
German and French Out-of-Area Engagement
from Iraq to Iraq.
Identity Theory and the Problem of Foreign Policy change

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Abstract:

In the limelight of the Iraq conflict in 2002/2003 were Germany and France which – to the surprise of many – let the USA down in a serious security crisis.

This paper seeks to shed light on that puzzle by applying an identity-discourse approach. Identity theory has been largely attributed to explain non-change offering insights in countries' principal foreign policy positioning. By complementing identity theory with elements of discourse analysis its explanatory value could be enhanced provided that discourses entail 'seeds of change'. By so doing, the complex relationship between foreign policy change and identity change could be explored in some more depth. Subsequently - in plausibility probes - Germany's and France's behaviour regarding US-led out-of-area missions 'from Iraq to Iraq' will be interpreted. It will be examined in how far their respective behaviour in the Iraq affair tends to be a coincidental gaffe, or rather signals a substantial identity change which would enable similar behaviour in future crises.

Introduction

France's and Germany's behaviour in the Iraq crisis of 2002/2003 could hardly be expected. Since the 1950s, both states had consistently joined the US in security crises – from the Cuba crisis to the struggle against terrorism. But when France and Germany opposed a second Security Council resolution which had been planned for by the US, the UK and Spain in Spring 2003, it became obvious that the West had disintegrated with a view to perceptions of threat, recommendations for action, and the legitimization of war. The Iraq dispute put an end to the Western consensus in security crises. Obviously, a change of behaviour (to be specified in the following) could be observed in the Iraq crisis which appears to demand an explanation.¹

For many observers, the transatlantic irritations and the disintegration of the EU in the Iraq crisis was not just a drama. It posed a puzzle: Was not the US a strong hegemon with clear expectations with regard to German and French behaviour? Did not NATO and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) represent strong common institutions, making a common position of the EU highly expectable? And had there not even been a shared commitment on the part of all Europeans since the late 1990s to achieve a common intervention force for deployment in crises everywhere in the world?

Let us look at some explanations. Interestingly, the intuitive suspicion, inspired by neo-realism, that French and German behaviour could be explained as counterbalancing against the US enjoys little support. Indeed, such an interpretation is not supported by the chronology of events since Germany positioned itself already in August 2002 whereas France followed only in January 2003 (Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2004, 159). Accordingly, the predominant reply to these questions to be found in the literature points at explanatory patterns drawn from social-constructivist IR theories (in a wider sense). In that, the view dominates that differences in political culture (Gordon/Shapiro 2004, 56; Larres 2003), in strategic culture (Gaffney 2004, 248; Szabo 2004, 137)² and regarding threat perceptions had increased (Gordon/Shapiro 2004, 83ff.). Furthermore, growing anti-Americanism is identified (Wall 2004, 124; Berendse 2003). For France, explanations draw in addi-

¹ Against the objection that it was not France's and Germany's foreign policy but that of the US which had changed, it can be argued that most EU member states had joined the US position and behaved like in previous international crises. Cf. Stahl 2005.

² Interestingly, however, Serfaty (2005, 74) points at similarities in the French and American self-understanding.

tion on the behavioural pattern of her ‚*politique arabe*’ (Styan 2004, 374), for Germany specific 1st image decision-making factors are added (Szabo 2004; Link 2004, 3; Hacke 2003, 13). Moreover, the German-American rift is attributed to *party politics* (Kaarbo/Lantis 2003) and different visions of world order (Harnisch 2004, 174). Not at least, a catalytic effect is ascribed to the date of elections in September 2002 (Risse 2004, 29; Forsberg 2005, 226; Bierling 2002/03, 293). For Germany, the factor of ‚political emancipation’ (Forsberg 2005) and ‚growing self-confidence’ (Schöllgen 2004, 15; Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2004, 158) appears amenable to several IR theories.

However, taking recourse to social-constructivist ‚variables’ is beset with a fundamental problem (Mayer/Rittberger/Zelli 2003, 43; Forsberg 2005, 217): These factors were evidently present for some time rather leading to behavioural continuity in French and German foreign policy in the past - how can they have caused change in this particular situation? Kaarbo and Lantis (2003, 205) draw our attention to a second problem:

„The cultural explanation is also incomplete in situations in which (...) two values (...) come into conflict with one another. (...) Culture- and identity based theories do not adequately specify when one value will supersede another, or when another value will enter the national discourse.“

What is lacking is a theoretical link between a social-constructivist ‚background variable’ and foreign policy behaviour – and such a link is proposed here by recourse to identity theory. In so doing, I introduce a model to demonstrate how behavioural change can be captured by means of an identity-discourse approach – and even some moderate statements about the stability of behavioural change can be made.

An application of identity theory and discourse analysis to foreign policy analysis generally seems promising (Hudson/Vore 1995, 229). In addition, it appears theoretically attractive because identity theory is held to reveal basic foreign policy orientations – and thus behavioural continuities. This conflicts however, with the social constructivist theories’ claim to give better evidence with a view to change and better analyse how change became possible (Adler 2002, 102). Therefore, I will here apply an approach combining identity theory and discourse analysis because discourse analysis can trace change, identify potentials for change, and make sound

statements with a view to behavioural stability. In so doing, a comparison³ of German and French behaviour is to enable us to better distinguish country-specific factors from those that apply across countries and thus better contribute to theory-building.

I will proceed as follows: First, I will lay the theoretical foundations by producing a model with reference to identity change. By recourse to discourse analysis, special attention is paid in so doing to the analytical tools of 'discursive formation' and 'discourse hegemony'. Subsequently, I will very briefly address the phenomenon of 'behavioural change' and demonstrate it by means of a short sketch of German and French out-of-area engagement (Gulf war, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Afghanistan). The chosen case study will then consist of a plausibility probe⁴ which uses arguments from identity theory for both states. Of course, I cannot claim to do a proper in-depth discourse analysis here. Instead, I will provide a 'macro-view' on the discourses taking a long-time perspective. This part starts presenting the country-specific identity construction before the out-of-area engagement in the 1990s is recalled. Subsequently, the behaviour in the Iraq crisis is interpreted in identity terms. In the conclusions, the empirical findings will be interpreted in the light of the theoretical questions raised.

Theory and Methodology

2.1 Identity Theory – forms and definitions

Constructivist approaches ground their analyses of European foreign policy – just as their more comprehensive analyses of international relations and the foreign policies of individual states – on various concepts of which 'identity' has become one of the most favoured (Wæver 2005, 34). Accordingly, EU member states' 'national identities' lead to different foreign policies as long as social construction takes place

³ 'Comparison' is understood here not as a concrete method but as '*approach*' or '*focus*' (Lijphardt 1971, 682) which needs methodological specifications.

⁴ A plausibility probe is a kind of pilot study for the application of a theory preparing for an in-depth study or even a theory test (Eckstein 1975).

primarily in the national and less in a European context (Larsen 1997, 199; White 2001, 177).⁵ Generally, „identity“ is defined as

“(..) images of individuality and distinctiveness (‘selfhood’) held and projected by an actor and formed (and modified over time) through relations with significant ‘others’”. (Jepperson et al. 1996, 59)

National identity is a specific form of collective identity which rests on a group’s self-definition as a ‘nation’ with a common history. In the European experience, such a vision of a common ‘nation’ is characterised by the possibility that various dimensions of the ‘nation’ – such as language, culture, state etc. – can be brought in accordance with each other. Therefore, a nation’s political organisation – the state and its institutions – is especially important for the individual members’ identification with the social entity of the ‘nation’ (Hedetoft 1995, 20ff.). For Europe, it thus appears legitimate to tie identity to the nation. I follow Lepsius’ modernist understanding of the nation in that it is not a quasi-natural collective entity but rather

„(..) an imagined order, a culturally defined imagination which defines a collectivity of humans as an entity.“ (Lepsius 1999, 232, my translation)

‘National identity’ is the result of historical processes which, despite generally being open to change, alters only very slowly over time. The emergence of a specific identity and its eventual substantial modification is always a result of social interaction and communication (Mead 1973, 222, 244f.). Identity thus must be endogenised, i.e. it must be specified how a given identity has emerged and developed (Cedermann and Daase 2003). In sum, national identity has the following characteristics:

- a common, socially (re-)constructed understanding of a common history,
- a common understanding of belonging to a group, a territory or/and a civilisation or culture (*belonging*),
- common institutions as historical products and maintainers of identity,
- an emphasis of national peculiarities which help distinguish one’s own nation from others. This is a central property of identity, namely, that identity defines an

⁵ The growing interest in ‘European foreign policy’ reflected by various recent publications may at first glance suggest that a nation-state or comparative perspective may be outdated. However, studies of the national conditions of European foreign policy certainly are desirable and their absence is frequently deplored (Jørgensen 2004, 21).

„us’ and a ,them’, thus creating „a social construction of boundaries“ (Zølner 1998, 171).

Identity theory claims to understand behaviour rather than explain it:⁶ An identity approach is not a theory of decision-making (Risse et al. 1999, 157) but a structural theory in the sense of Alexander Wendt which is concerned with what is possible (Wendt 1987, 362). Thus, according to Wendt’s distinction, identity is not „causal“ but „constitutive“ (Wendt 1999, 77). The impact of national identity on foreign policy behaviour is hence conceptualised less as a ,cause’ of specific actions but rather as an argumentative chain specifying various ‘reasons’ for action which privilege specific types of behaviour over others:

„Identity (..) does not cause action but rather makes some action legitimate and intelligible and others not so.“ (Barnett 1999, 10)

In this sense, this article asks how it was possible that France and Germany behaved as they did. The interrelation between national identity and foreign policy behaviour cannot be resolved by recourse to a linear causal logic. Both mutually influence each other: National identity itself is reproduced, altered or even newly constituted by (foreign policy) behaviour, i.e. it can itself become a ,dependent variable’. Because of this basic problematique, I analytically separate behaviour from identity. Accordingly, national identity provides a referential framework within which a specific behaviour is accepted as appropriate by all members of society. This framework is very wide, providing a 'supply' of identity-related justifications from which political élites can choose specific recommendations for action (Marcussen et al. 1999, 629).

National identity not only needs endogenisation but, as an 'elusive construct' (Abdelal et al. 2001, 6), it needs to be cautiously operationalised. Looking at applications of identity theory, the following aspects appear important for further research (Stahl 2006, 31-42; similarly from the view of discourse theory Waever 2004, 201-207):

⁶ This dichotomy was made popular by Hollis and Smith (1990) and is also reflected by the epistemological schism in IR theory. Bearing in mind that positivist research designs also know 'enabling conditions' and ,understanding' must be more than mere historicism (Hill 2003, 29-30), it indeed appears to be overstated. It is nevertheless useful for specifying the explanatory claim.

- (1) the problem of historical depth – in other words, how far must we go back into the history of a nation in order to find the 'relevant' identity?⁷
- (2) the problem of bias in endogenisation. For instance, Ole Wæver (2004, 204) has pointed to the fact that the use of ideal types for discourse analysis is inappropriate in principle. If 'national identity' nevertheless needs a filling, how can this be reached at?⁸
- (3) the problem of competing identities: How can we find out which of the identity constructions offered by history are the 'relevant' ones for foreign policy? Varying Kaarbo's and Lantis' theme above, an identity approach is faced with the challenge to „(..) *disclose the mechanisms which show why and when one discourse asserts itself against another.*“ (Harnisch 2003, 338, my translation)
- (4) the problem of understanding identity change and behavioural change. If identity can be analysed distinctly from behaviour and decision-making, we need to distinguish what can change when under what conditions.

2.2 Identity: Continuity and Framework of Behaviour

I follow a conception of national identity which understands it as composed of active and inactive elements (Nadolll 2003, 168). This means that ‚identity‘ is modelled not as a constant factor but as a polymorphous agglomeration of identity elements. Accordingly, a society's national identity is characterised by simultaneously active effects of several identity elements. This may sound complicated at first glance but has several advantages: First, more than one identity element may come to bear so that analysis does not have to be restricted to one – e.g. the state-nation relationship. Second, this also allows to conceptually considering competing ‚identities‘. And third, it can be assumed this way that other passive elements ‚slumber‘ in the identity construction which were active in different historical phases and may be 'revitalised' in future debates.

⁷ An answer to this question depends, *inter alia*, on which theory of nationalism one prefers since different theories historically locate the 'birth of a nation' and thus its national identity very differently. Cf. Breuilly 2005.

⁸ Thus, for the European policies of EU member states, the relation between the state and the nation is regarded as central (Jachtenfuchs et al. 1998, Risse 2001, Hansen and Wæver 2002), but it remains unclear whether this applies to the same degree to security policy as well.

An identity element should be understood as an 'ultimate argument' which is related to the national self e.g. ,*European France*' or ,*Germany as part of the West*'. An **identity element** is thus characterised by establishing a reference to the self which is not further substantiated but functions as a ,consensual point of departure' for one or several argumentative patterns.

How, then, can we determine identities (questions 1 and 2)? Operationalisation is normally done by means of selective historical narratives which are temporally and substantially open (e.g. Hansen/Waever 2002). The mode of analysis, which I follow here, is based on the idea that identities change only slowly over time and that the identity relevant at a given point of time shows up in a foreign policy debate. Historical discourse analyses more or less resemble a cross-section of a tree-trunk which show very well the past and state of a tree. Analysing historical debates is thus well-suited to determine a specific national identity. Since the relevant pre-studies determining German and French national identity have been elaborated elsewhere (Katsioulis/Nadoll 2003; Stahl 2006, 103-143), I can draw on them in this study.

Up to here, I have portrayed identity as a conception which is primarily characterised by aspects of continuity and thus as appearing to be made for understanding continuity in foreign policies. Identity change, on the other hand, rather seems to be a phenomenon of ,*longue durée*' and thus ill-suited for understanding short-term changes of behaviour. For this, we indeed need a methodological device:

“Discourse is central because it assists in the attempt to integrate structure and agency – and thus to explain the dynamics of change.”
(Schmidt/Radielli 2004, 192).

2.3 Foreign Policy Discourses: Justifications and Confirmation of Change

For this study, I understand the concept of ,discourse' as a communicative interaction in which actors seek to argumentatively link identity elements and preferences for action by an (imagined) causal chain in line with a societally recognised logic of appropriateness which is based on national identity. In democratic societies, political discourses perform various functions (March und Olsen 1995, 45, 66): they form political debates by

- explaining political events,
- justifying political actions,
- (re-)interpreting historical memories and
- (re-)constructing identity.

Since processes of the social construction of reality take place primarily through language, discourse analysis is of central methodological importance for tracing the link between identity and behaviour (Larsen 1997, 3-33). As already mentioned, I assume a loose and indirect relation of foreign policy behaviour (decision-making) and identity (justification, recommendation). The decisive link between the two is discourse. It helps understand how foreign policy change can be confirmed and legitimised. Discourse is the means by which meaning is attached to identity in a specific situation.

The explanatory claim⁹ of discourse analysis extends to a state's foreign policy, but

„(d)iscourse analysis (...) does not try to get to the thoughts or motives of the actors, their hidden intuitions or secret plans.“ (Wæver 2002, 27)

Discourses show which identity elements are ‚active‘ in terms of being referred to as a legitimisation of behaviour and which ones are ‚in-active‘. National identity thus serves as referential framework which is communicatively activated (Cruz 2000, 277). Discourse analysis, in turn, can show on which shared values resp. principled beliefs and identity elements a society is founded and which become relevant in a specific context:

„(...) discourse makes one type of identity (...) not only possible but also seemingly natural and acceptable, while attempting to make impossible, unnatural or unacceptable other types of identity“. (Westlind 1996, 116)

The initiation and the course of a discourse is strongly influenced by active **discourse participants**. With a view to initiating a discourse and setting its issues, I follow an understanding as that postulated by the Copenhagen School for security policy (‚*securitization*‘, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 21-47). A ‚dialectical relationship‘ exists among discourses, discourse participants and the structural and

⁹ In this respect, Hansen and Waever do not fully agree. Lene Hansen (2002, 8) points out that legitimations (and thus discourses) are ill-suited for ‚explaining‘. In regard of the limits of discourse analysis for France, Ulla Holm (1997, 144-45) states that *“(.) discourse analysis cannot say which policy will prevail and cannot measure how much external pressure is needed before France acts but can say a lot about tensions, the struggles concerning what gives meaning in the domestic arena“.*

substantial context: On the one hand, a discourse is subject to the constraints of its context. On the other, however, it itself contributes to shaping this context. In the same vein, discourse participants can – dependent on their societal power position – influence the course of a discourse but are themselves influenced therein by current or past discourses. Actors who, due to their status in a country's constitution, hold an eminent position in political discourses are also referred to as „*privileged storyteller*“ (Milliken 1999, 236). This implies that discourses are not non-hierarchical: they are always power struggles involved (Torfing 2005, 15 and 23). I borrow the basic idea from both Foucault and the Copenhagen School's securitisation approach that discourses generally also reflect power relations within a society – in the struggle for interpretive supremacy:

„Keeping in mind that words, expressions, propositions, etc., change their meaning according to the positions held by those who use them, and the corollary logic of discourses as hegemony-seeking, it is not surprising that the government narrative strives to monopolize the meanings of the above terms.“
(Bach 1999, 144)

Discourses create a *common sense*, a basic understanding shared by large parts of the population. Thereby, they limit possible societal resistance but at the same time strongly constrain state action. Discourse analyses demonstrates how a society structures and limits political options so that decision-makers regard only specific options as appropriate, or present them appropriate.

If a group of discourse participants successfully asserts itself and its argumentative patterns, they have reached ‚**discourse hegemony**‘. The emerged dominant discourse is most in accordance with common experience and other indicators if ‚truth‘. This invests it with a 'wrap of normality' which not only provides for interpretative supremacy over future events but also over past ones. In other words, it offers the opportunity to command over the policy of history. How can we now find out which argumentative pattern and which recommendations for action have gained discourse hegemony? One indicator is that they are shared by many important discourse participants. A second indicator would be if the same patterns were used again in later discourses. And finally, polls recording elite and public opinion on foreign policy can also be consulted.

In order to convince the public that their arguments are superior, discourse participants seek to argumentatively link them to active identity elements. In so doing, an identity element can be argumentatively used in different ways so that, at least in extreme cases, completely different political recommendations for action can be based on the same element: For instance, references to 'Germany's responsibility' can be used to justify both that Germany stands aside in military conflicts and that it contributes troops (Stahl et al. 2004, 437). Attempts at persuasion can be regarded as especially promising if a discourse participant successfully links his or her recommendation for action with one or more active elements, i.e. with established and omni-present ones.¹⁰ Such constructions are already internalised, partly even institutionalised and thus appear as 'natural normality' to the majority of the population.

Let us now address the 'problem of competition' (3) mentioned above. Many analyses of foreign policies in Europe focus on political parties and coalitions in government in order to determine decision-making processes. However, as the European experience shows this is problematic because political parties and party alliances may account for domestic decisions but do not represent basic foreign policy orientations well. Rather, foreign policy orientations cut across party lines. The split among French Socialist and Green party members over the EU Constitutional Referendum and the German Social Democrat-Green coalition on the Afghanistan mission may suffice here as examples. With a view to the relevant object of analysis, this problem can be evaded by resorting to '**discursive formations**'¹¹ which bind different party fractions together according to their respective foreign policy orientation. A discursive formation represents an already known argumentative pattern which is shaped by identity and guides action and which is shared by a group of discourse participants (Nadoll 2003, 176). They reflect basic elements of a society's identity construction which have been communicatively affirmed in previous discourses and are thus relatively stable. Discursive formations can comprise several identity elements and argumentative patterns which then, however, flow into fairly clear options for action. Thus,

¹⁰ This is also in line with the so-called resonance hypothesis in the study of identity which holds that arguments are the more convincing the better they match the experiences of the audience or already accepted norms and principles (Risse 2003, 115).

¹¹ This concept was introduced by Michel Foucault (1989, 13) and was fruitfully applied by Larsen (1997, 16-17) to International Relations.

discursive formations structure a discourse primarily in accordance with their main arguments, not their main actors. This analytical approach seems especially advantageous if we can assume that the same actors change their arguments over time and take over arguments from their political opponents – which in fact can be frequently observed in both France and Germany.

A discursive formation does not stand without competitors. In democracies, there is always competition among different discursive formations, using different argumentation and reaching different conclusions. Furthermore, I assume that discursive formations can join together but also separate with a view to their recommendation for action in a specific debate. Such developments always also mean power shifts because they strengthen or weaken argumentations – and thus the discourse participants which support them. Such power shifts prepare for change in future foreign policy actions which may then be largely uncontested.

2.4 Potential of Change

In its foreign policy behaviour, its operative foreign policy, a government usually moves within the scope of what the respective national identity defines as possible and legitimate (Nadoll 2003, 171). This behavioural spectrum was defined by previous discourses in which certain argumentative patterns had prevailed over others. The 'permissible' behavioural framework varies just as much as historical discourses in different countries: In France, for instance, the possession of nuclear weapons is the result of the Gaullist consensus whereas in Germany, such a possession appears unthinkable against the background of the World War II experience.

The behavioural framework opened by identity does not, however, always need to be fully exploited. Thus, the extension of political opportunities opened by the German out-of-area debate during the first half of the 1990s did not become politically relevant until the Kosovo crisis some years later. And even polls have shown that though the populations of EU member states agree to a communitarization of European foreign policies, governments have not made use of this space of manoeuvre up to the present. Conversely, however, one should not take it for granted that political decision-makers always stay with discourse-hegemonic recommendations for action. In other words: governments can actually leave the given framework of identity as well. If a government deviates from the permissive consensus about

foreign policy, one can plausibly assume that large parts of both the political élite and the population will deem this 'inappropriate' and 'illegitimate'. This foreign policy decision will probably be questioned and challenged in public discourse. Then, foreign policy becomes a contested issue. Especially elections and referenda offer an opportunity for raising questions about the proper course of foreign policy. If the government's rhetoric is successful, identity is transformed and change in the behavioural spectrum is achieved. If the government fails to plausibly sell its foreign policy as a continuation of the (identity-based) tradition of previous foreign policy, it will lose in the discourse and will be forced to correct its position.

The most recent examples of failed attempts (of governments) to extend their behavioural framework vis-à-vis their own population are the referenda on the European Constitution in the Netherlands and France. Even though the governments had signed and large parliamentary majorities had supported the treaty, both countries' electorates rejected it – thus causing the most serious constitutional crisis since the 'Empty Chair Policy' in the 1960s. As this example demonstrates, a discourse does not have to temporally precede the behaviour (of governments at the Intergovernmental Conference) to which it refers. It can also legitimise (or deligitimise) it post factum.

Now let us take a closer look at the interrelationship between a change of identity and a change of behaviour. First we must consider that in historical perspective 'continuity' and 'change' are highly relative analytical categories (Gerschenkron 1962). As Medick-Krakau's (1999, 11) overview shows, most analytical approaches differentiate between foreign policy change on the level of behaviour/policy and change in a deeper sector, however defined, of basic orientations (such a identity). A change of foreign policy can refer to either a change of policy *outcomes* (result-oriented) or *policies* themselves (instrument-oriented). For convenience, I have chosen the latter. In order to specify the 'puzzle', I pick a behavioural pattern relating to out-of-area engagement in order to give substance to my central question: To which extent have the two states participated in US-led out-of-area operations since the early 1990s? This sketch of the problem serves to specify the empirical puzzle of behavioural change and to provide a plausible and fruitful basis for the following interpretative study. In order to keep this historical comparison simple and instructive, I construct Germany and France as unitary actors.

Identities are stickier than behaviour, yet are continually changing over time. An identity change manifests itself in a discourse which renders identity change plausible if

- new identity elements (ultimate arguments relating to one's own country) are established, and/or
- a new discourse hegemony (new argumentative patterns, new recommendations for action) is established.

The following interrelations between identity and behaviour follow from this:

<i>case</i>	<i>identity change</i>	<i>change of behaviour</i>	<i>implications</i>	<i>security policy examples</i>
1	yes	yes	discourse enables change of behaviour, government asserts itself rhetorically (possibly also <i>post factum</i>)	German 1950s re-armament discourse, Spanish NATO referendum (1986)
2	yes	no	government does not exploit societally available options (rare because government action normally provokes discourses)	German 1990s out-of-area debate, popular acceptance of CFSP communitization in most EU-member states
3	no	yes	change of behaviour is enabled by identity	German participation in war over Kosovo, 1990s activation of Danish and Italian foreign policy
4	no	no	a. behavioural continuity or b. failed change	a. operative foreign policy, b. French EDC rejection (1954), Danish Maastricht referendum (1992)

Table 1: Change of behaviour and identity (my illustration)

As stated, my I aim is not only to trace change but also to explore potential for change and making statements about the probability that it occurs. My first premise is that change of behaviour is possible if the previous political decision was societally contested. In other words, if a government's decision in favour of participation in an out-of-area operation went uncontested, then it is unlikely that the government will decide otherwise in a similar case in the future. But even if an out-of-area engagement was strongly contested domestically, this does not mean that such discontent with a political decision will inevitably induce a change of behaviour. My sec-

ond premise is that this is probable only if the strength of the discursive formations supporting the argumentation in favour of change alters. A simple case would be a change in government – but only if it really brings a new discursive formation 'into power'. Changes within governing parties or shifts of public opinion are other possibilities.

Let us take the UK's societally highly contested Iraq policy. Prime Minister Blair's most recent statements notwithstanding, a substantial change of behaviour is nevertheless unlikely because due to the party constellation and the law of elections, the idealist-internationalist discursive formation – which is supported by the majority of the population, the Liberal Democrat Party and part of the Labour Party – suffers from a structural disadvantage vis-à-vis the Atlanticist-pragmatic discursive formation supported by the Conservative Party, part of the Labour Party and the majority of political élites.

Let us note: change of behaviour is possible if a foreign policy decision was contested, and it is probable if the strength of the discursive formation(s) changes accordingly.

3. France's and Germany's Out-of-area Engagement

Both countries' behaviour in the crises mentioned is researched and documented so well that it can be held to be widely known. I sketch the problem in the table below, seeking to answer the following questions: To which extent have both countries participated in US-led out-of-area operations since the early 1990s?

behaviour in:	Gulf War 1990/91 (Gnesotto/Roper 1992)	Yugoslav wars (Maull/Stahl 2002)	War over Kosovo (Fortman/Viau 2000; Maull 2000)	War on terrorism (Afghanistan) (Menon/Lipkin 2003; Shapiro 2002)	Iraq crisis (Stahl 2005; and plausibility probes)
D	No participation, financial contribution	Unilateral recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, no participation in UN-PROFOR and bombing campaign	Active participation in bombings, diplomatic initiatives to end conflict	'Unconditional solidarity', special troops (KSK) and military deployment, participation in ISAF	'Double no', NATO paralysis, reconstruction assistance outside Iraq
F	Diplomatic initiatives, deployment of ground troops (under US command)	Adherence to Yugoslav federal state, participation in UN-PROFOR and bombing campaign	Leading of Rambouillet-conference, active participation in bombings (under US leadership)	Strong solidarity after 9/11, deployment of fighter aircraft and offer to send ground troops, participation in ISAF	Threat to veto and lobbying against 2 nd SC resolution, NATO paralysis, insistence on UN role for reconstruction

Table 2: Out-of-area engagement in historical comparison (my illustration)

German behaviour resembles a zigzagging: After having refused to participate in the 1990/91 Gulf War, Germany's engagement in the war over Kosovo was remarkable in both military and diplomatic respects. In contrast, the categorical position taken in the Iraq case at first sight looks like a return to the pre-Gulf War era. Against the background of Germany's behaviour with a view to ESDP, one would have expected it to act as a moderator positioning itself between Europeans and Atlanticists. By contrast, *Le Monde* (14 September 2002) described Germany as „*Cavalier seul*“ at the informal EU meeting in Helsingør, and the *Financial Times Deutschland* headlined on 2 September 2002: „Germany isolated on Iraq question“. Even the war-sceptical Swedish Prime Minister Persson regarded Germany's position as hardly comprehensible (FAZ, 24 January 2003), and the Dutch Foreign Minister de Hoop Scheffer, who later became NATO Secretary-General, was angry about Germany's blockade of NATO (FTD, 11 February 2003). The fact that Germany caused its isolation in foreign policy itself, blocked NATO, irritated its neighbours and not at least did lasting damage to its relations with the US is remarkable and even exceeded the strongest unilateral sin it had committed before – the premature recognition of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991.

France's behaviour is indeed surprising if one recalls its active participation in the bombings of Yugoslavia in 1999 and the campaign against Iraq in 1990/91 under US-command. In that respect, the outcry among the 'coalition of the willing' was comprehensible. Let us address the two cases now in some more detail.

3.1 France – a veto from the heart

In order to understand French foreign policy, one – as Kessler and Charillon (2001, 131) succinctly put it – needs to consider its “obsessions” and “myths”. Important elements of French identity are its self-understanding as a great power, the preservation of *patrie-état-nation* and the perception of Europe as a counter-balance (Stahl 2006, 103-143). ‚European France‘ and ‚France as part of a Europe as a common destiny‘ appear of secondary significance. This identity construction allows for a wide spectrum of foreign policy actions and in this respect is open to “tactical adjustments” (Treacher 2003, 2) which are made by a comparatively small number of French decision-makers – in the extreme by the President alone.

After World War II, there were first two antagonistic discursive formations – a ‚realist’ and an ‚idealist’ one (Aron 1956, 12) clashing in a fierce debate over the European Defence Community (EDC). Over time, the idealist formation weakened and is today supported only by the *nouveaux philosophes* and parts of the centrist party UDF. By contrast, the ‚realist’ formation carried the day and, as ‚Gaullist consensus’, dominated French foreign policy since the 1960s. The following two decades saw a split of the realist discursive formation into a ‚realist-autonomous’ and a ‚realist-European’ one (Stahl 2006, 136-141). Presidents Pompidou, Giscard, Mitterrand and Chirac all represented this new discursive formation. It displayed new argumentative patterns, for instance, advocated sovereignty transfers in order to export the French model of civilisation or support of the US in security policy if this helps maintain French influence and status.

<u>discursive formation</u> characteristics	Realist- autonomous	Realist- European	Idealist
identity elements	F as great power, Europe as balancer, Preservation of France, Christian France	F as great power, Europe as balancer, Preservation of France, European France	Europe as a common destiny, Preservation of France, F as part of the West, European France
argumentative patterns	independence as end in itself, maximising influence through balancing, European integration endangers French values and interests, multi-polar world order	peace in Europe through balancing, export of French values and interests via the EU, embedding Germany, multipolar world order, Europe as balancer against the US	overcoming nationalism, peace in Europe, reconciliation, presence of European civilisation in the world, spread of human rights
recommendations for action	unilateral, interest-guided policy, stop European integration, selective alliance policy, distancing from the US	deepening only if it fosters French influence, increase of French and European influence in international organisations, co-operation with the US if in danger of marginalisation	EU deepening and enlargement, strengthening of international organisations, co-operation with US
representative discourse participants	PCF, FN, MDC, souverainist fractions from Gaullists and UDF, minority of Greens	majority of UMP, PS and Greens, parts of UDF	parts of UDF, few socialists and Greens, <i>nouveaux philosophes</i>

Table 3. The French identity construction with regard to Out-of-area engagements (my illustration)

Missions by exception – France's out of area engagement in the 1990s

Now, what has been the pattern of identity up to the Iraq conflict? France’s operative foreign policy with its rhetorical distance from the US can be conducted largely consensual – the three discursive formations agree. However, when the government is confronted with a security crisis in which the US is involved, then the decision-makers, as a rule, have opted for acting side by side with the US, even though this

was generally disputed domestically. Thus, in the Second Gulf War, the *Front National* and the PCF, as well as part of the Socialists, opposed an attack on Iraq, and Defence Minister Chevènement even resigned (Prater 1999, 449). This constellation was exemplary of the great debates of the following decade (Maastricht referendum, war over Bosnia and Kosovo, war on terrorism) in which the two more or less equally strong realist discursive formations split: While the realist-autonomous discursive formation normally demanded non-participation in out-of-area operations and a halt to further European integration, the realist-European discursive formation sided up with the idealist one in its recommendation in favour of European integration and action against security crises together with the US. To use the war over Kosovo as an example: When in 1999, Chirac took a u-turn and decided that France would participate in the war despite former government rhetoric, he found himself under massive pressure from within the country. A fierce debate broke loose in which, however, Chirac and Socialist Prime Minister Jospin could successfully demonstrate their determination to maintain some influence on policy outcomes (e.g. the avoidance of bombing civilian targets in Serbia) and reminded the *nation* of its human rights obligations and European responsibility (Stahl 2006, 226-234).

Iraq - the chance to unite the country

Unsurprisingly, exactly the same pattern was expected in the Iraq case (Economist, 1 February 2003). Indeed, in 2002, French diplomacy had remained rather passive (Dassù 2002, 3) yet engaged strongly in drafting Resolution 1441 – a successful policy as Dominique Moïsi stressed (Le Monde, 16 June 2003). The hopes for France's compliance, however, ignored the fact that French support for the US in the crises listed above had never been undisputed, let alone unconditional. The argumentation used with a view to Kosovo could hardly be reactivated in the Iraq case: In justifications to participate side by side with the US, the 'perceived behaviour of other great powers' had always played an important role (Stahl 2006, 252). In the Second Gulf War as well as in the final phase of the Bosnian conflict and the war over Kosovo, France had been able to exert influence on the course of the conflict whereas it would have marginalised itself had it stood aside. In the Iraq case, both aspects were different: The frustration over the absence of US requests for military support in Afghanistan (Shapiro 2002, 2) and the perceived irreversibility of the US position made France's own perspectives in the conflict appear small. And

this time, there already was another great country – Germany – which had actively engaged against a military campaign. When in January 2003, it became obvious that the US government's resolution to go to war was un-shakeable; Paris changed its course to active obstruction with a view to a second Security Council resolution. The President – with no doubt the most 'privileged storyteller' in French politics – justified his decision by pointing at the hitherto successful work of the inspectors which he found worth while continuing (cf. *Le Monde*, 10 March 2003, 11 March 2003). Alone for this reason, Chirac deemed war unnecessary at this time. Moreover, he recalled France's constructive behavioural record in the UN as it had never thoughtlessly used its veto power. He rejected the allegation of anti-Americanism and argued that an attack on Iraq would weaken rather than strengthen the struggle against terrorism.

This principal and conflict-laden shift of France's position in January 2003 found nearly consensual support from the political élite: In the National Assembly, not even a substantial debate emerged since the large majority of representatives – irrespective of party membership – backed Chirac's turn. All political sides applauded the President, be it the centrist pro-European UDF, Socialist Hollande, extreme right-wing Le Pen or Communist leader Buffet (*Economist*, 15 March 2003). Only the Atlanticist wing of Chirac's own UMP (Lellouche, Madelin) temporarily uttered doubts as to whether this drastic stance would be conducive to French foreign policy in the long run against the background of its deteriorating relations with its Anglo-Saxon partners (*FR*, 28 February 2003, *FAZ*, 1 March 2003). And some *nouveaux philosophes* deplored the lack of consideration of human rights in the French position (*Le Monde*, 20 March 2003). Not only the élites but also the public shared Chirac's line of argumentation and consensually rejected US policy: 70 per cent supported France's threat to veto, and Chirac's popularity reached the highest value for a President since 1938 (*Economist*, 22 February 2003, *Guardian*, 29 March 2003)! Remarkably, unlike the British public, the French rejected a war even if it had been mandated by the Security Council (Stuchlik 2005, 23).

In analytical terms, the two large discursive formations remained practically consensual in their recommendations for action, a split of the formations – as had happened in earlier crises – did not occur. In other words, support for the US in previous out-of-area missions had always been domestically disputed whereas France's policy on Iraq was not.

On the background of French identity, France acted as a great power against a unilaterally acting US, spoke as a political balancer for the majority of Europeans and defended the values of the *nation*, of civilisation and international law as represented by the UN. French behaviour in the Iraq crisis may be called surprising and extreme in a comparative perspective, but it was societally shared and thus a perfect expression of the French identity construction.

3.2 Germany – the overstretched consensus

German identity is marked by the experience of World War II. Elements of this identity, as they became visible e.g. in the discourse on rearmament in the 1950s, were '*Germany in Europe*' and '*in the West*', '*responsible Germany*', '*multilateral Germany*' and – as 'systemic' element reflecting the external perception of Germany – the '*German question*' (Nadoll 2003b, 350). Over time, the discourse on security policy diversified ever more over the question how to interpret the past and what should follow from this identity for foreign policy – from *Westbindung* to the *Ostpolitik*. In analytical terms, two discursive formations emerged by the early 1990s: 'restraint' and 'normalisation' (Katsioulis/Nadoll 2003, 354ff.; Baumann/Hellmann 2001). Whereas the former derived principal restraint with a view to foreign policy style, engagement and especially military operations outside German territory from the past, advocates of 'normalisation' regarded restraint as only temporary, confidence-building measure aiming at a finally 'normal foreign policy' of a democratic state in Europe (see Table 4).

For Germany, however, a peculiarity must be noted: The stability of its identity construction is based on similar argumentative patterns but not on similar discourse coalitions; in other words, German élites frequently change and even swap their arguments in foreign policy debates (Katsioulis/Nadoll 2003, 363).

<u>discursive</u>			
<u>formation</u>	Unconditional restraint (pacifist)	Conditional restraint	Normalisation
characteristics			
identity	responsible Germany, European Germany, German question	responsible Germany, European Germany, multilateral Germany, Germany as part of the West, German question	German question, Germany as part of the West, European Germany, multilateral Germany
elements			

argumentative patterns	unique moral obligation ('never again war'), no military means, civilian suffering, no German uniforms abroad, avoid raising neighbours' 'old fears'	moral responsibility resulting from history ('never again Auschwitz'), credibility, responsibility vis-à-vis partners, humanitarian requirements, respect international law, promote peace, overcome unilateral power politics, force as <i>ultima ratio</i>	responsibility as a great, mature democracy, reliable partner, alliance capacity and solidarity, European capacity, avoid isolation, regional stability, German interests are legitimate
recommendations for action	no out-of-area engagement of the Bundeswehr, seek diplomatic solutions, prevent militarisation of CFSP	restraint in out-of-area missions, participation in humanitarian interventions possible, deepening of CFSP, active participation in ESDP and NATO 'battle-groups'	behave in accordance with Germany's size and expectations vis-à-vis a 'normal' democracy, out-of-area missions in line with interests and resources, active participation in ESDP and NATO 'battle-groups'
representative discourse participants (not stable!)	PDS, Green fundamentalists, SPD left	Green 'realists', majority of SPD, FDP left, 'Europeans' within the CDU	SPD 'realists', majority of FDP, CSU, 'Atlanticists' within the CDU

Table 4. *The German identity construction with regard to Out-of-area engagements (my illustration)*

The activation of German Out-of-area engagement in the 1990s

An important stage in the differentiation of the discourse on security policy and the extension of behavioural options for Germany was the out-of-area debate in the early 1990s (Philippi 2001). It saw a split of the hitherto dominant discursive formation of restraint in two lines of argument entailing different recommendations for action: While adherents of the traditional, pacifist argumentation (PDS, left wings of SPD and Greens) stuck to unconditional restraint ('never again war!'), a larger group (including the later Foreign Minister Fischer) nuanced their argumentation by using the catch phrase 'never again Auschwitz', thereby signalling that in cases of genocide, German history demanded international action (Katsioulis/Nadoll 2003, 356f.). Against the background of the Bosnian war, this new discursive formation of 'conditional restraint' joined together with the normalists in recommending a more determined international engagement (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2003, 105). This new discourse hegemony was put to a practical test already in 1998/99 in the Kosovo conflict: The new Red-Green government followed up on the already gained discourse hegemony by changing German behaviour which led for the first time since World War II to active German participation in a military confrontation. Engagement in war was accompanied by a marked rhetoric of human rights and international law which also found resonance

so that public criticisms of this change of behaviour remained limited (case 3 in Figure 1). It is important to note that in this case, discourse hegemony in security policy cut across party divisions, including large parts of the opposition but excluding the pacifist fraction of the governing coalition.¹² This pattern was to continue for some time as German troops were sent to the Balkans and Afghanistan. But the government had more and more trouble in justifying each engagement since 'genocide', which had been the central argumentative pattern of 'conditional restraint' in the Kosovo conflict (Swoboda 2005, 71f.), could not plausibly be seen everywhere. Thus, resistance grew already with a view to sending troops to Macedonia,¹³ and in the Afghanistan question, Chancellor Schröder felt himself forced to initiate a vote of confidence in order to ensure backing from the dissenters within the coalition. In addition, after 9/11, the Bush Administration's foreign policy was even more increasingly felt as being unilateral, egocentric and economy-oriented (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2003, 108) – a policy whose endorsement the majority of the population resented. This rendered unattractive the argumentative patterns of 'alliance solidarity' which grounded in '*Germany as part of the West*', '*multilateral Germany*' and '*European Germany*' and which had still been highly present in the out-of-area debate.

Iraq - The chance to unite the government

The upcoming electoral campaign for the national elections (September 2002) was designed as one among two antagonistic camps. But the coalition had no majority on its own in favour of joining in action against Iraq – it would thus have had to rely on opposition support (Harnisch 2004, 174). Faced with this situation, Schröder and Fischer decided the 'double no' already in August 2002: Irrespective of any UN Security Council decision, Germany would not participate in a military operation against Iraq. Schröder justified this by arguing that Germany was no longer seeking an „easy way“ but was a „self-confident country“ which had already reached the limits of its capabilities.¹⁴ The Defence Minister added that Germany always fol-

¹² However, the rift between the two large discursive formations 'restraint' and 'normalisation' continued but increasingly shifted away from security policy and erupted in other societal debates (Bubis v. Walsler, Holocaust Memorial, Goldhagen theses, *Wehrmacht* exhibition).

¹³ Cf. Jochen Buchsteiner: „Politik der zittrigen Hand“, in: Die ZEIT, 2 August 2001, p.5.

¹⁴ Schröder's start-up speech of the election campaign in Hannover on 5/8/2002, www.spd-bebelhof.de/div/such.htm [24/6/2005] and his interview on TV (ARD-report) on 9/8/2002, www.bundesregierung.de/interview-428321/Interview-mit-Bundeskanzler-Sc.htm [16/4/2005].

lowed alliance solidarity but was no „US ward“ (FAZ 12/8/2002). By contrast, Foreign Minister Fischer was concerned about the consequences of a military attack on Iraq and warned that it might bring incalculable risks for stability in the Middle East. Furthermore, he did not share the US analysis of threat and stated that he simply was 'not convinced' (cf. Szabo 2004, 40).

The argumentative thrust of the proponents of a 'double no' contained pacifist, anti-American, status quo-oriented and normalist ('normal conflict among democracies') elements. In analytical terms, Schröder ended the discourse coalition between 'conditional restraint' and 'normalisation' and argumentatively switched to the discursive formation of unconditional restraint (pacifists).¹⁵ When the opposition's Chancellor Candidate Stoiber saw himself forced to join the government's course by temporarily even going as far as proposing a denial of over-flight rights to the US (Harnisch 2004, 184), it became evident that the new discourse hegemony even comprised parts of the normalists (Hellmann 2004, 33f.). The discursive formation of normalisation was split, and the smaller wing of 'Europeans' (Schäuble), multilateralists (Gerhardt) and Atlanticists (Merkel, Pflüger) remained marginalised. CDU leader Merkel blamed the government for having undermined Western pressure on Saddam Hussein, having stirred up anti-Americanism and pursuing a unilateral policy for election-tactical motives by its 'double no' (SZ, 21 February 2003). Other normalists lamented the decay of transatlantic relations and the weakening of international institutions such as the EU, NATO and the UN (Swoboda 2005, 100-105). But the CDU leader met harsh criticisms for her pro-American position even from her own party (Müller 2004, 18), and the public was highly content with the government's course: Already in Summer 2002, 80 per cent had opposed German participation in a military operation, and 80 per cent also regarded the allied attack on Iraq in March 2003 as wrong (Collmer 2004, 212). By its early determination, the acting government was able to catch up with the coalition in pre-election polls and secured a tight win in the September elections.

After the elections, Germany found itself in a difficult situation as the government had decided to in principle stick to its extreme course. Criticisms in the media and among analysts, however, grew louder and louder.¹⁶ In Germany, a heated debate

¹⁵ In terms of electoral tactics, the PDS especially suffered from this shift by losing its 'anti-war party' aura (Niedermayer 2003, 67).

¹⁶ Thus, for instance, coverage by the Financial Times Deutschland: „*Deutschland in Irak-Frage isoliert*“, FTD front-page story of 2 September 2002, „*Rot-grüne Kritik an Schröders Irak-Kurs*“

emerged as to how the German no was to be interpreted in concrete: Mine clearer and Patriot missiles for Israel, reconnaissance vehicles in Kuwait, German pilots on AWACS aircraft and Patriot missiles for Turkey were the issues – with the so-called 'BND affair' as more recent product. Counterfactually, I would argue that the government's course would have been contested had the other EU member states and the Security Council agreed upon military action against Iraq. Its argumentation was based on a single identity element – '*responsible Germany*' – and was thus susceptible to attack. But the government was lucky: By the French turn in January 2003 and the mass protests all over Europe of 15 February 2003, it found itself freed from isolation and could now also rhetorically activate the identity elements of '*European Germany*' and '*multilateral Germany*'. Moreover, when it became clear that the US position in the Security Council would find no majority, Germany again seemed to be within the multilateralist camp and could make forgotten its own contempt of the UN ("*...irrespective of how the Security Council decides*"). Developments in Iraq and the *ex post* dismantling of US justifications of the war also played in the hands of the government's rhetoric: A contestation did not occur, discourse hegemony remained stable and after the out-of-area debate, the behavioural spectrum of German foreign policy was again widened – this time by adding unilateral options for action.

4. Conclusions

'How can the surprising change of behaviour in Germany's and France's out-of-area policies be understood?' This was the empirical question raised at the beginning of this paper. In answering it, the identity/discourse approach portrayed here was to demonstrate which contribution social constructivist 'background variables' (i.e. identity in the present case) can make to understanding foreign policy change. In contrast to positivist theories, identity as a 'variable' requires filling in advance. So pre-existing content analyses of national identity helped to endogenise identity by identifying 'final arguments' of past foreign policy debates. These identity constructions run into concrete 'discursive formations' reflecting competing basic foreign policy understandings within societies. The introduction of 'discursive formations' links the identity approach to 'power' when discourse participants are striving for

wächst", FTD, 13 September 2002, p. 11, „Amoklauf eines Bundeskanzlers“, FTD, 11 February 2003. Cf. also „Stunde der Dilettanten“, Die ZEIT front-page title of 13 February 2003.

interpretative supremacy (i.e. the most convincing argument) and 'discourse hegemony'.

The comparative focus here was meant to show on the one hand how idiosyncratic foreign policy narratives could be reflected in identity theory. On the other hand the consistent use of discourse methodology enables us to overcome one current trend in foreign policy analysis: to overstate national idiosyncrasies.¹⁷

The plausibility probes were apt to analytically clarify the relation between behavioural change and identity change with a view to dominant legitimations and justifications of out-of-area missions. For France, I have argued that no identity change could be found: The determination of the French position in January 2003 was a surprising but nevertheless perfect expression of its identity construction – in other words, all earlier positions taken with a view to out-of-area missions had been more contested than France's veto policy in the Iraq crisis. Analytically, this means that this veto policy was well embedded in France's national identity (Table 1, case 3).

In Germany, the fragile consensus across party divisions about growing German military engagement abroad was jettisoned in the electoral campaign – in favour of a 'new' German restraint including unilateral and even obstructive behaviour. Due to lucky circumstances, this foreign policy remained uncontested and stable. German change of behaviour in the Iraq crisis went along with a change of identity (new weighing of identity elements, new discourse hegemony; Table 1, case 1).

What can be said about the factors of foreign policy change? In both cases, the decisions were met with domestic consent and hardly caused any contestation. For France, I have developed the thesis that the perceived behaviour of other great powers involved – notably the US and Germany – played a role which made Iraq a different case for the French decision-makers. In Germany, the foreign policy consensus on out-of-area missions had become weaker with every crisis due to the pacifists in the government, and got a final blow with the election campaign. The perceived Iraq crisis did not fit in the basic argumentative pattern of the 'restraint' formation – 'humanitarian intervention is only justified in case of genocide'. Ironically, Schröder's successful move to unite the government contributed to disunite the EU and the West.

¹⁷ Admittedly, there was no room here to refer to further essentials of national idiosyncrasies, i.e. the specific discourse structures/dispositions emanating from the political system or political culture.

At this point, we should remind ourselves of the limited predictive claim of the approach portrayed here. A future change of behaviour is held to be possible only if previous behaviour had been sufficiently contested; but it is probable only if an according shift of power among discursive formations occurs. In France, policy on Iraq was even less contested than in Germany. Accordingly, it can be assumed that the French government will be able to rely on broad societal support in future conflicts with the US. However, even in Germany, the new discourse hegemony was not challenged by the incoming Merkel government, even though prominent critics of Schröder's policy (Merkel, Schäuble and Pflüger) are among its members. Analytically, the potential for change (*contestation*) was too small to allow a shift of power among discursive formations – ‚Atlanticist normalists' entering the government, (‚restraint-oriented') Greens leaving – to substantially challenge the discourse hegemony.

This again means that the newly established discourse hegemony does not entirely fit to the grand coalition's foreign policy profile – thus tensions are already laid out. The „hidebound debate“ (FAZ, 15 March 2006) about the Congo mission of the Bundeswehr, the „war of details“ (Tagesspiegel, 12 March 2006) in the BND affair and „German excuses“ (FASZ, 13 August 2006) with a view to a Bundeswehr mission to Lebanon are testimonies of a continuing uncertainty about German out-of-area missions.

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