Review of International Studies (2011), 37, 249–275 *doi:10.1017/S0260210510000501*

First published online 19 July 2010

The German question in Central and Eastern Europe and the long peace in Europe after 1945: an integrated theoretical explanation

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Abstract. Within the field of International Relations, theoretically informed explanations of the long peace in Europe since 1945 tend to focus on Western Europe, especially the revolution in Franco-German relations. In contrast, German relations with Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are ignored, despite the fact that this nexus was a major cause of instability prior to 1945. This article focuses on why the German question in CEE ceased to threaten the stability of Europe after 1945. The article empirically examines the development of the German question in CEE since 1945, which refers here mainly to the Oder-Neisse line and the plight of ethnic Germans expelled from CEE after World War II. It provides a theoretically integrated and chronologically sequenced explanation. First, it argues that Realism primarily explains the successful containment of the German question in CEE between 1945 and the late 1960s. Second, it argues that the Constructivist process of cultural change, which altered German intensions, was primarily responsible for subsequently increasing the depth of peace and stability between Germany and CEE, especially after the Cold War. Finally, it is argued that prior Realist factors and Liberal processes constituted a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for cultural change.

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Introduction

The post 1945 era has been the most peaceful in the blood-drenched history of modern Europe. In the first half of the twentieth century, Europe was the hub of two World Wars involving the Great Powers and numerous ethno-national conflicts. Since 1945, Europe has increasingly become a zone of peace. This remarkable transformation makes Europe a particularly important case study for the analysis of the causes of regional war and peace and IR theory in general. This article aims to contribute to the growing literature of integrated theoretical

* This article is dedicated to the memory of my great aunt Dr Eva Reichmann, a German-Jewish refugee and historian, who worked for reconciliation.
I would like to thank my colleague Dr Shlomo Shapira and the anonymous reviewers for their very helpful comments on earlier versions of this article. I would also like to thank my research assistant Ms Anna Abelmann.

explanations in IR by focusing on an important, yet ignored,[1] factor that helps account for the long peace in Europe since 1945 – the management and resolution of the German question in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Here, the German question in CEE after 1945 refers to the issue of Germany's eastern border – the Oder-Neisse line – and the plight of millions of German refugees from CEE.

Within the field of International Relations, there is growing interest in combining different theories to provide integrated explanations, including explanations of regional stability and peace, which focus mainly on Realism and Liberalism.[2] Some argue that the epistemic and ontological foundations of Constructivism mean that it cannot be integrated into a theoretical explanation along with Realism and Liberalism. However, many moderate Constructivists, who reject postmodernism, rebuff this position and seek to demonstrate that integration is possible on a theoretical level.[3] In fact, Constructivist explanations, by their nature, do not seek to provide a complete explanation for political outcomes. Instead, they seek to demonstrate that certain actions were not possible or probable without the existence of ideational factors.[4]

Ripsman[5] provides an integrated theoretical explanation for the long peace in Europe since 1945 that draws on a wide variety of theoretical explanations focused on the improvement in Franco-German relations. He argues that the initial stabilisation of peace in Europe was due to Realist factors, while Liberal processes were responsible for the endurance of peace. In turn, those Liberal processes were dependent on the prior existence of necessary Realist conditions, without which they would have failed. He dismisses the claim that Constructivist variables played a significant role in explaining the long peace.

There are two issues here. First, the empirical focus is on the emergence of peace in Western Europe, while ignoring the German question in CEE. The German question in CEE is a compound conflict[6] with inter-state and ethnic dimensions. In such conflicts, the ethnic dimension is usually more protracted than the inter-state component.[7] It is also more often associated with war and armed

[1] While the German question in CEE has been largely ignored in the International Relations literature, it has received increasingly intense attention by historians; many of these works are cited below.

[2] For example, Benjamin Miller, 'Explaining Variations in Regional Peace: Three Strategies for Peacemaking', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 35:2 (2000), pp. 155–192; Benjamin Miller, 'When and How Regions Become Peaceful: Potential Theoretical Pathways to Peace', *International Studies Review*, 7:2 (2005), pp. 229–67; Norrin Ripsman, 'Two Stages of Transition from a Region of War to a Region of Peace: Realist Transition and Liberal Endurance', *International Studies Quarterly*, 49:4 (2005), pp. 669–94.

[3] On the reasons why, and the ways in which, Realism and Constructivism can be made complementary in International Relations theory, see J. Samuel Barkin, 'Realist Constructivism', *International Studies Review*, 5:3 (2003), 325–42; Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, 'Bridging the Gap: Towards a Realist-Constructivist Dialogue', *International Studies Review*, 6:2 (2004), pp. 337–41; Jennifer Sterling-Folker, 'Realism and the Constructivist Challenge: Rejecting, Reconstructing, or Rereading', *International Studies Review*, 4 (2002), pp. 73–97. On the ways Constructivism and Liberalism overlap, see Dinna Panke and Thomas Risse, 'Liberalism' in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki and Steve Smith (eds), *International Relations Theories* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 89–109.

[4] Jeffrey Checkel, 'Process Tracing' in Audie Klotz & Deepa Prakash (eds), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), pp. 114–30.

[5] Ripsman, 'Two Stages of Transition'.

[6] Edward Azar, Paul Jureidini and Ronald McLaurin, 'Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Practice in the Middle East', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 8:1 (1978), pp. 41–60.

[7] Shmuel Sandler and Hemda Ben-Yehuda, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict Transformed* (New York: SUNY, 2002).

intervention than any other issue.[8] Specifically, the issues of Germany's eastern border and ethnic German minorities in CEE were significant factors that contributed to the instability in Europe prior to 1945. Given this fact, the disappearance of this issue in post 1945 Europe needs to be integrated into any explanation of the long peace. Second, the conceptualisation of Constructivism is deficient and it will be argued here that Constructivism's explanatory role is very far from marginal.

Below, through a process of induction, a theoretically integrated and chronologically sequenced explanation as to why the German question in CEE did not destabilise Europe after 1945 is provided. In the first stage, Realist factors, which severely constrain German capabilities, played the dominant role in the stabilisation and containment of the German question in CEE. However, Realist factors alone are an insufficient explanation for the longevity of peace, and conflict resolution. Liberal processes played some role here, but the most powerful explanation stems from Constructivism. Cultural change transformed the way the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) defined its identity, its interests, its intensions and its modus operandi. In place of a nationalistic culture, which generated a predisposition to revisionism in CEE, from the late 1960s the FRG's political culture was increasingly characterised by anti-militarism, multilateralism and a strong identification with European integration. This cultural change propelled the FRG to resolve the German question in CEE by giving up on its claims and by promoting instead reconciliation in the framework of European multilateral institutions. This cultural change was brought about by a combination of domestic and European influences. Furthermore, the prior existence of Realist factors and Liberal processes was a necessary, but not sufficient basis for this cultural change.

The article begins by providing an analytical framework, which describes how the main IR theories explain conflict and peace in general terms. A set of theoretically-informed hypotheses are established that provide the basis for examining the role and relative importance of the various theories in explaining the case at hand. It then focuses on the period from 1919–45, when the German question in CEE was a significant cause of instability. Following this, the German question in CEE, especially German policy to this issue, is examined empirically and the reasons for its disappearance as a significant political/diplomatic factor since 1945 are analysed. As regards German policy, the focus for the period 1945–1990 is the FRG. This is because it was West Germany (FRG) – as opposed to East Germany (GDR) – that refused to formally accept the Potsdam settlement after 1945; while in any case, the East German state lacked any meaningful foreign policy independence. The analysis is divided up into three sections. The first section's focus is the period from 1945 until the late 1960s. It explains the neutralisation of the German question in CEE as a threat to regional stability. The second section focuses on Brandt's new Ostpolitik and the period 1970–89 during which the peace between Germany and CEE was deepened. The third section, focuses on conflict resolution and Germany's drive to expand the Western security community eastward in the post-Cold War era. Finally, some general implications of this case are assessed.

[8] Kal Holsti, *War, the State & the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambidge University Press, 1996).

The theoretical framework of analysis[9]

Traditional Realism provides two main bases for conflict management and stability; first, balancing against superior power[10] or threat[11] and second, hegemony.[12] Hegemony induces cooperation when a state has enough power to coerce other states and/or provide them with incentives to induce cooperation. The hegemon decreases the risks of cooperation and increases the cost of non cooperation, thereby encouraging peace and stability. Meanwhile, according to the Realist theory of ethnic conflict[13] the experience of fighting a war hardens ethnic identities and fatally damages the parties' ability to trust each other.[14] This leads to a prescription for the physical and political separation of ethnic groups in separate states in order to contain the conflict.[15] In the case examined here, the focus is not on ethnic conflict *per se*, but on its broader role within the regional strategic environment. Given that state borders often do not match the geographic location of ethno-national groups, there is the potential for states to intervene in neighbouring states on behalf of ethnic kin if they are being persecuted or attacked. In addition, the 'mother state' might seek to use ethnic kin to weaken neighbouring states as part of an expansionist agenda that can include the aim of bringing ethnic kin within the borders of the 'mother' state. On this basis, and against the background bloody conflict, the Realist prescription of ethnic separation can assist regional conflict management by removing a source of regional instability.[16]

Liberalism provides two materialist explanations for cooperation and stability: institutionalism[17] and economic interdependence.[18] First, international institutions constrain states' behaviour. They provide verification mechanisms, which reduce the risks of trusting another state. They also provide cooperative standard operating procedures and facilitate issue-linkage so that uncooperative behaviour over one issue is discouraged because it can harm states' overall interest in many other important areas. Second, economic interdependence discourages conflict by

[9] This section draws on Ripsman's theoretical framework while augmenting it with the Realist theory of ethnic conflict and 'inside-out' Constructivism.

[10] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

[11] Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

[12] Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[13] Chaim Kaufmann, 'Possible & Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars', *International Security*, 20:4 (1996), pp. 136–75; Chaim Kaufmann, 'When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers & Partitions in the Twentieth Century', *International Security*, 23:2 (1998), pp. 120–56.

[14] Alexander Downes, 'The Holy Land Divided: Defending Partition as a Solution to Ethnic Wars', *Security Studies*, 10:4 (2001), pp. 70–2.

[15] The 'weak' Constructivist theory of ethnic conflict adopts an identical prescription of separation when ethnic identities and conflict-inducing narratives have been hardened by the recent experience of bloody conflict; see Stuart Kaufman, 'Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence', *International Security*, 30:4 (2006), pp. 82; Chaim Kaufmann, 'Rational Choice and Progress in the Study of Ethnic Conflict: A Review Essay', *Security Studies*, 14:1 (2004-05), pp. 178–207.

[16] Indeed, according to Miller the degree of mismatch between nations and states is the main determinant of how war-prone a region is: the greater the mismatch, the more war-prone a region, Miller, 'When and How Regions Become Peaceful'.

[17] Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, 'The Promise of Institutionalist Theory', *International Security*, 20:1 (1995), pp. 39–51.

[18] Robert Koehane, 'International Liberalism Reconsidered', in John Dunn (ed.), *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 186–87; Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: Norton, 1997), pp. 230–50.

raising the opportunity cost of war in terms of lost trade and investment. In addition, since trade is a more efficient means of extracting resources than military force, states will have fewer reasons to use force, thereby promoting peace and stability.

According to Constructivism there are two main ways in which cultural change helps to generate peace. The first is concerned with the way international institutions and a shared culture help redefine state interests by transforming state identities and norms.[19] Security and stability are produced through the foundation of a 'security community' that creates shared identities, shared norms and trust.[20] As such, Constructivism is defined in terms of cultural change generated by international or transnational interactions – 'outside-in'. Yet, Constructivists also look at the impact of domestic cultural change on moves towards war and peace – 'inside-out'.[21] Recent studies argue that the impact of such domestic processes have been underestimated with regard to Constructivist studies of European integration.[22] In contrast, the emphasis below is on the 'inside-out' approach that focuses on cultural change in the FRG.

Hypotheses

In order to assess the explanatory power of each of the three general theoretical approaches outlined above, hypothetical explanations for the 'long peace' between Germany and CEE are developed below based on these theories. These hypotheses are then evaluated by checking to see to what degree they are borne out empirically. Counterfactual analysis is also used to elucidate the role played by the various explanatory variables by allowing for a qualitative assessment of whether the empirical outcome would have been the same, absent a causal factor that is predicted to be important. The consideration of alternative explanations and/or deployment of counterfactual analysis are often used by 'moderate' Constructivists.[23]

From the viewpoint of the Realist theory of ethnic conflict, one would expect that the physical and political separation of ethnic Germans from other ethnonational groups in CEE would precede greater stability in the relationship between Germany and the states of CEE. With regard to the Realist theory of hegemonic stability, strictly speaking, the theory does not apply to Germany and CEE during the Cold War, since there was no single hegemon, with the US dominant in Western Europe including the FRG and the USSR in the East including the GDR.

[19] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[20] Ole Wæver, 'Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-war Community', in Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[21] For example, Robert Herman, 'Identity, Norms and National Security: The Soviet Foreign Policy Revolution and the End of the Cold War', in Katzenstein, The Culture of National Security, pp. 271–316; Thomas Berger, 'Norms, Identity and National Security in Germany and Japan', in Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security*, pp. 317–56.
[22] Michael Zürn and Jeffrey Checkel, 'Getting Socialized to Build Bridges: Constructivism & Rationalism, Europe & the Nation-State', *International Organization*, 59:4 (2005), pp. 1045–79.
[23] Checkel, 'Process Tracing'.

However, within each zone there was a dominant superpower that opposed German revisionism. Thus one can predict that each dominant superpower would use its power to further its interests regarding the German question, by pressuring its client in ways that prevent the emergence of German revisionism. In addition, one would expect superpower patrons to pressure their heavily reliant clients to adopt policies that fit in with own general policies towards their adversary. Thus, as détente developed between the US and the USSR, one would expect that to be reflected in a more stable and peaceful environment concerning the German question in CEE.

Lastly within the Realist realm, theories of balance of power/threat predict that the rise of an overwhelming threat in the form of the Soviet Union, and the unfavourable balance of power that the Federal Republic faced against the Soviets, would moderate any revisionist ambitions *vis-à-vis* CEE after WWII. By the same token however, the end of the Cold War should lead to a more assertive, unilateralist German policy[24] to CEE, given the greatly reduced external threat, the greater material resources at the newly united Germany's disposal, and the lessening of external constraints such as the withdrawal of Soviet and other foreign armed forces from Germany.

In terms of Liberalism, one would expect that the development of intensive economic interactions between the FRG and CEE, and the development of inclusive multilateral institutions would *precede* positive changes in relations between the FRG and the states of CEE, including relations over the core issues of dispute between them relating to the German question. From the Liberal perspective, the key factor that one would expect to drive the move towards peace would be the logic of absolute material gains, rather than the logic of relative gains emphasised by Realism.

Finally, in terms of Constructivism, there are two possible expectations. The 'outside-in' multi-actor model leads to an expectation that the creation of a security community – involving the development of a sense of collective identity, high levels of mutual and reconciliation among former enemies – will occur *prior* to the resolution of the German question in CEE. The 'inside-out' model, focused on the FRG, generates an expectation that cultural change leads to a change in the way the FRG defines its interests and modus operandi. In turn these changes would inform a foreign policy that abandons revisionist claims as a matter of conviction coupled with the pursuit of reconciliation, cooperation and the creation of a security community that generates conflict resolution between former enemies in CEE.

In order to demonstrate the impact of Constructivism, it is necessary to demonstrate, first, that there is a cultural change that effects the elite discourse of politicians and opinion leaders, as well as wider public attitudes towards the German question in CEE; second, that these cultural changes are reflected in German foreign policy and third, that these changes play an important role in generating conflict resolution over the core issues. Should the pacific effects of cultural change on foreign policy and regional stability occur in circumstances that

[24] John Mearsheimer, 'Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War', *International Security*, 15:1 (1990), pp. 5–56; Kenneth Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics', *International Security*, 18:2 (1993), pp. 44–79.

the other two theoretical approaches would not predict, this would strengthen the explanatory power of Constructivism.

Before deploying these perspectives to analyse the German question in CEE since 1945, it is first necessary to demonstrate the potential importance of the issue to the stability of Europe overall, by focusing on its destabilising role 1919–45.

The German question in Central and Eastern Europe 1919–45

Explanations of the long peace in Europe after 1945 often focus on the integration of Western Europe and especially the revolution in Franco-German relations. This makes sense given that the Franco-German relationship was an important cause of conflict in Europe before 1945, whereas after World War II the opposite was the case as Franco-German relations became characterised by unprecedented cooperation. Although explaining this change is thus a necessary condition for accounting for the long peace, it is not sufficient on its own. This is because it ignores the fact that in strategic terms, the stability and security of Western Europe was clearly intertwined with the fate of CEE, particularly via the central role of Germany. As such Germany's relations with CEE were an important source of instability. The failed efforts of the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, at Munich in 1938 to buy the security of Western Europe at the expense of CEE are a testament to this. The Sudetenland issue could not be dismissed as a 'quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing.'[25] In the end, WWII finally broke out when Hitler invaded Poland.

The European order created by the Treaty of Versailles was heavily influenced by US President Woodrow Wilson's liberal belief in the right of national self-determination. The problem was that it was impossible to draw boundaries that matched states to nations due to the mixing of ethno-national groups in Europe. In the inter-war period the mismatch between the boundaries of the German state and German speaking minorities was potentially the most dangerous of these ethnic conflicts because of Germany's centrality to the European balance of power, and the relative weakness of the new states of CEE. In other words, European instability in the inter-war period was a function of a compound conflict in which ethnic and inter-state conflicts were intertwined.

As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany lost territory in the East – the Polish Corridor. Aside from that there were also sizable ethnic German minorities mainly in CEE, including 3 million in the Sudetenland within Czechoslovakia and millions more in Poland, Russia, the Baltic Republics, Rumania, Hungary and Yugoslavia. The *Volkisch* basis of German nationalism informed the 1913 German Citizenship Law, according to which these minorities could potentially obtain German citizenship by virtue of their ethnicity.[26]

In the inter-war period, the threat of revisionism and instability stemmed at least as much from this situation in CEE as from the question of Alsace-Lorraine. In the Treaty of Locarno 1925, Germany formally recognised its western border

[25] 'Prime Minister on the Issues', *The Times* (28 September 1938), p. 10.
[26] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992), ch. 6.

with France, resigning itself to the permanent loss of Alsace–Lorraine. However, at the same time, the German Chancellor, Gustav Stressemann, refused to recognise Germany's eastern border as final. It is unlikely that Stressemann could have renounced German claims in CEE even if he had wanted to, due to the strength of public feeling on the issue.[27]

Throughout the 1920s Weimar Germany funded organisations that strengthened ties with ethnic Germans. Part of the rationale was instrumental; ties were viewed as a mechanism for increasing chances of territorial revision in the East, particularly in Poland. The ethnic German minority was regarded as a threat by the Poles because many lived in the Polish Corridor, adjacent to Germany. Concurrently, Poland pursued an increasingly oppressive policy towards its German and other minorities. Meanwhile in Czechoslovakia the ethnic German minority never formally pledged allegiance to the Czech state, which never really accepted them as equal partners. Until 1925 the Sudeten German parties did not work cooperatively within the Czech political system. After that, there followed a decade of relative stability. That changed with the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany who used ethnic German minorities, especially the Sudeten Germans, instrumentally to further their expansionist agenda, which went well beyond the agenda of Weimar Germany. In this they were aided by the rise of Henlein's pro-Nazi Sudeten German party, which captured the majority of Sudeten German votes after 1935. Nonetheless, Hitler was prepared to abandon some territories with German minorities, for example in South Tyrol, in order to advance his wider plan of expansion.[28]

When the Third Reich invaded Poland and Czechoslovakia, they were welcomed by the majority of ethnic Germans.[29] In addition, during the 1939 invasion of Poland 82,000 ethnic Germans operated on the German side in paramilitary organisations. Later they implemented Nazi occupation policies in concentration camps and worked with the *Einsatzgruppen*, the mobile killing units of the SS.[30] Thus, the fact that the Nazis were able to draw on ethnic German minority support in CEE, further contributed to conflict and instability in Europe. Also during World War II, the Nazis' *Heim ins Reich* initiative sought to bring ethnic Germans within the expanded borders of the new larger Germany; this involved 'ethnic cleansing'.

The German question in CEE after 1945

The experience of World War II and the role of ethnic German minorities therein, greatly hardened attitudes against ethnic German minorities. Most Poles and Czechs felt that ethnic Germans should not live within Poland and Czechoslovakia

[27] Peter Kruger, 'The European East and Weimar Germany', in Eduard Muhle (ed.), *Germany and the European East in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Berg, 2000), pp. 7–25.
[28] Stefan Wolf, *The German Question since 1919* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), pp. 27–37; Hans Lemberg, 'The Germans & Czech Statehood in the Twentieth Century', in Roger Bartlett and Karen Schonwalder (eds), *The German Lands & Eastern Europe* (London: Palgrave), pp. 186–9.
[29] Wolf, The German Question since 1919, p. 46.
[30] Ibid.; Tadeusz Piotrowski, Poland's Holocaust: Ethnic Strife, *Collaboration with Occupying Forces & Genocide in the Second World War* (Jefferson: McFarland, 1998), pp. 23, 170, 222, 301.

and elites thought that a policy of transfer would enhance state security.[31] It was such strategic considerations, rather than revenge, that drove, not only the Czechs and Poles, but also the Allies to support population resettlement.[32]

At the 1945 Potsdam conference the Allies agreed to move Germany's eastern border westward – which meant that Germany lost not only areas captured by Hitler, but also areas such as East Prussia and Silesia that had been part of the German state previously. Simultaneously, around 12 million ethnic Germans fled in fear or were expelled from CEE.[33] The majority of the deportations occurred in areas belonging to Czechoslovakia, Poland and Russia after 1945. Simultaneously, millions of Poles, Romanians, Ukrainians and Hungarians were also forcibly resettled throughout Eastern Europe.[34] The first stage of population movement was chaotic. Subsequently, new governments, for example in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, officially expelled their ethnic German minorities. The USSR played a key role in initiating, implementing, and preventing the reversal of these population movements.[35] Overall, this process was legitimised by the US, Britain and the Soviet Union in the Potsdam Declaration that called for the expulsions to be affected in an 'orderly and humane manner'.[36] This did not occur and it is estimated that between 500,000 and 2 million ethnic Germans lost their lives, mainly as a result of Soviet brutality and poor living conditions.[37]

Post-war Germany refused to accept the legitimacy of these expulsions. In the early years of the FRG politicians from both Left and Right compared Nazi atrocities to Allied and Soviet atrocities that followed from Potsdam. The tone employed was similar to that relating to the Treaty of Versailles during the Weimar period.[38] A 1953 law made it the government's obligation to preserve the cultural heritage of ethnic Germans. An annual 'Homeland day' was instituted that emphasised the integral relationship between the FRG and the ethnic Germans of the lost territories. Archives and museums dedicated to ethnic Germans were also established.

Ethnic German refugees played an important role in West German politics, particularly in the first decade of the FRG's existence.[39] The *Bund der Vertriebenen*

[31] Phillip Ther, 'A Century of Forced Migration', in Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (eds), *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), pp. 52–6; Lemberg, 'The Germans and Czech Statehood', p. 191; Keith Sword, 'The German Minority in Poland 1945–95', in Bartlett and Schonwalder, *The German Lands and Eastern Europe*, p. 240.

[32] Detlef Brandes, *Der Weg zur Vertreibung 1938–1945. Plane und Entscheidungen zum 'Transfer' der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Polen* (Munich: Oldenbourg 2001); Detlef Brandes 'Die Vertreibung als negativer Lernproze Vorbilder und Ursachen der Vertreibung der Deutschen', *Zeitschrift fur Geschichtswissenschaft*, 53:10 (2005), pp. 885–96.

[33] Gerhard Reichling, *Die deutschen Vertriebenen in Zahlen. Teil I* (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1986), pp. 28–32.

[34] Mark Mazover, *Dark continent* (New York: Knopf, 1999), pp. 214–221.

[35] Mark Kramer, 'Introduction', in Ther & Siljak, *Redrawing Nations,* p. 7.

[36] Potsdam Protocol, Article XIII, 87. Today, the expulsions would be viewed as a war crime.

[37] Reichling, *Die deutschen Vertriebenen in Zahlen. Teil I*, pp. 34–6; Rudiger Overmans, 'Amtlich und wissenschaftlich erarbeitet' – Zur Diskussion uber die Verluste wahrend Flucht und Vertreibung der Deutschen aus der CSR, Erzwungene Trennung', in Detlef Brandes, Edita Ivanickova and Jiri Pesek (eds), *Herausgegeben far die Deutsch-Tschechische und Deutsch-Slowakische Historikerkommission* (Essen: Klartext, 1999), pp. 149–177.

[38] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, 'Memories of Universal Victimhood: the Case of Ethnic German Expellees', *German Politics and Society*, 23:2 (2005), pp. 1–28.

[39] Pertti Ahonen, *After the Expulsion: West Germany and Eastern Europe 1945–1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

(BdV) (Federation of Expellees) came to represents 21 different territorial associations with around 3 million members in the 1950s. Approximately 16–20 per cent of the West German population were ethnic German refugees and they made up a similar proportion of civil servants and representation in parliament. The *BHE* expellee party was also a junior coalition partner in the CDU government of 1953. But support for the expellees and the nationalist narrative ran far wider than the BHE. In 1951 only 8 per cent of West Germans were willing to accept the Oder-Neisse border as permanent.[40] In addition, the Federal Republic sponsored a large-scale project documenting the expulsions in order to establish factual foundations for the return of property.[41] Furthermore, the expellee organisations claimed a 'right of return' for refugees to their former homes and all political parties, except the Communists, officially supported this view.[42] By the end of the 1950s the BHE had lost its political importance, but the expellees were still regarded as a very important political constituency. Indeed, the expellee agenda constrained West German policy to CEE right up to the mid 1960s.[43]

In terms of official policy, Adenauer refused to recognise the GDR or accept the Oder-Neisse line as a permanent border. Areas to the east of the Oder-Neisse line were labelled as temporarily under Polish administration. The final borders were regarded as an open question subject to peace negotiations. In the meantime, the Federal Republic stood by its legal claim to the 1937 borders, and the rights of the expellees. Indeed, until 1970 official West German maps, including those used in schools, continued to mark Germany's 1937 borders, not the post 1945 borders. These positions were grounded in part on genuine conviction and in part on domestic political calculation. On occasion, Adenauer and other leaders would make strong revisionist statements.[44] At the same time however, Adenauer and his successors unequivocally renounced the use of force to obtain these objectives, which in any case they recognised as impossible to implement given strategic realities.[45] Unsurprisingly, the FRG's refusal to formally accept the *status quo* served to reinforce deep distrust of it in CEE.

Meanwhile, in East Germany about 25 per cent of the population was expellees. In 1950 the GDR signed the Treaty of Zgorzelec in which it recognised the Oder-Neisse line. This act was met with more popular opposition than any other government measure in the in the early post-war period. Recognising the threat this issue posed to the Communist regime, given its dependence on the Soviet Union which had imposed the agreement, the regime banned expellees from forming any associations and the subject became taboo in public discourse.[46]

[40] David Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture', in Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (eds), *The Civic Culture Revisited* (London: Sage, 1980), pp. 227–8.
[41] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memories of Universal Victimhood'.
[42] Rainer Schultze, 'The Struggle of Past and Present in Individual Identities: The Case of German Refugees & Expellees from the East', in Rock and Wolff, *Coming Home to Germany*.
[43] Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, pp. 11–2.
[44] Ibid., pp. 55, 56, 59, 134; Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer: Der Aufstieg, 1876–1952* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986), pp. 892–4, 946.
[45] Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer: der Staatsmann 1952–1967* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1991), p. 687; Philipp Gassert, *Kurt Georg Kiesinger 1904–1988* (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2004), pp. 445, 555–6.
[46] Phillip Ther, 'Expellee Policy in the Soviet-occupied Zone and the GDR, 1945–53', in Rock and Wolff, *Coming Home to Germany*, pp. 56–76.

The neutralisation of the German question in CEE after 1945: Realism

Despite the resonance of the ethnic German issue inside Germany and the fact that this in turn promoted great distrust of the FRG in CEE, especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia, the issue did not provoke serious instability in Europe.

The initial reason for this stability has to do with Realist factors which severely constrained Germany's capability to enact a revisionist agenda. As noted above, the experience of war hardened attitudes towards minorities in CEE such that many statesmen in CEE adopted the Realist prescription of ethnic and political separation to be enacted through population transfers and expulsions. Furthermore, otherwise Liberal figures from Western countries,[47] supported population transfer as a contribution to long-term regional stability. As Churchill expounded in the House of Commons in 1944, 'Expulsion is the method which [. . .] will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble [. . .] A clean sweep will be made.'[48] Indeed, albeit at a terrible price, the ethnic Realist prescription can be said to have aided stability by preventing the instrumentalisation of ethnic German minorities for an irredentist policy that would threaten the security and territorial integrity of the states of CEE bordering Germany.[49]

However, population transfer alone was insufficient to resolve matters. In fact, it created a strong sense of injustice in Germany that could have underwritten a revisionist policy to CEE, especially among the refugees. It was traditional state-centric Realist factors connected to the Cold War that neutralised this threat and contributed more broadly to the successful management of the German question in CEE after WWII. First, in terms of the balance of power, because of the 'iron curtain' drawn across Europe by the Soviet Union, it was not possible for ethnic German minorities to return to their former homes in CEE. Second, politically, the Cold War served to marginalise the ethnic German issue. The overarching threat posed by the superpowers to each other and their allies induced them to use their dominant position within their respective zones to expend significant resources in order to integrate German expellees quickly and effectively. Each side feared that leaving the refugee problem to fester would lead to political unrest, which would be exploited by the enemy to encourage further political unrest. Consequently, even the Western allies banned expellees from forming associations in their zones of occupation until 1950.[50]

More generally, against this Cold War backdrop of division and German weakness, it was clear that implementing a revisionist agenda was a non-starter. Hundreds of thousands of American, British and Soviet troops were stationed in the respective Germanys throughout the Cold War. East Germany had no foreign

[47] Joseph Schechtman, *Postwar Populations Transfers in Europe 1945–55* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), pp. 374–94; Kramer, 'Introduction', in Ther & Siljak, *Redrawing Nations,* p. 2, fn. 6, p. 7.

[48] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, (1 March 1945), vol. 408, col. 1617.

[49] Kramer, 'Introduction', p. 8; Mazover, *Dark Continent*, pp. 214–21.

[50] Ther, 'Expellee Policy in the Soviet-occupied Zone', p. 57; Emil Nagengast, 'The German Expellees and European Values', in Steven Vardy and Hunt Tooley (eds), *Ethnic Cleansing in 20th Century Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 289–302; Sylvia Schraut, 'Make the Germans do it: The Refugee Problem in the American zone of Post-war Europe', *Journal of Communist Studies & Transition Politics*, 16:2 (2000), pp. 115–24.

policy independence. While West Germany's position on the front line of the Cold War and its consequent dependence on an alliance with the West meant it was unable to challenge the Potsdam settlement in practice; a fact recognised by the leading decision-makers in the FRG.[51]

In this context – with the balance of power weighed so heavily against revision and the FRG's overwhelming dependence on the Western alliance for security – the leadership of the FRG concentrated on the integration of the expellees and on allowing the remainder of the ethnic Germans to immigrate into West Germany. Even the head of the *BdV* accepted, in 1958, that the realisation of the political goals of the expellees with respect to their homeland was impossible due to the geopolitical situation. Consequently, the expellee organisation focused their efforts in the 1950s on the integration of ethnic Germans and not on a revisionist agenda.[52]

Alternative theoretical explanations?

Liberalism has little or nothing to offer to help explain this initial period of stabilisation, in which the German question in CEE was neutralised. After all, there were not meaningful commercial or institutional links between the FRG and the undemocratic Communist East European states during this period. Nor were there any such links between the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc as a whole. Similarly, Constructivism does not provide an explanation either. As the above description of the way in which Germans related to the German question in CEE Europe after 1945 demonstrates, there was certainly no evidence of a cultural shift in identity and attitudes towards the issue that could explain moderation.

The deepening of peace 1970–89

In a dramatic break with post-war foreign policy, in 1970 Willy Brandt initiated a new *Ostpolitik* which involved West Germany's formal *de facto* acceptance of the post 1945 *status quo* in CEE.[53] Thus in the Treaty of Moscow, West Germany recognised *de facto* the Oder-Neisse line, and together with the USSR made a non-use of force declaration, while agreeing to work towards détente and to increase economic and cultural cooperation. At the same time, Bonn agreed to the *de facto* recognition of the GDR. The recognition of the border and the commitment to non-violence was reaffirmed in the Treaty of Warsaw with Poland a few months later. There followed an agreement on Berlin in 1971 and the Basic Treaty with the GDR in 1972. In 1973 Prague Treaty was signed which formally established diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and West Germany and in 1975 the Helsinki Final Act led to the creation of the Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

[51] Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, pp. 77–8; 96, 135.
[52] Wolf, 'The Politics of Homeland', p. 110.
[53] On Ostpolitik see Peter Bender, *Die Neue Ostpolitik und ihre Folgen* (Münich: DtV, 1995, 3rd edition); Richard Löwenthal, *Vom kalten Krieg zur Ostpolitik* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1974).

The new Ostpolitik was controversial in the FRG. The majority of the CDU/CSU opposed it and the party sought to prevent the Bundestag from ratifying the Moscow and Warsaw treaties. The CDU leader, Kiesinger, and his successor Barzel both tried and failed to topple Brandt and block Ostpolitik. Although Barzel's no confidence motion failed by only 2 votes, he subsequently recognised that public opinion favoured the treaties and consequently he was prepared to accept them subject to a number of revisions. However, Barzel proved unable to bring his party into line and the CDU/CSU officially abstained, which facilitated the ratification of the Moscow, Warsaw and Berlin Treaties in May 1972. In a ringing endorsement of the new Ostpolitik, the SPD won the November 1972 election, becoming the largest party in the FRG for the first time. The hard-line leader of the CSU, Franz-Joseph Strauss challenged the legality of the treaties, but in July 1973 the constitutional court ruled that the treaties, understood as a *modus vivendi* pending reunification, were constitutional.[54]

Realism

Realist factors played a role in generating the Brandt's new Ostpolitik. In the 1960s the fear of mutually assured destruction (MAD) brought both superpowers to pursue détente in Europe. This led to US pressure on the FRG to realign its policies towards the Eastern bloc, including on the issue of the Oder-Neisse line.[55] De Gaulle also tried to convince the FRG to make the same moves.[56] Meanwhile, the 1961 Berlin crisis demonstrated to the FRG that the Cold War division of Europe meant that Germany unity would not be possible for a long time.[57] In response to these strategic shifts, the FRG softened its policy towards CEE. Adenauer privately considered bilateral non-aggression pacts with Poland and Czechoslovakia and abandoning the Hallstein doctrine[58] regarding Warsaw Pact members.[59] The results however were meagre – the establishment of trading relations with 4 CEE countries. Chancellor Erhard and Foreign Minister Schröder continued this policy, establishing further trade missions in several CEE countries and offering in 1966 bilateral non-aggression pacts to all Warsaw Pacts states apart from the GDR. Most significantly, in the 1966 'Peace Note' the FRG formally recognised that the 1938 Munich agreement was no longer valid and declared that it had no territorial ambitions with regard to Czechoslovakia. During the Grand

[54] On CDU opposition to Ostpolitik 1969–1972 see Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists: The CDU/DSU and West German Ostpolitik* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1989), chapters 2 and 3.
[55] Schwarz, *Adenauer: der Staatsmann 1952–1967*, pp. 636, 704; Arne Hofmann, 'Small steps towards new frontiers? Ideas, concepts and the emergence of a détente strategy in the thinking of Willy Brandt and John F. Kennedy', *Historical Research*, 79:205 (2006), pp. 440, 444.
[56] Gassert, *Kurt Georg Kiesinger*, pp. 561, 674.
[57] Timothy Garton-Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Vintage, 1994), pp. 51–7.
[58] The doctrine held that the FRG would not maintain diplomatic relations with any state that had diplomatic relations with the GDR. On the Hallstein doctrine see William Glen Gray, *Germany's Cold War: The Global Campaign to Isolate East Germany, 1949–1969* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
[59] Daniel Kosthorst, *Brentano und die deutsche Einheit: Die Deutschland- und Ostpolitik des Aussenministers im Kabinett Adenauer 1955–1961* (Dusseldorf: Droste, 1993), pp. 354–59.

Coalition, in the spirit of détente promoted by the US and its Western allies, Chancellor Kiesinger tried to improve human, cultural and economic relations with the Eastern bloc; this included the establishment of trade ties with Czechoslovakia and diplomatic relations with Romania and Yugoslavia, which signalled the abandonment of the Hallstein doctrine in regard to Eastern Europe.[60] For Brandt too the construction of the Berlin wall and the rise of détente were an important catalyst for new thinking regarding the East.[61] In addition, Barzel's willingness to acquiesce in the ratification of the Eastern Treaties was partly a function of his recognition that they were strongly supported by Germany's Western allies.[62] Finally, in terms of the Realist theory of ethnic conflict, the physical division of Europe continued to restrain the German question in CEE until 1990.

However, the Realist explanation has its limits. Although the moderation of German policy towards CEE in the 1960s was a kind of precursor to Brandt's Ostpolitik,[63] the steps taken were quite modest and had very limited results. In each case, German moves were accompanied by a refusal to formally renounce its traditional positions regarding the Oder-Neisse line and expellee rights.[64] This was a major reason why these initiatives failed to significantly improve relations with CEE. In fact, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Romania and Yugoslavia actually increased Soviet suspicions of the FRG leading to a more negative atmosphere.[65]

Moreover, Brandt's *de facto* recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and his Ostpolitik more generally, while facilitated by Realist factors, would not have occurred without domestic change in the FRG, given the expellee organisations' and the CDU's opposition and the shift in public opinion, which had been vehemently opposed to these compromises in the 1950s.

Liberalism

Liberal factors also help explain German policy towards CEE. Liberal theories stress the importance of absolute material gains – commercial Liberalism – in generating an interest in peace. In this vein, in terms of German domestic politics, the political power of the expellee groups fell by the mid 1960s as a result of the successful social and economic integration of the expellees in West Germany.[66] In turn, this facilitated West Germany's ability to move to a policy of Ostpolitik under Brandt. In addition, Liberal Institutionalists could argue that the CSCE played a role by binding the Federal Republic to cooperate with the Soviet Union and its allies on the basis of the post-war territorial *status quo* until 1990.

[60] Gassert, *Kurt Georg Kiesinger*, pp. 554, 588, 592.
[61] Arne Hofmann, *The Emergence of Detente in Europe: Brandt, Kennedy and the Formation of Ostpolitik* (London: Routledge, 2007); Bender, Die Neue Ostpolitik, pp. 119–121.
[62] Clemens, *Reluctant Realists*, p. 88.
[63] For an argument to this effect, see Peter Siebenmorgen, *Gezeitenwechsel: Aufbruch zur Entspannungspolitik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1990).
[64] Schwarz, *Adenauer: der Staatsmann 1952–1967*, pp. 370–9, 686–7.
[65] Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, pp. 129, 207–8, 219.
[66] Rainer Lepsius, 'Sozialstruktur und soziale Schichtung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', in Richard Lowenthal and Hans-Peter Schwarz (eds), *Die zweite Republik. 25 Jahre Bundesrepublik Deutschland- eine Bilanz* (Stuttgart: Busse-Seewald, 1974), pp. 263–88.

Once again, this explanation has major limitations. CSCE only came into being in 1975 *after* changes in German policy regarding the German question in CEE in the early 1970s. In any case, its effect on German relations with CEE over the core issues remained limited. Relations between FRG and Poland improved 1975–89, but little progress was made the question of how to relate to the expellees. Meanwhile, relations between the FRG and Czechoslovakia did not improve after the establishment of CSCE, stymied in large part by historical issues related to Sudeten Germans.[67] Similarly, East-West trade was not really significant until the mid 1990s, well *after* Brandt's new Ostpolitik was adopted.

Constructivism

The sheer magnitude of Germany's defeat and occupation in 1945 came as a tremendous shock and it led to a fundamental re-evaluation of German foreign and security policy. For the most part German intellectual and political elites accepted that Germany bore responsibility for the war and had been guilty of horrific crimes against humanity. Against this background the FRG developed a foreign and security policy based on anti-militarism, multilateralism, European unity and integration into the West – *Westbindung*.

While multilateralism and Western integration were grounded on Realist logic they also had an ideological rationale. For Adenauer, the Western orientation was not only a means of guaranteeing West German security, but also a way to end Germany's identity crisis by anchoring the nation in Western civilisation and its values of liberal democracy, whilst distancing the Federal Republic from the tradition of Prussian militarism and German ultra-nationalism. By rejecting the Soviet offer of German reunification in return for neutrality in 1952, Adenauer institutionalised a clear preference for democracy and Western integration at the expense of German nationalism.[68] Despite domestic controversy over this issue in the 1950s, by 1960 this orientation became part of an elite consensus. As such, Adenauer's policies played a crucial role in helping to generate wider cultural change. Indeed, Brandt's Ostpolitik was grounded on this prior acceptance of Adenauer's policy of prioritising Western integration above German unification.[69]

By the 1960s, these multilateral institutions and their norms evolved from the status of imposed constraints to an integral part of the FRG's identity and strategic culture[70] – 'outside-in' cultural change. Consequently, German foreign

[67] Phillips, 'The Politics of Reconciliation', p. 71.

[68] Ronald Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU and the West, 1949–1966* (Berghahn, 2003), pp. 15–6; Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1965), p. 97.

[69] Peter Merseburger, *Willy Brandt* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2002), p. 582; Willy Brandt, *My Life in Politics* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992), pp. 164, 173.

[70] Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, pp. 67, 173–4, 332–7; John Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Rainer Bauman, 'German Security Policy with NATO', in Volker Rittberger (ed.), *German Foreign Policy since Unification: Theories and Case Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 141–84; Wolfgang Wagner, 'German EU constitutional Foreign Policy', in Rittberger, *German Foreign Policy since Unification*, pp. 185–229; Adrian Hyde Price, *Germany and the European Order: Enlarging NATO and the EU* (Manchester:

ministry officials became accustomed to defining German interests mostly from the point of view of the entire West; while for many German leaders multilateralism became a key objective in and of itself.[71] In addition, from its creation, the Bunderswehr was integrated into NATO's structures, with all of its military forces assigned to the organisation. This profoundly influenced the Federal Republic's strategic culture. Indeed, this institutionalised embeddedness constitutes a 'founding myth' of the Federal Republic itself.[72] At the same time, the Federal Republic's identity was decisively shaped by European integration and its membership in the EEC/EU. Among German elites there developed a consensus that Europe was not simply a free market zone but a common identity and a community of values; a democratic Europe based on integration, multilateralism and a norm peaceful conflict resolution.[73] As such, Chancellor Kohl described Germany's European orientation as one of the foundations of Germany's political culture.[74]

In tandem with 'outside-in' cultural change, there was also wide-ranging cultural change generated primarily from within the domestic arena that matched the culture associated with multilateral European institutions and thus greatly facilitated the integration of those international norms by the Federal Republic.[75] This domestic shift was characterised by the development of Holocaust-centric memory regime, a strong democratic political culture and a decrease in nationalistic attitudes. In this vein, the FRG developed a post-Holocaust identity as an anti-militaristic civilian power that seeks to avoid military conflict and resolve international disputes in a peacefully.[76]

This elite culture also attained popular resonance that was linked to a wide-ranging cultural shift among the German public. In the late 1960s, the West German public shifted from sympathy for authoritarianism and nationalism to support for democracy, anti-militarism, increased identification with Europe and its multilateral institutions. By 1968, most of the younger generation of West Germans had much less national pride and much less attachment to national symbols.[77] Meanwhile by 1973, 65 per cent of West Germans preferred European integration to German reunification.[78]

Simultaneously, there was an increase in support for democracy. Immediately following the war, most Germans viewed de-Nazification as an unwarranted punishment.[79] In the 1950s a large proportion of the West German public still rated Hitler as one of Germany's greatest statesmen. 1967 was the first year in

Manchester University Press, 2001); Simon Bulmer, *Charlie Jeffery & William Paterson, Germany's European Diplomacy: Shaping the Regional Milieu* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 126.

[71] Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, pp. 63, 65.

[72] Hyde Price, *Germany & the European Order*, p. 138; Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance*, p. 9.

[73] Hyde Price, Ibid., pp. 140, 170–4.

[74] Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, p. 63.

[75] Jeffrey Checkel, 'Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe', *International Studies Quarterly,* 43:1 (1999), pp. 84–7.

[76] Sebastian Harnish and Hanss Maull (eds), *Germany as a Civilian Power? The Foreign Policy of the Berlin Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

[77] Eva Kolinsky, ' Socio-Economic Change and Political Culture in Germany', in Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds), *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy Revisited* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 54–6.

[78] Berger, 'Norms, Identity and National Security', p. 339.

[79] Kolinsky, 'Socio-Economic Change and Political Culture in Germany', pp. 39–40.

which an absolute majority rejected this claim.[80] Indeed, until the late 1960s, West Germans did not express pride in their democratic political institutions, only in their economic success. However, by the late 1970s, the West German public was more apt to express satisfaction with the way the political system functioned than most other Western European democracies.[81]

Realism, liberalism and cultural change

The emergence of cultural change was partly dependent on the existence of prior Realist conditions and Liberal processes. First, concerning Realist factors, there was the total defeat of Nazi Germany and its occupation by the Allies. This was distinct from the situation at the end of World War I, when the 'stab in the back' myth resonated such that it assisted Hitler to mobilise support for authoritarianism and expansionism by inferring that Germany's surrender was down to corrupt democratic politicians and not military defeat *per se*.[82] In contrast, the sharp social and political discontinuity after 1945 provided an opportunity for cultural change, though that change was by no means automatic.[83]

Against the background of total defeat, after 1945 the program of de-Nazification and political re-education imposed by the Allies had importance.[84] Without their power as occupiers of Germany, such a scheme would have lacked the domestic support needed for implementation.[85] Second, Germany's multilateral European orientation, at least initially, was partly grounded on Realist logic, as even a Constructivist like Berger accepts.[86] Third, cultural change was dependent on the prior existence of physical security and economic wellbeing during the first twenty years of the existence of the FRG. This physical security and economic wellbeing was partly a result of Realist factors and commercial Liberalism. Sustained economic growth and the success of Germany's security policy, generated diffuse support for democracy, the Federal Republic, and its foreign and defence policy based on multilateralism, European integration and anti-militarism.[87] Particularly important in the diffusion of this cultural change was the generational factor; because the cultural change in West Germany was very strongly related to the rise to maturity of the post 1945 generation.[88] As such, it correlates with the more general generational cultural shift identified by Inglehart that depends on the prior existence of peace and economic prosperity and which is not unique to West Germany.[89]

[80] Conradt, *The German Polity*, p. 52.
[81] Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture', pp. 233, 264.
[82] John Girling, *Myths and Politics in Western Societies* (London, Transaction, 1993), ch. 3.
[83] Harry Eckstein, 'A Culturalist Theory of Political Change', *American Political Science Review*, 82:3 (1988), pp. 789–804.
[84] Wade Jacoby, *Imitation and Politics: Redesigning Modern Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), ch. 3–4; Nicholas Pronay and Keith Wilson (eds), *The Political Re-education of Germany and Her Allies after World War II* (London: Croom Helm, 1985).
[85] Kolinsky, 'Socio-Economic Change and Political Culture in Germany', pp. 39–40.
[86] Berger, 'Norms, Identity and National Security', pp. 319–20.
[87] Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture', pp. 233, 264.
[88] Ibid.; Levy, 'The Politicization of Ethnic German Immigrant'; Sussner, 'Still Yearning for the Lost Heimat?'
[89] Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Cultural change and the discourse over the German question in CEE: from nationalism and German victimhood to Europeaness and German guilt

The cultural change described above had implications for the way in which the FRG related to the German question in CEE. From 1945 until the mid 1960s (discussed earlier), the consensus identified with the ethnic Germans and their suffering. However, by the late 1960s the West German 'memory regime' had become Holocaust centred emphasising guilt and remorse for Germany's actions. The division of Germany and the expulsions came to be viewed as punishment for Auschwitz such that stories about German suffering could not be voiced without a direct causal reference to prior German crimes. Consequently, in the 1970s the expellee organisations were marginalised from the mainstream discourse because they tended to compare the fate of ethnic Germans and Jews.[90]

The shift in the discourse was strongly linked to the rise to maturity of the post-war generation; as such it correlates with the more general shift in German political culture. For many young West Germans in the 1960s and 1970s, the expellee organisations' political agenda became synonymous with an unhealthy obsession with the past. Even the expellee organisations were hit by this intergenerational conflict – as their ethno-national narrative became 'incomprehensible' to many of their own children.[91]

Cultural change and Brandt's new Ostpolitik

In the 1960s and 1970s Brandt constantly argued that the legacy of Nazism should be addressed through reconciliation and peaceful settlement with the East. The victims of Hitler's aggression had a right to secure borders and consequently, acceptance of the territorial *status quo* represented merely recognising the results of Hitler's war.[92] As he famously noted in this regard, 'Nothing is lost that had not long since been gambled away [by Hitler]'.[93] Intellectuals and people around Brandt in the SPD had begun to challenge the traditional 'victim' narrative regarding CEE in the 1960s[94] and these challenges gained public backing to a large degree because of generational changes in West German political culture. Once public opinion polls started to provide increasingly firm evidence of this trend, the political elites within the SPD reacted by distancing themselves from the expellee lobby and their revisionist agenda.[95]

Against this background, although Ostpolitik was initially opposed by the CDU, Brandt was able to garner the necessary legitimacy and support for the move due to the impact of cultural change on public opinion. Thus, it was only

[90] Sussner, 'Still Yearning for the Lost Heimat?'
[91] Faulenbach, 'Die Vertreibung der Deutschen'; Albrecht Lehmann, *Im Fremden ungewollt zuhaus. Fluchtlinge und Vertriebene in Westdeutschland 1945–1990* (Munich: Beck, 1993), p. 83.
[92] Bender, *Die Neue Ostpolitik*, p. 168; Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, p. 440.
[93] Television address from Moscow (12 August 1970), cited in 'Willy Brandt', *Time* (4 January 1971), {http://www.time.com/time/subscriber/personoftheyear/archive/stories/1970.html}, accessed 20 March 2007.
[94] William Glenn Gray, 'West Germany and the Lost German East: Two Narratives', in Charles Ingrao and Franz Szabo (eds), *The Germans and the East* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008), pp. 409–10; Bender, *Die Neue Ostpolitik*, p. 121.
[95] Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, p. 267.

in the late 1960s that the West German public was ready to accept Ostpolitik. In 1951 only 8 per cent of West Germans were prepared to accept the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's permanent border, whereas 80 per cent opposed this; by 1967, prior to Brandt's initiative, 46 per cent were in favour and only 35 per cent opposed. By 1972, 61 per cent were in favour and only 18 per cent opposed.[96] The correlation between cultural change and changes in public opinion towards the German question in CEE is apparent in three regards. First, the timing of the shift in public opinion corresponds to the timing of cultural change. Second, there was a very strong correlation between the willingness of people to accept the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's permanent border and the strength of their support for democracy. Third, the post 1945 generation was much more identified with the new culture than older generations and they were also much stronger supporters of the political Left, which initiated Ostpolitik.[97]

Thus, whereas previously domestic political considerations constrained the FRG's political elite's efforts at even a limited détente in the East,[98] by 1970 Brandt was able to legitimise his policy in terms of the 'guilt' narrative by famously kneeling at the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising memorial and by blaming Hitler for German losses in the East. Such symbolic moves could not have been successfully adopted beforehand when the 'victim' narrative still dominated.

The endurance and expansion of the long peace between German and CEE since the end of the Cold War

The conclusion of the Cold War ended the physical separation between Germany and its former territories and the new political openness in CEE provided the opportunity for political action on behalf of the expellee agenda for the first time since 1945. Subsequently, the German far-right and the expellee organisations began to act. The *BdV* started a campaign for a referendum over the future of Silesia, which raised hopes among elements of the German minority there of a shift in the border. Other groups initiated legal proceedings to claim compensation, which in turn generated counter-claims for compensation, including from the Polish parliament.[99] Meanwhile, Sudeten German expellee groups tried to make the Czech Republic's accession to the EU contingent upon granting material concessions to expellees. There was also the issue of a 'right of return' for ethnic Germans to CEE that was still part of the *BdV* charter. Such activities by expellees generated fear and distrust in Germany's neighbours, specifically Poland and the Czech Republic, which complicated bilateral relations immediately following the end of the Cold War.[100] According to polls in 2005, 61 per cent of Poles and 38 per cent

[96] Conradt, 'Changing German Political Culture', pp. 227–8. Recognition of this public support was one reason why the CDU leader Barzal acquiesced in the ratification of the Eastern Treaties, Clemens, *Reluctant Realists*, p. 92.
[97] Ibid. The younger generation within the FDP and the CDU were also more inclined to support Brandt's Ostpolitik than older counterparts, Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, pp. 230, 251.
[98] Ahonen, Ibid., pp, 77–8, 94, 148–53; Gray, 'West Germany & the Lost German East', pp. 404–5.
[99] Eric Langenbacher, 'Moralpolitik versus Moralpolitik: Recent Struggles over the Construction of Cultural Memory in Germany', *German Politics & Society*, 23:3 (2005), pp. 106–35.
[100] Jerzy Jedlicki, 'Historical Memory as a Source of Conflicts in Eastern Europe', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 32 (September 1999), pp. 225–32.

of Czechs believed Germany would try to get back territories and demand compensation.[101]

Yet despite the re-emergence of the ethnic German issue and rise of nationalism in the area of the former East Germany following the end of the Cold War, Germany's relations with states in CEE actually improved.[102] Rather than reverting to a machtpolitik nationalist agenda, the dominant themes of German policy to the region have been reconciliation,[103] free trade and mutual security through multilateral European institutions. Indeed, the unified Germany was one of the strongest advocates of incorporating the CEE states into those institutions and it was also the main source of bilateral and multilateral economic assistance to CEE in the 1990s.[104] In 1990 West Germany, led by a CDU Chancellor, signed the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany (Two plus Four Agreement) which recognised a united Germany in exchange for German acceptance of the post-World War II borders as final. The 1991 Polish-German border agreement confirmed the Oder-Neisse line as the Polish-German border. Only four members of the *Bundestag* voted against the 1991 Polish-German border treaty. In 1992, Germany signed a Treaty of Friendship treaty with Czechoslovakia, which improved bilateral relations.[105] In 1997 the Czech-German declaration constituted a form of reconciliation between the two states and a formal agreement not to burden relations with political and legal issues which stemmed from the past. This later commitment was made despite opposition from expellee groups.[106] In direct contrast with the 1950s, in the 1990s all the mainstream German political parties rejected the notion of a 'right of return' or compensation for German expellees. In 1999 Chancellor Schroeder stated officially that Germany would not seek or support compensation claims and even the *BdV* leader distanced the organisation from compensation claims, while dropping altogether territorial claims from their list of demands.[107] Subsequently, the Czech Republic declared that the Beneš decrees, which had provided the legal basis for the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, were 'extinct' and Germany supported the Czech Republic's inclusion in NATO and subsequently in the EU.

Realism

In terms of the Realist theory of ethnic conflict, although ethnic German minorities remained in 16 CEE countries at the end of the Cold War, the numbers were much

[101] Timothy Burcher, *The Sudeten German Question and Czechoslovak-German Relations since 1989* (London: Royal United Service Institute, 2004), p. 17; 'Allensbach-Umfrage: Polen und Tschechen fürchten deutsche Gebietsansprüche', *Spiegel Online* (5 November 2005), {www.spiegel.de/spiegel/vorab/0,1518,383359,00.html}, accessed 18 January 2007.

[102] On German policy towards expanding European institutions to include the states of CEE in the 1990s see Bulmer, Jeffery and Paterson, *Germany's European Diplomacy*, pp. 104–26.

[103] Lily Gardner Feldman, 'The Principle and Practice of Reconciliation on German Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 75:9 (1999), pp. 333–56.

[104] Ann Phillips, *Power and Influence after the Cold War: Germany in East-Central Europe* (Lanham MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 6–13.

[105] Ann Phillips, 'The Politics of Reconciliation: Germany in Central-East Europe', *German Politics*, 7:2 (1998), p. 75.

[106] Henning Sussner, 'Still Yearning for the Lost Heimat? Ethnic German Expellees and the Politics of Belonging', *German Politics and Society*, 22:2 (2004).

[107] Wolf, 'The Politics of Homeland', pp. 120–1; Nagengast, 'The German Expellees and European Values', p. 298.

smaller than before 1945.[108] This minimised one potential source of tension between the newly united Germany and CEE. In terms of state-centric Realism, it was clear in 1990, given the continued presence of large numbers of foreign troops on German soil, that the price of Europe's acceptance of German reunification was Germany's de-jure acceptance of the post-1945 borders, including the Oder-Neisse line. Furthermore, the change in the international strategic structure wrought by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union left a power vacuum in CEE which Germany, and the West more broadly, were able to take advantage of by expanding their security community and its multilateral institutions, NATO and the EC, eastwards. This structural change facilitated Germany's leading the charge to expand multilateralism eastward, but it did not cause this shift.

In fact, according to Realist theories of balance of power/threat, the post-Cold War era should have led to the lapse or weakening of multilateral alliances, coupled with greater unilateralism in order to create a German dominated sphere of influence in CEE.[109] It is unlikely that any power in Europe would have been willing to forcibly prevent German reunification. Moreover, as the strongest military power in Europe west of Russia, Germany could have adopted a more assertive policy towards CEE, including raising the issue of restitution for ethnic German expellees. The fact that it chose not to do this, but instead renounced its claims in CEE and operated within an anti-militarist, multilateral European context, strongly suggests that other factors were at work.

Liberalism

In terms of commercial liberalism, Germany's acceptance of the *status quo* in 1990 can be understood as a means of ensuring stability in order to protect its economic relations in Western Europe and promote economic relations in the post-Communist states. By the mid 1990s, Germany had become the most important economic partner of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. It was the inducement of such material benefits that drove these states towards democracy, European institutions and reconciliation with Germany. Thus, even though Czech and Polish public opinion did not particularly like Germany, they recognised the importance of the relationship.[110]

From a Liberal Institutionalist perspective, it could also be argued that European and Western multilateral institutions constrained the Federal Republic from adopting an aggressive stance towards CEE. In terms of issue linkage, the Federal Republic's security and economic wellbeing were very strongly tied to these institutions and the adoption of a unilateral nationalist policy of revision in CEE would have damaged German standing in these institutions, thereby posing a threat to core German interests. One example of the constraining effect of institutions was apparent during the reunification process. According to the Four Power regime instituted after World War II, the question of German reunification was a matter, not only for Germany, but also for the victorious occupying powers.

[108] On the size of ethnic German minorities see {www.ethnologue.com}.
[109] Mearsheimer, 'Back to the Future'; Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics'.
[110] Wayne Thompson, 'Germany and the East', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 56:3 (2001), pp. 929–33.

Consequently, when Chancellor Kohl sought to delay formal recognition of the Oder-Neisse line until after reunification, he came under enormous pressure from the four powers to recognise the border prior to reunification. As a result, Kohl relented and agreed to their condition.[111]

The limitations of these liberal explanations are twofold. First, East-West trade was not really significant until the mid 1990s, *after* Germany had taken the most important steps on the German question in CEE 1990–92. Second, although international institutions did play a significant role in the endurance and expansion of peace in CEE after 1990, their role was not primarily in terms of an external material constraint, as per the classic approach of Liberal Institutionalism. The Federal Republic did not need to be *constrained* by multilateral institutions because it *wanted* to act within these frameworks.

Constructivism

The cultural change that occurred in the late 1960s proved very robust outlasting the end of the Cold War, as was evident in the major parliamentary debates over Europe in the newly unified Germany, during the early 1990s. In these debates, two inter-locking narratives predominated: a negative one which drew a link between German dictatorship, genocide and European war associated with German nationalism, a positive one which linked the economic revival, peace and democratisation associated of the Federal Republic, with European integration and multilateralism. Against, this background, a return to more unilateral policies in the East was ruled out as risking isolation and a return to the unstable balance of power politics of the past.[112] Voices which called for the 'normalization' of German foreign policy on the basis of 'national interest'[113] remained largely peripheral, even as a united Germany felt less constrained about talking about pursuing its own interests within a pro-integration, multilateralist context.[114] In terms of public attitudes, by 1999, 57 per cent of Germans felt attached/fairly attached to Europe, while 77 per cent favoured a common European defence policy, higher than the European average.[115]

The return of the expellees to the mainstream discourse

In the post-Cold War era the expellee issue became more prominent again. However, the issue was framed in a completely different way than in the 1950s. For a start, ethnic Germans residing outside the unified Federal Republic were no longer considered unequivocally as part of the German nation. Thus, in the 1990s

[111] Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, p. 133.
[112] Thomas Banchoff, 'German Identity and European Integration', *European Journal of International Relations*, 5:3 (1999).
[113] See, for example, Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas: Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne* (Berlin: Siedler, 1994).
[114] Hyde Price, *Germany and the European Order*, p. 220.
[115] Hass et al., 'Germany and the Norms of European Governance', p. 157.

only 31 per cent thought German speaking minorities outside Germany's borders were 'real Germans'.[116] In 1993 Germany amended its citizenship law by limiting the right of ethnic Germans to immigrate into Germany and thereby weakening the ethnic component of German nationality.[117] Furthermore, the discourse regarding the post-war expulsions became increasingly framed from within a transnational European perspective that emphasised universal moral opposition to ethnic cleansing, while retaining the reminder that the expulsion of Germans from CEE must always be set against prior German responsibility for the war and the Holocaust.[118] As the then Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, himself the son of Germans expelled from Hungary, noted in 2003 'When we talk about expulsion, one cannot leave out what came before'.[119]

This trend in the discourse was evident in the debate over 'The Centre against Expulsions' (Zentrum gegen Vertreibung). In the parliamentary debates and in the pages of two major German newspapers there was a near consensus to view the Centre as a trigger for a transnational European orientation toward human rights.[120] The thrust of discourse within the main political parties[121] was similar. The dominance of this universal frame is evident by virtue of the fact that even those seeking to revive a national perspective, did so through a European Human Rights lens. Thus, Erika Steinbach, the head of the *BdV*, argued that the Centre was critical to fostering transnational norms of international law and human rights in order to ensure that Kosovo style ethnic cleansing would not happen again.[122]

Germany and the expansion of the Western/European security community eastwards

After its foundation in 1975, CSCE deepened the peace in CEE by helping to establish some trust between states in Eastern and Western Europe.[123] It also strengthened Liberal opposition to Communism in CEE, making for a smoother transition to democracy after 1990.[124] However, until the end of the Cold War its impact regarding German relations with CEE was limited. In other words, the 'outside-in' effect of CSCE was quite weak until 1990.[125] It was only after the end of the Cold War that CSCE transformed into the OSCE, becoming a fully-fledged regional organisation that aimed to forge a community based on liberal standards and 'cooperative security'. As such, it provided the leaders of Post-Communist

[116] Levy, 'The Politicization of Ethnic German Immigrants', p. 294.
[117] Haas et al., 'Germany and the Norms of European Governance', pp. 166–7.
[118] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memories of Universal Victimhood'; Langenbacher, 'Moralpolitik versus Moralpolitik'.
[119] Gunter Hofmann and Bernd Ulrich, 'What have we done to ourselves?', *Die Zeit* (28 August 2003), {http://www.germany.info/relaunch/politics/speeches/082803.htm}, accessed 20 March 2007.
[120] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memories of Universal Victimhood'.
[121] Langenbacher, 'Moralpolitik versus Moralpolitik'.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Emanuel Adler, 'Seeds of Peaceful Change: OSCE's Security Community Model', in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 126–8.
[124] Richard Davey (ed.), *European Détente* (London: Sage RIIA, 1992), p. 251.
[125] Marcin Zaborowski, *Germany, Poland and Europe: Conflict, Cooperation and Europeanization* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 70, 76.

states in CEE with a normative basis for their new state identities.[126] NATO and the EU also played a major role in promoting liberal democratic norms in the East, thereby helping to extend the Western/European security community eastward.[127]

The role of 'inside out' cultural change was important here because it was the newly united Germany that played the leading role in seeking to extend the Western security community eastwards. In response to the structural changes wrought by the end of the Cold War that reduced the constraints on Germany, rather than seeking to maximise its power unilaterally as predicted by Realism, Germany actually constrained itself, while allowing CEE countries such as Poland to 'punch above their weight'.[128] The German vision, informed by a strong sense of 'special responsibility' embedded in the narrative of German responsibility for World War Two, was to expand multilateral European frameworks eastward in order to create a peace order for the whole of Europe based on democracy, law and human rights.[129] Thus, it was Germany that led the drive for eastward expansion within NATO and the EU, especially regarding Germany's closest neighbours in CEE with which it had historic disputes over the ethnic German question, Poland and the Czech Republic. Germany's promotion of NATO's eastward expansion was designed to prevent the re-nationalisation of post-Communist countries security policies, drawing on the positive narrative of Germany's own post-war experience. Germany was also the leading Western proponent of the expansion of the CSCE and its conversion into OSCE.[130] Indeed, from the early 1990s onwards Germany framed its policy towards the remaining ethnic German minorities in CEE on the basis of the common norms outlined by the CSCE/OSCE.

Germany's renunciation of its claims in CEE, in combination with its pursuit of reconciliation and expanded multilateralism, helped to foster moves towards the creation of a security community between itself and the states of CEE with which its relations had been so problematic in the past. For example, the 1992 Treaty of Friendship between Germany and Czechoslovakia included a German declaration that it bore the primary responsibility for the suffering of Sudeten German's expelled after 1945.[131] This in turn helped to generate a more conciliatory approach to history on the parts of the Czechs such that the 1997 Czech-German declaration contained mutual expressions of sorrow for past acts including, for the first time, a formal Czech expression of regret regarding the Beneš decrees. With regard to Poland, the acceptance of the Oder-Neisse line formalised in the 1991 Polish-German border agreement led to a dramatic improvement in Polish-German

[126] Emanuel Adler, *Communitarian International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 200–3.
[127] Emanuel Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-restraint, and NATO's Post Cold War Transformation', *European Journal of International Relations*, 14:2 (2008), pp. 195–230; Alexandra Gheciu, 'Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the "New Europe"', *International Organization*, 59:4 (2005), pp. 973–1012; Frank Schimmelfennig, Stefan Engert, Heiko Knobel (eds), *International Socialization in Europe: European Organizations, Political Conditionality & Democratic Change* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006).
[128] Zaborowski, *Germany, Poland and Europe,* pp. 117, 121.
[129] Hyde Price, *Germany and the European Order*, pp. 139, 143, 156, 160, 181, 183, 212; Patricia Davis and Peter Dombrowski, 'Appetite of the Wolf: German Foreign Assistance for Central and Eastern Europe', *German Politics*, 6:1 (1997), pp. 1–22; Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, pp. 92, 97–8, 105.
[130] Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, pp. 93–105.
[131] Phillips, 'The Politics of Reconciliation', p. 75.

relations.[132] The 1991 Treaty of Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation, which followed the border treaty, signalled the beginning of the process of establishing a security community. It introduced strong normative elements: human rights, rule of law, condemnation of discrimination and minority rights based on the 1990 CSCE Copenhagen declaration. In a deliberate imitation of the 1963 Franco-German Elysee Treaty, the agreement established bilateral institutions; a youth exchange and cross border bodies. Subsequently, German support of NATO enlargement had a profoundly positive impact on the perception of Germany in Poland.[133] More generally, German multilateralism reassured small CEE countries concerning their historic fear of German domination.[134]

In terms of developing a deeper sense of communal identity, Germany and her CEE neighbours remain some distance from a common culture of memory.[135] However, there has been a serious attempt to foster dialogue within European institutions about the past, which can be said to constitute a step towards the sense of 'we-ness' that undergirds a security community. Thus, in response to the controversy surrounding the idea of establishing a Centre Against Expulsions in Berlin, the Presidents of Germany and Poland issued the 2003 Danzig Declaration which asserted that 'memory and grief' over World War II and subsequent expulsions should 'not be abused to divide Europe again.'[136] Subsequently, in February 2005, the culture ministers of Poland, Germany, Slovakia and Hungary announced the foundation of the 'European Network for Remembrance and Solidarity' in Warsaw, based *'exclusively* on the European spirit of reconciliation'. Also in 2005, when Chancellor Merkel decided to support the *BdV*'s project for a 'Centre Against Expulsions', all members of the *European Network* were invited to cooperate and to include their experiences in the Berlin Centre.[137]

Conclusion

This article has provided a theoretically grounded and chronological sequenced explanation of a core element of the post 1945 long peace in Europe – namely the containment and resolution of the German question in CEE. In the first stage, Realist factors played the dominant role in explaining the stabilisation and containment of the German question in CEE. However, Realist factors did not

[132] Aniot Wlodek et al., 'Returning to Europe: Central Europe between Internationalization and Institutionalization', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 195–250.
[133] Duffield, *World Power Forsaken*, pp. 93–117; Wolf, 'The Politics of Homeland', p. 124; Zaborowski, *Germany, Poland and Europe*, pp. 95, 107.
[134] Thompson, 'Germany and the East', pp. 929–33; Hyde Price, *Germany and the European Order*, pp. 183, 212.
[135] Sybille Quack, 'Divided History – Common Memory? A Question of the Culture of Memory in the EU' Lecture, EU Studies Center, CUNY, New York, (28 February 2007), {http://web.gc.cuny.edu/Eusc/activities/paper/Quack07.htm}.
[136] 'Joint declaration in Danzig by Federal President Johannes Rau & President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski, October 29, 2002', *German Embassy, Washington DC website*, {www.germany.info/relaunch/politics/speeches/1029a03.html}, accessed 20 March 2007.
[137] On these issues see Quack, 'Divided History – Common Memory?'; Stefan Troebst (ed.), *Vertreibungsdiskurs und europäische Erinnerungskultur. Deutsch-polnische Initiativen zur Institutionalisierung. Eine Dokumentation* (Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2006).

explain the depth and longevity of peace, and ultimately conflict resolution. In fact, contrary to the expectation generated by Realist theories the end of the Cold War did not lead to a revival of a more unilateral, assertive German foreign policy towards CEE, but instead it facilitated the intensification of a pacific policy of multilateral peace-building. Liberal theories played some role in explaining conflict resolution, but the most powerful explanation stems from Constructivism. Cultural change generated both domestically and through membership in European institutions, propelled the FRG to resolve the German question in CEE by giving up on its claims and by promoting instead reconciliation and the expansion of the Western/European security community and its multilateral institutions into CEE.

Without cultural change, conflict resolution between Germany and the states of CEE after 1990 would have been unlikely, and consequently greater regional instability would probably have ensued. The nationalist agenda of the expellees would have retained its general cultural resonance and, given significantly less Realist constraints, it is reasonable to assume that this agenda would have garnered significant political expression. Germany would have also felt much less attached to continuing to work on the basis of multilateral norms within European institutions. This would probably not have been enough to actually bring about war, but it would have made it extremely difficult for a German government to formally renounce all its claims in CEE and reassure its neighbours by taking moral responsibility for the past. This would have put a significant obstacle in the way of good relations, especially given that the Polish and Czech publics distrusted Germany in any case.[138] Moreover, such states, as new democracies, are more prone to populism, nationalism and warlike behaviour; especially when issues of national identity are involved.[139]

How do these findings relate to other integrated theoretical explanations for peace? First, they confirm the conclusions of Miller[140] and Ripsman that Realism best explains the first stage of stabilisation and conflict management and that Realist variables are also a necessary precondition for sustaining and deepening peace by other variables. However, whereas Ripsman and Miller identify Liberalism as providing the main explanation for this second stage, ignoring or dismissing Constructivism, it has been argued here that Constructivism provides the most robust explanation for the deepening of peace and conflict resolution.

Balancing the importance of this Constructivist factor is the finding that in the FRG cultural change was partly dependent on the prior absence of war, combined with stability and economic prosperity generated by Realist factors and Liberal processes. In general terms this suggests that an extended absence of conflict and serious security threats combined with economic prosperity provide at least a permissive environment for a slow-moving process of cultural change in identities, values and norms to be generated.[141] In other words, there would appear to be

[138] Thompson, 'Germany and the East', pp. 929–33.

[139] Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005). On the populist nature of democracy in CEE, see the special issue of *Journal of Democracy*, 18:4 (2007).

[140] Op. cit. fn. 2.

[141] Similarly, it has been argued that state security and the absence of conflict provide an important precondition for the establishment and maintenance of democracy, see William Thompson, 'Democracy and Peace: Putting the Cart before the Horse?', *International Organization*, 50:1 (1996), pp. 141–74; Manus Midlarsky, 'The Impact of External Threat on States and Domestic Societies',

significant material constraints on cultural change as a mechanism for generating peace.[142]

One possible implication of this finding for regions embroiled in compound conflicts, like the Middle East, is this: The generation of cultural change in the direction of democracy and reconciliation can only follow, and not precede, the establishment of stability and the neutralisation of conflict through Realist factors and later Liberal mechanisms. Even then, the process is likely to take a long time.

International Studies Review, 5, 4 (2003), pp. 13–18. In a related vein, Miller argues that the greater the balance between the nation and the state, the greater the chances of democracy emerging, see Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations and the Great Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[142] See also Jonathan Rynhold, 'Cultural Shift and Foreign Policy Change: Israel and the Making of the Oslo Accords', *Cooperation & Conflict*, 42:4, (2007), pp. 419–40.