theories predict that Germany will try to avoid autonomy losses by rejecting any strengthening of the European Parliament.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we have attempted to (re)construct neorealist foreign policy theory in order to use the analysis of German foreign policy since unification as a test case for neorealism. As we have seen, two theoretical strands within neorealism can be distinguished, which we have labeled "traditional neorealism" and "modified neorealism". Two main conclusions can be drawn from this.

First, neorealism's critics should note that this school of thought may provide more insights in states' foreign policy than is sometimes acknowledged. This is the case especially with respect to international institutions. Skepticism about states' willingness to conduct foreign policy through multilateral institution, as expressed by traditional neorealism, is commonly associated with neorealism. Modified neorealism's expectation that, when facing only low security pressures, states may seek to instrumentalize institutions instead of abandoning them, should also be recognized. In other words: In order to disprove neorealism's claim that a state's foreign policy is mainly determined by its power position in the international system, it is not enough to address its mainly autonomy-oriented theoretical variant.

Second, neorealists themselves should also keep the distinction between the two variants of neorealist foreign policy theory in mind. If neorealist foreign policy analysts mix up arguments drawn from both strands of neorealism, they will often be able to find some realist expectation that matches the observed patterns. To be sure, by using divergent theoretical arguments like a box of tools, always picking the one that fits best in an individual case, one does not explain much. If the assumed relationship between autonomy-seeking and influence-seeking is specified *ex post* on a case-by-case basis, neorealism becomes difficult to be falsified. Neorealism's claims about states' foreign policy behavior can only be put to a proper empirical test, if this specification is made *ex ante*, as we have attempted to do in this paper.

Whether, and to what extent, neorealism, either in its traditional or in its modified version, can actually explain German foreign policy since unification, is subject to further study.

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Tables and Figures

Tabelle 1**GNP (billion US-\$, in prices of 1995)***(Source: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1996)*

	FRG	FRA	UK	JPN	USA	SU/RUS	EU-12	EU-15	group	group without SU	group, small
1985	1689	1226	894,6	3849	5758	2903	5978,1	6476,9			
		1,378	1,888	0,439	0,293	0,582	28,25%	26,08%	10,35%	12,59%	22,05%
1986	1728	1260	933,9	3952	5920	3003	6152,5	6660,5			
		1,371	1,850	0,437	0,292	0,575	28,09%	25,94%	10,29%	12,53%	21,95%
1987	1754	1290	974,4	4123	6085	3039	6318,1	6841,2			
		1,360	1,800	0,425	0,288	0,577	27,76%	25,64%	10,16%	12,33%	21,54%
1988	1818	1349	1019	4381	6321	3130	6576,3	7117,3			
		1,348	1,784	0,415	0,288	0,581	27,64%	25,54%	10,09%	12,21%	21,22%
1989	1894	1407	1040	4592	6533	3170	6820,1	7380			
		1,346	1,821	0,412	0,290	0,597	27,77%	25,66%	10,16%	12,25%	21,20%
1990	1998	1438	1037	4811	6625	3057	7020,2	7589,8			
		1,389	1,927	0,415	0,302	0,654	28,46%	26,32%	10,53%	12,56%	21,52%
1991	2095	1449	1016	5018	6555	2797	7154,3	7716,2			
		1,446	2,062	0,417	0,320	0,749	29,28%	27,15%	11,07%	12,99%	21,87%
1992	2120	1461	1022	5084	6729	867,9	7218,7	7775,2			
		1,451	2,074	0,417	0,315	2,443	29,37%	27,27%	12,27%	12,91%	21,89%
1993	2071	1449	1044	5076	6881	794,3	7173,4	7721,3			
		1,429	1,984	0,408	0,301	2,607	28,87%	26,82%	11,96%	12,54%	21,48%
1994	2131	1488	1084	5106	7106	693,2	7375,5	7938,7			
		1,432	1,966	0,417	0,300	3,074	28,89%	26,84%	12,10%	12,60%	21,72%
1995	2172	1521	1110	5153	7247	664	7536,4	8105			
		1,428	1,957	0,422	0,300	3,271	28,82%	26,80%	12,16%	12,63%	21,82%

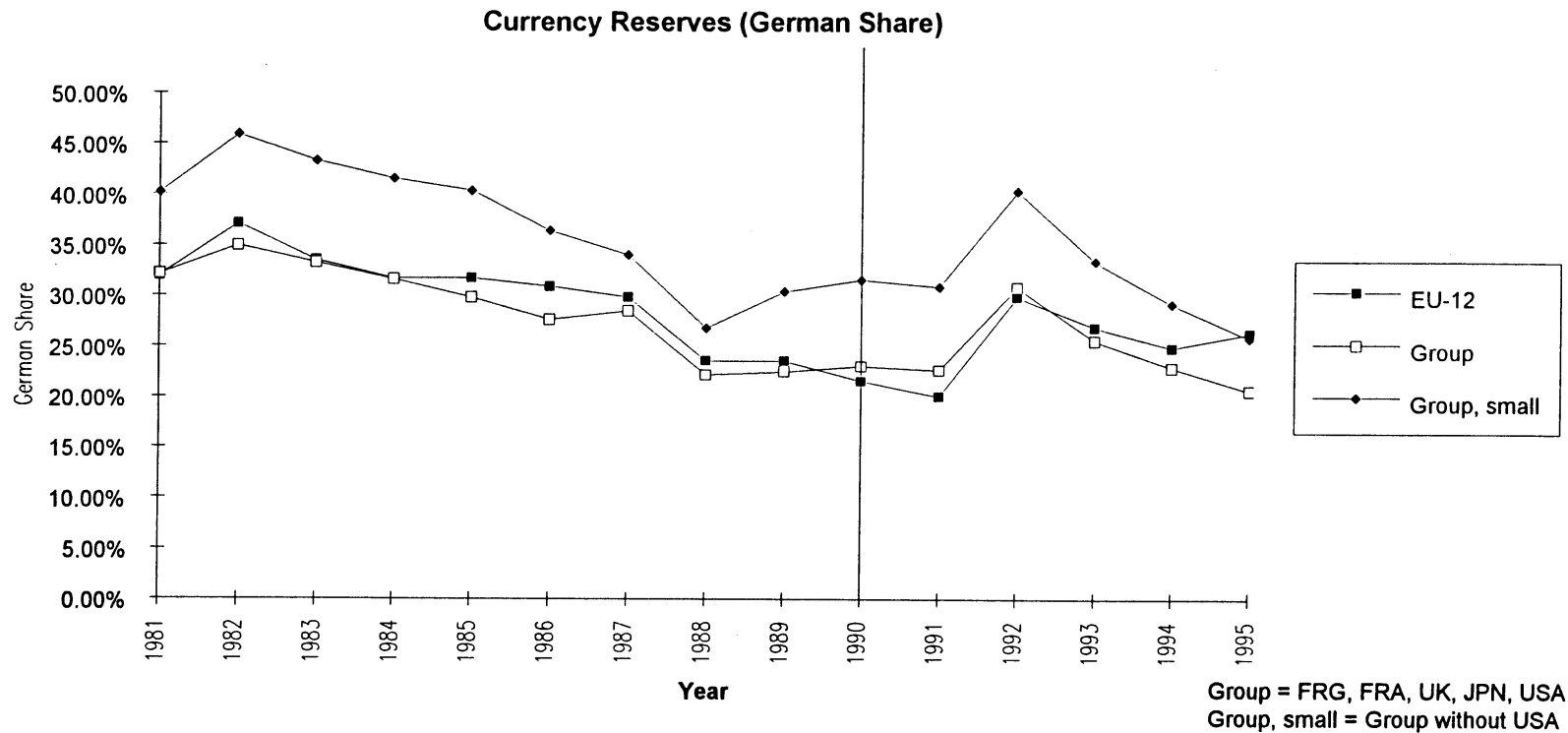
figures in second line of each year: relation Germany/respective country or German share within group

figures for Russia (from 1992): rough estimates

figures for 1995: estimates for all except Germany, U.S.A.

Group=FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA, SU/RUS

Group small = group without USA, SU/RUS



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Table 2

Exports (billion US-\$)

(Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook)

	FRG	FRA	UK	JPN	USA	EU-12	EU-15	group	group, small
1981	176,047	106,424	102,244	151,495	238,715	648,571	707,074		
		1,654	1,722	1,162	0,737	27,14%	24,90%	22,72%	32,83%
1982	176,424	96,694	96,984	138,385	216,442	624,350	679,888		

		1,825	1,819	1,275	0,815	28,26%	25,95%	24,34%	34,70%
1983	169,417	94,943	91,619	146,965	205,639	607,883	663,274		
		1,784	1,849	1,153	0,824	27,87%	25,54%	23,91%	33,69%
1984	171,735	97,566	93,881	169,7	223,976	623,645	682,233		
		1,760	1,829	1,012	0,767	27,54%	25,17%	22,69%	32,23%
1985	183,933	101,674	101,252	177,164	218,815	657,242	718,559		
		1,809	1,817	1,038	0,841	27,99%	25,60%	23,50%	32,61%
1986	243,326	124,948	107,093	210,757	227,158	798,938	875,065		
		1,947	2,272	1,155	1,071	30,46%	27,81%	26,64%	35,46%
1987	294,369	148,382	131,257	231,286	254,122	958,644	1050,355		
		1,984	2,243	1,273	1,158	30,71%	28,03%	27,79%	36,55%
1988	323,323	167,787	145,165	284,856	322,427	1062,617	1165,184		
		1,927	2,227	1,135	1,003	30,43%	27,75%	26,00%	35,10%
1989	341,231	179,397	152,345	273,932	363,812	1135,412	1242,162		
		1,902	2,240	1,246	0,938	30,05%	27,47%	26,03%	36,04%
1990	410,104	216,588	185,172	287,581	393,592	1370,686	1496,062		
		1,893	2,215	1,426	1,042	29,92%	27,41%	27,47%	37,30%
1991	402,843	217,1	184,964	314,786	421,73	1371,55	1490,958		
		1,856	2,178	1,280	0,955	29,37%	27,02%	26,13%	35,98%
1992	422,271	235,871	190,003	339,885	448,164	1451,344	1578,713		
		1,790	2,222	1,242	0,942	29,10%	26,75%	25,81%	35,54%
1993	380,154	209,349	180,180	362,244	464,773	1346,508	1459,985		
		1,816	2,110	1,049	0,818	28,23%	26,04%	23,81%	33,58%
1994	427,179	235,905	204,923	397,005	512,627	1530,62	1666,785		
		1,811	2,085	1,076	0,833	27,91%	25,63%	24,03%	33,77%
1995	508,924	286,694	241,79	443,116	584,743	n/a	n/a		
		1,775	2,105	1,149	0,870			24,64%	34,37%

figures in second line of each year: relation German/respective country or German Share within group

no data available for SU

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA

Group, small = Group without USA

Table 3**Currency Reserves (million Special Drawing Rights (IWF))***(Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook 1996)*

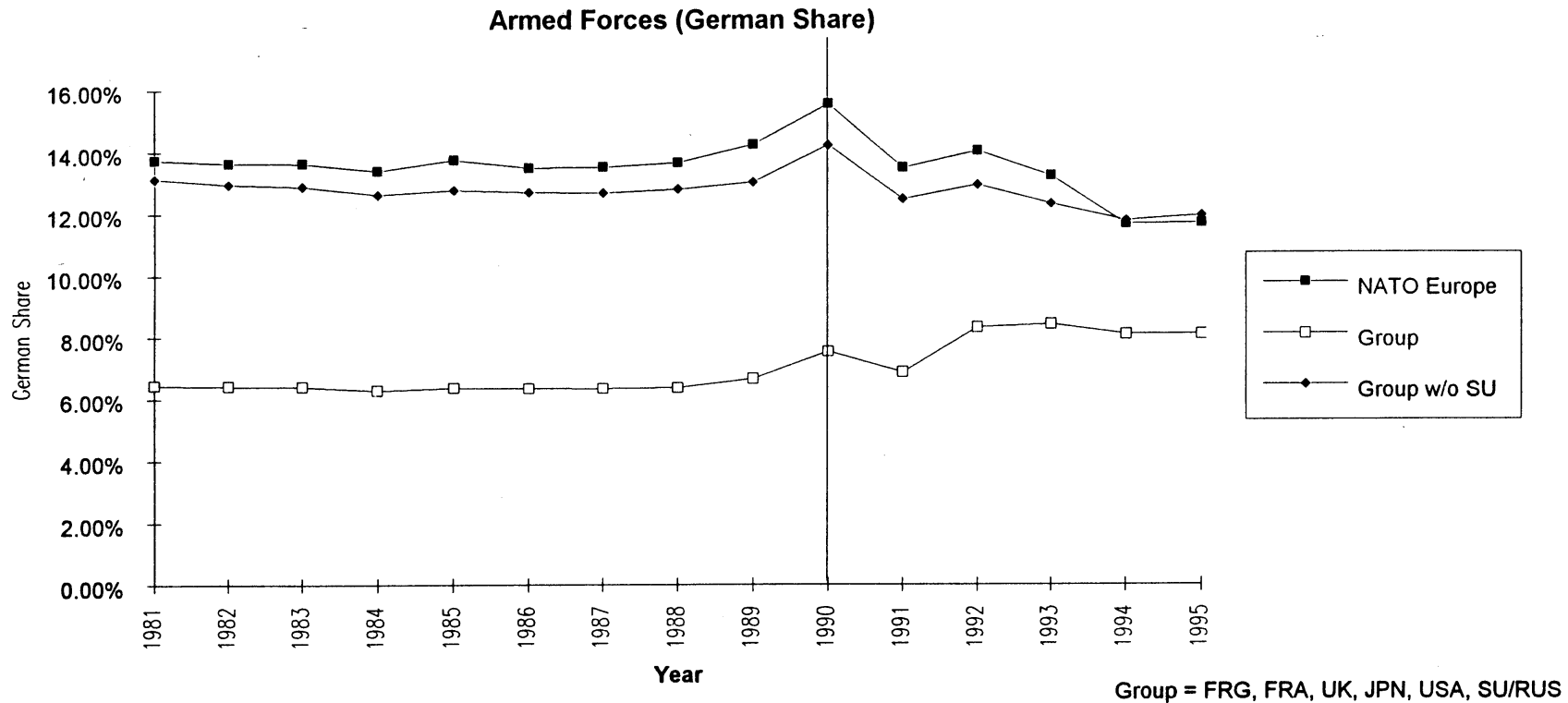
	FRG	FRA	UK	JPN	USA	EU-12	EU-15	group	group, small
1981	40892	21991	13757	25083	25502	127861	137765		
		1,859	2,972	1,630	1,603	31,98%	29,68%	32,14%	40,20%
1982	43909	17850	11904	22001	29918	118297	128658		
		2,460	3,689	1,996	1,468	37,12%	34,13%	34,96%	45,90%
1983	44092	21826	11497	24346	30831	131613	141957		
		2,020	3,835	1,811	1,430	33,50%	31,06%	33,25%	43,33%
1984	44282	24227	10297	27811	33517	139770	151829		
		1,828	4,300	1,592	1,321	31,68%	29,17%	31,60%	41,53%
1985	43735	27071	12373	25173	38412	137962	152010		
		1,616	3,535	1,737	1,139	31,70%	28,77%	29,80%	40,36%
1986	45626	28579	15727	35394	39790	147643	160517		
		1,596	2,901	1,289	1,147	30,90%	28,42%	27,63%	36,41%
1987	58846	26161	30070	57925	33657	197119	213734		
		2,249	1,957	1,016	1,748	29,85%	27,53%	28,47%	34,01%
1988	46824	21713	33439	72727	36471	198774	216313		
		2,156	1,400	0,644	1,284	23,56%	21,65%	22,17%	26,80%
1989	49527	21592	27121	64735	57525	210310	229022		
		2,294	1,826	0,765	0,861	23,55%	21,63%	22,46%	30,39%
1990	51060	28716	25865	56027	59958	236626	263636		
		1,778	1,974	0,911	0,852	21,58%	19,37%	23,04%	31,58%
1991	47375	24735	29948	51224	55769	236522	262863		
		1,915	1,582	0,925	0,849	20,03%	18,02%	22,66%	30,91%

1992	69489	22522	27300	52937	52995	232479	262711		
		3,085	2,545	1,313	1,311	29,89%	26,45%	30,85%	40,34%
1993	59856	19354	27420	72577	54558	222448	251826		
		3,093	2,183	0,825	1,097	26,91%	23,77%	25,61%	33,40%
1994	56325	20851	28739	87062	52510	226305	261985		
		2,701	1,960	0,647	1,073	24,89%	21,50%	22,94%	29,19%
1995	60517	20930	28910	124125	59467	229991	266168		
		2,891	2,093	0,488	1,018	26,31%	22,74%	20,59%	25,81%

figures in second line of each year: relation German/respective country or German Share within group

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA

Group, small = Group without USA

**Table 4****Military Spending (million US-\$, prices of 1995)**

(source: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1996)

	FRG	FRA	UK	JPN	USA	SU/RUS	NATO Europe	Group	Group w/o SU	Group, small klein
1985	54000	48990	45850	37550	353800	379900	213400			
		1,102	1,178	1,438	0,153	0,142	25,30%	5,87%	10,00%	28,97%
1986	53660	49160	45260	39340	374900	383900	213700			
		1,092	1,186	1,364	0,143	0,140	25,11%	5,67%	9,54%	28,63%
1987	53720	50780	44570	41380	373000	392200	217600			

		1,058	1,205	1,298	0,144	0,137	24,69%	5,62%	9,53%	28,21%
1988	53150	50700	42070	43370	365900	398300	213500			
		1,048	1,263	1,226	0,145	0,133	24,89%	5,57%	9,57%	28,08%
1989	53190	51570	42480	45110	364300	363000	215200			
		1,031	1,252	1,179	0,146	0,147	24,72%	5,78%	9,56%	27,65%
1990	55790	51480	42630	46820	351900	335600	216700			
		1,084	1,309	1,192	0,159	0,166	25,75%	6,31%	10,17%	28,36%
1991	51480	51910	43780	48430	309700	287300	213600			
		0,992	1,176	1,063	0,166	0,179	24,10%	6,50%	10,19%	26,32%
1992	49260	50300	39340	49510	328200	171200	204000			
		0,979	1,252	0,995	0,150	0,288	24,15%	7,16%	9,54%	26,15%
1993	44820	49680	37790	50070	312000	131000	197500			
		0,902	1,186	0,895	0,144	0,342	22,69%	7,17%	9,07%	24,58%
1994	42050	50190	36330	50540	295300	95330	192200			
		0,838	1,157	0,832	0,142	0,441	21,88%	7,38%	8,86%	23,48%
1995	41160	47770	33400	50240	277800	76000	183900			
		0,862	1,232	0,819	0,148	0,542	22,38%	7,82%	9,14%	23,85%

figures in second line of each year: relations Germany/respective country or German share within group

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA, SU/RUS

Group, small = Group without USA, SU/RUS

figures for Soviet Union: estimates based on insecure data

figures for Russia (from 1992): rough estimates

Military Spending (German Share)

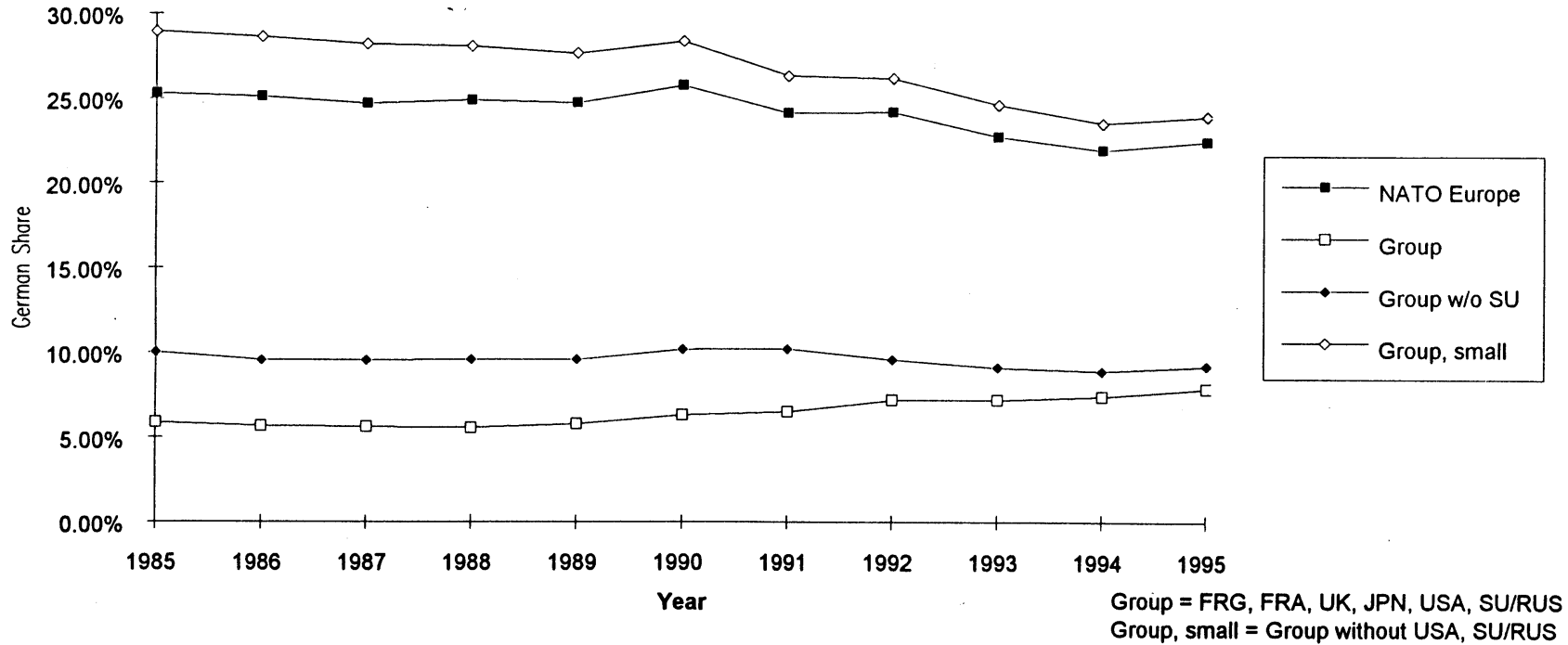


Table 5

Armed Forces (thousands)

(Source: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1991-92 und 1996)

	FRG	FRA	UK	JPN	USA	SU/RUS	NATO Europe	group	group without SU	group, small
1981	493	575	341	241	2101	3900	3586			
		0,857	1,446	2,046	0,235	0,126	13,75%	6,44%	13,14%	29,88%
1982	495	578	335	243	2168	3900	3629			
		0,856	1,478	2,037	0,228	0,127	13,64%	6,41%	12,96%	29,98%
1983	496	578	333	241	2201	3900	3639			

		0,858	1,489	2,058	0,225	0,127	13,63%	6,40%	12,89%	30,10%
1984	487	571	336	241	2222	3900	3637			
		0,853	1,449	2,021	0,219	0,125	13,39%	6,28%	12,63%	29,79%
1985	495	563	334	241	2244	3900	3603			
		0,879	1,482	2,054	0,221	0,127	13,74%	6,36%	12,77%	30,31%
1986	495	558	331	245	2269	3900	3670			
		0,887	1,495	2,020	0,218	0,127	13,49%	6,35%	12,70%	30,39%
1987	495	559	328	244	2279	3900	3665			
		0,886	1,509	2,029	0,217	0,127	13,51%	6,34%	12,68%	30,44%
1988	495	558	324	245	2246	3900	3625			
		0,887	1,528	2,020	0,220	0,127	13,66%	6,37%	12,80%	30,52%
1989	503	554	318	247	2241	3700	3534			
		0,908	1,582	2,036	0,224	0,136	14,23%	6,65%	13,02%	31,01%
1990	545	550	308	250	2181	3400	3509			
		0,991	1,769	2,180	0,250	0,160	15,53%	7,53%	14,21%	32,97%
1991	457	542	301	250	2115	3000	3391			
		0,843	1,518	1,828	0,216	0,152	13,48%	6,86%	12,47%	29,48%
1992	442	522	293	242	1919	1900	3152			
		0,847	1,509	1,826	0,230	0,233	14,02%	8,31%	12,93%	29,49%
1993	398	506	271	242	1815	1500	3012			
		0,787	1,469	1,645	0,219	0,265	13,21%	8,41%	12,31%	28,09%
1994	362	506	257	233	1715	1400	3105			
		0,715	1,409	1,554	0,211	0,259	11,66%	8,09%	11,78%	26,66%
1995	352	504	233	240	1620	1400	3010			
		0,698	1,511	1,467	0,217	0,251	11,69%	8,09%	11,94%	26,49%

figures in second line of each year: relation German/respective country

Group, small = Group without USA and SU/RUS

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA, SU/RUS

Armed Forces (German Share)

Table 6

Population (thousands; mid-year estimates)

(Source: OECD Main Economic Indicators)

	1981	1985	1989	1993
FRG	61682	61024	62063	81190
FRA	54182	55170	56423	57667
UK	56379	56618	57236	57830
JPN	117650	120750	123120	124670
USA	230138	239279	248781	257908
SU/RUS	272500	280144	286478	147760
EU-12	319036	321934	325781	346584
EU-15	339725	342744	346862	368359
German share in...				
Group	7,78%	7,51%	7,44%	11,17%
EU-12	19,33%	18,96%	19,05%	23,43%
EU-15	18,16%	17,80%	17,89%	22,04%

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA, SU/RUS

SU/RUS: figures are mid-year estimates by the UN (Source UN: Statistical Yearbook); 1985 figure is estimate for 1986

Table 7

Territory (square kilometres)

(Source: Statistisches Bundesamt: Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Ausland 1989, 1995)

	Jb '89	Dtl./Land	Jb '95	Dtl./Land
FRG	248621		356974	

FRA	551500	0,451	543965	0,656
UK	244100	1,019	244100	1,462
JPN	377801	0,658	377801	0,945
USA	9372614	0,027	9363520	0,038
SU/RUS	22402200	0,011	17075400	0,021
EU-12	2261960	0,110	2362773	0,151
EU-15	3133922	0,079	3234717	0,110
German share in...				
Group		0,75%		1,28%
EU-12		10,99%		15,11%
EU-15		7,93%		11,04%

Group = FRG, FRA, UK, JPN, USA, SU/RUS

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Footnotes

1

This paper on neorealist foreign policy theories is part of a research project on German foreign policy conducted at the Center for International Relations/Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Tübingen, funded by the German Research Association (DFG) and led by Professor Volker Rittberger (cf. Rittberger/Schimmelfennig 1997). Within this research project, neorealist as well as constructivist and liberal theories of foreign policy will be applied to Germany's policy towards and within NATO, the European Union, and the United Nations, as well as to German foreign trade policy, German development aid policy, and German human rights policy. The authors wish to thank Derk Bienen, Henning Boekle, Corinna Freund, Daria Nashat and Dirk Peters, as well as Sebastian Bartsch, Thomas Bernauer, Helmut Breitmeier, Andreas Hasenclever, Gunther Hellmann, Peter Mayer, Martin Mogler, Peter Moser, Thomas Nielebock, Frank Schimmelfennig, Hans Peter Schmitz, and Bernhard Zangl for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper, and Philip Mann for his translation of a revised version (Baumann/Rittberger/Wagner 1998).

2

Examples of this are Christensen/Snyder 1990 and Grieco 1995.

3

Lebow (1994: 273f.) takes a different view, seeing an evolutionary selection mechanism in neorealism. Elman, by contrast, stresses that, in the end, Waltz works with a rationality assumption, although he concedes: "... in much of his work it is unclear whether Waltz is relying on rationality, evolutionary selection or socialization" (Elman 1996a: 43). Keohane (1989: 160) even attributes both realists and neorealists with the assumption of substantive rationality as defined by Herbert Simon. Grieco maintains that the assumption of states' substantive and instrumental rationality is an essential feature of the neorealist research programme (Grieco 1995: 27).

4

For many proponents of classical realism, states' struggle for power has its basis in human nature (cf. Morgenthau 1948: 49). Our perspective, however, is that of (structural) neorealism, which attributes the struggle for power to the anarchic structure of the international system.

5

If security were available in abundance in the international system, a state's behavior might be geared more strongly to preserving other resources, yet without "security" losing its significance for the state.

6

For the three possibilities of conceptualizing and measuring power, cf. Hart 1976.

7

One could mention here areas of "low politics" such as development aid or international environment policy.

8

Gilpin is often also regarded as an offensive realist, however.

9

However, the security dilemma can also become manifest in relations between defensively oriented states if states are insecure about the intentions of other states. A defensive neorealist theory, although barely convincing, that can generate the expectation of the security dilemma and does not need any additional (e.g. subsystemic) variables, is thus possible: It has to work with the assumption that, as rational actors, states assume that other states have aggressive intentions, even though the theory denies that these can exist.

10

Schweller (1994; 1996), who adopts Carr's (1939) and Morgenthau's (1948) distinction between status quo states and revisionist states, takes a step in this direction; cf. also Buzan (1991: 298-303). However, Schweller cannot give any clear criteria as to when a state is revisionist and when it is status quo- oriented.

11

Interestingly, even Grieco, who coined the term "defensive positiona- list", assumes in his model of the state utility function in international cooperation that benefit rises with increasing relative gains (see Grieco 1988b: 607-09): $U = V - k(W-V)$, where V := player's payoff, W := other player's payoff, k := player's sensitivity for gaps in gains. A rational actor with this utility function will strive for relative gains, and not only to avoid relative losses.

12

For neorealists, the international system can also be unipolar (cf. Layne 1993), yet unipolarity is regarded as so intrinsically unstable, that it is only felt to be a transition stage on the path to a bipolar or multipolar system. For neorealists, therefore, the most important distinction is the 'bipolarity/non-bipolarity' dichotomy, where non-bipolarity generally signifies a multipolar system, and in exceptional cases a unipolar transitory system.

13

In this sense, the neorealist position concerning institutions is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, they stress the irrelevance of international institutions for explaining state behavior while on the other hand they depict states as sensitive to commitments towards them. Though we may not be able to solve this paradox we may point to a possible neorealist answer: From a neorealist perspective, states are indeed not very sensitive to commitments vis-à-vis international institutions per se but they are of course sensitive to commitments vis-à-vis other states. Because, from the neorealist point of view, international institutions serve as instruments of great powers (Mearsheimer 1995: 13), it seems perfectly rational not to devolve any competences to these institutions. As neorealists might emphasize it is not international institutions per se but powerful states using these institutions which renders them threatening to a state's autonomy and independence.

14

One example of this is Mearsheimer's thesis that the high level of integration in the EC could be explained neorealistically on the basis of the Soviet threat and the protective function of the U.S.A. (Mearsheimer 1990: 46-48). While this may explain cooperation between America's European allies, it can by no means explain the creation of supranational institutions.

15

A conceivable exception here would be that a very powerful state withdraws from an international organization whose decisions are binding for its members, but that the remaining member states are very concerned that this state should rejoin. In such a case it is possible that that state can successfully set out conditions for rejoining and can thus continue to influence the behavior of the remaining member states.

16

Gains in autonomy and influence do not have to be made within a one-to-one relationship. In the present example, autonomy would be gained vis-à-vis other donor countries, and influence vis-à-vis recipient states.

17

On the whole Buzan has to be seen as part of the English school rather than as a neorealist. However, together with Jones and Little, he did attempt to revise Waltz's theory (Buzan et al. 1993).

18

Even a traditional neorealist like Waltz (Waltz 1981) supports the position of a pacifying effect of nuclear weapons in the international system (cf. Weber 1990)

19

However, Grieco cannot predict under what conditions a state will prefer balancing and when it will prefer voice-opportunities seeking (cf. Grieco 1995: 40). To do this, the above-mentioned variables would have to be specified.

20

This is why Vasquez regards neorealism as a degenerative research programme (cf. Vasquez (1997) and the counter-arguments by Waltz, Christensen/Snyder, Elman/Elman, Schweller and Walt).

21

Comparable inflation-adjusted figures for "GNP" and "military spending" are only available for all states in the above-mentioned group for the period between 1985 and 1995.

22

As noted above, a thorough examination of a number of cases from six different issue-areas is currently conducted at the Center for International Relations/Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Tübingen, in order to provide a broad analysis of German foreign policy since unification, as well as to assess the explanatory power of neorealist, constructivist, and liberal theories of foreign policy.

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