Contents

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Foreword

Frank Stengel's study proceeds from a fairly straightforward empirical puzzle: why, despite decades of strong public commitments opposing the use of military force, has Germany altered its stance such that participation in out-of-area military operations has become an everyday part of German security practices? Existing explanations for the Federal Republic of Germany's previous anti-military stance make reference to deeply-embedded norms rejecting the use of force, the rapid shift in policy raises serious problems for any such account. And explanations for the participation of German military forces in a wide range of novel deployments that rely on supposedly obvious facts about the changed security environment run into immense difficulties when confronted with the ambiguities of that environment—and the plethora of interpretations and arguments about just what kind of response is called for.

The solution to these explanatory deficiencies, Stengel proposes, is to take more seriously the process by which state actions are justified and legitimated. To bring this process into view, Stengel deploys the tools of critical discourse analysis, specifically its Essex School variant, and concentrates on how situated policymakers and politicians take advantage of gaps and mismatches between elements of German security discourse to remake a stance opposing the use of military force into a stance that supports that use. In particular, Stengel notes, the mutation of the notion that military force is a tool of last resort from a component of an argument *against* out-of-area troop deployments to a component of an argument *for* such deployments helps to explain why the conditions of possibility for German security practices changed. This is not a change of overall "ideas," because the same notion—military force is a tool of last resort—is present in *both* arguments. Instead, the overall arrangement of discursive elements has changed, and that alters the meaning of specific notions. Something similar, Stengel argues, is at work in the reinterpretations of the German past and the drawing of differ-

ent "lessons of history" from the experience of Nazism; where once this was a cautionary tale about the dangers of militarism, now it is a cautionary tale about the kinds of evils that can *only* be opposed by military force.

Stengel's argument is considerably more than an explanation of one country's changing foreign policy, however. Against both interest- and idea-based accounts of social action, especially social action undertaken by artificial persons like states, Stengel illustrates how much more we learn about international affairs when we focus our attention on processes of articulation and concrete strategies of meaning-making. Against more or less determinist accounts of political change, Stengel recovers contingency and agency without sliding into an unfettered indeterminism. Both of these broad theoretical moves have implications for how we think about international affairs in general, since they point to the need to take more seriously the specifics of how actions become possible in particular contexts, and how different discursive configurations give rise to different outcomes. Indeed, an extension of Stengel's analysis to other otherwise-puzzling cases is entirely reasonable, and in Stengel's book, scholars will have an outstanding example of just what such an account looks like.

I would also be remiss if I did not highlight the relevance of Stengel's argument for contemporary discussions and debates about the future of international order. A demilitarized Germany was a core component of the "Western" geopolitical settlement that followed the Second World War, and along with the transatlantic alliance instantiated in NATO, formed the institutional architecture that tacitly enframed world politics in the Euro-American "core" of the world-system for decades. If we did not pay attention to the way that a demilitarized Germany became a militarily active Germany, we would likely mis-estimate the durability of that "Western" geopolitical settlement. The changes Stengel points to did not take the form of a complete break with past political coalitions and positions, but are best understood as a contingent evolution of how a variety of discursive elements were configured. While that does not initially present an optimistic view of the stability of our global institutions, it also calls for a more responsible exercise of political agency in defense of those institutions. In that way, Stengel's reflections on the past has clear lessons for us in the present, as a good piece of critical social science should.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson
Series Editor, Configurations

Preface and Acknowledgments

This book is about the intersection of changes in discourse and foreign policy, in the context of security policy. It grew out of my PhD dissertation, which I began at the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS) at the University of Bremen and finished at Kiel University. My research in Bremen was funded by a full scholarship financed by the German Excellence Initiative, and the project received additional funding by a research scholarship from the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), as well as a completion grant by the University of Bremen. I finished the final manuscript at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University, while on a postdoctoral fellowship financed by the German Academic Exchange Service.

Over the years, I profited immensely from comments by many people on various chapter drafts and conference papers. First and foremost in this context, I thank my PhD supervisors at BIGSSS—Martin Nonhoff, Rainer Baumann, Thomas Diez, and Dirk Nabers—for their invaluable comments, patience, and support over the years; they went well beyond what can be expected. The manuscript profited from discussions at BIGSSS with other fellows, most notably Jesse Crane-Seeber and Anup Sam Ninan, as well as the members of what we called our "Discourse Self-Help Group," Dominika Biegoń and Linda Monsees. I presented parts of the project at a number of conferences and workshops, including doctoral colloquia at GIGA in Hamburg, the Institute for Intercultural and International Studies at the University of Bremen, and the University of Marburg; the methodology workshop at the 2009 Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference at the University of Kassel; a research colloquium on German foreign policy at the Université Jean Monnet in Saint-Étienne, 12–13 November 2009; the annual meetings of the International Studies Association in Montréal in 2010 and in Atlanta in 2016

I thank my parents, brothers, in-laws, and son, Fiete, as well as a handful of close friends, all of whom suffered, to different extents, under what sometimes seemed like a never-ending project. Above all, I am grateful to my wife, Jana Jarren, for her patience, support, encouragement, and faith in my ability to write a book. Without Jana, this book, dedicated to her, would have never been written.

Abbreviations

AA	Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt)
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung)
BGBl	Federal Law Gazette (Bundesgesetzblatt)
BMVg	Federal Ministry of Defense (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung)
BVerfG	(German) Federal Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht)
BVerfGE	Decisions of the German Federal Constitutional Court (Entscheidungen des Bundesverfassungsgerichts)
CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany (Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands)
CSU	Christian Social Union in Bavaria (Christlich Soziale Union in Bayern)
EU	European Union
FDP	Free Democratic Party (Freie Demokratische Partei)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesrepublik Deutschland)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik)
GG	Grundgesetz (Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany)
GOBT	Geschäftsordnung des Deutschen Bundestages (Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan
IOs	international organizations
IR	International Relations

MP	member of parliament (Bundestag)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OEF-A	Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan
PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus; preceded by the SED, succeeded by Die Linke)
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
RAF	Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion)
SED	Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands)
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia
US	United States
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

Introduction

Today, the Bundeswehr is an army on operation
(interjection by Die Linke: "Boo!");
national defense takes place also at the Hindu Kush.

<small>GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER PETER STRUCK[1]</small>

This book analyzes changes in the German security discourse after unification, focusing specifically on the emergence of "networked security" (*vernetzte Sicherheit*) as the overarching framework for post–Cold War German security policy. In doing so, it follows two main avenues. First, for understanding processes of discursive change, it proposes a theoretical framework based on the poststructuralist discourse theory of the so-called Essex School (Glynos and Howarth 2007; Howarth et al. 2000; Laclau and Mouffe 2001). Although primarily located within poststructuralist theory,[2] this study demonstrates that understanding discursive change is highly relevant to a much broader range of theoretical questions, including norm dynamics, the transformation of taboos in international relations, grand strategic change, the "identity-security nexus" (e.g., Innes 2010), and the domestic or international legitimation/making-possible of certain (potentially controversial) policies (Doty 1993; Nuñez-Mietz 2018; Wajner 2019; Weldes and Saco 1996),

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1. Speech at the German Bundestag, 16th legislative period, 2nd session, 8 November 2005: 43. Struck made this statement for the first time at a press conference in December 2002 (von Bredow 2015: 153). The sources for subsequent quotes from parliamentary protocols are provided in the form of in-text short citations according to the following template: name of the speaker, legislative period/session number, date: page. All translations from the German language in this book are, if not otherwise indicated, the author's, including parliamentary protocols and the German-language academic literature.

2. *Poststructuralism* is a problematic and highly contested term (see Angermüller 2015). For practical reasons, I employ it here to refer to the approach used in this study.

most notably the threat and use of military force. Second, the book intervenes in the ongoing scholarly debates about German security policy, particularly German participation in military operations outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) area. Despite a supposedly widespread and deeply engrained antimilitarist culture (e.g., Berger 1998), German participation in these so-called out-of-area operations has increased significantly since the end of the Cold War. Moreover, such operations—once perceived as "completely unthinkable," in the words of German Chancellor Angela Merkel (17/37, 22 April 2010: 3478)[3]—have become widely accepted among German policymakers as a normal (if unpopular) element of German security policy. The "out-of-area debate" (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2006; Longhurst 2004) has given way, it seems, to an out-of-area consensus.[4]

This book sets out to provide an answer to the puzzle of how German policymakers have widely taken out-of-area operations for granted as a social practice. Assuming a discourse theoretical perspective, the book argues that whether policies are considered appropriate or inappropriate, rational or irrational, or moral or immoral depends on the discursive order (the established, dominant discourse) that organizes a certain field of human activity at a certain point in time.[5] Starting from this basic argument, shared by (the partially overlapping fields of) discourse theory, poststructuralism in International Relations (IR), and (parts of) International Political Sociology (IPS) and critical constructivism alike,[6] the book proposes that understanding how once-unthinkable policies are made possible (i.e., how taboos erode) requires that we turn our attention to dynamics of discursive change. Thus, that out-of-area operations have become not only acceptable but considered a self-evident requirement of a post–Cold War world can only be understood in the broader context of changes in the German security discourse. How "reality" (including a state's security environment) is understood, who or

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3. On taboos in IR, see Tannenwald 1999, as well as the contributions to the fourth issue of *Review of International Studies* 36 (2010).

4. This consensus is discussed in the literature as Germany's "normalization" (Crawford 2010; Gordon 1994; Karp 2009; critical, Kundnani 2012) or its "coming-of-age" (Brockmeier and Rotmann 2018: 20).

5. In that sense, discourse functions in a similar way to how strategic culture is sometimes conceptualized (e.g., Biehl et al. 2013; Longhurst 2004). I prefer discourse because the "beliefs, norms and ideas" (Biehl et al. 2013: 11) of which culture consists can only be observed empirically once they are articulated in discourse.

6. See, e.g., Ashley and Walker 1990; Behnke 2013; Campbell 1998; Der Derian and Shapiro 1989; Doty 1993; Hansen 2006; Nabers 2015; Nabers and Stengel 2019a; Weldes and Saco 1996; Weldes et al. 1999; Zehfuss 2002.

what is considered a threat, what means are appropriate to solve certain policy problems, and how specific norms and values (e.g., antimilitarism) should be understood in the context of security policy is produced, regulated by, and transformed in the security discourse. In short, security discourses are primarily concerned with what is usually referred to as grand strategy, broadly understood as "a state's theory about how it can best 'cause' security for itself" (Posen 1986: 13; see Krebs 2018).

Building on these arguments, this book examines dynamics of discursive change, with the ultimate aim to add to our understanding of (foreign) policy change. After developing a theoretical framework to analyze what makes some discourses more effective than others, it provides an explanation, based on a comprehensive discourse analysis of more than 25 years of German parliamentary debates, for the transformation of the German security discourse since the Cold War. Moreover, the book traces how military operations have been articulated differently in the Cold War and the current discursive order, making them unthinkable (a taboo) in one case and without alternative in the other.

WHY INTERVENTIONISM IS NOT SELF-EVIDENT: PROBLEMATIZING THE GERMAN OUT-OF-AREA CONSENSUS

The starting point of this book is the curious expansion of involvement abroad by the German armed forces, which presents a puzzle for existing theoretical accounts. Over the past 30 years, the Bundeswehr—the official title of the German armed forces—has undergone nothing less than a "dramatic transformation" (Enskat and Masala 2015: 365) from a "non-interventionist, conscription-based territorial defense force" (Sarotte 2001: 12) to an "army on operation" (e.g., Jung, 16/227, 18 June 2009: 25169).[7] Once confined to territorial defense within NATO, the role of the Bundeswehr has been gradually expanded to include conflict prevention, crisis management, and counterterrorism, as core functions.[8]

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7. The original German term *Armee im Einsatz* has been translated inconsistently in official documents as "army on operations" (Federal Ministry of Defence 2003: 18), "expeditionary force" (Federal Ministry of Defence 2006: 6), and, in the 2005 coalition agreement between CDU, CSU, and SPD, "operational army" (CDU et al. 2005: 126). Often, this is simply called the "new Bundeswehr" (BMVg 2012a: 9).

8. While many of the Bundeswehr's current tasks, including conflict prevention, can be traced back to the 1994 white paper on security (Federal Ministry of Defence

Importantly, while individual missions continue to be controversially debated,[9] the general practice of out-of-area operations has become a largely uncontroversial matter among members of the Bundestag, the German parliament (with the notable exception of the left-wing party Die Linke). Today, that the Bundeswehr should participate in military operations around the globe has become, for the majority of German policymakers, a self-evident fact of life (Enskat and Masala 2015; von Bredow 2015; von Krause 2013, 2015). Moreover, force transformation with the explicit aim of making the Bundeswehr fit for its changed "operational reality" (Struck, 15/97, 11 March 2004: 8601) has become a constant feature, bringing about numerous legal reforms and quite material consequences in new arms procurement plans. In short, out-of-area operations have become a social practice, understood as "the ongoing, routinized forms of human and societal reproduction" that are mostly taken for granted, without any "strong notion of self-conscious reflexivity" (Glynos and Howarth 2007: 104).

This general consensus, normal though it might seem in a time in which most "Western" countries pursue interventionist security policies,[10] is actually highly remarkable, for at least two reasons. First, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is commonly considered to be an ideal-type "civilian power" (Maull 1990, 2018) whose foreign policy is marked by a preference for multilateralism, Western integration, and, above all, antimilitarism (Baumann 2011: 468)—an "extraordinary reluctance to become actively involved in

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1994), the paper, published before the Federal Constitutional Court's 1994 out-of-area decision, only cautiously advocates a more active international role (Martinsen 2010). The paper quite clearly places emphasis on national defense as the Bundeswehr's main function, explicitly arguing that the maintenance of a "protective function must not be affected by changes in the security situation," because armed forces were intended mainly as an insurance "against the imponderables of the future" (Federal Ministry of Defence 1994: para. 302). In contrast, the 2006 white paper lists conflict prevention, crisis management, and counterterrorism first when discussing the Bundeswehr's functions, even prior to the "support of allies" and the "protection of German territory and its citizens" (Federal Ministry of Defence 2006: 9). While the change is gradual, it is still substantial.

9. That not each and every mission is surefire business for Germany is clearly demonstrated by the country's 2011 abstention from United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1973 authorizing the Libya intervention (see Brockmeier 2013; Meiers 2012; Miskimmon 2012).

10. I intend the scare quotes to indicate that the concept of "the West" itself is discursively produced (see Behnke 2013; Hall 1992; Hellmann and Herborth 2016; Klein 1990; on "Western" interventions, Dillon and Reid 2009; Kühn 2013; Orford 1999; Sabaratnam 2018; Zehfuss 2018).

international military security affairs" (Berger 1998: 1).[11] This argument is primarily made by conventional constructivist scholars who point to the importance of various relatively stable "ideational variables" (Malici 2006: 37)—norms, values, roles, identities, political cultures, and so on[12]—that, internalized by policymakers and the general public alike, influence standards of appropriateness. As a consequence, constructivist scholarship would have led us to expect antimilitarist culture to have a constraining effect and to function as a formidable obstacle to military involvement abroad (Longhurst 2004: 131; Crawford and Olsen 2017).[13] This expectation should apply especially to violent missions like that of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (see Noetzel 2011). The expansion of out-of-area operations is rendered even more puzzling because antimilitarism does not seem to have significantly weakened among the general public.[14] This point is of interest not only to researchers concerned with German foreign policy but, equally, to students of Japanese foreign policy. Like Germany, post-1945 Japanese foreign policy has traditionally adhered to a strict antimilitarism but recently began a process of "normalization" (e.g., Hughes 2009; Stengel 2007; recently, Gustafsson et al. 2018), despite strong, if declining, public opposition (Hagström and Isaksson 2019). As in the German case, scholars struggle to provide convincing explanations for this puzzle (but see, recently, Gustafsson et al. 2019; Hagström and Hanssen 2016; Hagström and Isaksson 2019).

Second, although policymakers themselves usually attribute expansion of out-of-area operations to the pressures of a changed security environment, a closer look renders this argument unconvincing. After the end of the Cold War, we are told, the world is marked no longer by traditional threats

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11. See also, recently, Crossley-Frolick 2013: 43; Daase and Junk 2012; Hilpert 2014; Leithner 2009. Others have called this the *Kultur der Zurückhaltung*, translated as "culture of restraint" (Longhurst 2004: 130) or "culture of reticence" (Crawford 2010: 181; Malici 2006).

12. Among studies drawing on ideational variables, political, strategic, and/or security cultures are the most prominent (see Berger 1998; Daase and Junk 2012; Duffield 1998; Giegerich and von Hlatky 2019; Hilpert 2014; Junk and Daase 2013; Lantis 2002a; Malici 2006), but scholars have also explained policy by drawing on norms and values (Baumann 2001; Boekle et al. 2001), roles (Koenig 2020; Maull 2018), identities (Banchoff 1999; Risse 2007), and even Bourdieu's (1984) concept of habitus (see Bjola and Kornprobst 2007).

13. See, e.g., Berger 1998; Bjola and Kornprobst 2007; Maull 2000. For a more nuanced take, see Junk and Daase 2013.

14. For data, see Gravelle et al. 2017; Körber-Stiftung 2014; Mader 2017; Schoen 2010.

but by "new" globalized threats like terrorism, state failure, or the prolifera-
tion of weapons of mass destruction that, if not countered early and at their
source of origin, will eventually reach Germany as well. For example, in a
much-discussed speech in 2014, federal president Joachim Gauck claimed
that since Germany could not "hope to be spared from the world's conflicts,"
the country "should not [*darf nicht*] say 'no' on principle" to military opera-
tions (Gauck 2014: 5). The implicit logic behind this claim is one political
scientists call (neo)functionalist: policy measures are responses to objective
problems.[15]

There is one major problem with this line of reasoning: the claim that
new threats like terrorism, intrastate conflict, or state failure demand out-of-
area operations does not sit easily with the literature concerned with the
effectiveness of military operations. Although systematic evidence is hard to
come by, the recent literature suggests that military operations are of very
limited, if any, utility to counter new threats like terrorism, intrastate con-
flict, or state failure, let alone climate change or mass migration.[16] Even with
respect to traditional peacekeeping operations, which take place after a
cease-fire or peace agreement has been reached and which are commonly
regarded as the most successful type of interventions (Fortna 2004; Fortna
and Howard 2008; Gromes 2012), success seems to vary with different fac-
tors, including whether it is a UN mission (Nilsson 2008), the mission's
mandate (Salvatore and Ruggieri 2017), whether it includes a civilian compo-
nent (Hoeffler 2014), and whether it is a so-called robust (Bellamy and Hunt
2015: 1280) or militarized (Sloan 2011) operation.[17] In addition, because mil-
itary operations at least entail the possibility of violence, they risk creating
unintended negative consequences like injuring civilians and/or provoking
resistance (Condra and Shapiro 2012; Hughes 2015: 106; Johnson 2004a;

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15. Similar arguments are prominent in the debate about Japanese security policy,
although the rise of China and North Korean aggression are commonly seen as the
most important factors causing foreign policy change in Japan (e.g., Hughes 2004;
Samuels 2007). As in the German case, this interpretation is not self-evident (see Gus-
tafsson et al. 2019). The same can be said about arguments that pressures from exter-
nal problems require Japanese participation in peace operations (Stengel 2008).

16. See Bellamy 2015; Downes and Monten 2013; Gilligan and Sergenti 2008;
Grimm 2008; Gromes and Dembinsky 2013; Mac Ginty 2012; Regan and Meachum
2014.

17. Even peacebuilding, which uses primarily civilian instruments, has been sub-
ject to sustained criticism, raising doubt concerning the effectiveness of external
interventions more generally (Autesserre 2017; Duffield 2007; Goetze 2017; Rich-
mond 2011; Sabaratnam 2018).

Paris 2014).[18] Following some of these studies' recommendations would mean less, not more, military activity abroad. In summation, although assessing the effectiveness of military operations is an arduously complicated task fraught with methodological problems, it is relatively safe to say that the available research at least does not support the claim that new threats demand military interventions. Of course, out-of-area operations equally serve the purpose of demonstrating solidarity within NATO and the European Union (EU) (Kaim 2007), but that purpose only shifts the question from Germany to its partners, because, from a functionalist perspective, it is no less clear why the United States (US) would rely on largely unsuitable policy instruments.

Given these limitations, it is, as Enskat and Masala aptly summarize, "not self-evident but to the highest degree remarkable" that out-of-area operations have "become almost a thing of course" (2015: 373). This book takes this puzzle as a starting point, arguing that the German out-of-area consensus can only be understood within the context of large-scale discursive change. Put simply, the book argues that the changing view on military operations is the result of the demise of one (the Cold War) security order and its replacement by another.

COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

Previous attempts at explaining Germany's move into out-of-area operations fall within three (and a half) broad categories.[19] The first group of studies explains out-of-area operations (as do policymakers themselves) as an adaptation to changed circumstances. They include, most notably, neoclassical realist and theoretically eclectic, policy-oriented studies. For example,

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18. This concern is in addition to any ethical questions (see Baron 2010; Dill and Shue 2012; McMahan 2009; Rudolf 2014; Zehfuss 2018). Indeed, recent years have seen pacifism and nonviolence return as serious topics in IR (Frazer and Hutchings 2014; Hutchings 2018; R. Jackson 2019).

19. I limit my discussion here to explanations of the more general shift toward the out-of-area consensus, not of individual policy decisions. The literature on German security policy is wider than the discussion here suggests, including, at least during recent years, insightful studies from the perspective of Foreign Policy Analysis, which explain individual operations (see Brummer 2011, 2012, 2013; Brummer and Oppermann 2019) as well as focus on the effect of party ideologies and contestation on variation within the broad limits set by ideational factors (or discourses) (Hofmann 2019; Wagner et al. 2018).

criticizing constructivist studies, Dyson argues that Germany was simply "acting according to the material forces of the international system, rather than subjective norms and ideas rooted in German 'security culture'" (2011: 559; also 2019). Similarly, Glatz et al. (2018) state that out-of-area operations are "necessary," and Buras and Longhurst claim,

> The *international situation after the end of the Cold War*, Germany's acquisition of full sovereignty coupled with demands from allies and partners to take up a greater responsibility for security and stability in the world *necessitated a certain adjustment* of Bonn/Berlin's foreign and security policy. (2004: 226, italics added)

This argument, perhaps convincing at first glance, is problematic because it (implicitly or explicitly) takes reality as objectively given. This assumption stands in stark contrast to a diverse group of studies in IR, the social sciences, and philosophy that highlight that reality precisely cannot be taken for granted.[20] Ignoring their arguments is problematic for two reasons. First, taking one particular construction of reality as an objective representation of reality brackets a large portion of the politics involved in decision-making on matters of foreign policy. As a consequence, it offers a partial explanation at best. Second, such research actually reproduces one specific representation of reality and contributes to its enduring influence, including potential negative unintended consequences (Cox 1981; Dillon 1996; Smith 2004).

Despite the obvious limitations of this argument, it is shared even by some constructivist studies. For example, Leithner (2009: 9) explains discursive change as a result of "pressure from the new international environment" (similarly, Maull 2006). From a constructivist perspective, this argument is nothing less than self-defeating. Given that constructivists generally hold "the view that the material world does not come classified, and that, therefore, the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language" (Adler 2002: 95), they should be among the first to point to the "social construction of reality" instead of taking it for granted (Berger and Luckmann 1967). From a constructivist point of view, claiming

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20. This argument has been made in a broad range of studies based on very different theoretical positions across the social sciences: see, e.g., Ashley 1987; Behnke 2013; Berger and Luckmann 1967; Campbell 1998; Dillon 1996; George 1994; Hajer 2005; Hansen 2006; Houghton 1996; Jervis 1976; 2006; Mintz and Redd 2003; Sylvan 1998; Weldes 1999; Wendt 1995; Winch 1990.

that reality "demands" anything amounts to an ad hoc abandonment of one's (meta)theoretical framework as if it was a sweater, not a skin (Marsh and Furlong 2002), which is why Eberle is spot-on when he describes these studies as (only) "soft-constructivist" (2019: 4). Needless to say, this abandonment poses serious problems in terms of theoretical coherence (Guzzini 2000; P. T. Jackson 2010). Even if we were to gloss over these obvious inconsistencies (which we should not), the reference to an external reality means that constructivism itself has nothing to add and has to fall back on the theoretical competition.[21] A similar criticism applies to studies that invoke campaign tactics to explain the 2003 Iraq War (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2003: 100–101; Risse 2007: 59), which is to draw on rationalist explanatory factors rather than delivering a constructivist analysis.

The second group of explanations seeks to account for out-of-area operations from within constructivism. Most notably, Berger (2002) has argued that German policy change is the product of norm change, weakening antimilitarism in favor of multilateralism.[22] More than 15 years after Berger originally made the argument, its shortcomings are readily apparent. Thus, while participation in Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001 (the Afghanistan invasion) is compatible with the argument, German refusals to participate in the Iraq War in 2003 and the intervention in Libya in 2011 suggest that Germany has reverted to antimilitarism (Nonhoff and Stengel 2014). As has been pointed out by Baumann (2006), such a linear conception of norm change, which underpins much of conventional constructivist research (in both German foreign policy research and IR more generally: see Puetter and Wiener 2007), is not fully convincing, because it means that norms either are stable and constraining or change almost randomly back and forth (see also the critique in Flockhart 2016).

A third group of studies (the half category mentioned above) engage the issue but fall short of offering an explanation. These studies come in basically two variants. The first variant argues that change has actually been only incremental and moderate, still being compatible with German antimilita-

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21. At this point, some observers will feel reminded of Legro and Moravcsik's (1999, 2000) highly similar and devastating critique of realism. Given the extent to which factors other than the international system were accountable for explaining policy outcomes in realist explanations of foreign policy, Legro and Moravcsik questioned whether anybody was still (or ever was) a realist.

22. Harnisch (2001) makes a similar argument with respect to socialization; more recently, Koenig (2020) has argued that Germany has undergone a role adaptation, placing more emphasis on multilateralism at the expense of military restraint.

rist culture and/or its civilian power role.[23] Aside from the fact that the extent of change is always a matter of interpretation (Baumann 2006; Hellmann 2009b), these studies simply state that constructivism passed the test and lives to fight another day. The second variant declares out-of-area operations outside of constructivism's jurisdiction altogether (Risse 2007: 59). Obviously, that approach provides no more insight.

Finally, a small, slowly growing body of research applies insights from critical IR and social theory to the study of German foreign policy, including discourse.[24] These studies significantly broaden our understanding of German foreign policy. Nevertheless, research that uses discourse as a main analytical concept remains slim (Crossley-Frolick 2017), and the few such studies focus on topics other than military operations or only on individual missions, concentrate on questions other than explaining large-scale discursive change, approach the issue from a different theoretical vantage point, and/or focus primarily on popular culture. With a macrolevel perspective on the changing German security discourse, the present study complements those previous ones.

ARGUMENT: POLICY CHANGE AND DISCURSIVE TRANSFORMATION

Overall, the widespread acceptance of out-of-area operations remains, to put it in more conventional political science terminology, a puzzle in need of explanation (Day and Koivu 2019; King et al. 1994: 15). This book shows that the common-sense assumption that military operations are essential is the result not so much of (what is commonly said to be) factual necessities but of a particular, contingent representation of reality within the German security discourse, rather than reality itself (which from a poststructuralist point of view is unintelligible anyway). To understand the establishment of military operations as a social practice (policy change), one needs to take a step

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23. The basic argument that Germany remains a civilian power continues to be widespread: see Bjola and Kornprobst 2007; Koenig 2020; Malici 2006; Maull 2006, 2018; Müller and Wolff 2011; Risse 2007; critical, Hellmann 2002, 2007, 2011, 2016b.

24. See Bach 1999; Baumann 2006; Behnke 2012; Eberle 2019; Engelkamp and Offermann 2012; Geis and Pfeifer 2017; Hellmann 1999, 2007; Nonhoff and Stengel 2014; Roos 2012; Schoenes 2011; Shim and Stengel 2017; Spencer 2014; Stark Urrestarazu 2015; Stengel 2019b; Zehfuss 2002, 2007; Ziai 2010.

back and examine the much larger changes in the German security discourse as a whole (discursive change). In the, roughly, past 30 years, the Cold War German security order has become replaced by what I call, for convenience's sake, the "discourse of networked security." According to the new German grand strategy that this discourse produces, the old threat of the Soviet Union has been replaced by new threats like terrorism, mass migration, and environmental problems. Since these threats are globalized, they cannot be deterred but require a networked or comprehensive security policy that tackles them early on and at the place of their origin,[25] while combining the military and civilian instruments of different actors into a unified approach. In short, a networked security has to be both preventive and (in a broad sense) interventionist. Within this discourse, out-of-area operations are rearticulated in two important respects. First, military operations are constructed as indispensable within a broader whole-of-government strategy. Second, there is a transformation in the relationship between military operations as an instrument, on one hand, and peace and security as policy goals, on the other: once seen as contrary to peace and security, military operations (including the use of military force) have become accepted as a means to achieve peace and security.

To understand how the changing articulation of the military within the German security discourse has been made possible, this book traces and provides an explanation for the "hegemonization" of the discourse of networked security (Nabers 2015: 110; Norval 2004: 145). The term *hegemonization* here refers to the process by which a particular discourse manages to assert itself in discursive struggles, successfully establishing itself as "a valid and/or dominant world description" (Nonhoff 2019: 63). In this context, three aspects especially contribute to a particular hegemonic project's chance of success: (1) the construction of a broad range of social demands as equivalent (as going hand in hand), (2) the articulation of an antagonistic frontier between the Self and a radically threatening Other (that blocks the Self's very identity), and (3) the representation of the totality of equivalent demands by one particular demand (an empty signifier). Put simply, incorporating a broad range of demands increases the chance of gaining sufficient supporters to become hegemonic, and the identification of a clearly discernible root of all evil to be overcome galvanizes het-

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25. This policy is also sometimes referred to in the literature as "extended security" (Junk and Daase 2013: 139).

erogeneous demands into a single project, which is further supported by the provision of a common symbol around which subjects can rally (Laclau 2005a; Laclau and Mouffe 2001). In addition to these three factors, a project has to be credible when held against the set of sedimented discursive practices that make up the normative framework of a given society (Laclau 1990a).

Here in particular, I argue, a discourse theoretical approach can benefit from engaging with arguments from feminist (e.g., Hooper 2001; Peterson and Runyan 1993; Sjoberg and Tickner 2013; Tickner 1988; Wibben 2018; Zalewski and Parpart 2008) and decolonial and postcolonial approaches as well as with arguments from critical geopolitics in geography (Dalby 1994; Ó Tuathail 1994, 1996).[26] The legitimation of military operations and, in particular, of the use of force is a prime example that some phenomena cannot be fully understood without taking feminist and postcolonial arguments into consideration. Indeed, a significant reason arguments for interventions (broadly understood) appear convincing is because, at the risk of oversimplification, they draw on established gendered representations (e.g., Young's "logic of masculinist protection"; see Young 2003) and civilizationist representations of a "modern" West and a "traditional" non-Western Other, which, in turn, are linked to older constructions of colonizer and colonized (Chakrabarty 2000; Cockburn 2010; Eichler 2014; Masters 2009; Muppidi 2012; Peterson 2010; Shepherd 2006). By drawing on that body of research, this book tries to respond to the criticism that "nonfeminist" research (including critical IR) does not sufficiently engage with feminist or postcolonial arguments (Åhäll 2018: 2; Chowdhry and Nair 2004a; Steans 2003; Tickner 1997; Wibben 2020; Zalewski 2019). To avoid silencing the importance of gender and Eurocentrism and the continued relevance of colonial discourses for the legitimation of interventions (and severely limiting explanatory power in the process), this book follows the proposal by Ann Towns (2019) to weave feminist and postcolonial arguments into the analysis. Having said that, readers should be aware that the gender and postcolonial analyses here remain limited in the sense that the book is primarily informed by the Essex

26. Decolonial and postcolonial perspectives comprise a very heterogeneous group. In the following discussion, I am using postcolonialism as a shorthand to refer to this body of research, but that should not provoke the misconception that this group of approaches is monolithic (on postcolonialism in IR, see Barkawi and Laffey 2006; Chandler 2013; Chowdhry and Nair 2004a; Darby 2009; Dunn 2003; Grovogui 2010; Inayatullah 2014; Vucetic and Persaud 2018).

School and, as a consequence, unavoidably falls short of fully realizing the "radical potential" of these perspectives.[27]

   This book shows how the discourse of networked security prevailed. First, it transcended the confines of the security discourse more narrowly understood, by incorporating a number of different social demands, ranging from the security of Germany and its allies, to humanitarian concerns, to environmental protection. It included not only demands previously considered disparate but even some that were formerly seen to be contradictory—most notably, demands for out-of-area operations and civilian conflict prevention. Networked security thereby united previously opposing demands into a single hegemonic project. Second, the project clearly identified the source of enduring problems after the end of the Cold War, which, against original expectations, had not brought about world peace. This alleged root of all evil was the so-called new threats, which were articulated as a danger not just to Germany but to the entire international community, blocking it from fully establishing itself as a stable, democratic, peaceful, and perfectly secure entity. Finally, the demand for networked security was articulated as a universal remedy through which all of the new threats could be overcome. Networked security thus functioned as an empty signifier, a symbolic representation of different subjects' demands and the common good as such.

   Within this larger discourse, military operations were articulated as an integral part of a networked approach, providing support for what was claimed to be mainly a civilian task. Against the background of antimilitarism, the integration of military operations into a networked approach was made possible through a highly ambiguous construction that articulated military operations as simultaneously indispensable and subject to severe limitations. On one hand, German decision makers argued that military operations were a *conditio sine qua non* in (networked) whole-of-government operations, often enabling the application of civilian means in the first place—for instance, in postwar societies. On the other hand, policymakers regularly pointed out (1) the limited utility of the military for the management of new threats like terrorism and (2) that military operations could, for moral reasons, only ever be a means of last resort (*ultima ratio*). This book argues that pre-

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27. I thank one anonymous reviewer for alerting me to this important limitation; the formulation about the radical potential of these perspectives is the reviewer's.

cisely this highly ambiguous articulation made out-of-area operations possible against the background of sedimented antimilitarist practices. Only because policymakers themselves pointed out the limited utility of military means for the management of the new threats could they credibly claim that those means were nevertheless needed as part of a wider approach. Similarly, policymakers' expression of uneasiness with the use of military means contributed to the impression that participation in military operations was not so much a political decision as a factual necessity to which policymakers only grudgingly conceded, against their own explicit normative convictions.[28]

Precisely in this context, the analytical advantage of a poststructuralist approach vis-à-vis a conventional constructivist one becomes most clearly visible. On face value, decision makers expressing a dislike of military operations seem to demonstrate the continued relevance of antimilitarism. This could be read as evidence supporting the conventional constructivist argument that antimilitarist norms continue to play an important (constraining) role in German foreign and security policy or, in Maull's (2018) terminology, that Germany continues to adhere to a civilian power role. Similarly, Koenig (2020: 91) has recently claimed that "the culture of military restraint" continues "to set important boundaries for the enactment of 'international responsibility.'" In contrast to that claim, a poststructuralist perspective shows how statements expressing a moral aversion to military means are actually employed in favor of, instead of against, military interventions.[29] Thus, a poststructuralist approach reveals how apparently antimilitarist statements serve to undermine military reticence and how the very meaning of antimilitarism is transformed in the process. More broadly, a poststructuralist account can help understand instances of what could be called "paradoxical politics," that is, situations marked by an at least seeming contradiction between rhetoric and policy action.[30]

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28. The notion of responsibility has received some attention in the study of German foreign and security policy (see Crossley-Frolick 2017; Geis and Pfeifer 2017; Schwab-Trapp 2002; Stahl 2017; Stengel 2010, 2019a).

29. In a similar way, Junk and Daase (2013: 147–48) have pointed out that public acceptance depends on how specific military interventions are framed rather than on an inherent (in)compatibility of interventions with culture per se.

30. The apt term *paradoxical politics* was suggested by an anonymous reviewer.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

This book develops the foregoing arguments in more detail in the following chapters. Chapter 1 draws on discourse theory to develop a theoretical framework for the analysis of discursive change, centered around the notion of hegemony. It sketches an ideal-type hegemonic process, from the disruption (dislocation) of a dominant discourse via discursive struggles between competing projects, to the acceptance, institutionalization, and naturalization of one particular discourse as a new discursive order. In line with discourse theory, the book conceptualizes hegemony as the result of the interplay between (1) the production of a chain of equivalences between previously disparate or even contradictory demands, (2) the construction of an antagonistic frontier between the Self and a radical Other that blocks the Self's identity, and (3) the representation of the chain of equivalent demands by one particularity that, by emptying itself of its particular content, becomes a symbol of a fully constituted society. The chapter pays specific attention to the importance of sedimented practices in endowing certain articulations with credibility. Chapter 2 takes a closer look at discourse theory's ontological and epistemological commitments and explores what these mean for an empirical analysis of processes of hegemonization. In addition, the chapter discusses what explanation means in the context of discourse theory, systematically outlining how such an understanding differs from more conventional, "neopositivist" (P. T. Jackson 2015: 13) notions of explanation. Finally, it explains how the theoretical concepts of discourse theory can be translated into categories for empirical analysis.

Chapters 3–5 provide a detailed analysis of the changing German security discourse since the late 1980s. Chapter 3 examines the old security order that provided the general framework of German security policy during the Cold War. It shows how a positive German identity (as inherently democratic and peaceful) was produced through the double exclusion of (1) Germany's own past and (2) the East, that is, the Warsaw Pact (both of which were articulated as oppressive and aggressive). The discussion of the Cold War order also functions as a foil against which change can be identified. The chapter then turns to the dislocation of the Cold War order at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and the discursive struggles that ensued as a result. It pays particular attention to the rearticulation of the relationship between the discursive elements surrounding peace and military force. The chapter details how arguments for military force to be only a

means of last resort (an *ultima ratio*) were reinterpreted in such a way that they actually served to legitimize military operations and how German anti-militarism became transformed in the process.

Chapter 4 analyzes the emergence of comprehensive security as the central concept for the post-unification German policy of conflict prevention. During the 1990s, German decision makers increasingly advocated for the combination of military and civilian instruments to combat armed conflict (what is now known as a networked or whole-of-government approach). The clue about this development is that proponents of comprehensive security picked up demands, originally voiced by members of the Green Party and the peace movement, for more activities in the field of civilian, as opposed to military, conflict prevention and rearticulated them as complementary, instead of an alternative, to military peace operations. This incorporation of competing demands is, I argue, a crucial point that helps explain how military operations became acceptable.

Chapter 5 analyzes the expansion of the discourse of comprehensive security after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11), from originally the narrower field of conflict prevention to the security discourse as a whole. The main argument developed in this chapter is that as opposed to the US, in which 9/11 proved disruptive, Germany already had the discursive template of comprehensive security ready to make sense of terrorism, as one of the new threats that required a comprehensive or networked approach. As a result, the post-9/11 German security discourse is marked not by upheaval but simply by the expansion of comprehensive/networked security and its establishment as the dominant discursive order (as the general organizing frame for German security policy), thus establishing a new grand strategy. At the same time, using the example of the "war on terror" discourse, the chapter demonstrates how discourses need to be rearticulated to make them credible against the background of the specific sedimented practices of a given society.