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# 1

## German Foreign Policy in Europe: An Interactionist Framework of Analysis

*Wolfgang Wagner, Rainer Baumann,  
Monika Bösche and Gunther Hellmann*

### **Changes in Germany's European diplomacy: in search of an explanation**

During the 15 years or so since the end of the Cold War and unification, Germany's policy towards and within the European Union has undergone significant changes. Once the 'Musterknabe of Europe' (Le Gloanec, 1998, p. 21), Germany has become increasingly reluctant in supporting the progressive implementation of key projects of European integration. The most recent example is the refusal of the German government to adhere to a strict interpretation of the Stability and Growth Pact that empowers the Commission to monitor fiscal discipline. Instead of curbing government spending or accepting an infringement procedure, Germany has managed to build a blocking minority that rendered the Stability and Growth Pact ineffective. This has been a dramatic break with its former policy of imposing fiscal discipline on the members of the euro-area. While at first sight this episode may only provide anecdotal evidence for the claim that Germany's European policy has changed substantially, it is not without precedence: for instance, since the European Council in Amsterdam in June 1997, Germany has repeatedly vetoed the introduction of majority voting to asylum and refugee policy. This has been an equally striking break with its policy of having justice and home affairs communitarized. As regards security and defence policy, Germany's position has also changed dramatically. Whereas Germany used to be a vanguard of security and defence integration in the early 1990s, it has lagged behind in implementing the commitments agreed at the European Council in Helsinki and has thereby endangered the success of the entire project.

These changes in German EU policy are puzzling to those students of German policy that have pointed to a stable Europeanized identity.

According to Klaus Goetz, the Europeanization of the German state has made 'the search for the national, as opposed to the European, interest a fruitless task' (Goetz, 1996, p. 40). Thomas Banchoff concurs that 'the major government and opposition parties came to view the FRG as inextricably bound within an emergent supranational community', and this, in turn, 'informed a particular conception of German interests – support for deeper economic and political integration' (Banchoff, 1999a, p. 283). According to these scholars, German decision-makers have supported European integration by default in the sense that 'the goal of furthering integration has entered their genetic code' (Goetz, 1996, p. 24; cf. also Katzenstein, 1997a; Risse and Engelmann-Martin, 2002; Berger, 1996, 1998; Duffield, 1998, 1999; Maull, 2000). By the same token, the development of German EU policy at first sight seems to support those scholars who have expected a changing EU policy after unification. According to Josef Janning, for example, 'German EU policy will have to replace its uncritical general support for integration with a calculated integration strategy in order to preserve its interests and freedom of action' (Janning, 1996, pp. 31–2, our translation; cf. also Frenkler, 2001; Wernicke, 1998; Deubner, 1995, p. 11). According to Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, Germany has even turned 'from a *Musterknabe* of Europe into a convert to British policies' (Le Gloannec, 1998, p. 21; cf. also Maurer and Grunert, 1998; Hort, 1997). For German policy on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in particular, Wolfgang Wessels observed a declining interest (Wessels, 1999, p. 401).

In this volume, we will argue, however, that these changes in Germany's foreign policy in Europe are hardly an instance of a planned strategic change. While analyses working with the concept of a stable Europeanized German identity or political culture have a hard time accounting for the changes in German policy, studies highlighting change in Germany's foreign policy in Europe often overestimate the strategic calculus underlying this development. We will argue that German policy is adequately understood neither as solely driven by stable social structures nor as the voluntaristic policy of an incipient great power. Instead, what is needed is an interactionist framework of analysis that captures the interplay between German policy and European governance, avoiding the pitfalls of both structural determinism and individual voluntarism.<sup>1</sup>

Focusing on two of the cases mentioned above, that is, security and defence policy and asylum and refugee policy, this volume will thus demonstrate that changes in German policy are not simply the result of a more 'calculated' or 'British' definition of interests. Rather, Germany

has been facing growing difficulties to meet the expectations of its EU partners and to play by the rules of European governance. It is important to note, however, that Germany had previously been a crucial actor in designing these rules in the first place. As a consequence, Germany's failure to live up to its commitments is best understood as resulting from a complex interplay between German policy and European governance.

In order to account for changes in Germany's EU policy, this chapter presents an interactionist framework of analysis designed to capture the noted interplay between German policy on the one hand and European governance on the other. We will start out with a brief review of the existing literature on German foreign policy in Europe. Then we will turn to two lines of thinking we consider most useful for an interactionist understanding of foreign policy. As the interplay between agency and structure is at the heart of the framework, the debate on the Agency–Structure Problem in International Relations is a natural point of departure. In order to remedy the neglect of agency in this debate, a pragmatist extension seems warranted. Ultimately, we will merge the structurationist and the pragmatist perspectives into an interactionist framework of analysis and, finally, discuss our selection of cases for empirical investigation.

### **German foreign policy in Europe: state of the art**

Over the course of the 1990s, Germany's European diplomacy attracted considerable attention among scholars of International Relations and foreign policy analysis because it was considered an ideal 'test case' to assess the explanatory power of different theoretical approaches (cf., for example, Rittberger, 2001). As a result, the analysis of German foreign policy was influenced by the theoretical debates in International Relations about the relative importance of different structural variables. Thus, research has been dedicated to the question of whether German policy has adapted to the imperatives of the international power structure, whether German policy has reflected the demands of domestic interests or whether German policy has been led by institutionalized expectations of appropriate behaviour (on either the international/European or domestic level). These expectations were derived from competing schools of thought, most importantly neorealism and constructivism.<sup>2</sup> Neorealism expected Germany to adapt to the transition from bipolarity to unipolarity (and ultimately to multipolarity) and the concomitant improvement of its power position by putting more emphasis on its unilateral freedom of action at the

expense of multilateralism and integration (cf. Waltz, 1993; Baumann, Rittberger and Wagner, 2001). Empirical studies, however, have found little evidence supporting this expectation. By contrast, most observers have found continuity to be the dominant feature of Germany's foreign policy after unification. According to them, Germany has continued to pursue a foreign policy characterized by multilateralism, non-military means and a culture of restraint.

Most of these studies have been based on constructivist theorizing in order to explain continuity in German foreign policy. Scholars have pointed either to the enduring embeddedness of Germany in international institutions (cf. Anderson and Goodman, 1993; Katzenstein, 1997a) or to unchanged features of Germany's political culture (cf. Duffield, 1998, 1999; Berger, 1998; Maull, 2000). In both cases, foreign policy has been traced back to the impact of (international or domestic) structures. According to Thomas Berger (1998) and John Duffield (1998, 1999), an anti-militarist culture in German society has led the German government to forgo the establishment of an independent military capacity and to avoid out-of-area missions. Klaus Goetz (1996), Peter Katzenstein (1997a), Thomas Banchoff (1999a), Thomas Risse (1999) and Markus Jachtenfuchs (1999) have all pointed to a Europeanized German identity in order to explain Germany's adherence to European integration. It is important to note that none of these authors conceives of 'political culture' or 'national identity' as a fixed concept. The possibility of change in 'political culture' and 'national identity', however, is mostly considered in the context of outside pressures (cf., for example, Risse et al., 1999, for French European policy). Little attention has been paid to the active shaping of 'political culture' and 'national identity' by actors such as the German government or other governments.

Given the widespread treatment of Germany as a test case for competing schools of thought in International Relations (IR), it is striking that the attention of the broader IR community has faded away and, since the late 1990s, again left the field to specialists in German foreign policy. This shift of attention is all the more striking as the period since the Amsterdam Treaty in particular offered a bulk of potential case studies that would have qualified as further test cases for competing theoretical claims. Further case studies also appear warranted as the competing camps have not reached any middle ground but maintained their initial, incompatible claims. Why then did German foreign policy stop to attract the attention of a broader IR audience? We suggest that one important reason for the competing camps turning away from Germany has been that the developments in German foreign

policy did not fit the theoretical frameworks at hand. Though changes in German foreign policy became more and more obvious, they could not simply be attributed to a more 'unilateralist' or 'British' stance on European integration.

However, rather than refining their theoretical tools, scholars simply turned to new issues and cases for 'testing' their competitive claims. In contrast, we argue that the case of German foreign policy change necessitates a new framework of analysis. Instead of confirming or falsifying established theories, such a framework of analysis should enable us to overcome traditional distinctions and to develop innovative concepts and new theoretical insights.

### **Towards an interactionist framework of analysis**

The debate on the Agency–Structure Problem (ASP) in International Relations is an obvious starting point for developing an analytical framework that can account for the dynamic interplay between agency (for example, German policy), on the one hand, and structure (for example European governance), on the other. Our theoretical endeavour therefore begins with a reading of this debate. There are a number of reasons to give Alexander Wendt's work a prominent place in this section. First, with his 1987 article in *International Organization*, Wendt brought the ASP to the attention of an IR audience in the first place. Second, Wendt's ensuing work has been the most sophisticated 'positivist'<sup>3</sup> solution to the ASP. Finally, in introducing the ASP, Wendt claimed that the utility of his (as any) answer to the ASP 'ultimately depends on its ability to enrich substantive theorizing and concrete empirical research' (Wendt, 1987, p. 337).<sup>4</sup> We will take this claim seriously in evaluating Wendt's model on the purpose of our research project, that is, to develop an analytical framework that accounts for the co-constitutive and co-determinate nature of Germany's EU policy and European governance.

As we will elaborate below, the Wendtian model is well-suited to ask questions about the mutual influence between actors (such as Germany) and structures (such as European governance) because it keeps actors and structures as distinct categories. Moreover, Wendt has suggested a concept of structure that is well-suited to conduct empirical research. At the same time, in our view, Wendt has paid insufficient attention to the concept of agency. In particular, Wendt's model is ill-suited to account for the creativity inherent in any social action. In the subsequent chapter we will therefore draw on a pragmatist theory of action to remedy this

shortcoming. It should be noted that the pragmatist theory of action is not intended to replace the positivist model. In contrast, it will extend the framework by contributing further conceptual tools (most importantly, the concept of creativity) that have no systematic status within Wendt's model.

### **Alexander Wendt and the 'positivist' answer to the Agency–Structure Problem**

This section will first present the ASP as introduced to IR by Alexander Wendt and David Dessler. In doing so, three dimensions will be distinguished, that is, an ontological, an epistemological and a methodological dimension. We will continue by presenting the cornerstone of the 'positivist', Wendtian answer of the ASP, that is, the notion that agents and structures can, for analytical purposes, be conceived of as not changing permanently but as being relatively fixed and stable during certain periods. Given the purpose of our project, special attention will be paid to the conceptualization of structure and agency because any empirical analysis has to be built on a careful conceptualization and operationalization of these core concepts. We start with a discussion of structure and proceed with a discussion of agency.

#### *Three dimensions of the Agency–Structure Problem*

The ASP has been presented, first of all, as a problem of (social) ontology. As an ontological problem, the ASP has been concerned with the *nature* of agents, structures and their relationship to each other (Wendt, 1987, p. 339). What is at stake is to what extent agents and structures can be considered ontologically primitive units. Traditionally, (methodological) individualism and (methodological) structuralism have marked the extreme positions on that question.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the debate since the mid-1980s has started from the assumption that both extreme positions are untenable and that a mediating position is needed.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the ontological dimension of the problem, an epistemological and a methodological dimension can be distinguished.<sup>7</sup> With regard to the former, it has been asked whether a positivist epistemology can still be appropriate once the mutual constitution of agents and structures has been accepted or whether an interpretivist approach is required (cf. Carlsnaes, 1992; Friedman and Starr, 1997, p. 10; cf. also Kratochwil and Ruggie, 1986). The methodological dimension has been concerned with the translation of co-constitution into specific research designs. Methodological aspects of the ASP have received the least attention so far. As a consequence, empirical research



has rarely gone beyond paying lip-service to 'structurationist' ontology (cf. Checkel, 1998, p. 340; for a recent exception, cf. Cerny, 2000). In our view, this is a major shortcoming of the debate, since the merits of metatheory in the end depend on the additional empirical insights it makes possible.<sup>8</sup> A major aim of this chapter is therefore to address the methodological issues of conceptualization and to present an interactionist framework of analysis that is applicable to the analysis of German foreign policy after unification.

#### *Moderate-structurationist foreign policy analysis*

The term 'structurationist' was coined by Anthony Giddens to denote a mode of theorizing that takes neither agents nor structures as primitive units and focuses instead on the process of their mutual constitution. The notion that agents and structures are co-constitutive and therefore subject to change poses a serious challenge to any positivist methodology dedicated to the detection of regularities ('laws') between clearly defined and measurable variables (Carlsnaes, 1992, p. 263). It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that the Agency–Structure Problem has inspired a wave of post-positivist theorizing that has replaced causal analyses with narratives (cf. Suganami, 1999) or figurations (cf. Jackson and Nexon, 1999).

It is important to note, however, that such a post-positivist structurationism becomes necessary only if both agents and structures are considered to be in a process of *permanent* change (Zangl and Zürn, 1996, p. 344). In contrast, a *moderate structurationism* assumes that agents (or to be more precise: their interests and identities) as well as structures do not change permanently. Rather, for analytical purposes, it is inevitable to conceive of them as if they are relatively fixed and stable during certain periods (cf. Carlsnaes, 1992; Zangl, 1999, pp. 38–9). On the basis of temporarily stable attributes of agents and structures, the process of co-constitution can be sequentialized and thus kept open for causal analysis.<sup>9</sup> Wendt and others have referred to this analytical device as 'bracketing', 'that is, taking social structures and agents in turn as temporarily given in order to examine the explanatory effects of the other' (Wendt, 1987, pp. 364–5).

#### *The conceptualization of structure*

From the perspective of empirical research, the re-conceptualization of structure has been the most striking consequence of the agency–structure debate.<sup>10</sup> The Waltzian notion of a material structure constraining behaviour has been the prime target of criticism. In Waltz's theory,

structure is reduced to the 'unintended positioning, standing, or organization of units that emerges spontaneously from their interaction' (Dessler, 1989, p. 449). What has been criticized as missing from Waltz's concept of structure are the intended institutions, norms and rules that may be reproduced as well as transformed by states. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that the impact of rules cannot be limited to their regulative effects, that is, to constraints and incentives that change the costs of various behavioural options and thereby regulate behaviour. Instead, the constitutive effects of rules also have to be taken into account. That is to say that rules also inform actors about their identity and interests in the first place. They legitimize goals and act as 'motives' (Klotz, 1995, p. 26).<sup>11</sup>

Contributions to the agency–structure debate have relied upon different concepts of structures. The most popular concepts are Bhaskar's notion of generative structures as sets of internal and external relations (cf. Wendt, 1987, p. 346) and Giddens' notion of structures as sets of rules and resources (cf. Giddens, 1979, pp. 64–6; Wendt, 1991; Arts, 2000).<sup>12</sup> With a view to an empirical analysis of (German) foreign policy, we have to ask which concept best captures the two notions that (1) structures of European governance impact upon the interests and identity of Germany to an extent that makes Germany's European policy incomprehensible without reference to them and that (2) structures of European governance do not exist apart of the policies of various actors (most importantly, the member states) that reproduce as well as transform them.

Bhaskar's concept of generative structures as sets of internal and external relations can capture the impact of structures on both policy and identity. The impact of European governance on the policies of German governments (for example, attempts to keep budget deficits below 3 per cent of GDP) can be understood as an external relation. An internal relation between 'Europe' and 'Germany' can be said to exist insofar as post-war Germany's identity is inextricably linked to the project of European integration. The concept of internal relations, however, has two shortcomings. First, it seems ill-suited to capture the nuances (and changes) in the way Germany's identity is linked to European integration. Second, it leaves little room for choice because Germany's identity is held to be *unthinkable* without European integration.

In contrast, Giddens' conceptualization of structure as 'rules and resources' better fits the purposes of our research project. To begin with, the concept of rules also allows differentiating between a structure's impact on policy as well as identity because rules have both regulative

and constituting effects (Rawls, 1955). As regulative devices, the concept of rules understood as shared understandings of appropriate behaviour<sup>13</sup> serves to identify not only a single external relation between structure and action but a range of possible actions, each of which can be judged according to its appropriateness. Moreover, the concept of rules leaves an actor's freedom of choice intact because rules may be broken without being invalidated. (It is hard to see how the concept of internal relations could account for this.)

The concept of resources adds a distinctly political dimension to the concept of structure and enables us to account for the role of power in the interrelationship between German policy and European governance. Taken together, Giddens' conceptualization of structure as 'rules and resources' connects well with established concepts in International Relations (cf. also Arts, 2000, p. 514).<sup>14</sup>

With regard to empirical research, Wendt's distinction between micro- and macrostructures as two levels of structure within a social system is particularly helpful to systematize the debate on structure following Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*. Except for the issue of collective knowledge as a non-material element of structure, Wendt's concept of macrostructure is largely identical with Waltz's concept of structure. Macrostructures refer to attributes and tendencies of a system as a whole. The elements of macrostructures can be found 'at the level of the population of states, not on the level of individual or interacting states' (Wendt, 1999, p. 151). Microstructures, by contrast, refer to the interactions between the units of a social system, for example, states in the Prisoners' Dilemma. Wendt correctly points out that the outcome of interactions in problematic social situations such as the Prisoners' Dilemma does not follow immediately from state actions and cannot be conceived without reference to structures as well.

With regard to empirical research, micro- and macrostructures are best understood as ideal types on a continuum that differ in terms of their scope and – as a consequence – their malleability.<sup>15</sup> By definition, macrostructures refer to the level of the population of states, that is, to the international system as a whole. Microstructures, by contrast, refer to an 'interaction complex among states' (Wendt, 1999, p. 147). Such an 'interaction complex' may comprise two states (for example, Franco-German relations) as well as the members of an international institution (for example, the EU). Though both levels of structure are reproduced by the actions of agents, they differ with respect to their malleability. Microstructures are seen to be very responsive to the actions of the states involved (Wendt mentions the transformation of

the Prisoners' Dilemma into the Chicken Game caused by a change in a state's preference ordering; cf. *ibid.*, p. 149). By contrast, macrostructures 'supervene' individual actions, that is, their existence depends on, but they are not reducible to particular actions of states. From a particular state's point of view, macrostructures are therefore not changeable by its foreign policy actions though a critical mass of states and their policies may indeed lead to a transformation of a macrostructure as well.

The differentiation of micro- and macro-levels of structure is helpful in guiding empirical research such as on German foreign policy after unification. Because macrostructures (for example, 'anarchy') have remained untouched even by the end of the Cold War (not to mention 'minor' events such as German unification or the Maastricht Treaty), they can be considered as a constant feature of the environment in which German foreign policy takes place. By contrast, microstructures are more likely to have changed in response to the end of the Cold War and the ensuing policies of states such as Germany. The interaction between microstructures and German policy constitutes a major focus of our analysis of Germany's foreign policy. In empirical analyses, microstructures become largely synonymous with international institutions. As international institutions, microstructures may be further distinguished by the degree of their tightness, that is, 'whether or not material conditions (technology, communication and so on) and/or socially and historically embedded practices strongly limit actors' room for manoeuvre in a quasi-coercive manner (whether exogenously imposed or psychologically internalized)' (Cerny, 2000, p. 437). Whereas tight international institutions, for example, the European governance of monetary policy, are more difficult to change, loose international institutions, for example, the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, are more malleable.

#### *Bringing domestic structures back in*

In the context of the ASP, the debate on an appropriate conceptualization of structure has almost exclusively focused on structures of the international system. Though the relative importance of various domestic structures (such as regime type, political culture and the like) has traditionally been discussed in foreign policy analysis (as discussed above), a structurationist perspective remains to be extended to the realm of second-image foreign policy analysis. Given the salience of political culture in research on German foreign policy, the reification of domestic structures, that is, the inattention to agency in the analysis of their reproduction and change, must be regarded as a major shortcoming.

It is important to note a difference between domestic structures and their international counterparts that impacts on an interactionist analysis of foreign policy: there is a high degree of 'likeness' among the units of the international system, that is, among the states. Due to the anarchic nature of the international system, the degree of functional differentiation among states is comparatively limited.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, the degree of functional differentiation among the units of a domestic system is extremely high because the ordering principle *within* states is hierarchy, not anarchy. Within states, some actors (such as the government or the Constitutional Court) are endowed with powers that give them extraordinary leverage over the other units of the system. The ordering principle and the degree of functional differentiation among the units of a system impact on the way in which the structures of a system are reproduced. Within states, single actors (such as the government) may become decisive in reproducing (or changing), structures, whereas other actors only play minor roles.<sup>17</sup> This is especially true in the realm of foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> Consider, for example, a neutral state, that is, a state that has been non-aligned and that has not been involved or taken sides in international conflicts on principle.<sup>19</sup> The neutrality of the state has probably been institutionalized by respective constitutional provisions, court rulings and the like. Most importantly, however, 'being neutral' has become a part of that state's identity and political culture, that is, its citizens as well as corporate actors (for example, political parties, schools) have continually reproduced the domestic structures that make that state neutral: by keeping that state's collective memory alive, by educating students and diplomats about the merits of neutrality, or by commenting on the state's policy from the perspective of 'appropriate neutrality', and so on. It seems obvious that the actions of the government are more influential in reproducing 'neutrality' than the actions of any other domestic actor. Of course, the government is highly constrained in its policies by a 'culture of neutrality'. Still, the government enjoys considerable leverage which it may use to change the meaning of neutrality (that is, domestic structure).

### *Agency*

*The neglect of agency.* Compared to the intense treatment of 'structure', the concept of agency has received lesser attention in Wendt's work. Notwithstanding the structurationist credo that 'structure' and 'agency' should be given equal status in social theory (Wendt, 1987, p. 339), agency is largely portrayed from a structuralist point of view, namely as *servicing* structure by reliably giving existence and effect to it.

As regards the reproduction of structures, Wendt gives a number of reasons why culture 'will tend to reproduce itself' (the wording is telling since it simply attributes agency to structure itself). First, there is 'the human need for ontological security, which creates a generalized preference for order and predictability' and 'the internalization of roles in identities, which generates subjective commitments to objective positions in society' (Wendt, 1999, p. 339). Second, there are institutions that reward certain practices and punish others. As a consequence, 'cultures have an intrinsically conservative quality which ensures that structural change will be the exception, not the rule' (*ibid.*, p. 340).

Notwithstanding their homeostatic tendencies, Wendt is very concerned with the potential of structures to transform themselves (or rather to be transformed). In particular, Wendt is interested in the transformation of a Lockean into a Kantian culture. In a Lockean culture, states are neither enemies nor friends but rivals which recognize each other's sovereignty as a right. However, they may still be engaged in violent disputes, for example, over territorial boundaries (Wendt, 1999, pp. 279–80). By contrast, a Kantian culture is characterized by a rule of non-violence. In addition, a rule of mutual aid stipulates that 'they will fight as a team if the security of any one is threatened by a third party' (*ibid.*, p. 299). Wendt's approach to the question of transformation is again telling. In order to explain why states would engage in new social actions that would transform a Lockean into a Kantian culture, Wendt introduces interdependence, common fate, homogeneity and self-restraint as four causal mechanisms or 'master variables'. With the exception of self-restraint, all master variables bear structural features.

Several reasons can be given for this conspicuous neglect of agency in Wendt's work. First, when Wendt started working on the Agency–Structure Problem, he addressed a widespread concern that the concept of structure rather than the concept of agency had suffered from neglect in International Relations. The discipline was regarded to be dominated by rational choice approaches which view structures largely as an effect of state actions (which in turn are based on preferences derived from *given* interests) that impact on state strategies, not on state identity. As a consequence, 'we now have a fairly well-developed framework for thinking about agency and interaction ... but by comparison our thinking about structure is relatively impoverished' (Wendt, 1999, p. 184). Analogously to Waltz, Wendt also portrays his work as a theory of international politics, not one of the state and foreign policy. According to this reading, agency is not systematically neglected but simply left to be elaborated by someone else within the framework given by Wendt (*ibid.*, p. 246).

In a similar way, Wendt has been concerned with the establishment of constitutive theorizing as an equal supplement to causal theorizing that has been well-established by mainstream International Relations. Instead of asking 'Why?' questions, as in causal theorizing, constitutive theorizing is concerned with 'How (possible)?' questions. According to Wendt, social kinds are constituted by internal or external structures. For example, states are constituted by internal 'organizational structures that give them a territorial monopoly on organized violence' (Wendt, 1999, p. 83) as well as by the external discursive structure of sovereignty that define the territorial monopoly on organized violence as a criterion for statehood in the first place. It is important to note that no role has been attributed to agency in constitutive theorizing.

Finally, Wendt's concern with culture and the long-term transition between cultures disposes him to discount agency: as macrostructure, culture supervenes actions, that is, it depends on but cannot be reduced to them (cf., for example, *ibid.*, p. 340). As a consequence, little attention is given to any particular agency and ensuing developments of micro-level phenomena. Of course, it remains a matter of speculation, but one could argue that Wendt would have given agency more attention if he had been working on microstructures, for example, Franco-German relations or European integration.

*Who qualifies as an agent?* The only agency-related issue that has received wide attention in Wendt's work is the question of *who* (or what) may be treated as an agent. The issue has been split into the philosophical question of whether 'agency' should be reserved for human beings or may be extended to include corporate agency as well, and – given that there is something like corporate agency – the question of whether states are the most important actors in international politics.

As regards the first question, Friedman and Starr, among others, have taken the 'individualist' position arguing that only human beings are in possession of 'consciousness, power, and intentional choice' (Friedman and Starr, 1997, p. 32; cf. also Wight, 1999, p. 127–8; Jaeger, 1996, pp. 319–20). Wendt, by contrast, holds that corporate actors also qualify as agents: 'states are also purposive actors with a sense of Self – "states are people too"' (Wendt, 1999, p. 194). In his *Social Theory of International Politics*, Wendt has dedicated an entire chapter to the problem of corporate agency. He starts from the notion that corporate agency is actually a kind of structure that is instantiated and reproduced by individuals. Because corporate agents are unobservable, 'the challenge for [scientific] realists is to show that state action is anything more than the sum of ... individual governmental actions' (*ibid.*, p. 216). Wendt

points out that we routinely explain individuals' behaviour 'as the "behavior" of corporate agents, and these explanations work in the sense that they enable us to make reliable predictions about individuals' (ibid.). Moreover, Wendt argues, 'we cannot make sense of the actions of governments apart from the structures of states that constitute them as meaningful' (ibid., p. 217).

The second question of whether states are the key actors in international politics goes to the heart of what constitutes International Relations as a discipline and has been debated accordingly. Wendt argues that states are the key actors in the regulation of organized violence and that the states system is relatively autonomous from other structures of the international system, like the world economy (ibid., pp. 193–4). Among others, Jaeger (1996) and Behnke (2001) have deplored that notion as too conventional. To be sure, the question of whether states are the most important actors in international politics is ultimately an empirical question that may be answered in various ways, depending on the issue area, region and historical period under consideration.

### **A pragmatist extension**

Whereas the model offered by Wendt has focused on the structural side of the Agency–Structure Problem, agency is at the heart of pragmatist theory. Pragmatism has been interested in how human beings think, how they attain and change their opinions and beliefs (Dewey, 1991 (1910)) and how they act based on these opinions and beliefs. The pragmatist theory of action, therefore, is well-suited to further develop Wendt's model by describing, conceptualizing and operationalizing agency.<sup>20</sup> Before this argument can be elaborated, a few general and introductory remarks about pragmatism are in order.

In recent years, there has been an unexpected renaissance of the tradition of American pragmatism in Philosophy and Sociology, but also within Political Theory (cf. especially Rorty, 1982, 1989, 1998; Joas, 1992a, 1992b; Bernstein, 1995; Menand, 1997; Putnam, 1995, 1997; Dewey, 1999; Habermas, 1999; Sandbothe, 2000). In International Relations in general and foreign policy analysis in particular, however, this development has only begun to leave its imprint so far (Puchala, 1995; Smith, 1996, pp. 23–5; Deibert, 1997; 'Millennium' Special Issue 2002 on 'Pragmatism in International Relations Theory'). This is astonishing, since pragmatism, being a philosophical tradition that treats epistemology and theory of action as a unity, offers important suggestions and unconventional solutions to problems and debates of International Relations. This concerns both the recent 'success story'



(Guzzini, 2000, p. 147) of constructivism in IR and the agent–structure debate which has provided a basis for this success story. Thus, we will attempt to bring together two lines of theoretical research that are concerned with the same problems and yet have remained unconnected so far: the moderate-structurationist tackling of the Agency–Structure Problem, on the one hand, and pragmatist reasoning on problem-oriented creative action, on the other. In combining insights from these two bodies of research, we intend to formulate an interactionist framework of analysis which then can be applied in empirical analysis, for instance to cases of German foreign policy and European governance.

From a pragmatist point of view, the relative stable and persistent structures which Wendt focuses on can be described as what Bourdieu called practices and forms of habits and actions (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 116–18). Actors follow these implicit rules for action without further reasoning or examination in situations that are perceived as normal and routine. These determinate situations are characterized by ‘a closed ... “universe of experience” ’ (Dewey, 1981 (1938a), p. 227). In routine situations, actors resort to habits, that is, an internalized repertoire of action which is based on a rich experience with similar situations in the past. As a consequence, actors unconsciously reproduce again and again the given structures (cf. Dewey, 1981 (1938b), p. 513).

In addition to these unreflected forms of acting, pragmatism is concerned with explicit and reflected forms of action. A reflected form of action occurs when actors perceive a situation as problematic or uncertain. In such situations actors cannot fall back on known or tested rules for action because these do not exist or are not considered available by actors and, in addition, the outcome is indeterminate (Joas, 1992b, pp. 193–6, 235–6). As a result, actors cannot resort to an internalized repertoire of actions. In such situations, actors have real doubts about what to do next and how to cope with the situation because their belief system has been challenged (cf. Joas, 1992a, p. 29; Peirce, 1997 (1878), p. 33). In order to get beyond the period of doubt, actors must reconstruct the ‘disrupted continuum of action’. Their perception must

comprise new and different aspects of reality; the action must refer to different points of the world, or it must restructure itself. This reconstruction is a creative achievement of the actor. If the action can be reoriented by means of a changed perception, and if the actor can continue with this reoriented action, then something new has come into being: a new way of acting that could be stabilized and, in turn, itself become an unreflected routine. From a pragmatist perspective,

all human action is characterized by the tension between unreflected routines and creative achievements. This also implies that pragmatists see creativity as an achievement within situations that call for a solution rather than as the unconstrained creation of new things without any constitutive background of unreflected routines. (Joas, 1992b, p. 190, our translation)

In problematic situations, actors use the 'pragmatist method' to deal with the given problems: they 'try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to any one notion rather than that were true' (James, 1995 (1907), p. 18). In the context of metatheory, Rorty describes how scientists use this method: 'They check for examples against criteria; they fudge the counter-examples enough to avoid the need for new models; they try out various guesses, formulate within in current jargon, in the hope of coming up with something which will cover the unfudgeable cases' (Rorty, 1982, p. 193).<sup>21</sup>

From a pragmatist point of view, problematic situations are not necessarily threatening to actors because they offer a 'horizon of possibilities' (*Möglichkeitshorizont*) accessible to actors (Joas, 1992b, p. 196). Thus, actors may behave in new ways: without self-evident rules about how to act appropriately and how to solve a given problem they have the chance to pursue their own interests and aims and to invent new ways of problem solving and action. In doing so, they creatively produce new forms of actions (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 187–306; for further explanation of the concept of creativity, see below) that may in turn influence the possible worlds of the future (Hawthorn, 1995 (1991)). These new forms of actions may then become habitualized and thus be stabilized if they contribute to problem-solving. If new forms of actions have been habitualized, structures in Wendt's terms have evolved (cf. Wendt, 1999, pp. 143, 145).

When given the opportunity, actors consciously create new forms of habits and actions to achieve their own interests. From a pragmatist point of view, therefore, the concept of action cannot be separated from the actors' aims and the related means and instruments (Joas, 1992b, pp. 214–15, 218–26). Instead, human action is always bound to its larger *context of action* (*Handlungszusammenhang*) and cannot be separated from it (Joas, 1992b, pp. 232–6). 'Practical reasoning is done by particular agents in the light of their particular experiences and the particular circumstances in which they find themselves' (Hawthorn, 1995 (1991), p. 34). Thus, obviously, missing rules for action offer a broad range of possible actions which actors may choose from. On the

one hand, actions may have the effects intended by actors to reach their goals. On the other hand, actions may also have unintended consequences due to ongoing interactions and structures which actors have unreflectedly (re)produced and not taken into account. Thus, it is more appropriate to conceive of the formulation of ends and the choice of respective means as an interplay in a given problematic situation, rather than to assume that actors' goals are fixed and the choice of the means be oriented towards these ends.<sup>22</sup> Thus, any 'problem' to be solved is complex in the sense that conglomerates of actors and bundles of motivations and beliefs come into play. As regards the temporal context of problem-solving actions, experiences (that is, past thoughts and actions of ourselves as well as others) are as important as expectations (that is, intentions as to desired as well as predictions as to likely future states of the world).<sup>23</sup> Frequently, a solution to a specific problem will be based on a re-formulation of the problem itself. In general, a new rule for action is the more likely to become habitualized the more it captures a problem's complexity (for example, by formulating appropriate new and more complex goals that will provide 'procedural means' in future contexts of action).

These new forms of action stress the actors' creativity and their ability to reflect their actions and to calculate the possible consequences and the reactions of others. Actors' expectations in turn influence the definition of goals in the first place which, as pointed out above, may contribute to the solution of a given problem. Whether actors are able to reach their goals depends on current practices (*Handlungspraktiken*) including other actors' efforts to modify them. Because actors are aware of this, they take possible structural effects and other actors' reactions into account. Nevertheless their considerations and actions are necessarily counterfactual: It is a matter of possible scenarios (cf. Hawthorn, 1995 (1991), pp. 15–18). Only the future can answer which scenarios work and which new forms of actions and practices become habitualized as rules for actions. The better an actor anticipates others' reactions and the effects of structure, the fewer unintended consequences are to be expected. In contrast, the more an actor miscalculates others' reactions and/or structural effects, the more likely unintended consequences occur. In the latter case, actors may fail to solve the problems at stake and to reach their goals.

Creativity is therefore a constitutive element of agency: in their everyday practice actors creatively invent new forms of habits and actions. When these new forms of habits and actions turn out to be useful rules for actions, they consolidate to stable structures, that is, rules for action,

which are uncontested and reproduced in routine situations. Creativity is an achievement in specific situations in which the actors are looking for a solution. According to Joas, this understanding of situative and *genuinely creative* action lies at the heart of the pragmatist theory of action; he therefore names pragmatism a theory of situated creativity (Joas, 1992b, p. 197). From a pragmatist point of view, the notion of human creativity impacts on the concept of structure: structure is linked to agency by rules. In particular, it is crucial to distinguish analytically between the conditions of establishing rules and the conditions of using established rules, that is, habitualized practices and in Wendt's term, structure.

In sum, the mutual dependence and the reciprocal constitution of agency and structure is highlighted from a pragmatist point of view, as well. The process of how agency is constrained and rendered possible by structures described above corresponds to Wendt's concept of microstructures. In addition, the structural bias in Wendt's model is diminished without contesting the most important feature of structure, that is, its capacity to produce unintended consequences. Two further points of correspondence deserve to be highlighted. First, as regards agency, Wendt's concept of macrostructures that supervene individual actions but are not reducible to them corresponds to the unreflected and reproduced practices and rules for action. Second, the sequencing of periods during which either agency or structure can be treated as stable ('bracketing') corresponds to the pragmatist distinction between problematic and routine situations: In open or problematic situations, structures must not be treated as given because actors creatively reshape current practices dependent on their experiences and expectations. With regard to Germany's European policy, problematic situations regularly occur during intergovernmental negotiations about the basic rules of integration (for example, during the Intergovernmental Conferences leading to treaty changes<sup>24</sup>). However, problematic situations may also be caused by events outside the EU, for example, the fall of the Iron Curtain and the following wave of immigrants (asylum seekers and ethnic Germans with a legal entitlement to be naturalized) from the East into the EU. In contrast, in determinate situations, implicit practices and forms of habits and actions, that is, rules for action, are crucial. Each rule for action was in turn invented in a problematic situation. Through repeated use, they have become habitualized and consolidated as a structure. Therefore, in determinate situations, because agency merely reproduces given habits, structure can be treated as given. With regard to Germany's European policy,

determinate situations can be found during periods during which routine issues are treated within an established framework.

The pragmatist theory of action assumes creative and reflexive actors which may change the given structures, that is, to supplement, to replace, or to abolish them. Due to the creativity of human action, pragmatists do not expect regularities in social interaction in a strict sense. These pragmatist extensions of an interactionist approach to foreign policy analysis indicate that the empirical reconstruction of specific problematic situations as well as their 'solution' (that is, a new level of development of the co-constitution of agent and structure/environment) is crucial for rendering the 'theoretical' solution of the ASP relevant also to empirical analysis. Thus, the 'co-constitutive' development or change of certain actors and certain structures on the basis of a certain horizon of possibilities can only be traced in empirical analysis (cf. Hawthorn, 1995 (1991)).

## **The interactionist framework of analysis**

### **Integrating moderate structurationism and the pragmatist perspective**

A moderate-structurationist and a pragmatist approach are not (as some underlying epistemological differences may suggest) mutually exclusive but complementary. Taken together, they provide a framework suited to analyse the interplay between German policy and European structures of governance and, as a result, changes in Germany's EU policy. In this section, we will discuss how moderate-structurationist and pragmatist concepts can be integrated and utilized for the study of German foreign policy in Europe. It must be noted, however, that an analytical perspective as developed and used in this book does not lend itself to full-fledged explanatory models of foreign policy or foreign policy change. Thus, the goal of this section is not to develop such a model but to formulate an analytical perspective that will often help to better capture and understand gradual foreign policy change than conventional foreign policy analysis. At the heart of such a perspective is the combination of a moderate-structurationist understanding of agency–structure interplay within the EU with a pragmatist understanding of agency. Based on this combination, we will sketch out the analytical concepts that will guide the empirical analyses. First, we will utilize the concept of bracketing for analyzing Germany's EU policy. Second, this will lead to a distinction of different types of effects of foreign policy behaviour. Finally, it will become clear that this interactionist perspective implies an understanding of foreign

policy change that differs from the one that is prevalent in most studies – and that, as we will maintain, is more nuanced and often more adequate when analyzing foreign policy.

### *Summits, hills and valleys*

As noted above, from the perspective of a moderate structurationism, there is no need to regard both agents and structures as constantly co-constituting and co-determining each other all the time. Rather, at some times structures may be viewed as relatively stable. Then, we will mainly be interested in how actors are coping with structural pressures and incentives. At other times, for instance at EU summits or at Intergovernmental Conferences, it is the rules and resources, that is, the structures of European governance, that are being renegotiated. In these moments, we may treat Germany's foreign policy identity and possibly even concrete preferences as given. As explained earlier, this technique is called 'bracketing'.

So how do we decide when to bracket what? The answer to this question can only be given on a case-by-case basis, since to a large extent it is an empirical question as to when agency and structure are more or less stable in a certain policy field. Yet, when analyzing the interplay between German policy and European structures of governance, we can distinguish between periods during which a focus on German agency seems warranted while the structures of European governance are bracketed, and periods during which agency is bracketed in order to focus on the impact of governance structures on the interests and identity of Germany. This distinction fits what Thomas Christiansen and Knud Erik Jørgensen (1999) have called 'summits' and 'valleys' in the process of European integration. 'Summits' refer to periods during which European structures of governance are malleable and entrepreneurial action by EU member states seems promising. 'Summits' will usually be brief periods or moments – often they will be actual EU summits, although not every political summit must be a 'summit' in theoretical terms, and vice versa. In contrast to summits, 'valleys' refer to periods during which new rules of European governance are put into practice. It is important to note that, during valleys, member states do not simply implement rules they have agreed on before. As any agreement remains necessarily incomplete, mere implementation is not possible because competing interpretations about the meaning of rules have to be sorted out. As the pragmatist theory of action reminds us, what might appear as 'mere implementation' is a constant endeavour to creatively cope with a changing environment. Compared to 'summits', however, there is little entrepreneurial action

during these periods. As opposed to the brief ‘summits’, ‘valleys’ will typically cover a longer range of time during which actors adapt to the new structures and new modes of behaviour may be routinized.

What counts as a summit always depends on the issue area under study. Because of their broad agenda, however, the Intergovernmental Conferences on treaty reform usually qualify as a summit. The treaties, however, usually provide only for the most basic rules governing an issue area. More specific rules are frequently agreed on among the heads of state or government on the occasion of European Council meetings.

Next to summits as points of high malleability and valleys as phases of low malleability of European structures, we will introduce a third category, denoting points in European governance, when at least some European structures may be changed, but in a less fundamental way than is the case for summits. In accordance with the summit–valley metaphor, these points shall be called ‘hills’. The differentiation between summits and hills is not a systematic one, such as the one between summits and hills, on the one hand, and valleys, on the other. It is, however, a useful differentiation, since not every moment of structural malleability is one where European structures may be fundamentally overhauled. Our conceptual remarks about summits, hills and valleys are summarized in Table 1.1.

*Intended and unintended consequences of foreign policy*

Sequentializing Germany’s European foreign policy by means of bracketing is only the first step, however. A central goal of our analysis is to better grasp the complex agent–structure interplay over a longer period of time. For instance, German policy at summit one may contribute to altering European structures, thus indirectly impacting on structural pressures on Germany during following valleys and on Germany’s position before and at summit two. In the empirical analyses, special attention will be paid to such indirect effects that German policy may have on Germany in later periods of time. Admittedly, such

*Table 1.1* Summits, hills and valleys

	<i>Summit</i>	<i>Hill</i>	<i>Valley</i>
Malleability of European structures	High	Some	Low [→bracket]
EU impact on foreign policy (identity)	Weak [→bracket]	Weak [→bracket]	Strong

agent–structure–agent interplay is not the only type of effect that may be observed in this respect. In the context of a study focusing on European integration, it might be even more interesting to look at instances of structure–agent–structure interplay. Since we are studying German (European) foreign policy, however, we will primarily if not exclusively, be concerned with indirect effects of German foreign policy.

The distinction between summits and valleys helps to trace the interplay between German policy and European governance. Moreover, this analytical framework helps to identify changes in Germany's policy and identity as regards European integration. Because our framework of analysis traces the impact of government policy on European structures of government as well as the influence of these structures on later government policy, the framework helps to identify the extent to which consequences of earlier policies have indeed been intended at the time of their initiation. As historical institutionalism reminds us, unintended consequences occur, because governments may have shorter time horizons than supranational actors to whom they have delegated competencies, because supranational actors may pursue own preferences distinct from their 'principals' and because government preferences may change over time (cf. Pierson, 1998). Unintended consequences are of particular interest for the study of German EU policy because Germany has had a huge impact on the initiation of policies (including the Stability and Growth Pact, asylum and refugee policy and security and defence policy). The concept of unintended consequences helps us to avoid interpreting policy change as either a reaction to external developments or a deliberate change of strategy (see discussion above).

Indirect consequences of foreign policy need not be unintended, however. Two remarks must be made in this respect. First, actors may in some cases deliberately utilize agent–structure interplay to further their goals. Second, what has been called 'unintended consequences' may be further differentiated: consequences may be unintended but anticipated, or they may be unintended *and* unanticipated (cf. Martin and Simmons, 1998, pp. 749–59). In the first case, the effect is not what the actor was aiming at when pursuing a certain foreign policy, but it is an effect that was expected and has therefore been taken into account. In contrast, unanticipated consequences were not foreseen by the actor. Thus, within an interactionist framework of analysis, we must pay attention to three different kinds of indirect effects of foreign policy: intended effects, unintended but anticipated effects and unanticipated effects.



*The interactionist understanding of 'identity'*

German policy is, of course, most visible during summits when the structures of European governance are malleable and the German government may pull its weight to establish new rules and modify or abandon others. A comparison of government action during various summits therefore helps to identify changes in German policy since the end of the Cold War and unification. Such a comparison of government action during various summits, however, only highlights policy changes in a particular issue area, that is, changes in the definition of German interests and in the way these interests are pursued in a particular issue area.

According to Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein (1996, p. 59), the concept of 'identity' functions as a crucial link between environmental structures and interests. The term ... refers to the images of individuality and distinctiveness ("selfhood") held and projected by an actor and formed (and modified over time) through relations with significant "others".<sup>25</sup> Thus, 'identity' is conceived of as a relational concept according to which 'identity' influences policy towards others and, at the same time, is influenced by them. Notwithstanding this relational *concept* of identity in constructivist theory, many constructivist analyses of German foreign policy have treated policies as a function of national identity or political culture, but have ignored the possible indirect impact of German policy, via agent-structure-agent interplay, on German identity and therefore have tended to downplay actual changes in Germany's identity.<sup>25</sup>

In our case studies, we aim to take the relational character of identity seriously and, with the help of our interactionist framework of analysis, to highlight the impact not only of Germany's European identity on its policy towards the EU but also of a changing EU and concomitant changes in German policies on the very identity of Germany. Thus, we treat the 'European Union', that is, the Western European states as well as the supranational institutions, as the 'significant other' of Germany.

The pragmatist theory of action in particular helps to treat identity not only as a source of action, but also as a result of action. Building on the pragmatist notion of beliefs as rules for action, 'identity' refers to generalized rules for actions that result from issue-specific beliefs and policies. Thus, we do not treat an actor's identity as ontologically different from and prior to an actor's interests. Rather, we understand an actor's identity to be directly linked to its many interests. Though an actor's identity will certainly be more stable than an actor's policies in an issue area, it is therefore still subject to change. In contrast to policy

changes, however, identity changes cannot be observed directly in an actor's behaviour. They can be disclosed in an interpretive process, however, as gradual shifts in what actors take for granted in specific situations, as transformation of an actor's routinized self-perception.

Germany's European identity, in this respect, refers to its general self-image as a member of the European Union. Whereas the interplay of German policy and European structures of governance in particular issue areas may be crucial in shaping this self-image, it is clear that Germany's European identity should not be reduced to any particular issue area. As the case studies in this volume will demonstrate, asylum/refugees and security/defence have indeed had a tremendous impact on the image that Germany has had of itself and the EU. However, Germany's struggle with the Commission and other member states over fiscal discipline and the rules of the Stability and Growth Pact have been equally important in shaping Germany's European identity. As a consequence, changes in policy will be the focus of the two chapters on asylum/refugees and security/defence, whereas changes in identity will be discussed in more detail (and taking into account further issue areas) in the concluding chapter.

### **The selection of cases for empirical investigation**

The value-added of our interactionist framework of analysis will be demonstrated in two detailed case studies of German EU policy, namely German policy in the realm of European asylum and refugee policy (Chapter 2) and in the issue area of European security and defence policy (Chapter 3). These two issue areas are particularly suited for studying the interplay between German policy and European structures of governance for several reasons. First, the structures governing both issue areas have been highly malleable in the period under study. Though proposals for a European defence policy in particular have had a long history, both issue areas have (re-)entered the European agenda only with the end of the East–West conflict. The demise of the Warsaw Pact, the emergence of civil war in the former Yugoslavia and rising numbers of refugees entering the Union challenged established rules of governance in these issue areas, such as the military engagement of the US in Europe and the national responsibility for handling refugees and asylum-seekers. Second, the intergovernmental nature of the second (security and defence) and third (justice and home affairs) 'pillars' has facilitated member-state initiatives. The limited powers of the European Commission, the European Court of Justice and the European Parliament in these two pillars have left the control over the agenda and

the course of policy largely to the member states. Third, Germany has been a crucial player in influencing the course of these policies. Due to its size, population, GDP, and so on, Germany has always been an important player in EU politics. Moreover, Germany has been particularly affected by the developments in security/defence and asylum/refugees. As regards security and defence, its policy had been tied to NATO to a particularly high degree. Lacking national command structures, the Bundeswehr had been a *Bündnisarmee*, that is, an army heavily relying on allies' resources. For a number of reasons, moreover, Germany has attracted particularly high numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, there have been large windows of opportunity as well as strong incentives for entrepreneurial action by the German government.

## Notes

- 1 The distinction between determinism and voluntarism in (German) foreign policy analysis is not restricted to foreign policy in the European Union. For instance, studies on Germany's policy concerning out-of-area military operations since 1990 have often tended to present it either as a reluctant adaptation to a changing international environment or as a calculated re-militarization. For a more detailed discussion and an interactionist analysis of German out-of-area policy, see Baumann and Hellmann (2001).
- 2 Liberals who expect foreign policy to reflect the pattern of domestic interests and their institutional mediation (cf. Moravcsik, 1997, and the literature on the democratic peace) have paid little attention to German foreign policy after unification (but see Freund and Rittberger, 2001; Anderson, 1999).
- 3 Though Wendt has referred to his work as 'positivist', the appropriateness of this claim has been challenged (Guzzini and Leander, 2001).
- 4 This is not to say that metatheory must or should be immediately applicable to empirical research. In fact, both Wendt and Dessler emphasize the differences between metatheory and theory. At the same time, however, metatheoretical innovations should enrich our *possibilities* to do empirical research. Otherwise, not much would be gained.
- 5 This is the terminology used by Wendt (1987, p. 339), Schimmelfennig (1999) and Wight (1999, p. 113). Carlsnaes (1992), drawing on political theory, uses individualism/collectivism instead.
- 6 According to Wendt, there are 'two truisms about social life which underlie most social scientific inquiry: (1) human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and (2) society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors' (Wendt, 1987, pp. 337–8; cf. also Dessler, 1989, p. 443).
- 7 This distinction has been made by Friedman and Starr (1997) and Wight (1999, p. 125). Wendt only mentions an ontological and an epistemological dimension, though he distinguishes 'two epistemological issues' (Wendt, 1987, p. 339), that is, the choice of form of explanation (interpretivist or

mechanically causal) and the relative importance of agent-explanations and structure-explanations in social theory.

- 8 According to Wendt, 'structuration theory should be evaluated on pragmatic grounds, on its ability to solve problems in existing substantive theories, to suggest new areas of theoretical and empirical inquiry, or to integrate different bodies of research' (Wendt, 1987, p. 369).
- 9 Margret Archer has referred to such an approach as 'morphogenesis' (cf. Archer, 1982). While we agree with the underlying thrust of her argument on the necessity to systematically examine the co-constitution of actors and structures as *historical processes over time* (see also Carlsnaes, 1992, pp. 258–60) – we prefer the term 'moderate structurationism' because, in our view, the term 'morphogenesis' overemphasizes the organical and, most importantly, teleological nature of a system's development. It is worth quoting at length both Wendt and Dessler who have envisioned such a 'moderate structurationism' open for causal analysis. According to Wendt, 'neither agents nor ... structures which constitute them should be treated always as given or primitive units; theories of international relations should be capable of providing explanatory leverage on both. This does not mean that a particular research endeavor cannot take some things as primitive: scientific research has to start somewhere. It does mean, however, that what is primitive in one research endeavor must be at least potentially problematic (or function as a "dependent variable") in another – that scientists need theories of primitive units' (Wendt, 1987, p. 349). In a similar fashion, Dessler holds that '[n]ot every specific explanation, of course, need give a complete analysis of both agential powers and the conditions in which those powers are deployed. But the explanations must make room for such completion; or, more accurately, the conceptual scheme or framework underpinning specific explanations must recognize and make appropriate allowance for the workings of both agency and structure, even if each specific explanation does not exploit this allowance' (Dessler, 1989, pp. 443–4).
- 10 With reference to the dominance of rational choice in International Relations and the concomitant exogenization of actors' interests and identities, some authors hold that it has not been the concept of agency but the concept of structure which has been neglected (cf. Finnemore, 1996, p. 25; Christiansen, 1998, p. 111).
- 11 The distinction between 'regulative' and 'constitutive' effects of rules goes back to Rawls (1955). Some scholars regard regulative and constitutive norms as different categories. In their view, constitutive norms do not generate any specific expectations of behaviour because their function lies in the constitution of actors' identities, not in the regulation of their behaviour (for example, Klotz, 1995). Others hold that rules are rules though the relative importance of their regulative and constitutive dimension may vary (Onuf, 1998).
- 12 In *Social Theory of International Politics*, Wendt has introduced a third concept of structure containing 'three elements: material conditions, interests, and ideas' (Wendt, 1999, p. 139). However, the relationship of this concept to the other concepts mentioned above is unclear (cf. Wight, 1999).
- 13 This is, of course, the famous definition of 'norms' but it also applies to rules insofar as rules are not a qualitatively different concept but differ from norms by being more specific prescriptions for action.

- 14 Porpora has claimed the incompatibility between a concept of structure as a set of internal and external relationships and a concept of structure as a set of rules and resources (Porpora, 1989, pp. 201–2). This claim, however, seems to rest on a reading of Giddens according to which rules are always at least tacitly acknowledged. Giddens, however, emphasizes the importance of ‘unacknowledged conditions of action’ in his theory of structuration (cf., for example, Giddens, 1984, p. 8). Moreover, Porpora accuses Giddens of underestimating the material aspects of structure (including their unequal distribution). In our view, however, Giddens’ concept of ‘allocative resources’ (cf. Giddens, 1984, pp. 258–60), referring to those material capabilities that generate power, seems to capture this aspect well.
- 15 Wendt does not present them as ideal types on a continuum but as qualitatively distinct structures. However, as with the constitutive and causal effects of norms, it can be argued that ‘structures are structures’ though they vary in their balance of reducibility and supervenience to individual actions (cf. below).
- 16 It is a matter of dispute whether the anarchic structure of the international system ‘allows’ states to engage in functional differentiation. Whereas neorealists tend to emphasize that the international structure induces states to be ‘like units’, liberals tend to allow for a higher degree of functional differentiation. Notwithstanding these differences, there is little doubt that there is a huge difference between the degrees of functional differentiation on the level of the international system and on the level of the state.
- 17 In the realm of International Relations such a situation can only be envisioned if a single state attains the position of a hegemon.
- 18 In comparative politics, it is considered to be a feature of modern states that many policy areas are governed by networks, that is, without a single most important actor.
- 19 The example of the neutral state has been introduced to the agency–structure debate by Walter Carlsnaes (1992). Carlsnaes, however, has analysed the co-constitutive relationship between the foreign policies of neutral states and the international regime, the rules of which define ‘neutrality’ and appropriate behaviour of neutral states in the first place.
- 20 For pragmatists there are no classical questions inhibiting further theorizing and action. For example, Wendt’s question whether states are real actors or not just does not matter. For pragmatists it is crucial that states do have observable and perceptible effects for other actors. Besides, for pragmatists truth in itself is not the point. What matters is if a belief is held true and therefore used by the actors: ‘The most that can be maintained is, that we seek for a belief that we shall *think* to be true. But we think each one of our beliefs to be true, and, indeed, it is mere tautology to say so’ (Peirce, 1997 (1877), pp. 13–14; emphasis in the original). For pragmatists, truth is something which proves its utility in the everyday practice (Rescher, 1995, p. 712).
- 21 From the pragmatist point of view, science is not characterized by a specific method but has many similarities to every-day reasoning (cf. Rorty, 1993, p. 29). According to Rorty, scientists use ‘the same banal and obvious methods all of us use in every human activity’ (Rorty, 1982, p. 193). ‘Therefore, the pragmatist method suits all human actions whether it may be every day

problem-solving or scientific research efforts: It is always a process of trial and error' (cf. Rorty, 1989, p. 12).

- 22 In this pragmatist theory of action, ends are usually 'relatively indeterminate and will only be specified in the course of the decision on the means to be used. Reciprocity of ends and means thus implies an interplay between choice of means and specification of goals. The dimension of the means is not neutral vis-à-vis the dimension of the ends. By realizing that we possess certain means we detect ends we were not aware of before. Thus, means do not only specify ends, but they also broaden the scope of possible ends' (Joas, 1992b, p. 227, our translation).
- 23 Intentions refer to a future that we hope to shape as a result of our current thoughts and actions; predictions refer to the likelihood that our intentions will indeed turn out to shape the future. Cognitively we often tend to equate both, but at least 'theoretically' we know that outcomes may differ from outputs and that there may be unintended consequences resulting from our interaction with others.
- 24 Thus, Intergovernmental Conferences can be regarded as institutional settings for new solutions which are considerably induced by problematic situations.
- 25 Again, the development in Germany's policy with regard to out-of-area operations is a good case in point. As two of the authors have argued elsewhere (Baumann and Hellmann, 2001), Germany's road from abstaining from the 1991 Gulf War to deploying combat troops to Kosovo and Afghanistan hints at a profound change of German foreign policy identity rather than a mere adaptation of behaviour while its identity had remained fixed.

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