Role Concepts of German Foreign Policy in the Context of European Integration: A Europeanisation of Market Power and Military Restraint?

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Introduction

‘In my opinion, Germany should make a more substantial contribution, and it should make it earlier and more decisively if it is to be a good partner.’¹

During the Munich Security Conference 2014, German Federal President Joachim Gauck delivered a speech that has been widely echoed in European and international media. Indeed, the speech can be regarded as a paradigm shift in the self-perception of German foreign policy, as for the first time, the most senior representative of the Federal Republic publicly demanded to abandon the post-war principle of foreign policy restraint and assume more responsibility in international and European affairs. The impression of a rising European leadership position of Germany in international politics was further reinforced by its recent mediatory involvement in the Minsk negotiations to solve the Ukraine crisis. Nevertheless, also in the years prior to Gauck’s speech at the Security Conference, Germany had been the focus of international and German domestic policy observers. The Euro-crisis brought about the undesired situation that Germany was suddenly perceived as an anchor of stability which was also expected to assume leadership so as to save the monetary union, and eventually the European Union as a whole, from collapsing. Indeed, the Euro-crisis exposed

Germany’s strong position as the Union’s biggest economy and revealed the political power this fact entails. Yet due to a militaristic past that caused two devastating wars and the crimes committed against Jews and other minorities during the Holocaust, Germany has so far refused to openly declare any leadership ambition. However, in 2011 Poland’s Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski said during a speech in Germany, ‘I fear German power less than German inaction’ and thus illustrated the expectations of many European countries about a more active German leadership position. Nonetheless, Germany has remained careful so far and the discrepancy between reservations held against the expectations to lead Europe and the factual reality of economic and political clout induced journalists and policy observers to describe Germany as the ‘reluctant hegemon’.

Since the debate about a strong German position in European politics is of rather recent nature, academic publications about German hegemony are still very limited. Nonetheless, I posit that German influence and power are not entirely a recent phenomenon, and ‘Europeanisation’ has been used to transpose parts of the characterizing tenets of its own foreign policy into European foreign policy. Indeed, since the process of European integration commenced in the 1950s, Germany has not only ‘downloaded’ European foreign policies to the domestic level, but also has it been able to ‘upload’ and hence to ‘Europeanise’ the respective concepts of Monetary and Market Power as well as Military Restrained Civilian Power. In addition, the normative element of an emphasis on institutionalism is mainly, according to the hypothesis, a German initiative. Germany hence contributed decisively to certain role perceptions of the EU, which is commonly described as a market, civilian or

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normative power in the academic literature.\textsuperscript{5} This article aspires to examine to what extent European foreign policy can be regarded as an upload of German foreign policy role perceptions. The aim is to understand the influence Germany has been exerting on the European Union as from the beginning of European integration.

In order to further elaborate on the claim made by the author, the following section introduces the theoretical framework utilized for this article, which is a mélange of sociological role conception in foreign policy analysis and bottom-up Europeanisation, also depicted as ‘Europeanisation by uploading’. Next, the article deals with the self-perception of Germany’s roles as a foreign policy actor and its Europeanisation. Particularly, the cases of military restrained civilian power, market and monetary power, as well as normative power are analyzed. The final section then provides for a conclusion in which as assessment is offered of Germany foreign policy Europeanisation.

**Theorizing: Role Conceptions in Foreign Policy Analysis and Europeanisation**

The theoretical framework that is utilized here builds extensively on Lisbeth Aggestam’s conceptualization of sociological role theory in foreign policy analysis as well as on a bottom-up concept of Europeanisation by Reuben Wong and Christopher Hill. The objective of using a conceptual framework derived of two backgrounds is to provide for a way to understand the impact of German national role perceptions on the EU-level and to address the assumption that some European role conceptions stem from national German ones.

According to Aggestam, a role reflects a claim on the international system, recognition by international actors and a conception of identity. The ambition of her framework of analysis is to provide an understanding for the manner in which roles as ‘building blocks’ are constructed, sustained and changed in foreign policy. Foreign policy actors, resembling actors on a theatre stage, base their performance on the international stage on a script which consists of ‘national role conceptions’ determined by a nation’s process of socialization. The meta-theoretical foundation of Aggestam’s conceptual analysis is that roles are determined by institutions, the process of interaction between actors and the intention of actors to actively shape them. Institutions can constrain the actor’s behavior via norms and obligations, which lead to the forming of more authoritative ‘position roles’ which are more or less static with limited room for interpretation by actors, and ‘preference roles’ that are less static and carry more flexibility for the actor. Interaction is a major ‘constructivist’ element of the socialization process, as it describes the capacity of actors to develop roles of their own, which is of particular importance regarding informal rules. Intention is about the definition of roles by actors themselves, as ‘[t]he foreign-policy maker […] is actively involved in the construction of roles on the basis of calculations and reasoning’ which takes place in a ‘room for maneuver’ determined by institutional normative constraints. It is therefore crucial to include all the three aspects into the scope of analysis.

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid. 12-13.
9 Ibid. 15-16.
11 Ibid. 17-18.
Lisbeth Aggestam postulates there are four dimensions of a role: 1) role expectation, 2) role conception, 3) role performance, and the 4) role set. The first dimension pertains to the expectations of other actors in regards to the ‘role-beholder’ while the second dimension, role conception, refers to the subjective understanding of the role-beholder. The third dimension, performance, deals with the practical implementation of roles and the fourth dimension, the role set, describes one general determining meta-role which can be regarded as a sum of several particular roles. Regarding the sources of roles, the respective role and a political entity’s identity are closely interrelated. ‘Changes in foreign policy may be detected by paying attention to how different identity discourses lend value to or withdraw them from particular roles.’ Another important aspect in Aggestam’s theoretical conceptualization is role conflict and foreign policy change. Even though ‘[s]tability is an inherent characteristic of role as a patterned behavior’, there is nevertheless the latent possibility of an outbreak of role conflicts when dominant role conceptions contradict each other or seem incompatible.

Aggestam argues foreign policy change most likely occurs when actors experience role conflicts. These might be traced back to compromises, ambiguities within the role-set itself or in case conditions under which the roles were developed change. Table 1 provides a concise overview about Lisbeth Aggestam’s concept:

Table 1:
As noted earlier, the second part of the theoretical framework utilized in this study deals with ‘Europeanisation’, a term frequently used for different conceptualizations of the implementation of EU policies in Member States.\(^{18}\) Aside from this intra-EU approach, however, Europeanisation has recently also been used pertaining to the realm of EU foreign policy.\(^{19}\) The background behind the current use of the term in foreign policy aspects is the divide between the meta-theories of European integration about the question of whether there is a foreign policy of the EU, specifically between intergovernmentalism, contending all power rests with the Member States, and a neo-functionalism that posits a *réflexe communautaire*.\(^{20}\) The aim of Europeanisation is to function as an alternative concept overstepping the intergovernmentalist approach which maintains there is no foreign policy of the EU, and the neo-functionalist one arguing EU Foreign Policy already exists.\(^{21}\) Other debates focus on the impacts of socialization processes on the actual ‘substance’ of foreign policies and the degree of convergence between national and EU-level foreign policies.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{22}\) Ibid. 6.
There is a vast scholarly consensus on three different dimensions of Europeanisation:

1) a top-down approach or Europeanisation by ‘downloading’, 2) a bottom-up approach or Europeanisation by ‘uploading’ and 3) a ‘process of identity and interest convergence’.

In addition, a fourth aspect deals with the question of the degree of eventual policy convergence, and a fifth dimension discusses the institutionalization and socialization processes of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

As this study deals with the extent of German ‘uploads’ to the European level, the conceptual framework mainly focuses on the second bottom-up dimension, Europeanisation by uploading. Five indicators allude to such a process of Europeanisation via national projection:

a. The member state attempts to gain influence
b. The member state attempts to influence other Member States’ foreign policies
c. The EU is being used as a ‘cover or umbrella’
d. The national foreign policy of a member state makes use of the EU as an ‘influence multiplier’

The model of Europeanisation developed here also fits into Aggestam’s conceptualization, as these indicators can be attributed to the actor’s behaviour in both the ‘interaction’ and the ‘role performance’ dimensions, respectively. The assumption being made is that acts of Europeanisation have impacts on performance and/or the institutional or international expectations on the situated actor. For this reason, Europeanisation itself, or rather its outcomes, exert influence on the role conceptions of a country, so that there is a circular model of relationship between sociological role theory and Europeanisation.

23 Ibid. 6.
24 Ibid. 6-11.
25 Ibid. 7.
Germany’s Role Perception as a Foreign Policy Actor and its bottom-up Europeanisation

In academia, Germany has often been depicted as one of the most ‘Europeanised’ states.\(^{26}\) This can be traced back to the post-WWII identity of West Germany, which has been shaped by four key dimensions.\(^{27}\)

1. Civic political rights in contrast to fascism and the Third Reich
2. Westbindung, embeddedness into the community of western democracies
3. Domestic institutions such as the Basic Law, the DM currency and social market economy
4. The reconciliation with former adversaries and the rejection of military

Even though the dimension of being a nation-state has reemerged after reunification in 1990, German foreign policy identity in general has been stable overall.\(^{28}\) Out of these identity factors emerge Germany’s role conceptions as a civilian power and as a trading power.\(^{29}\) Even though these role conceptions still apply, I use alternate terminology for those role conceptions – Military Restrained Civilian Power, and Market and Monetary Power, as it is deemed more encompassing due to the existence of German military potential and an economic prowess extending the realm of trade. The third decisive role concept that is analyzed here is normative power.

\(^{26}\) Anderson, Jeffrey. Germany and Europe: Centrality in the EU (Oxford University Press, 2005);
Bulmer, Simon. Shaping the Rules? The Constitutive Politics of the European Union and German Power (1997);
Dyson, Kenneth; Goetz, Klaus. (ed.) Germany, Europe and the Politics of Constraint (Oxford University Press, 2003);
Katzenstein, Peter J. United Germany in an Integrating Europe (Cornell University Press, 1997).


\(^{28}\) Ibid. 66-67.

\(^{29}\) Ibid. 68.
‘German policymakers still are more active supporters of the ‘European –idealistic’
conception of a normative-civilian power model for European foreign policy than their
French or British colleagues in that both Germany and the EU support the promotion
of democracy, human rights and security cooperation as common values shaping
international politics while often lacking the necessary means or the political will to do
so.’\textsuperscript{30}

The concept of normative power is also a widely discussed conception in academia,
and in the third case study the normative power of Germany to pursue the Europeanisation of
the multilateral and institutional is examined.

1) \textbf{Military Restrained Civilian Power}

As mentioned above, German identity after the Second World War was heavily shaped
by the notion of ‘nie wieder’, never again. As part of the western orientation the Federal
Republic of Germany embarked on, and the failure of the European Defence Community,
West-Germany acceded to NATO and consequently also had to re-establish military
capacities. Yet legal provisions restricted the use of the military only for the cases of defence
and natural disasters.\textsuperscript{31} Furthermore, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled in 1994 foreign
deployments of the German military require a parliamentary mandate.\textsuperscript{32} Aside from these
restrictions which conform to a culture of military restraint, other institutional obligations
have nevertheless had a different influence on Germany as a foreign policy actor. Aside from
NATO obligations, the Maastricht Treaty provided for a Common Foreign and Security


\textsuperscript{31} Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (GG), Article 35; Article 87a.

\textsuperscript{32} Bundesverfassungsgericht [Federal Constitutional Court], \textit{BvE} 3/92, 2 \textit{BvE} 5/93, 2 \textit{BvE} 7/93, 2 \textit{BvE} 8/93, Out-
of-area Einsätze (1994)
Policy and as from 1998, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP) came into being, entailing commitments that appear to counter the self-perception of a civilian power.

In terms of Europeanisation, Germany has been regarded as one of the main drivers of CFSP. To a large extent, this can be related to a particular perception of security that mainly builds on inclusion and partnership rather than the extension of hard power capabilities. This notion can be traced back to the idea of ‘security community’. According to Karl Deutsch, extensive interactions via social-communicative processes between states lead to a “we-feeling” and also trigger a sense of being part of a “security community”. German politicians frequently make references to this idea by emphasizing that European integration has made war between countries in Western Europe ‘unthinkable’.

Further to this push for CFSP, Germany has also made some contributions to the development of CSDP. The St. Malo initiative of the United Kingdom and France could be translated into a concrete European Security and Defence Policy under the German presidency of the EU Council in 1999, and Germany further significantly shaped the ‘Headline Goals’ of the ESPD, combining both military and civilian elements, which were adopted at the Helsinki European Council. In 1999 Germany also participated for the first time since the end of the Second World War in a NATO-led combat mission abroad in Kosovo, a mission not covered by a mandate of the UN Security Council. Even though one could argue this counteracts the culture of military restraint, Germany nevertheless could ‘upload’ a proposal for an end to this conflict.

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33 Aggestam, Germany, 77-78.
34 Ibid. 68.
35 Ibid.
36 Daenhardt, Germany in the European Union, 47.
‘The uploading of German preferences for ending the Kosovo war with the proposal for the Stability Pact for south-eastern Europe as a civilian instrument for post-conflict reconstruction helped shape the EU’s nascent security policy.’

In this context, the EU’s Eastern Neighborhood Policy (ENP) of the EU can also be seen as an upload of German policy preferences. Originally being a Swedish-Polish initiative, it nevertheless complied with German national security policy and Chancellor Merkel’s backing helped the proposal gain momentum. Via the ENP, a multilateral framework was set up that envisages EU-enlargement. Hence Germany managed to advance the concept of ‘security community’ despite the prevalent enlargement fatigue.

In addition to the ENP, one of the major indicators for a successful upload of Germany’s military restraint-conception is Germany’s mark on the European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003. Germany was able to decisively determine the process of policy-making which included provisions for the adoption of ‘effective multilateralism, civilian crisis management instruments and the use of military force as a mechanism of last resort’. Furthermore, Germany successfully insisted to replace the initial depiction ‘pre-emptive engagement’ by ‘preventive engagement’.

Given these successes in uploading policies to the European level, one is inclined to conclude that the entire role concept of a Military Restrained Civilian Power has been Europeanised. However, as Patricia Daenhardt points out, Germany has also downloaded different policies from the European level. In the case of ESDP, for instance, the triggering initiatives of the St. Malo summit of 1998 were French and British. Since it has been taking part in civilian but also in military missions, this ‘download’ of European policies challenged

37 Ibid.
38 Daenhardt, Germany in the European Union, 49.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid. 40-45.
Germany’s self-conception of military restraint which ‘shows that it has been affected by a general EU process which it cannot wholly control, meaning that some degree of Europeanisation is at work.’ Moreover, Daenhardt claims despite heavy German influence on the process of ESS-formulation, the country itself only came up with White Papers as a quasi-strategy paper in 2006 and this case should hence be rather depicted as crossloading.

Furthermore, political constraints pertaining to the major role of the German parliament in military deployment complicates further ‘Europeanisation by uploading’ of German policies in the realm of CSDP. Finally, also Germany’s driving power in CFSP is limited since it was not successful to achieve consent regarding the application of the community method and qualified majority voting (QMV) in the area of CFSP and also to enhance the role of the European Parliament. Moreover, under the treaty of Lisbon the entire field of External Action and CFSP as well as CSDP remains intergovernmental. For these reasons one must say that Germany cannot be regarded as ‘the single uploader’ of CFSP and CSDP policies. Yet in the context of the civilian and multilateral imprint of the decisive ESS and the ENP which can be traced back to German negotiating efforts, one must draw the conclusion that a large extent of the German role concept of military restraint has been uploaded to the European level and has thus been ‘Europeanised’.

2) Monetary and Market Power

As a matter of fact, Germany being the biggest economy in Europe has been characterized as Handelsstaat or Handelsmacht. This focus on economy and trade is also one of the defining character traits of the post-WWII West-Germany and the Wirtschaftswunder, the economic miracle of the post-war Federal Republic which became an

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42 Ibid. 41.
43 Ibid. 47.
44 Ibid. 48
45 Aggestam, Germany 77.
important narrative. In addition, via the institutionalization of the concept of the social market economy, the Deutsche Mark (DM) currency and the German Central Bank (Bundesbank), the economic institutions became a crucial part of German identity.\(^{47}\) The Bundesbank, designed as an institution independent from governmental instructions and only committed to fiscal stability, was especially seen as a pillar of stability in Germany, yet also faced accusations of dominating the continent.\(^{48}\) Even though monetary policy is principally not regarded as a foreign policy domain, it nevertheless has decisive impacts on international trade and competitiveness and thus also entails a major foreign policy dimension.

It is widely recognized that parts of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the design and structure of the European Central Bank (ECB) very much resemble those of the German Bundesbank. Indeed, the former core principal of the Bundesbank, price stability, is clearly set out as the main objective in Article 2 of the Protocol (No 4) on the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank.\(^{49}\) Furthermore, the independence of the ECB is safeguarded via Article 7 of the 4th Protocol which protects the decision-makers of the ECB from any kind of interference by the EU-institutions or the Member States.

‘When exercising the powers and carrying out the tasks and duties conferred upon them by the Treaties and this Statute, neither the ECB, nor a national central bank, nor any member of their decision-making bodies shall seek or take instructions from Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies, from any government of a Member State or from any other body. The


Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and the
governments of the Member States undertake to respect this
principle and not to seek to influence the members of the
decision-making bodies of the ECB or of the national central
banks in the performance of their tasks.”

In addition to these legalistic elements, the name of the European currency, Euro, was
invented by German Finance Minister Theo Waigel. The EMU, the ECB and the Euro-
currency are therefore strong indicators of an ‘upload’ of German policies.

Another indicator for a ‘Europeanisation’ of German market power are Free Trade
Agreements entailing clauses of arbitration conducted by an international tribunal system, the
investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS). This element is regarded a ‘German invention’
and German business lobbyists promote such an inclusion into further Trade Agreements.

Even though in May 2015 there is yet no Free Trade Agreement between the EU and a third
party containing such an ISDS clause in force, the fact that the negotiating mandates for the
Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the proposed Transatlantic
Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) request the Commission to include ISDS can be
regarded as an attempt to ‘upload’ German practice to the European level.

However, it is still too early to speak of Europeanisation, as the legislative process of
CETA has not yet been completed and TTIP is in the midst of negotiations. Furthermore, in
light of the current protests by non-governmental organizations against TTIP (and particularly

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53 Between the EU and Canada.
54 Between the EU and United States.
against the ISDS clauses) there are some doubts about the final implementation. Yet also in the realm of monetary policy, Germany seems to increasingly face pressure to ‘Europeanise’ by downloading. In order to solve the Euro-crisis, the ECB has taken ‘extraordinary measures’ such as outright monetary transactions (OMT) that have been criticized by the Bundesbank and the Federal Government. Nevertheless, two realities allude to a further case of ‘Europeanisation’ by downloading: the fact that the Constitutional Court, for the first time in history, handed the case over to the European Court of Justice for a preliminary decision, and the opinion of Advocate General Cruz Villalón released in January 2015 to confirm that the OMT is principally compatible with the European Treaties.

3) Normative Power

The German role concept of normative power is strongly interlinked with that of a civilian power exerting military restraint. One of the core features of German identity after the Second World War has been the rejection of all fascist and national-socialist traits and the promotion of civic political rights as well as values like human rights and democracy, which are institutionalized in Germany’s Basic Law (Grundgesetz). In addition, the normative German role conception also entails a commitment vis-à-vis multilateralism, reflecting the feature of reconciliation and the importance to preclude a German ‘Special Way’ (Sonderweg) in international and European affairs.

Germany has mostly uploaded multilateral mechanisms to enhance cooperation. In addition, conflict prevention and civilian conflict resolution instruments are part of German contributions to the European diplomatic toolbox, which has also led to a ‘post-war anti-

militaristic stance’. In this context, the aforementioned uploading of ENP also has an important normative component, as it serves as a middle-way institutional setting that allows for enhancing cooperation between the EU and its eastern neighbours while not making commitments regarding EU accession. Thereby Germany has also shaped the concept of Normative Power Europe.

However, Germany has also occasionally been criticized for prioritizing trade and market power over normative power. Generally, Germany has been conducting a rather ‘unilateral’ policy towards China which is built on trade and economic ties, while the ‘mood between the EU and China has become tense’. Together with France, Germany for instance attempted to lift the EU arms embargo against China. In the 1980s, Germany was reluctant to take part in a European approach to impose sanctions on apartheid-era South Africa, as it did not want to risk trade relations. However, Germany is going along with the economic sanctions imposed on Russia as a response to the Ukraine crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which also indicates that aside from solely uploading, Germany also increasingly ‘downloads’ European policies in the normative area.

5. Concluding Remarks

The role concepts of post-war western and the reunified Germany have apparently been influencing the European Union to a large extent. Germany could successfully ‘upload’ its role conception of being a Military Restrained Civilian Power, even though some domestic features such as parliamentary influence were not replicated in CFSP decision-making. In CSDP Germany also had to ‘download’ and adapt to some initiatives and the structural

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57 Daenhardt, Germany in the European Union, 46.
58 Ibid. 44.
59 Ibid. 51-52.
60 Aggestam, Germany 68.
constraints of Germany in regards military deployment might also limit its capability to further ‘upload’ CSDP-policies and thus continue shaping the uploaded role concept. In general, however, the EU as a foreign policy actor is widely regarded as a civilian rather than military actor, which can clearly be related to Germany’s national role concept. Nevertheless, it will be of great interest to see how outside expectations as to stronger German leadership and responsibility might eventually affect this military restrained civilian power role conception in Germany. The speech of President Gauck in 2014 might have heralded a real paradigm shift, yet long-term observations and empirical investigation is required to reach a well-founded conclusion in this regard.

Further to the military and civilian dimension, this essay finds the structures of the EU’s Monetary and Market Power were decisively determined by the uploading of Germany’s own national concept. Indeed, the European Central Bank and the Euro-currency resemble the German Bundesbank and the DM, yet the heavy disputes about certain ECB-policies in the context of the Eurocrisis underline the German limitations in its ability to influence on role concepts once they have been uploaded and ‘Europeanised’. It is likely that Germany is obliged to download policies that contradict some of their basic role conceptions and further research is required to investigate how this eventually affects the German national role concept itself.

Regarding Normative Power, the EU reflects German post-war values and engages heavily into multilateralism. It appears Germany has been able to upload and Europeanise its normative multilateralist role concept and thus shape the concept of Normative Power Europe. However, a role conflict between normative and market power increasingly becomes apparent as the examples of German-Chinese relations and the reluctance against sanctioning the regime in 1980s South Africa demonstrate. The fact that Germany participates in sanctions against Russia might yet indicate the normative power element eventually prevails.
Nonetheless, this finding needs to be proven by further observations and in-depth empirical research.

So on the one hand the conclusion can be drawn German Foreign Policy has been Europeanised by the ‘upload’ of major role concepts and the download of certain elements contributing then to national role perceptions and role concepts. However, as ‘downloading’ from the European level has also taken place, European Foreign Policy is far from emulating that of Germany. In addition, ‘Europeanised’ roles concepts obviously leave the national-level sphere of influence and become subject to constant adaptions and alterations through interaction and performance on the European level. It will be a point of interest for researchers and scholars to find out how these role-changes on the uploaded ‘Europeanised’ level then relate back to the respective national role concepts.
References


