Embracing one's archrival

A case study on the role of ideas and preferences in the German reunification process

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Abstract

Germany's rise as a European major power has invoked great armed conflicts in the past. After having solved the issue of Germany by splitting it up in 1945, the major powers decided to grant the country sovereignty as a unified state in 1990 once more. This paper analyses what the main reasons and rationale behind the German reunification were for the four victors (France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States) of World War II. A neoliberal instutionalist and social constructivist toolset are used in order to explain how a former archenemy could be granted full sovereignty despite historical motives and diverging interests of participating states. The study finds that although preferences were overall dominant in determining the outcome of the reunification process, the norms of a German right to self-determination and the spreading of democratic values have contributed significantly in the pace and accepting of the outcome.

Keywords: German Unification, Ideas, Preferences, State Succession, Interstate Politics

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1. Introduction

Ever since Germany became a unified state in the 1870s, it has continuously been a threat to the other European major powers. The influence German foreign policy has had on the dynamics within the international structure has led to three great wars involving major powers on the continent. Germany's role in the international system has been illustrated by Kissinger's characterization of it being "too big for Europe, but too small for the world." While being able to outcompete its neighbors on the European continent, it was unable to translate that dominance to the global level as shown in World Wars I and II. It has taken the other European major powers much effort to put a halt to German military expansionism. The French, British and Soviets were able to gain the upper hand through the emergence of alliances among each other and the United States' interference on the European continent. In terms of identity, the Germans have been demonized and seen as a threat to peace by the continental powers since the early 1900s. Foreign policy making by the European countries from World War II onwards has always been rather German-centric. The main question revolved around if and how to embed Germany in the then emerging institutions facilitating European cooperation and integration.

A solution to the question posed regarding reemerging German challenges to the status quo in power relations was found in splitting up the country into four occupied areas, eventually resulting in two Germanys. Nazi-Germany had to surrender unconditionally, giving up its sovereign right to being a self-determined state and entitling the four victors to redefine its political infrastructure. The Soviet-installed government put its efforts in creating a Soviet-friendly Eastern German state, which resulted in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The new country had to give up its Prussian territories beyond the rivers of the Oder and Neisse and shrunk in size (Gunlicks, 2003: 36). The Western states merged their zones into a single Western German state, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1949. The West-German state gained autonomous rule in according with the Paris-Bonn treaties in 1955, which made it an sovereign state in internal and external affairs. The three major powers, however, retained their right to have a say in matters regarding unification.

Half a century later, however, the four victors agreed upon a reunified and sovereign Germany and signed the Two Plus Four treaty in late 1990. This is rather peculiar if we look at early skepticism or outright reluctance among the participating partners. The British Prime Minister at the time, Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013) has openly opposed a single Germany and is often quoted for remarking that "we beat the Germans twice, and now they're back" (der Spiegel, 2009). French policy makers had similar reasons to distrust German unification and feared the potential damage it might inflict to the process of European integration. The Soviet Union had to deal with prestige issues when it had to give up its dominance over the Eastern part of the country. Even the two Germanys had to drop their historical claim of eastern territories and conform to the Oder-Neisse line in order

to get to an agreement in the first place. Why would the international community accept to a unified Germany when it happening would lead to unfavorable political consequences?

Taking these events into consideration, this brings us to the central point of this paper. Its aim is to illustrate what the decisive factors were which enabled German reunification in the first place, despite incentives for the participating parties to put a halt to it. Neglecting one's self-interests seems rather peculiar and puzzling. The research question following the puzzle and the key objective in explaining is formulated as follows:

"Why did the four victors of World War Two agree upon and contributed to the reunification of Germany?"

The outcome is hardly explainable through and at odds with the grand theory of (neo)realism. In a notorious paper put forward by Mearsheimer (1990), the issue of renewed instability on the European continent is touched upon rather vigorously. His main argument involves the emergence of multipolarity and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Although criticized by fellow scholars such as Keohane and Hoffman (1990), it touches upon a peculiarity in European politics: why would the European powers agree to commence a renewed period of potential uncertainty? This is backed up by Waltz's earlier work in which he argued that the more significant powers emerge in the international system, the more unstable it will be when interactions and conflicts of interests occur (Waltz, 1979: 160).

Insights from rationalist and social constructivist approaches will be analyzed in order to determine whether it was material *or* ideational incentives which caused the agreement on a single, reunified Germany. On the one hand, the neoliberal school delves into factors which are mainly material and strategic. The outcome is to be explained through a logic of consequences, and as the right thing to do for the parties involved. The social constructivist school of thought, on the other hand will be used in order to place the reunification in a ideational spectrum of appropriateness, while looking at the spreading of democratic values and ideas of self-determination.

1.1 Scientific Relevance

The case of the German reunification offers insights in the behavior of major power when it comes to the regional balance of power. With such high stakes the outcome is of great importance for each of the players. When looking at the theoretical, rather than historical, literature regarding the German reunification, we must distinguish between literature aimed at explaining internal dynamics (e.g., Seibel, 2011; Preuss, 2011) and external dynamics. As for explaining the reunification process through external dynamics, which is the aim of the paper, Hayes and James (2014) have looked at the

dynamics for Great Britain's policy making through the perspectives of realism, neoliberal institutionalism and social constructivism. The authors argued all schools of thought have additional value as regards explaining the phenomenon, but no school could explain it entirely. Rather than looking at a single case from a Foreign Policy Analysis perspective, this study will focus on its systemic dynamics and on its outcome rather than the decision making processes.

As (neo)realism seems unable to answer the question of German reunification properly, we will get a better understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the competing theories. Neoliberalism in International Relations (IR) involves a heavy reliance on state preferences in order to explain foreign policy behavior due to the accompanying ontology. Interests are given and, contrary to post-positivist thinking, are not constructed by ideas. The neoliberalist school advocates the importance of regimes in giving shape to state preferences. These regimes, defined by Krasner (1983) as consisting of a set of principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures may have been decisive in altering the interests of the four involved powers. Seeing how initial positions of some signing parties were rather reluctant on accepting a German unification, this study will contribute to the scientific body of literature on state preferences and foreign policy behavior.

In contrast with the materialist view, including social constructivism allows checking to what extent the common demonization of Germany as regards its role in the international system has had its effect in determining outcomes. The role of norms in such an eminent issue makes the case interesting. Recent literature in the realm of international relations has been focusing a great deal on norms. Furthermore, one would expect that, given the zeitgeist of the late 1980s in which democratic values and the right to self-determination are praised, states which adopt this zeitgeist applaud the forming of political communities which fit their population. Such states are willing to suffer minor material losses in order to reaffirm previous values. One can wonder, however, whether this still holds when the stakes rise and the future opens up for potential threats. The German reunification is such of such strategic importance that it allows checking whether norms are actually internalized or just fancy wording. Is it really norms all the way down, or are they put aside when they form an obstacle for survival? This crucial case will show us the tension between norms and interests. Shedding light on the processes and dynamics which led to the Two Plus Four treaty can provide insights on what causes states to act (if they do so at all) against their initial interests.

1.2 Societal Relevance

The findings of this study will help understand processes of state formation and state secession, recurring themes in international politics, to a deeper extent. Whenever political communities seek a right to self-determination and have a claim on occupied territories the internal dynamics are usually

the main focus of media sources and the public debate. The international context and overall external dynamics are often underemphasized by such sources and are studied in a more detailed fashion here. This study will show what states take into account and how they behave when geopolitical changes occur due to state secession and new state formation. By understanding to what extent norms actually matter when determining state behavior we get insights in whether fair wording has any effects or whether it is interests all the way down. Drawing upon the observations, the efforts of, for instance, international organizations or other interest groups that try to influence national policies on the basis of norms can be judged on their effectiveness. Moreover, citizens get a better understanding of whether policymakers will actually comply with norms on the international level or whether it will be a matter of cost-benefit analyses in the end. The findings may have implications on diplomatic affairs, as those engaged in foreign policy are interested in getting results. If one of the both factors, ideational or material, is of bigger influence or is only applicable in certain cases, this will have consequences for the profession. By knowing to what extent fair wording has a significant effect or whether states can only be persuaded by interest-driven incentives diplomats will be more effective in determining how to approach issues in foreign policy.

1.3 Structure paper

This paper and its main argument will be built upon six different chapters. This section will shortly show what can be expected from each different chapter and in what way it contributes to getting a coherent answer in answering the research question. The first part is this introduction, in which the puzzle is introduced and the scientific and societal relevance are presented. What follows is the theoretical chapter, which will elaborate to a large extent on the scientific debates and their background regarding the topic of interest. In the theoretical chapter, hypotheses will be presented which will be tested in the empirical analyses. In the methodological chapter the variables we introduced in the theoretical hypotheses are made measurable. Furthermore, the case will be positioned within the spectrum of potential cases, while by doing so illustrating its theoretical value. In the empirical analysis, the case will be looked at in such a way that answers to the formulated hypotheses can be given. Finally, the last chapter will evaluate the study and provides a conclusive answer to the research question posited, based on the findings in the empirical section. Both schools of thought will be judged on their explanatory power in this case while generalizing findings to a broader perspective. These findings will once again be located in the spectrum of scientific debates on the issues, while the research performed will be evaluated critically.

2. Theory

In order to make sense of a phenomenon, event or particularity, theories are applied to get a better understanding of the world. Theories help to make sense of the world, defining the observed as "being a case of" and by doing so placing it in a larger context. Theoretical frameworks can differ in views on ontology, which have metaphysical foundations, resulting in different ways of explaining and observing. In this paper, the main question is whether interests are endogenous, constructed through identities and social values, or exogenous, given. The realm of IR has known several great debates on all related issues, resulting in different schools of thought. In the end, there are two main distinctions between the major branches within IR scholarship: the rational-choice based theorists and the constructivist based theorists.

The chapter will first introduce the great debates in order to locate our specific puzzle in the domain of International Relations. Then, the school of rationalism and its theoretical assumptions will be presented. Neoliberalism will be touched upon more in detail and from there, two hypotheses will be formulated which are in line with the theoretical insights. The subsection will be concluded with a drawback section in which criticism on rationalist theories will be presented. The school of social constructivism will be treated in a same fashion. First, the background of social constructivism will be presented. Some key concepts will be touched upon which help to make sense of the case. From there, two hypotheses will be formulated which are in line with the social constructivist school of thought. This particular subsection will also be concluded with a drawback section in which its flaws and weaknesses will be looked at.

2.1 The great Debates

How scientists perceive the world to hang together is what structures their research and determines the significance of that which they observe. An understanding of the ontological underpinnings of different theoretical schools is therefore needed to make sense of the causal mechanisms constructed and conclusions reached. Although it being a rather philosophical one, the question of whether there is actually a world out there is where the main schools of thought within IR differ in principle. In the realm of IR scholarship there have been multiple great debates of which the participating parties were typical in their own respects and communicated and contested each other on certain specific points. Views on ontology and epistemology changed with changing perspectives as regards the overall perception on what the IR-discipline should take into account. In order to understand to what theoretical background this study has its roots and contributes to, we need to delve deeper in what the fundamentals of the debates in the IR discipline have been.

2.1.1 The First Debate

In the first debate, idealist scholars on the one hand and realist scholars on the other, debated how social science should be conducted. Typical for the first debate is its perception on what a social science should be in the first place. The idealists have a normative aim in cleansing the world of the evil which is war. The idealist view on the international society is what gave rise to the discipline of International Relations in the first place. Rather than being an explanatory tool for international interaction, seeing it as given, it had a normative aspect which had the aim of directly applying it to reality in order to better the world. The primary source of international conflicts was, according to idealists, ignorance and a lack of understanding (Kurki & Wight, 2013). Policy makers such as Woodrow Wilson and his post-World War I visions on interstate politics fit well within this school of thought. This is view on IR is contested after World War II by the so called *realist* scholars, who opposed the unsystematic and value-driven idealist approach to IR. Big names are Carr and Morgenthau, who pointed out the difference between *ought* (normative) and *is* (positive) in science. Although claiming to be more scientific than the idealist and seeking objective mechanisms steering international politics, neither of the big names adhered to or sought Iron Laws in international relations (ibid.). Considering how much influence Morgenthau and Carr's perceptions still have in contemporary IR theories, it is generally accepted that the realists has gained a dominant position after the first debate (Kurki & Wight, 2013). Ideational perspectives, however, kept on emerging time and again certain fields in IR theory. In the European integration theories, for instance, Mitrany argued in his "*The Functional Approach in Historical Perspective"* that political cooperation is a necessity in order to tackle technical issues, which then initiates the spill-over mechanism (Mitrany, 1971: 541). Furthermore, Mitrany sees room, through spill-over dynamics, to eventually end up in an international peace system (ibid.: 543). It would therefore be incorrect to argue that idealism has entirely been removed from IR theory building. To illustrate this point even further, Keohane (2005: 8) has argued these idealist inspired functionalist approaches such as Mitrany's have much to offer IR students, albeit through a sometimes too optimistic perspective. Further on in his work, he follows Simon (1978), which is in line with Mitrany's preaching, that "institutions are functional if reasonable men might create and maintain them in order to meet social needs or achieve social goals." (Keohane, 2005: 80). We can therefore see that these idealist insights are still implemented in some of the greater works in IR, and although the main direction of the discipline has been in line with realist thinking, idealism has its roots in some of the greater works in IR.

2.1.2 The Second Debate

The second debate saw behaviorist scholars pitted against historicist, or interpretivist, scholars in a twist about methodological issues. The behaviorists adhered to a more positivist, the then dominating principle in the philosophy of science, approach to International Relations. The

historicists maintained an interpretative approach, focusing on context and understanding rather than explaining. These different views on how to conduct science can be traced back to the difference in both schools' ontology. Behaviorists see reality as being "out there" and observable regardless of human interpretation. Preferences are exogenously given and can therefore both be observed, calculated and used to draw expectations for the future. The behaviorists could therefore also formulate explanatory frameworks with causal mechanisms. In contrast, as the historicists emphasize that the world is partly a human creation, interpretation is required to give meaning to the world and its mechanisms. Preferences are developed through discourse and can be internalized. This leads to the method of understanding rather than explaining, or *verstehen* over *erklären*, in IR. Kurki and Wight (2013) argue the main success of the positivist views in this debate was due to the tendency in all science to adhere to such an epistemological framework. The behaviorists opposed the more historicist and interpretative form of international relations, as it could not offer any "real", observable measurements. The influx of all types of methodological analyses which could be used to test theories contributed to a greater diversity in the research performed. This new type of conducting research, however, provided mostly quantitative results which aimed at observing the world and by doing so, finding causal mechanisms. As International Relations was still perceived as a social science by many, this natural science-like approach was criticized internally. Hedley Bull's writings, for instance, which were critical for the foundation of the English school in International Relations, were a direct result of discontent as regards the direction the discipline was heading (Kurki & Wight, 2013; Dunne, 2013).

2.1.3 The interparadigm debate

Inspired by Kuhn's (1962) main findings on the dynamics of paradigms and its implications for scientific research, the debated shifted yet in another direction. Kuhn argued in his work that during times there was overall consent as regards what the right subject of a discipline was, progress within that discipline in terms of scientific progress prospered. It is during these periods when conducting "normal" science that knowledge is gathered and the discipline moves forward. Disputes among scholars regarding what the ontology and epistemology of the discipline exactly ought to be is what is called an interparadigm debate. IR scholars engaged in such a debate during the seventies: the third debate. In this debate, three major schools of thought, realism, Marxism and pluralism contested each other for paradigmatic dominance (Kurki & Wight, 2013). Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* and Keohane's *After Hegemony* illustrate the third debate well, as well as Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics,* written much later. Especially due to writings of the latter, social constructivism gained prominence in the field of IR, especially in Europe. All three

scholars did not simply address one other paradigm in their work, but engaged with all of them to the end of legitimizing their own perspective.

A prime illustration of how this debate is conducted is when John Mearsheimer wrote his article *The False Promise of International Institutions* in the Journal *international security*, volume 19(3) in 1995, and in its next volume, the journal accepted an article by Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin in its 20th volume, named *The Promise of institutionalist theory*, which basically reacted on everything Mearsheimer had written before. And like the books of Waltz and Keohane, both articles also criticize reflectivist approaches.

2.1.4 The fourth debate

The most contemporary debate in IR theory is about the discipline's epistemology. Due to insights from schools emphasizing the social construction of reality, an increasing amount of scholars emphasized the role of ideas, norms and identity. Other scholars tend to stick with the materialist assumptions. These different views on how the world works has implications as regards how science should be conducted. Materialists argue that the causal mechanisms in the world can be uncovered and can explain the world by studying those very mechanisms. The so called reflectivists argue that one cannot make sense of the world solely through material factors, and argue the world is constructed through acts performed by people. Ideas, therefore, need to be taken into account in order to make sense of the world. These two parties can therefore be distinguished on an epistemological basis, hinting back at the second debate. Following Weber's distinction, materialist scholars focus on explaining, *erklären,* whereas reflectivists emphasize the importance of understanding, *verstehen,* in a social science.

The materialists' emphasis on explaining implies following the positivist scientific approach, which sees the world's relevant aspects as those which can be observed through human senses. If it cannot be measure, one cannot say anything meaningful about it. Interests are "out there", and preferences can be measured. This is directly linked to the way of testing in natural science-like approaches, which is done through the nomological-deductive model, which revolves around the strict testing of theories. The reflectivists' view on epistemology through the concept of *verstehen* implies a postpositivist understanding on science. Rather than looking at that which can be bluntly observed, reflectivists often apply interpretation as a tool to make sense of the world. They go beyond that which can only be observed, and try to place acts in a cultural background, one full of meaning and social factors. Preferences therefore are not simply given but endogenously constructed through norms and meaning.

2.2 Ideas versus Interests

The issue of whether interests or ideas dominate the terrain of International Relations can be seen as a golden thread running through the different debates. It started with the idealists versus the realists, with the question if normative factors can play a role in the realm of IR. It was continued in the scientific debates, as a natural science-like approach would filter out all ideational factors whereas a social science-like approach would consider those factors of significant importance. The final, ongoing, debate which saw reflectivists and utilitarianists against each other touches upon this even further, with the reflectivists advocating a social constructive approach whereas the utilitarianists see rationalism as the leading logic in IR. What follows will be an overview of the key elements of both these perspectives.

2.2.1 Rationalism

The first of the schools dominating the current debates in International Relations is the materialist school. The so called rational-choice based theorists apply a materialist, or neo-utilitarian, ontology in their works. This way of making sense of the world, originates from the first debate in International Relations discipline, and emerged through a U.S. postwar aversion towards idealism. The thinkers mostly disregard any constructive effects ideas, norms and identities might possess (Ruggie, 1998). In Morgenthau's six principles (2006), positing the foundations of contemporary materialist IR theory building, an effort was made to convert political science into a researchable discipline, rather than involving an objective to reach normative ends. With power being its main currency and the statesman its actor, international politics could be analyzed to a scientific extent. It involves a world which is given, "out there" and observable. This ontology involves underlying logics and causal mechanisms that always apply to events on the surface and can be analyzed in order to make sense of the world. Rational Choice theorists often, sometimes implicitly, apply Occam's Razor in their theory crafting, valuing parsimony. The key principle here is that when there are several competing hypotheses that explain phenomena, the one with the fewest assumptions is to be favored over the others. When taking into account all possible variables to explain a certain given in reality, one might be shooting in a general direction without actually hitting something. Even when that something is struck, the scholar may not be aware what the explanatory variable is (Waltz, 1979: 16). Rational Choice scholars therefore argue that the less assumptions required explaining phenomena the more powerful a theory is.

The rational-choice based schools of thought have their roots in utilitarianism, which emerged in the 19th century. Key to the way of thinking is its cost-benefit analyses in order to make a rational decision on certain issues. Whenever the topic of ideational factors in studies originating

from these IR scholars emerge, they are always seen as instrumental and used strategically for material gains. Preferences determine the construction of interests, and securing those interests are an absolute end. Utilitarians assume a certain sameness among states, causing them to act identically when facing equal circumstances (Fierke, 2013). Waltz (1979) has argued states are units which are alike, and are so to a considerable extent. Behavior by states is often duplicated by other states and given the international structure will behave in a similar way. This can be linked to the overstretching assumption of Utilitarian thinkers that actors follow a logic of consequences, rather than a logic of appropriateness. When the logic of consequences holds, states are considered to be rational actors and have a complete overview of their options while being able to rank them accordingly. In order to determine what option to pick in given situations, states formulate a strategy which gives an overview what to do in any given situation.

2.2.2 Utilitarianism/neoliberalism

As mentioned earlier, the school of neoliberal institutionalism follows the utilitarianist view on the way the world hangs together. Together with neorealism the school forms the major theoretical branches of the utilitarian framework. Both schools are inspired by Kenneth Waltz's (1979) systemic approach of international relations, and argue that due to the anarchic traits of the system uncertainty is central in international politics. Both neorealism and neoliberalism start from consequentialist assumptions and have taken insights from the economic schools. Epistemologically, the schools apply the concept of methodological individualism, which analyses big institutions as if they were single individuals acting. By seeing states as unitary and rational actors, materialist scholars can interpret events using game theory. Potential outcomes through strategies played by all participating players are analyzed in order to understand the rationale of states. It shows when there are potentially dominated options resulting in obvious outcomes and when outcomes are unclear. In IR, choices are mainly displayed as being either cooperative in nature or defective in nature. These choices will be made in order to maximize expected utility.

States are able to formulate their best strategies, as they are argued to be rational entities. Being a rational actor involves two main assumptions: the actor has a full overview of all possible strategies to play and the actor is able to rank them in according to their preferences. The first one assumes a completeness of information. All the possible strategies which can be played, in combination with the responses it may yield from the other actors, should be considered before deciding on a strategy. When all possible strategies are then presented, the actor should be able to rank them in order of preferences. This implies that when A is to be preferred over B and B is preferred over C, A will be preferred over C. Furthermore, states are able to interpret the international political environment in such a way that they perceive threats, opportunities and

constraints. These threats, opportunities and constraints will alter the original utility functions in accordance with their magnitude. When interaction with other actors occurs, states will run a total cost/benefit analysis in order to get a grasp of every expected gain or loss in utility for every given action. The strategy which yields the highest expected utility is then opted for.

So what is this utility in International Relations? Consequentialist scholars take material factors, rather than ideas, as the ultimate ends in International Relations. Traditional liberals argue interests are a calculation from preferences on the domestic level that states aim to secure in international politics (Moravcsik, 2008). At the same time, the instruments which are used to interact with other players in the system are material. These material factors are then used to secure, or increase the possibility of achieving certain, outcomes. Speech acts and fair wording are argued to play no role in interaction between states. These interests in the domain of International Relations are related to security and the survival of states. Security is measured through counting the so called Carrots and Sticks. Power is a combination of the size of territory, population, weaponry, raw resources and capital (Keohane, 2005). The importance of these factors, however, depends on the given interests of states. A situation of harmony, for instance, requires no inter-state interaction, as the dominant behavior for each player, given its interests, is cooperative by default (Keohane, 2005: 51). Coordination is required when interests conflict and the final outcome is uncertain. It is through expectations on the other players' behavior that strategies are formulated. Rational actors will then play the strategy, cooperate or defect, which yields them the highest expected utility.

The key difference between neorealists and neoliberals is their perception on future interaction (Baldwin 1993). Neorealists see states as the only relevant actors, and due to the anarchic nature of the international system there is no meaning for trust, certainty or norms. This will result in states to act as if they were in a self-help system, grasping whatever potential gain possible. The game of international politics has a zero-sum outcome, as the total lack of trust will lead to a situation where one's benefit means one's other demise. Interaction is about relative gains and relative losses. Long term cooperation is therefore seen as highly unlikely, unless a continuing process of balancing power relations forces states to cooperate extensive periods in time. The outcome of rational strategic interaction therefore often ends in a prisoner's dilemma with a suboptimal outcome. Neoliberals, however, see the potential for long-term cooperation. Even though state behavior may be incentivized by egoistic motives, cooperation is possible by following a consequentialist logic. Through the emergence of international institutions and more abstractly speaking, international regimes, it may be in a state's best interest to cooperate rather than defect on other states. These regimes may be defined as a set of "principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actor expectations converge […]" (Keohane, 2005: 57) Through the iteration of strategic interaction, the playing of cooperative strategies is encouraged. Reciprocity

becomes a key method in order to secure cooperative interaction in the long-term. Compared to a situation of mutual, repeated defection, a small investment can lead to long-term cooperation, overcoming prisoner's dilemmas. Neoliberals argue the game can be altered to improve outcomes. Long term cooperation only holds when the number of encounters is infinite, as a finite number of encounters will remove incentives to cooperate in the final interaction game. Fully rational actors will even understand they will be cheated upon in the last interaction, and will therefore cheat in the game preceding the final one. An endless chain of defections will emerge resulting in non-cooperative behavior from the start (Axelrod, 1980).

Neoliberals argue, like all utilitarian IR scholars, that states are rational actors. States are capable of identifying their interests and are capable to sort them by their preferences. Actors involved in interstate interaction will perceive their interests in the material domain only and act in accordance with their own self-interest. In order to make sense of the following the hypotheses linked to the school of neoliberalism, these assumptions have to be kept in mind.

2.2.2.1 Pareto optimality

As mentioned, the neoliberal school sees room for absolute gains rather than actors being restricted to decisions made to secure relative gains, due to iteration and rational reciprocity. This opens up the option to check for Pareto optimality (PO) in our study. Pareto optimality is a concept originating from the economic schools of thought. Its key logic is that through trading of goods, given original endowments, all participating players can benefit. Both players can increase their total amount of utility by exchanging goods, due to the law of diminishing returns to scale. Up to a certain point, this move towards mutual benefit can be sustained. At a given point, however, neither party can benefit more without hurting the other participating party. When this outer boundary is reached, we speak of a situation of Pareto optimality (Barr, 2012: 45). From that point onwards, every increase in utility for either party will necessarily result in a loss in utility for the other. As a consequence, it is often argued to be the most optimal point of trading or interaction. In a stricter Game-theoretical definition formulated by Sean Ingham (2016): "[…] a state of affairs *x* is said to be Pareto-inefficient (or suboptimal) if and only if there is some state of affairs *y* such that no one strictly prefers *x* to *y* and at least one person strictly prefers *y* to *x*."

The value of the concept of Pareto optimality is illustrated by issues such as the Prisoner's dilemma. Through interactions, economic or political entities may have the tendency to, while operating rationally, end up in suboptimal outcomes for the collective whole. The Prisoner's dilemma illustrates this by showing potential outcomes for defective and cooperative behavior. The actual outcome and utility derived for both players depend on the strategy played by those two players. As, in the Prisoners dilemma, player A's defective choice is to be preferred over the cooperative for

every given strategy played by player B and vice versa, a suboptimal outcome will be reached. The cooperative choice is strictly dominated by the defective choice. As the allocation in outcomes is distributed in such a way that a double defection will not lead to the best outcome for both players individually as well as the collective, we see that individual rational behavior will not yield the highest utility in certain cases. In other words, there could have been a more beneficial outcome for at least one of the players without the other one losing because of it. Pareto optimality has not been achieved in this specific scenario with its given outcomes for the given combination of choices.

The concept of Pareto optimality and the inability to achieve it under particular conditions applied to markets is what economists often describe as market failures. Suboptimal levels of production and prices will be set that are not in line with the collective best outcome. It is through achieving better outcomes through legislation, subsidies or penalties where national, regulatory governments have their added value. If applied to the realm of IR, the issue of reaching Pareto optimality on the international level is even harder than it is in domestic affairs. As often argued by IR scholars, there is no such thing as a world government which can enforce individual state behavior. When interests conflict in international politics it is up to the conflicting parties to reach an outcome all by themselves. Furthermore, we see strong incentives for utility maximizing states to benefit through hurting the other's interest. Especially, the notion of indifference is rather contestable in the realm of International Relations. In the economic schools of thought, as stated, individual A does not mind individual's B extra gains, as long as it does not hurt him. Due to the small number of states combined with security or power, rather than utility, being the driving force, countries are unlikely to be absolutely indifferent about one other's gain. This holds especially true for the neorealist branch in the field of IR.

Neoliberals, however, see room for long-term cooperation through reciprocity and iterative games. Pareto optimality is often seen to be reachable only through interaction through institutions, reaching the so-called Pareto frontier (Richardson, 2008). Institutions as mentioned above, are said to encourage long run cooperation. Through the process of reciprocity and repeated interaction, actors see it in their best interests to be willing to give others some additional gains in order to smoothen future interaction further. This holds true even for egoistic actors that only think in achieving the biggest amount of utility. How to reach this best payoff while under uncertainty of the strategies of other players has been pondered upon by many IR scholars. As demonstrated in the Axelrod tournaments (1980), the strategy of Tit-for-Tat proved to be yielding the highest payoffs of all admitted strategies for a large number of iterated games with two players. This strategy, developed by Anatol Rapoport (1911-2007) operates given the following mechanism: play a cooperative strategy at the first move, and then respond with whatever the other player has played in the previous round. This strategy will be followed until the game has finished the final round. The

strategy signals a positive attitude and a willingness to cooperate over a longer period, as cooperative behavior of the other is always rewarded with cooperative behavior, hence increasing the total payoff. Defective behavior will be punished in the next round by defective behavior by the acting player, hence yielding a lower payoff for the other player.

Reaching an agreement under Pareto optimality is the ultimate sign for cooperative behavior. Its implied indifference towards other players' payoffs as long as it does not hurt them shows the emphasis on absolute gains over relative gains, and is where neoliberalism differs fundamentally with the neorealist school of thought. Investigating for it in this study will prove of scientific value in the intra-utilitarianist debate. If such an agreement is reached, we expect to find the Pareto frontier to be reached, implying that neither party can benefit further without harming the other participating parties. This issue of Pareto optimality can be translated to the first hypothesis [H1] in the neoliberal branch, stated as follows:

[H1]: States are likely to come to the restructuring of a state, if none of the parties in a negotiation can benefit further without harming the other parties, hence displaying Pareto optimality.

2.2.2.2 Hegemonic stability

The concept of hegemony and its implications have been pondered upon by IR scholars for an extended period of time. We should first look into the concept of hegemony in order to make sense of hegemonic theories, and to see what it takes for a state to be categorized as one. In *After Hegemony*, Keohane (2005: 32) defines the concept as the "preponderance of material resources. Four sets of resources are especially important. Hegemonic powers must have control over raw materials, control over sources of capital, control over markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods." Neorealists often see it as an ultimate end for states which wish to improve their relative power position (Mearsheimer, 2001). Following the uncertainty provided by the anarchic traits of the system, the security of a state is always at stake. Phrased more informally, in order to be certain of your own safety it is vital to be the big bully in the international system. Once a state reached the status of hegemony, other actors can be coerced into fulfilling the hegemonic state's wishes and by doing so, distributing utility to the hegemon.

Neoliberals, however, argue that a hegemonic state has more regulative traits, giving rise to regimes that favor the interests of the current hegemon (Keohane, 2005). The hegemonic state does not seek to dominate the international system entirely with its material overweight, but will try to make other states benefit as well in order to increase the stability of the system, and therefore

increase its own utility. The hegemonic state, however, is able and willing to enforce his preferences upon weaker members in the international political system if push comes to shove. They are still rational, utility maximizing actors that think in terms of their own preferences and best possible outcomes. The fact that cooperation emerges does not contradict the fact that states can still be egoistic, self-help units. An abundance of resources available to a hegemonic state allows it to sacrifice short-term gains in order to secure the larger pay-offs that a more stable political system may provide in the longer run. Institutions will be given rise which are in line with the hegemon's preferences, and constructed in such a way that it is beneficial for minor states to comply with norms set by these institutes. This act of benevolence is therefore not ideationally driven but derived from calculations on the payoffs based on utility functions.

This notion of granting benefits to minor states is what characterizes hegemony to be of a more facilitative than of a coercive nature. While it may seem appealing for a strong power to use their material capacities to force states to contribute to favorable outcomes, the strong role neoliberals see for future interactions will incentivize hegemonic states to pursue stability over short-term gains. Both the *Pax Britannica* and the *Pax Americana* are prime examples of such sets of institutions that allowed long-term cooperation to emerge. For instance, the Bretton Woods system allowed minor states to benefit from the strong dollar as a currency. By the pegging of every participating country's currency to the value of the dollar, which in turn was determined by the amount of gold in the U.S. treasury, monetary stability was guaranteed for minor states. Furthermore, the IMF allowed for cheap financial aid for participating countries. By joining the Bretton Woods system those minor states increased the level of interdependence between them and the hegemonic state. An increase in interdependence makes it less likely for coalitions of states to rebel against the ruling position of the stronger, hegemonic state. Rational states will have to take the preferences of the hegemonic state into account in calculating their own utility functions. Certain constraints in strategies can emerge through the increased interaction with the hegemonic state. Playing strategies that may not be in line or at odds with the preferences of the hegemon will not be judged on its intrinsic value solely. The implications as regards the relation with the hegemonic state will be taken into account. The utility function of minor states will therefore be altered significantly in order to not disturb cooperative relations between them and the hegemon. It might have been very costly for minor states that support the hegemonic states and are part of institutions contributed heavily by and favoring the hegemonic states to divert their behavioral patterns. During the *Pax Americana,* for instance, it would be unwise for the Netherlands or Spain to invest heavily in friendly relations with countries part of the Warschau pact, as it might imply hegemonic repercussions in terms of exclusion from certain agreements.

As a result of these different insights, the exact implications of having a hegemonic power in the international system have been contested. For a long period of time mainstream realist thinkers have argued that as the driving force of mankind is security, states will always try to maximize their relative power position (Morgenthau, 2006). Following this logic, Mearsheimer's offensive realism derives that states with excessive power will end up in an endless struggle to pursue even more power and an hegemonic position in the international system. There is little room for stability in international politics as every great power in the international system is of a revisionist nature, looking to change the international distribution of power if it is in its benefit (Mearsheimer, 2001). Even a system which knows a strong hegemon that tries to keep the status quo is not free of violence. The hegemon will act upon rising threats if it sees reason to, using its material weight to keep matters as is. Realist scholars therefore see the concept of hegemony in a stricter way. Other than seeing the hegemonic state as also being a regulative power that can secure absolute gains for every cooperating player in the system, realists emphasize the coercive nature of hegemonic powers. This is retraceable to the views on relative versus absolute gains. Due to the acceptance of the notion of absolute gains, neoliberalism sees hegemony differently than neorealists in the international system. Hegemonic states will give rise to institutions that facilitate regimes favoring them while also providing benefits to other states. It is in the hegemonic power's best interest to do so, as it will avoid the risk of other states balancing against it. The states benefitting from the institutional bonuses will have an incentive to support those institutions favoring the hegemonic power in the long run as it can create a pattern of order (Keohane, 2005: 49). Supporting a hegemonic ally can be beneficial as long as one's own survival is also in the best interest of the hegemonic power. There is this mutuality of interests in cooperative behavior for both the hegemonic state and the supportive states. The lesser powers see it in their best interests to support the hegemonic power as the institutions given rise by it serve their long run interests. At the same time, by providing benefits to the lesser powers in the system, the hegemonic state seals its place in the international system through the support of cooperating states. Cooperative rather than defective behavior is therefore stimulated, even for truly egoistic actors, in cases of hegemonic stability. This hints at the role of a hegemonic power to be rather regulative and having a stabilizing effect for the international system as a whole

Following the neoliberalist interpretation one can expect a hegemon to ensure an outcome which will allow long-term cooperative behavior between the restructured state and itself. Furthermore, the hegemonic state would ensure an outcome which yields positive rewards for it. A potentially harming outcome will be tried to avoid, and due to their excessive bargaining power hegemonic states are able to maximize gains or minimize the potential losses. By following this line of logic

presented by neoliberalist insights on hegemonic stability the following hypothesis [H2] can be formulated:

"*States are likely to agree upon the restructuring of a state, if the outcome is in line with the preferences of the hegemonic state."*

2.3 Debate and Drawbacks

The materialist schools of thought bring valuable insights to the realm of international politics. As they are taken from mainly economic perspectives, however, they do have their drawbacks applied to the social realm. What Axelrod (1979) was arguably right in pointing out, is that the translation from socioeconomic issues to security issues might become problematic at times. The main difference is the impact non-cooperative behavior has on the other players. In economics, firms lose utility in terms of profit. When firms under price each other or start a campaign of negative advertising, there is no immediate threat to the firms' existence. In security issues, however, a defection in nuclear affairs can endanger the very existence of states and can change the entire international system. When the impact of defecting reaches certain levels, there may be no repercussion in terms of a series of continued defective responses.

What proves to be a harsh issue for neoliberalism to tackle properly is insecurity for future affairs. The issues of reciprocity and iteration of games build upon a need for repeated interaction. Defective behavior can only be avoided if there is certainty about the threat of punishment in the sequential game. When the status quo is rather stable and variables remain constant, there is room for cooperation as states will have learned what their own and the other player's utility functions are in the long run. States can adjust their behavior in such a way that the highest possible utility can be reached given the behavior of the other players. When the future is rather unclear in terms of allocations of raw resources, state succession or overall changing power relations, investing in long term gains may very well not be the dominant strategy.

An additional comment raised by scholars is to what extent rationality actually holds. It may be a bit much to assume total rational behavior of all states' interaction with each other, while they are also capable of assuming rational behavior among all other states. Simon (1957) argued this view on the world is too distinct from actual society and presented his concept of *Bounded Rationality.* The author moved away from seeing the human being as a homo economicus, which is capable of having a total overview of and ranking his or her preferences, has knowledge regarding all related affairs and is capable of maximizing its utility. Simon emphasized the role of time, the lack of information among individuals and cognitive abilities and restraints, which places rationality into an

individual-specific terrain. Even though Simon made his adjustments for individuals, this notion can be made for states, as the rational schools apply methodological individualism, which sees bigger entities as if they were acting individuals. States will therefore also act under time pressure, deal with the information they have. Foreign policy analyses support Simon's claim and have pointed towards psychological phenomena such as cognitive dissonance (Rosati, 1995), group think (Janis, 1982) and the demonization of other states which interfere with rational decision making.

On a final note, the deterministic nature accompanying the materialist schools of thought in International Relations is often criticized. The Neoliberalist school of thought provides useful frameworks which help make sense of the world as it is, but is often argued to fail in explaining major changes in world politics (Lebow, 2013). Most notably the rationalist perspectives were unable to expect the abrupt fall of the Soviet Union, turning the world from a bipolar state into a U.S. led hegemony. The rise of BRICs in terms of global significance also amplifies this further, as one would expect the hegemon, being the United States, to put a halt to their increasing importance.

2.4 Social Constructivism

After having illustrated the main assumptions in utilitarian thinking, this section will move forward and explain social constructivist thinking and its background.

Contrary to rational-choice theorists, the social constructivist school of thought has its roots in the domain of social sciences. It is through Weber, who argued human beings are at first cultural entities that give meaning to the world, and Durkheim, who advocated the importance of social facts, that social constructivist make sense of the world (Ruggie, 1998). Ideational factors are not instrumental or strategic means, but have meaning in themselves and wield importance. As Durkheim saw it, "ideational factors held their own specificity and integrity as a result of which they cannot be reduced to other factors" (ibid.: 858).

There are many different branches within the overarching school of constructivism, but all argue that it is through these ideational factors that meaning is given and interests and preferences are affected. To what extent it is ideas all the way down and to what extent ideational factors are an end rather than an enabling or constraining factors is where scholars within this school of thought differ (Ruggie, 1998; Fierke, 2013). As Ruggie (1998) puts it, social constructivism makes up the middle ground between rationalism and pure reflectivism. It can incorporate aspects from both schools of thought, and by doing so can shift more towards rationalism or reflectivism. The extent to which they do lean towards either side determines how a constructivist performs research and what ontology underlies that project. All constructivist scholars emphasize the importance of intersubjective meaning and argue that preferences are therefore not externally given, but internally constituted through ideas by the relevant actors themselves.

Most social constructivists argue that, due to this importance of intersubjectivity and cultural diversity, understanding, *verstehen,* rather than explaining, *erklären,* is the appropriate term and method in order to make sense of the world. Contrary to the materialist schools, constructivism does not aim to build a generalizing framework to explain causal mechanisms which can be translated into general, universal laws. The more room is given for case-specific aspects such as group identities or historical aspects, the smaller the potential scope for research will be.

With Wendt (1999) and other early constructivists pioneering the realm of IR towards a more social sciences-friendly environment, a logic of appropriateness in the discipline emerged. When the logic of appropriateness holds, states behave in a way which is appropriate when taking into account the culture of the international system, rather than making a cost-benefit analysis. Rationality is no longer an obvious given, and historical context starts to matter. The idea of sameness of states is contested, as differences in context and the emergence of mutual cultures limits and guides state behavior. States should therefore be perceived as primarily norm-driven actors. The given that there is anarchy in the international system does not enforce certain types of behavior in itself. In Wendt's

(1999) terms, it is an empty vessel to which states give meaning, and by doing so they give shape to international politics. Through the process of social learning states identify themselves with one another, giving rise to a certain appropriateness and internalizing certain types of behavior over time.

States act upon issues through the logic of appropriateness, doing that what makes the most sense given a historical and cultural context. Identities matter in enabling or constraining possibilities to play certain strategies in international interaction. States are more than strictly rational units and are argued to be cultural entities. Behavior that challenges values states promoted in the past or contradicts the image of the national identity will be seen as inappropriate and will often be disregarded. This is properly illustrated in Tannenwald's (1999) article on nuclear taboos. Rather than solely looking in the realm of strategic deterrence solely, the author offered a constructivist framework in order to make sense of the non-use of nuclear weaponry. Tannenwald showed that, although there were dominant strategic incentives to use nuclear weapons, resulting in higher efficiency and less innocent casualties, ideational factors came into play restricting policy makers from using means which were seen as delegitimized (Tannenwald, 1999: 434). In such cases the logic of appropriateness holds. The logic of appropriateness constrains states in playing strategies that challenge previously affirmed national values even if it is in their interest to cheat on their beliefs.

In Wendt's social theory of international politics (1999) the logic of appropriateness has been touched upon to a larger extent. He linked it to appropriate inter-state behavior depending on mutually shared cultures. It is through the identifying process of the Self and the Other that states form a shared culture. When states tend to behave in a friendlier or more hostile way than was previously the norm, the dynamics in the international system will change due to different behavior becoming appropriate or inappropriate. If a state's perception of another state becomes increasingly hostile, acts of aggression can be interpreted as the appropriate thing to do. An act of aggression against a befriended state on the other hand is considered to be inappropriate as conflicts of interest are often dealt with through other means.

This notion of appropriate behavior can be linked to the English school's concepts which are used to classify state interactions on the international level. Rivaling the dominant rationalist U.S. based theories, the English school has advocated studying the discipline in terms of a global political system rather than interstate relations and the actor-status of states. Furthermore, historical understanding and the importance of values have always played a role in Bull's work (2000) in formulating his view on the IR discipline. Distinctions between an international system, an international society and a world society are made by scholars subscribing to the school. The degree of cohesion and the significance of values increase from the international system, which emerges through mere interstate relations, to a world society, in which an ideational underpinning is central

in determining the dynamics of interstate behavior (Dunne, 2013). The English school has been a rival to the dominant U.S. based rationalist theory building in the sense that it challenged its methodology. Scholars within the English school argue that rationalist research may be incapable of getting significant results when they do not take a more interpretative stance.

Wendt's idea of the identification through the Self and Other can be linked to the English school in International Relations. If a state sees other states as being hostile its proper identification regarding itself would be an actor who's primary goal is survival. The most appropriate way, then, to function is as if states function in the concept of an *international system*. States do not have to recognize each other's existence and function as materialist, power-maximizing entities. This would imply simple interaction on the material level, with the possibility for military escalation while no shared ideas are seen as ultimate goals for state dynamics (ibid.). In an *international society*, states recognize each other's right to existence and territory. Although interaction still occurs with strategic objectives, states may be limited in their means to pursue them. The accompanying appropriate behavior, then, shifts towards a more accepting status. Identification here would take shape in the form of rivalry. There is this mutuality in not seeking the other's ultimate destruction. The state the international system is in would be perceived by states as is, and do not seek to overthrow the structure and general players in it completely (Dunne, 2013).

Finally, and most relevant for social constructivist thinking, in a world society states adhere to norms and ideational goals. Rather than quarreling over strategic factors states have an end goal to pursue on the international level. International communities will work together in order to secure those goals in every region in the world. The appropriate behavior accompanying this *world society* would be to comply with cosmopolitan norms and values and formulating policies in order to make others comply as well. By adhering to certain norms and seeing other states doing so as well, this idea emerges of a mutual struggle towards a shared ideational end goal. By seeing other states pursuing the same values while recognizing others' attempts for doing so as well, a culture of cooperation emerges. The identifying process of seeing the Self as having the same shared goal as the Other will allow a friend-like relation to emerge.

2.4.1 The norm of spreading democratic values

If we then take our insights on the importance of ideational factors in determining state behavior from the previous section and apply it to the case, we can formulate some premature expectations which one would expect to observe in the process of German reunification.

We see that during the 1980s democratic values experienced their glory days and were appreciated throughout the west. The idea of a shared goal in spreading democracy to the world was

embraced by countries all over the Western hemisphere. It was through the identifying of Western states as being democratic and overall happy that the Eastern, communist countries were often perceived as backwards and repressive. The need for other countries to adopt democratic tendencies emerged in earlier years, and can be retraced to the democratic peace theory. The normative factor linked to democracy stems from this theory, given shape by Kantian ideas and further popularized in scientific spheres by Michael Doyle (1983). The mechanism works as follows: as states turn into democracies, their leaders can be punished in the sense of not being reelected due to potential losses related to warfare. Their increased accountability will make leaders act more prudent, and therefore less likely to start unpopular wars. Although it is often criticized for linking correlation to causation and suffered from other theoretic flaws, the democratic peace theory has become an incredibly popular concept among Western state leaders.

It is not only through its instrumental mechanism which would presumably be capable of providing stability, but it is also linked to the ideological framework of many Western states in the latter half of the 20th century. As Doyle (1983) put it in his work on *Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs*, "Liberalism has been identified with an essential principle—the importance of the freedom of the individual." (Doyle, 1983: 206). Individuals should therefore be seen as moral subjects, rather than being a means or objects, which gave rise to the need of institutions embracing those rights. In order to protect the individual from harm as regards its humanitarian rights, three pillars were introduced to meet the challenge to achieving this individual freedom. The first of them involves negative freedom, which, as Doyle puts it, regards the protection from arbitrary authority rule. The second involves positive freedom, and involves the active promotion and enabling of the opportunity for individuals to achieve freedom. As these two principles can collude in certain areas, two major groups emerged. One of those is conservative liberalism, rather reluctant to risk rights given shape by the first pillar through the implications the second might bring. The other came to be known as social liberalism, which, even though the pillars might collude in some ways, tried to realize positive freedom as well. Although differing in their emphasis on freedoms, both groups saw the need of a third pillar in order to make sure these freedoms could be given rise to in the first place. This last pillar, which is closely related to the norm of spreading democracy as a cosmopolitan value, is therefore more of a prerequisite for the former two to be actualized. This pillar involves the participation of individuals in decision making processes and the representation of their interests in the political domain (Doyle, 1983: 207). More concrete, in order for a state to refrain from abusing their citizens' rights, a democratic political sphere has to be constituted. This view on democracy as a requirement for states to properly respect the wishes of their people and the dominance of liberal thinking in the last century among major actors in the international system is what has lead to the

cosmopolitan value of the spreading of democratic traditions towards states that do not protect the rights of individuals through this set of liberal pillars.

Whenever states are given the opportunity to restructure a state, they will be more likely to do so if they can implement the cosmopolitan norm into the newly emerging state. As our case allows for ideational restructuring of a state, we can derive that there is a likeliness for the major powers to be willing to implement their norms into the emerging state. Given our insights on the dominance of the cosmopolitan norm of democratic values, derived from the liberalist school of thought, we can expect this norm to be spreading democratic values. We can therefore formulate the following hypothesis [H1] of the social constructivist branch as such:

[H1]: States are likely to come to the restructuring of a state if they subscribe to a (shared) norm of spreading democracy towards other states.

2.4.2 The norm of self-determination

As regards the issue of norm diffusion, the same logic can be applied to the issue of self-determination. Self-determination should however be distinguished from the issue of a right to democratic values. Democratic values are an internal affair, and should not have any significant strategic consequences on the level of international politics, following the utilitarianist logic. As traditional rationalist schools do not open up the black box and look at internal factors, a change in them will therefore go unnoticed. When applying Wendt's approach to international politics, however, a domestic change in a foreign country can have strategic effects on other states. The process of identification can be altered which will result in a different kind of behavior. For instance, states that used to develop hostile feelings on the basis of the nature of its authority will experience a different process of mirroring. The implications of following the logic of appropriateness will change when internal factors are altered. When states perceive another state as being highly hostile or rather untrustworthy, the likeliness of acknowledging the other state's right to existence will decrease. If a friend-like relationship between states has been reached, one would not expect the people of country A to reject the right to existence of country B. This differs significantly from the rationalist schools' perception on state behavior. When following the logic of consequences, states will not see an alteration of their utility functions and will act in the same way, given a ceteris paribus situation. Ideas as such have no intrinsic value, and states will act upon their preferences, and not merely their perception on another state's right to existence.

The idea of a people's right to self-determination is not a new concept in (normative) fields of research and can be found in many significant historical works. For instance, the idea of a *ius gentium*, a right of peoples, has been formulated as early as the centuries in which the Romans ruled Europe. This idea has been further developed by scholars in the renaissance, most notably Grotius (1583-1645) and has traditionally contributed a lot to the (normative) IR discipline. A people's right to self-determination can be retraced in President Wilson's Fourteen Points which accompanied the rise of the League of Nations. This becomes particularly visible in the fifth point, being: "A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined." (Avalon Project, 2016). This notion of mentioning the interests of the affected populations as them being sovereign hints at that those people decide themselves what is best for them. With Wilson's League of Nations in which nations themselves could discuss among others what their views and interests are a more egalitarian system arose in which sovereignty of states was crucial. By doing so, the idea of self-determination became even more embedded within liberal thinking in IR. As of today, in most studies on ethics in IR, the role of self-determination has played a big role in defining what is just and what is unjust (e.g. Walzer, 2005).

Where the effects of internal change are contested between IR scholars, external change is seen by all scholars as having a significant impact on world politics. When people have a right to self-determination and aim to found its own political community with territorial borders and political sovereignty, other states are highly unlikely to be indifferent about the issue. The emergence of new states at the cost of other states will alter international politics, no matter its internal affairs. The spreading of values which involve a right to self-determination will therefore have bigger consequences than advocating democratic rights of civilians abroad. External actors will perceive the material change of territory as an externality which may have positive or negative impacts in the longer run. As the strategic impact of successfully spreading these rights is so much bigger, the norm may be more subject to become a means for strategic ends.

The issue of self-determination is inherently related to the national identities of the four victors of World War II. The United States is the most obvious example, coming from a history of decolonizing itself from British rule. One would expect views on the right to self-determination for other states to be rather favorable towards political communities emerging. The Soviet Union emerged through a revolution initiated by some intellectuals support heavily by the people. This bottom-up way of changing regimes is in line with claims to self-determination, as those claims are often based on a feeling of belonging of the population. Furthermore, the fact that Russia has never had any significant colonies in the past has not forced the country into a split between its strategic

interests and its normative views on the world. This is where it becomes troublesome for Great Britain and France. Being colonizers themselves in the past, the issue of self-determination is of great strategic interest to them. In the zeitgeist of the late 1980s, however, there were no real issues regarding colonization left, removing this barrier for normative views. For all three western states one could argue that as the Soviet Union was perceived as the main enemy, they had a strategic incentive to support a right to self-determination for strategic means as well. The Soviet Union consisted of many peoples that had an aspiration to (re)build their own state. Supporting those claims and advocating self-determination may have well lead to instability within the borders of a great enemy.

By combining this relatedness among the four victors to the issue of self-determination with the concept of norm diffusion, we can formulate the following hypothesis [H2]:

[H2]: States are likely to come to the restructuring of a state if they subscribe to a (shared) norm of a people's right to self-determination.

2.6 Drawbacks Social Constructivism

Although Social Constructivism brings new insights to the table of theory crafting in IR, it does have its drawbacks just like its counterparts in the materialist school of thought. As it applies a different ontology, it allows shedding light on affairs which are usually marginalized. Its narrower scale and objective aimed at a deeper understanding of causal mechanisms related to, often cultural, affairs do bring a better view on processes in particular cases. Following this approach however often results in a rather limited potential to generalize towards a larger population of cases. Due to the aim of *verstehen,* research performed is about making sense of the world rather than explaining it. This is in contrast with utilitarianism, as they have a rather broad lens which can be used in many cases, but lacks explanatory power per case. As constructivists themselves often put it (Ruggie, 1998), they do not aim to produce another grand theory of International Relations, but rather address affairs that are overlooked by the regular schools of thought. Constructivism can say a lot about a small number of cases, whereas utilitarianism often says a little about a big number of cases.

The epistemology linked to the school of thought makes doing research rather difficult. The significance the school of thought links to social factors forces the researcher to take cultural factors into account. These social factors can only be understood through interpretation, which forces the researcher to contemplate on the constitutive role researchers have when doing qualitative research. By addressing the issues they observe the researcher takes part in a constructive process by doing so, as speech acts constitute reality.

Furthermore, it is unclear when the researcher is sure to have grasped the actual meaning of a cultural phenomenon. Geertz (1973) has touched upon this issue rather accurately. As social science, and in particular the qualitative, interpretative branch of it, is all about understanding meaning, the cultural deepness of a phenomenon might not be grasped by the observer. Geertz (ibid.: 6) addresses the issue of cultural thick- and thinness, which touches upon the levels of cultural significance might be related to a certain phenomenon. A wink can be interpreted as a mere behavioral act, while combining it with cultural meaning will make it a “gesture”. This gesture can, however, have multiple levels of cultural thickness. For instance, it can send a message involving conspiracy, be a parody on that message of conspiracy or in the end just turn out to be a hair irritating the eye. The level of cultural thickness can only be grasped by an observer which has familiarized him or herself with the culture in such a way that social processes can be understood properly. But how does one know this level has actually been reached? As the social constructivist school of thought looks beyond what is observable and aims to understand the cultural and social meaning behind phenomena, one runs the risk of interpreting events a couple levels to thin, so to say. One could interpret the wink as being a message of conspiracy, while being a parody on it, misinterpreting reality.

Although if performed well, findings done through constructivist research can be very insightful, the challenge lies in properly addressing the issues and connecting the right dots in order to make sense of a certain phenomenon. Studies within social sciences yield a great difficulty to perform properly, but if done correctly can be very rewarding in terms of social understanding of the world.

3. Method

The methodological chapter has its value in building a bridge between the expectations drawn from the theoretical chapter and the empirical section. One cannot simply move from often very abstract theoretical concepts to the testing of the hypotheses without making that which you are observing measurable. We need to formulate indicators as regards what we need to find in order to justify our judgments of the different theories' applicability. In this chapter, the way of doing research, to the extent to whether it applies an inductive or deductive approach and its consequences for the findings will be touched upon further. The description of the sources and the classification of the case in the field of qualitative research will also be given in this chapter in order to signal to what extent we can judge the theories' explanatory power.

3.1 The scientific approach

Scholar of scientific methods Karl Popper (1902-1994) formulated his demarcation criterion in order to distinguish between scientific and non-scientific approaches. He argued that in order to contribute to scientific research, one needs to formulate a general theory and then look for cases which then falsify it through observations which contradict the theoretical expectations (Popper, 2005). Theories that cannot be falsified are therefore not subject to scientific testing and are called non-scientific or pseudoscience. Theories can therefore also never be confirmed, but can in a best case be corroborated as a contradicting observation can still emerge in the future (ibid.: 248). This approach of theory testing is known as the deductive method and is a top-down way of progressing in science. A theory is formulated which relates to the topic of interest, corresponding hypotheses will be drawn from it which can be tested and through observations the theory can either be falsified or be confirmed for the moment. Alternatively to the deductive method is the inductive method. The way research is performed is quite the opposite from how deduction works. Here, phenomena of interest are selected, which is then being checked for patterns. Through these patterns, hypotheses can be formulated which can then provide the fundamentals for a scientific theory. It is often through inductivist research that causal mechanisms are more closely looked at, rather than testing a theory as a whole.

If we take this study on the German reunification into account and link it to the two ways of doing research, we can argue that this paper is of a rather inductive nature. The phenomenon of interest is presented and its puzzling outcome is shown. Seeing how some theoretical frameworks are unable to explain the phenomenon, the study was rather pragmatic in analyzing two schools of thought in order to get a better grasp on which is the better fit. At the same time, we contribute to the ideas/interest debate by picking two theories that are deeply embedded in a reflectivist and a rationalist theoretical framework. By doing so, meaningful connections can be made on both the

case of German reunification and the general debate between the role of norms and preferences. Looking at the case, we hope to find a hint at the answer whether ideas matter at all in International Relations, even more when the issue at stake is of such strategic importance.

There are no iron laws in the field of IR that hold in basically every scenario where interaction occurs between states. There is a large variety of variables which can affect state behavior and every school of thought in IR puts a different emphasis on other factors. Furthermore, there is no laboratory-like vacuum setting which will imply errors in measurement. Scholars therefore speak of lenses a researcher can put on in order to make sense of a phenomenon in a different way. With each lens, certain factors will gain in significance whereas other will lose. It is the applicability of the approaches, rather than a full-on testing of a theory, which has become central in inter-discipline IR debates.

For this study, following the inductive approach will imply that we cannot throw out either theory on the basis of it being falsified. We can judge their strength on the basis of their applicability in this particular case within the broader sense of state formation and the role interests/ideas play in it. In addition, something meaningful can be said over to what extent strategic urgency has its importance in interacting with these two variables. If we find that in this particular case of huge strategic importance ideas are still guiding for the formation of state attitudes, we touch upon the inter-paradigm debate of norms versus utility.

3.3 Variable indicators

In order to say something meaningful about the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, some practical expectations for different scenarios have to be formulated. This will be done for the independent variables in the hypotheses related to the neoliberal school of thought and for the variables in the social constructivist school of thought. Furthermore, a justification for using the Two Plus Four treaty will be presented as the dependent variable and indicator for the different states' attitude towards a reunified Germany. The indicators for the independent variables will be dealt with first, after which the dependent variable will be introduced.

3.3.1 Neoliberal school of thought

The two hypotheses formulated in the theoretical chapter regarding neoliberalism come from a rather complicated debate within the utilitarian tradition. The concept of Pareto-optimality in IR is not easily defined, nor are the practices of states easily placed and explained by hegemonic stability theory. In order to make sense of these concepts in the practical domain, we need to formulate indicators that suggest that the theoretical concepts have played a significant role in the eventual outcome. In other words: how can we operationalize the theoretical concepts in a way such that its ability to make sense of the world out there can be judged? What follows will be a operationalization

of both the Pareto-optimality hypothesis and the hypothesis resulting from the Hegemonic Stability Theory.

3.3.2 Pareto-optimality

In order to make Pareto-optimality measurable we first need to go back to the hypothesis formulated on this specific concept. Under section (X.X.X) we formulated [H1] as follows:

[H1]: States are likely to come to an agreement, if none of the parties in a negotiation can benefit further without harming the other parties, hence displaying Pareto-optimality.

As we can see the main criterion here to judge whether a situation of Pareto-optimality is achieved is to look for an outcome where not one country could have benefitted further without reducing the utility of other states. In order to pursue a status of Pareto-optimality, states need to be at least indifferent about the gains of other parties. If they are negatively affected by another player's gains, achieving Pareto-optimality will become highly unlikely, impossible even for strictly rational actors. If a player's utility function is positively related to the gains of the other players due to positive externalities, an outcome which also favors others may be the most desirable one, even for truly egoistic actors. If actors are entirely indifferent as regards another player's outcome, we would still expect the Pareto frontier to be reached, as bargaining will steer all parties towards that point.

In our particular case, in order to observe a Pareto-optimal outcome we need to find evidence of parties not acting against one's others interest *merely for the sake of damaging the other's interest*. For instance, if we see the any of the four victors blocking certain outcomes for the sake of the outcome yielding a lower utility for a given other party, without benefitting from it themselves, we could argue Pareto-optimality has not been reached. We can then argue that the assumption of positive externalities or indifference does not hold, and therefore will not yield Pareto-optimal outcomes. For our given case, if we can think of or observe the considering of potential outcomes which are better for at least one of the other parties without being harmful to the rest than the outcome that actually came to be, we can refute our hypothesis regarding Pareto-optimality in this given scenario.

What will become particularly interesting is to see whether a state will be driven by solely strategic motives when damaging other states' potential gained utility or whether norms come in. If this is the case, and certain utility will be given up in order to make another state suffer more, and by doing so moving away from the Pareto frontier, it would be interesting to see to what extent identities matter here. If parties seem to be willing to let a certain country benefit while feeling

inclined to portray defective behavior towards others while the same utility functions applies, one must conclude that ideational factors are at play here.

3.3.2 Role of Hegemony

In order to make sense of and operationalize our independent variable regarding the role of hegemony in the case of the German reunification, we should bring up the hypothesis that dealt with the hegemonic stability theory. It involved the likeliness of the outcome to be in line with the hegemonic state's preferences, and was formulated as following:

[H2]: "*States are likely to agree upon the restructuring of a state, if the outcome is in line with the preferences of the hegemonic state.*"

The [H2] hypothesis easier to operationalize than the one regarding Pareto optimality. We would expect an outcome to emerge which would positively affect the United States' position in the international system. If not, the emergence of the restructuring will be very unlikely in the first place. There are, however, many ways for the United States to make sure their position on the material level would gain a positive boost. As the hegemonic state had already constructed political and economic regimes which would serve the long-run interest as regards its position in the international system, we can expect the United States to want to see the restructured state to be incorporated in them. As Germany was still split up in two different states before the Two Plus Four meetings commenced, there was no guaranteed certainty to which of the possible power blocs the restructured state would accede, if any at all. If we find evidence for the newly formed state to join institutions given rise by the United States, promoting their values of neoliberal economics and pro-U.S. political dominance, we can argue that the expectations of the hegemonic stability theory hold. Indicators that hint that the unification was in the best material interests of the United States would be public officials actively stimulating the process from occurring, even when no ideational factors are at play. Making sure a state emerges that is more U.S.-friendly can also be in the hegemonic state's best interest, even if no immediate effects are visible. Long term cooperative behavior can yield significant benefits due to the iteration of interaction. What may seem costly in the short run might prove beneficial in the long run. We should therefore also investigate the new state's relations with the hegemonic power in order to see whether there might have been some long term benefits in the calculations.

What followed from our expectations in the theoretical chapter regarding the hegemonic stability theory, we can also check to what extent the U.S. hegemony has lead to the preferences of Great Britain and France being altered. As was stated in the theoretical chapter, the effect of the presence of a hegemonic state in the international system can be quite significant. Actors that are

contributing to the hegemonic dominance through the institutions given rise by it will see their spectrum of possible strategies affected by the hegemonic state's preference. The utility function of smaller states is altered, as their survival depends on the benevolence of the hegemonic power in the system. The United States has been acting as a hegemonic power after World War II, in the sense that it gave rise to and financed those institutions that favored itself and its direct allies. We can therefore expect the aspect of hegemony to have played a role here in determining the states' utility functions. This study will look at it as follows: First, the hegemonic state of the United States has to be determined. If it shows that, following Keohane's description, the U.S. can indeed be seen as a hegemon, we can expect one of the two following scenarios to have occurred: Either the utility functions of Great-Britain and France have been altered, or some strategies could not be played due to hegemonic interference. If we find evidence for the first scenario having taken place, Great-Britain and France will have successfully incorporated the hegemonic state's preferences into their own, acting upon them up front. If we see that Great-Britain and France actually favored another outcome but were forced into playing a strategy other than their initial most favored one, we see behavior has not (yet) been internalized. That would imply the nature of hegemony to be rather coercive at times, rather than having successfully made the smaller states' interests equal to the hegemonic state's interests.

3.4 Social Constructivist variables

The school of social constructivism emphasizes historical and cultural context in order to give meaning to phenomena, rather than offer a general theory in order to explain the world. A logic of appropriateness is how states act upon affairs, and they do so in a way which is in line with a previously constructed identity, emphasizing certain values. For the outcome of the negotiation process, we should therefore expect one to emerge which is in line with, or not heavily contradicts the ideational, cultural and historical background of the participating states. Given the events of hostility experienced by all victors of World War II, in particular the European ones, some potential outcomes can be seen as ideationally unacceptable, even if there are no strategic motivations. For instance, the rise to power of the Nazi-German regime has been the primary cause of World War II. This may constrain the potential outcomes to non-autocratic ones solely. This can be linked to the hypotheses stated for the social constructivist school of thought. As the Western states have embraced the values of democracy and the right to self-determination, we are likely to see them advocate outcomes that will promote those values. The hypotheses presented under the section regarding social constructivism also have to be operationalized to a similar degree as the neoliberal hypotheses have been. As social constructivism sees reality as being given meaning by human

interaction, our indicators will be ideational here. For instance, speech acts will be looked into in order to make sense of the given cultural dimension and ideational overtones in this particular case. The way speech acts are being emphasized by social constructivist scholars allows for ideational factors mentioned by public officials as being the driving force of their attitude allocation to be taken into account, rather than looking at interests solely. The indicators for the social constructivist school of thought are slightly more clear-cut than the neoliberal indicators, but should still be elaborated upon for the sake of clarity and consistency.

3.4.1 Spreading of Democratic values

Measuring to what extent the norm of spreading democratic values have played a role in the decision making processes is of importance in order to say something meaningful on the role of dominant norms. In line with the cosmopolitan values of spreading the enlightened norms towards the rest of the world, one would expect the countries advocating those norms to be very active in pursuing such outcomes abroad. In the case of German unification we should therefore expect the advocating of the norm of democratic values to be done by at least the three major Western powers.

The 1980s were known for being the glory days of the process of democratization and the overall appreciation of democratic values. The concept of democracy was the most dominant normative value covering the public debate in many states, and was perceived as being overall desirable. The principles behind the democratic peace, whether correct or not, have led to a widespread belief that it is not only internally desirable for states to adhere to democratic values, but it also benefits the international system as a whole. These cosmopolitan values were present in many highly influential states, and the spreading of the democratic values was promoted by those normative entrepreneurs. Due to these pro-democracy tendencies we formulated our hypothesis regarding the promotion of democratic values to those lacking them as follows:

[H1]: States are likely to come to the restructuring of a state if they subscribe to a (shared) norm of spreading democratic values towards other states.

In order to make our hypothesis testable, we need to decipher what exactly an act of advocating the spreading of democratic values implies looking at our case. Proper measuring is required in order to say something meaningful as regards the extent of influence the norm has had in determining the outcome. As we are focused on state behavior, our prime unit of observation should be public officials of the non-German states involved in the agreement. Social constructivism, however, sees room for non-state actors to influence state decision making as well, which implies we are not limited to state-like actors. This study will however focus on governmental actors following this rationale: As the states were the decisive actors regarding the agreement, their views on the

spreading of democratic values matter most. If those ideational values were present in the domestic realm, one could expect them to have influenced the public officials, if powerful enough. If societal actors express their views in the question at hand, their assessment will be taken into account by national governments. The focus on governmental actors will therefore be likely to be sufficient. In order to get a grasp to what extent those values of democracy were considered worth spreading towards transition countries, we will look at speech acts of public officials from 1980 onwards. If we find official rejections of non-democratic regimes, merely for the sake of them not being democratic, or appraisals of transitions from non-democracies to democracies, we can argue the idea of spreading democratic values was appreciated by the public officials, hence representing the state.

The previously mentioned logic applies for the democratic states of Great Britain, France and the United States. Those states adhered to the norm of democracy as the appropriate way of distributing power on the domestic level, and can therefore advocate that way for other countries as well. As for the Soviet-Union, we find a more challenging operationalization of the spreading of democratic values. It would be rather peculiar to find public officials in the early 1980s pleading for the spreading of democratic values in countries other than the Soviet-Union, as one could argue this norm was not (yet) diffused in the country itself. One cannot spread what one does not have itself. We can, however, look at the process of democratization of the Soviet-Union itself, which occurred under the Gorbachev-led government. If we see an internal change in the approval of democratic values, the likeliness to accept it in areas under influence by the Soviet-Union will go up. We cannot go as far as saying that, as for the Western countries, by initially advocating the spreading of democratic values the likeliness to get to the restructuring of a state will go up, but we can try to explain a potential lack in reluctance to be based on an increase in indifference towards democratic tendencies. In order to test that more indifferent state, or a decrease in reluctance, we will look into Soviet-institutional reforms and speech acts by public officials such as Gorbachev.

3.4.2 Spreading of values of self-determination

As for the norm of spreading values related to people's right to self-determination, we can look at the matter similarly as done for the spreading of democratic values. Following the Helsinki treaty of 1975, states should actively try to pursue the self-determination of peoples. Former attitudes as regards the desirability of political communities having a right to self-determination will be taken into account. By doing so, the overall perception on the norm and tendencies to advocate the spreading of such values can be analyzed. This issue of self-determination could potentially become rather tricky here, as two of the four external powers used to be colonial powers. However, as the major wave of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s had already taken place, we can assume attitudes of the European major powers changed tremendously. Furthermore, the case of German unification

takes place on the European continent. The recognition of the sovereignty of European states has started to develop since the treaty of Westphalia in 1648, and there were no self-proclaimed duties similar to the white man's burden. The study will therefore not look into claims made by states saying that the Germans "do not know what's best for them". What will be looked at, however, will be statements that aim to restrict the German right to self-determination which are made as a large Germany is feared for its potential. As for the norm of spreading democracy, the statements of heads of state's or ministers of foreign affairs will suffice, as domestic sentiment will be filtered through them. All the four powers will be checked for such sentiments among their leaders in order to check whether their acknowledgment of the value of self-determination is in line with what their attitudes were during the process leading up to reunification.

3.5 Dependent variable

The explanandum of the case is the restructuring of the German state. What was the actual outcome resulting from the participating parties' preferences and ideational incentives? The traits and characteristics of the outcome will be measured in this study in order to determine what kind of end result the independent variables have produced. The outcome as a whole will be a sum of inputs by the different participating states, with each of them having their individual amount of influence. The ultimate sum of these inputs will be the actual *Two Plus Four treaty*, or more formally the *Treaty on the final settlement with respect to Germany, September 12, 1990*. This might, however, provide rather static results as they do not display Germany's role on the world stage after the treaty was signed, only what rights and duties it acquired. The de facto outcome of the near years after will also be taken into account, for instance to what extent it has affected European integration for different member states, and to what, if any, military or political international entity it subscribed to. This broader perspective will be taken as states had sufficient time to perceive each others' preferences, and by doing so could somewhat predict what the near future could possibly bring.

3.6 Case classification

In his work on qualitative research methods, John Gerring (2007) touched upon the different kinds of case studies. Certain kinds of case studies fit the formulated research aims better than others do. In qualitative case study designs, the appropriate case selection often depends on the developmental state of a theory within the discipline. A fully developed theory which has survived many Popperian falsification attempts can be put to tougher tests than a theory which is still in its initial phase. For more advanced, stronger theories, a researcher can test it with a case that has a least-likelihood for the theory to hold. For these least-likely cases the saying by Sinatra "*If I can make it here, I can make*

it anywhere" is rather applicable. In contrast, when some theoretical insights are brought together and are only yet transformed into an overarching theory, a most-likely case study can contribute to see whether the theory holds at least for some specific scenarios. It is in the exploratory state of a theory that such cases are especially helpful.

Looking back at the Great Debates between rationalism and reflectivism, we observed that the golden thread running through them regards to what extent it is interests all the way down or whether there is room and a role for ideas in International Relations. If one takes a case of small strategic importance, it is easier for states to be the guardian of norms and ideas as there is little to lose and little to gain. Finding normative factors affecting the behavior of states in such cases may imply that they interfere with the utility function, but to a small extent. This then leaves the question what one can expect when a scenario occurs in which the strategic importance rises tremendously. Is there still room for ideas when they may become a barrier to a state's survival? Do states actually commit to their ideational views when push comes to shove and their behavior will have rather big strategic consequences?

The German reunification is such an event of big strategic importance for some of the four victors of World War II. Great Britain, the Soviet Union (and before it, Tsarist Russia) and the United States have had to deal with a large Germany twice in multi-continental wars. France even experienced the direct consequences of a unified Germany in 1870-1871, making a total of three great armed conflicts. Great-Britain, France and the Soviet-Union were all major powers on the continent of Europe, and merging the two minor powers of West- and East-Germany into a unified major power is sure to result in different dynamics when interaction occurs. Furthermore, the process of European integration would show insecurities as to its development in the future.

Looking at the subject from a social constructivist perspective, the immense strategic importance of the outcome would make the case of German reunification a least-likely case for ideas and norms to have an influence on policy making. Depending on the intensity of the ideas, the extent to which they are internalized, however, one could still expect ideational factors to play a role. If the participating states really subscribe to the shared values which could justify a German reunification and have internalized those views, the parties could overlook the immense strategic incentives or not even consider rejecting. Following the great debates, this case with its accompanying material urgency should be classified as a *crucial* case, which shows whether ideas play a role in all IR cases. If normative aspects play a role in this particular case, they are likely to be on the background of all IR cases.

3.7 Sources used

This study will heavily rely on historical documents on the process of the German reunification. Both texts by public officials addressing the issue on a formal level, and biographical works will be used in order to get the preferences of state leaders into perspective, while taking into account potential biases for the latter. For the process of reunification multiple historical works from tertiary sources will be looked into, combined with scientific studies focusing on related theoretical puzzles for the same issue.

The main work which is used for the placing of events within a historical timeframe is the book by Elizabeth Pond (1994), *Beyond the Wall*. It was written rather early after the process of unification unfolded and shows both internal and external dynamics. As we are mostly interested in external dynamics, the works of Zelikow and Rice's (1997) "*Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft"* and Risse's (1997) *"The Cold War's Endgame and Germany Unification: A Review Essay"* will be used to look into the external dynamics. As both are focused on the end of the cold war, they mainly describe U.S. – Soviet relations. Risse's work draws extensively upon the study presented by Zelikow and Rice, but rather than looking solely at statecraft the author presents a structural answer as well. Despite their differences in scope, both works are suitable to explain in their own way what the American and Russian rationales were for getting to the restructuring of the German state, but run short on findings on the other two players, Great Britain and France. For those particular cases this study will use the works by Hayes and James (2014), Renwick (2013) and Bozo (2007) in order to get the full picture. Hayes and James (2014) basically posit the same question as this paper does: Why did a state, here Great Britain, agree upon the reemergence of Germany as a potent major power on the European continent? Their study analyses the events through a multiplicity of approaches and apply a realist, neoliberalist and social constructivist perspective. Robin Renwick's work (2013) on Foreign policy under Thatcher provides a clear insight in what Thatcher's rationales were during the time of the events and displays British interests. Bozo (2007) addresses the issue of the supposed irrelevance of France in the process of German unification and counters this by claiming the French were rather vital in determining the outcome of the reunification. Bozo uncovered this through data which has recently become available due to the opening up of historical foreign policy archives. This discrepancy between older historical works such as Zelikow & Rice's (1997) and Pond's (1994) and this newer perspective on France's role by Bozo in 2007 can shed more light and perhaps provide a better explanation. In the author's own words: "[…] we have so far lacked an uncontroversial, scholarly account of France's role at the end of the cold war and in German unification." (Bozo, 2007: 459).

As for the outcome, the agreed upon *Treaty on the final settlement with respect to Germany, September 12, 1990* will be analyzed. This is the treaty referred to as the Two Plus Four treaty, laying the judicial foundations for a reunified Germany as regards their external rights and signed by the two Germanys, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. The treaty also touches upon some domestic affairs, which is relevant for our hypotheses formulated under the school of social constructivism. The treaty itself can be found in the appendix. Furthermore, the membership of military or political organizations emerging shortly after the unification will also be taken into account, as the treaty will present rather static results, whereas analyzing the new role of Germany on the international stage will make it more accurate and dynamic.

3.8 Strengths and Weaknesses

All studies performed have their own individual flaws while shining in other aspects. This study is no different. Relying mostly on documents by secondary sources (with some written by agents active during the process) will involve a potential for biases in the findings. One could expect those present at the negotiations and writing their findings afterwards, to have perceived matters in a different way than others might have. This holds especially true when those sources still have a stake in how their work at the time has been perceived. Zelikow and Rice (1997) for instance, held places in public offices at the time of their writing. Potential miscalculations on their side during the process may question their competences as public officials. This holds especially true in the French case. According to one of the later authors, Bozo (2007: 458) the literature previously available was heavily tainted as it was written by authors who "used Attali as a key source (it is now established that the book is utterly unreliable as a result of outright errors, omissions and even additions in comparison with original documents, not to mention the fact that most of the book is based on material which Attali falsely attributes to himself". These factors should be kept in mind in order to get a full understanding of how the study interacts with the empirical domain.

4. Empirics

The process of the German reunification can be split up in three phases. Rather than looking at tendencies and attitudes of the four victors case by case, a chronological approach will be presented in order to show changing tendencies over all four states. Interaction between the different states are extremely relevant for our study, as it will show to what extent the states have acted in order to affect the outcome as regards a potential reunification. It also shows to what extent states have informed themselves about the preferences of the other relevant actors, in order to see what potential strategies can be played. A phase by phase-analysis rather than a case by case-analysis helps putting these changes into perspective. Looking at it on a case by case basis might suffice, but for the sake of clearly pointing out transformation of state attitudes the chronological approach will be taken.

The first phase involves the years preceding the very first ideas of a unified Germany, starting straight after World War II up to right before the point where reunification seemed a possibility in the future. This allows showing the initial attitudes of the four victors towards the idea of a single Germany in the future, and to what extent this was even discussed or considered an actual outcome in the first place. The attitudes straight after World War II will be discussed and the rationale behind the solution to the problem Germany will be presented in order to get a better understanding of how attitudes changed. A leap in time will then be made to the few years preceding the emergence of the issue, in order to see how states at the time perceived the issue and whether they have adjusted their preferences in accordance with it.

The second phase starts with the massive influx of East-German citizens into Hungary, seeking to make their way to the West and the public officials of East-Germany's incapability of dealing with it to the citizens' satisfaction. During this period, the loosened grip of the Soviet Union on Eastern Europe became clear. This had lead to heavy discussions as regards the possibility of a German unification in the future. States were active in calculating their preferences and forming their attitudes towards the very idea of a unified, perhaps militarized, Germany. The big difference compared to the first phase is that states would have to act in order to secure a potentially favorable outcome. Interaction among states discussing the idea therefore emerged, showing the adaptation of behavior due to the others' utility functions. The phase in total has a span of a few months, starting from September 1989 up to the beginning of the Two Plus Four negotiations in March 1990. By that time states had a clear overview of what their best outcome would be and had indications of what to expect from the other participating parties. In the spring of 1990, some states would have adjusted their behavior to fit that of other states already, whereas others would not have yet. Furthermore, the decisive factors per party which lead to their position on the issue can be analyzed

to what extent they had a strategic and/or ideational background, and which of the two was most present in the interaction.

The third phase focuses on the period when all states decided their final strategies and got to the endgame of the issue of a German unification. It starts with the collapse of the East-German regime after the free elections opening up the window for an actual reunification. The formal meetings regarding the issue of a unified Germany while ending with the Two Plus Four treaty signed in September, 1990 followed immediately after. This last phase is unique in showing state behavior that resulted as a summation of interaction between actors. During all three phases we can find indicators to what extent the theoretical concepts offered explanatory value, but it is in the last were we can see best whether the final strategies and ideational reasoning are in line with theoretical expectations. For the ideational hypotheses, this period can help check to what extent rhetorical entrapment of the commitment to subscribed values may have played a role in determining the outcome. For the material hypotheses, this phase helps determining to what extent states have been able to adjust their policies given their best possible outcome given the other players' win-sets.

4.1 Phase one: Stability through bipolarity

Fritz Stern (1987: 119) once wrote: "After Hitler, nothing is quite the same—not in the world of the mind nor in the world of politics; not in Europe and not outside it." This notion of perceptions on Germany and the German people seems to hold true for the major powers on the European continent up to late in the 1980s. What started after the initial unification in 1870 and the defeat of France in 1871 as a period of uncertainty based on strategic incentives now seemed to have an additional ideational background. The military successes German forces had over other continental powers only twenty years after their previous defeat once more forced the four victors to think Germany's role in international politics over. Arguing in line with their own preferences and national identities both sides of Europe were terrified by the idea of a unified Germany. The Soviet policy makers feared a pro-Western and militarized Germany, once again willing to claim territories in Soviet spheres of influence under the flag of a Western military alliance. Similarly, the West feared a pro-Eastern Germany to a same extent as under the Rapallo treaty in 1922, in which Germany was the first to acknowledge the Soviet government. This treaty signaled friendly relations between the newly erected Communist state and the Weimar Republic. A renewal of interactions of a similar nature would shift the magnitude of material power on the European continent eastwards and distort the strong position the Western states had established. This mutual fear of the potential threat a unified Germany would yield towards both the East and West if it would team up with the

other partner is what incentivized the four victors to split the country and take its complete autonomy away (Zelikow & Rice, 1997).

Over time, the different occupied zones merged into two Germanys: the relatively autonomous Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the Soviet-led German Democratic Republic (GDR). The United Kingdom and France, however, were not that content with the initial plans. It was after a guarantee by U.S. policy makers to construct a military institution (i.e. NATO) in which the current Eastern and future German threat could be balanced against that both countries agreed on the matter. The United States, having initiated the process, remained rather optimistic as regards West-German intentions due to good relations with Adenauer and the success of both parties in stopping the Berlin-blockade. Furthermore, the United States had the economic recovery of the European continent as a top priority. An autonomous West-German state was not perceived by the United States as being problematic in any way (Zelikow & Rice, 1997).

The tensions as regards the potential of a German threat lowered further in the years following the separation of the two territories. It was due to the Marshall program and FRD's chancellor at the time Konrad Adenauer's policy of *Westbildung* in the West that the amount of mutual trust increased between both parties. The process of European integration initiated by the Inner Six in the late 1940s had over time created a set of institutions which forced continued cooperation between West-Germany and the remaining powers. Moreover, the FRG was one of the more active partners to deepen European integration, mostly due to Adenauer's western-centered foreign policies. This increase in mutual dependency has lead to more favorable relations between Germany and other European countries. Meanwhile the installment of a Soviet-controlled government and the redistribution of German territories towards Poland in the East provided a guarantee against German aggression for the Soviets. The split-up of Germany with each part embedded into larger political institutions lead the remaining major powers on the European continent into an era of bipolar stability, providing a seemingly final answer to the German question.

An important aspect in making the West-German state function as properly as it did while under suspicion externally was its active role in reassuring the major powers on both the European continent and in Northern-America of their Western fondness. The chancellors and public officials of the West-German state, Helmut Kohl (1982-1998) aside, time and again insisted that the issue of a single Germany was a closed one and unattainable if even desirable at all. This view was happily shared by all four victors of World War II. Given the unlikely outcome of a unified Germany in the near future, seemingly empty promises could be made to address what would happen if it would ever occur. The United Kingdom in particular was rather persistent in signaling positive intentions as regards a unified Germany. As Edward Heath accurately puts it in an interview later with Der Spiegel:

"*Naturally we expressed our support of German reunification, because we knew it would never happen.*" (Zelikow & Rice, 1997: 96). This is supported by evidence found in the study by Hayes and James (2014). It was as late as the fall of 1989 British foreign minister at the time, Douglas Hurd, openly argued that issue of German unification was not an urgent matter as it would not occur within the foreseeable future. Furthermore, as stated in Renwick's (2013) work on foreign policy under Thatcher's governance, the remarkable amount of influence the British Prime Minister exerted over Reagan's foreign policy lead to the continued support if the matter of unification arose. During the time the Reagan-administration was in power, the British had never felt themselves forced to deal with the German question.

The French under Mitterrand did not see, in contrast with the British, the Reagan administration as the most favorable variable when it came to their position in European power relations. Where Thatcher's foreign policy could be seen as rather Atlantic-focused, Mitterrand saw the "sheltering of perestroika and the Gorbachev 'experiment' (…) as the single most important dynamic behind the changes occurring in Europe" (Bozo, 2007: 465). According to Bozo, the French kept this in mind in all affairs regarding international politics on the European continent, but this would eventually become most guiding during the process of German unification. Furthermore, unification gone wrong would have the capacity to damage the process of integration, or if gone right could marginalize France in comparison to Germany in EC decision making processes.

On the eastern side of the two Germanys in the late 1980s, the Soviet head of State Mikhail Gorbachev (1985-1991) was primarily occupied with domestic affairs. His perestroika policies, which involved the reformation of the communist party rule in the Soviet Union, was observed by the party members with mixed feelings and surely did not go uncontested. After an extensive period of overall disastrous events—the nasty experience in Afghanistan, Stalin's murder of millions of the Soviet population, economic repression during Brezhnev and lagging military competitiveness—there was still one major source of international prestige for the Soviets, being the resistance it had given to Nazi Germany and the huge sacrifices of Russian lives eventually leading towards the defeat of the Third Reich (Pond, 1994). Furthermore, the East-German state did relatively well compared to other Eastern European areas, providing a stable income for the Soviet state (Zelikow & Rice, 1997). On the ideational side, as stated by the minister of foreign affairs, Shevardnadze (1985-1990) the Soviets had internalized the idea of the existence of two Germanys as the only appropriate one. According to the minister: "The conviction was too deeply rooted in the consciousness of our people that the existence of two German states provided a reliable guarantee for the security of our country and the whole continent—the conviction that an enormous price had been paid for this and that it would be inadmissible to forget it." (Risse, 1997.) This enormous price is obviously pointing towards the heavy

losses the Soviet Union had to suffer in World War II in order to ensure its own survival. Those fallen soldiers were considered national heroes by keeping the Germans at bay for future generations. With a reunified and militarized Germany, potentially as part of the Soviets' rivaling alliance NATO, those deaths could have been perceived as being in vain. On the material level, a reunified sovereign Germany had always been argued to be a negative development on the European continent due to strategic losses. On an ideational level, Soviet leaders had always rejected the idea outright or argued the issue was out of the question until later decades due to the demonization of the intentions of a German people. The dissolution of Germany into two different states embedded in their own political blocs seemed to provide a stable, secure Europe for the time being, and none of the major powers seemed to be willing to change it.

4.2 Phase two: Cracks in the wall

In the latter half of the 1980s the political spectrum changed when the Soviet leadership under Gorbachev became rather progressive towards internal affairs of Eastern Europe. The lack of hardliners in the Soviet top ranks combined with economic deficits of their own resulted in a window of opportunity for Eastern states to claim more autonomy and pronounce their right to self-determination. When the Hungarians allowed East Germans to start pouring into Western European territories and the lack of a proper response of the Soviet Union the prospect of a different future seemed to be confirmed. The influx of East-Germans into Western territories can be seen as the key event initiation the second phase as regards the change in tendencies towards a unified Germany. The assumed strong grip providing internal stability by the harsh rule of the authoritarian regime in East-Germany seemed to show cracks. Civilian unrest under the East-German population reached a peak and the so called *Monday demonstrations* were held in order to critically address the communist party's regime. With the lack of a strong effective response by either the Soviet or the East-German public officials and the tearing down of the wall separating east from west, the notion of a German right to self-determination seemed to have awakened within the borders, and it was up to the external parties to respond upon it.

At the same time the change in leadership in the White House in the United States lead to a more continentally focused foreign policy replacing the previous emphasis on the Atlantic. Under Ronald Reagan (January 1981- January 1989), U.S. foreign policy as regards Europe was mainly inspired and driven by Thatcherian views. George H. Bush (1989-1993), however, wanted to show Thatcher that his policy making was different from that of Reagan's. While still consulting with Thatcher on important affairs regarding world politics, he felt that he should be the one leading the alliance rather than his British counterpart (Renwick, 2013: 229). As a consequence, George H. Bush's

relationship with the West-German Chancellor also seemed more fruitful than Reagan's was, as the new President felt less obliged to please British interests. U.S. favoritism shifted more towards West-Germany after a successful reduction in Short-range Nuclear Forces on NATO's side, with Bush referring to the West-Germans as 'partners in leadership', which did not go unnoticed on the British isles (ibid.: 230). Bush's foreign policy was differing significantly from Reagan's, and its friendly ties to West-Germany forced all major powers on the continent to rethink their position on the German question.

With the rising unrest in East-Germany, the Soviet leadership was eventually forced to take a stance towards the internal affairs of East-Germany and the dynamics of a potential reunification. The Soviet Union could either intervene strongly in order to put a halt to the challenges the German population posed to the pro-Soviet government, or take a more *laissez-faire* kind of approach, letting matters unfold. Military action would imply a renewal of old cold-war tensions, which would damage the positive relations East and West had built up over time. Doing nothing, however, would result in having to deal with a new Germany under Western influence (Zelikow & Rice, 1997:273). As the case of Germany did wield significant ideational values to the Soviet people and identity, loosening the grip on the territories formally owned and governed by the greatest enemy the Soviet Union had ever faced would imply even more challenges to the Soviet identity of a great communist global player. With the challenging of Soviet leadership in an increasing number of Eastern Europe states, adding a German rejection would be another blow to Soviet legitimacy. But the intrinsic ideational values the German state posed the Soviet made reunification even more unacceptable. A militarized single Germany embedded in NATO emerging through self-determination and free elections would therefore be highly problematic for the Soviets' perception on their national history, in particular related to World War II (Pond, 1994). Furthermore, allowing a unified Germany to emerge would likely reopen the issue of the Oder-Neisse line, which was still a rather disputed issue for many Germans. An enlarged Germany would challenge the Soviets perception of historical events just as it did for the British and the French. A single Germany with NATO-friendly tendencies emerging through their own right to self-determination while incorporating democratic values in territories previously governed by Soviet-friendly governments would therefore be the worst possible outcome and ideationally close to, if not totally, unacceptable.

Apart from ideational factors, there are also material incentives for the Soviets to stall the issue of a unified Germany. Gorbachev's internal position would be even more pressured if a single, pro-Western Germany would emerge on the European continent. As the Soviet Union was in a deep economic crisis, the funds were lacking to invest in other Eastern European countries which were also in need of change. A strong Soviet policy in Eastern Europe was non-existent. Capital was needed in order to keep national economies from falling apart, and the Soviet Union had none

(Zelikow & Rice, 1997). Western states were actively looking to fill the vacuum left by the lack of Soviet economic means through investments themselves. To the Soviet Union, East-Germany seemed the last stronghold left. And the West was trying to overrun it (ibid.). This view on the Soviet's perception is strengthened by conversations between Mitterrand and Gorbachev. According to the French president, the Soviet leader would have stated in a phone call that: "the day Germany unites, a Soviet marshal will be sitting in my chair." (Pond, 1994: 160). This change in leadership would imply internal costs as political instability hinders effectiveness of policy making and a worsening of the relations between the East and the West. This worsening in relations would make further cooperation potentially unreachable, thus resulting in suboptimal outcomes due to a mutual lack of trust. The Soviets did not, however, feel entirely isolated in the affair. They did very well perceive the British unwillingness to agree to the issue initially, and the continued friendlike relations between the USSR and French ensured the Soviets that they had a Western partner who cared for their security affairs (Bozo, 2015). In an effort to at least reduce the damage done brought forward by German unification tendencies, it was the Soviet leader who proposed a Four-power meeting for the first time since eighteen years in order to signal seemingly legitimate influence over affairs within German territories (Pond, 1994: 155). By doing so, the role of the four powers would be bigger in determining the outcome, rather than having the two Germanys figuring affairs out by themselves. This would also allow the French and British political elite to further raise their concerns, perhaps making a Germany unified a less tempting possibility for the United States.

What seemed to be an easy promise in the early 1980s of promoting a single Germany under NATO seemed to become an actual possibility in later months of 1989. Existing NATO-members had to deal with the possible outcome which included a sovereign Germany into their military defense organization. As Robert Zoellick, Counselor of the Department of State (1989-1992), at the time argued, it was in the United States' best interest to actively steer the direction of German state building towards NATO-membership rather than seeing how events evolve. In his own words:

> "It was the right thing to do, a slam dunk. A U.S. leadership role would also enable us to better achieve our interests. […]. [O]ur strong support for that process would make it more likely that the German people would voluntarily stay within Western structures. […]. [L]ong-term discrimination or singularization would only plant the seeds of future trouble." (Pond, 1994: 161)

It is typical how Zoellick approaches this affair from a primarily material perspective. It seems like ideational factors were used in a strategic way in order to make sure the outcome fits best with U.S.'s preferences. One could also argue that the spreading of democratic values to parts of Europe which

were previously under communist, authoritarian rule could reaffirm the democratic values emphasized by Western thought. It seems that the U.S. leadership had the luxury of having their material incentives to be directly in line with their ideational incentives. The emergence of a single German state with political sovereignty through self-determination is not conflicting with strategic objectives of ensuring U.S. hegemony after the decline of the Soviet spheres of influence. Moreover, through the continuing positive relations the American and FRD's heads of state had the alignment of both countries' interests became clear. Kohl repeatedly signaled to Bush that their interests were similar, and Kohl would support Bush in all possible discussions when it came to convincing the other Western states of a German unification, embedded in NATO (Zelikow & Rice, 1997).

For the other two victors within NATO, we come across different views on the issue. Both were concerned with a Germany regaining its sovereignty, partly due to objections intrinsic to the issue and partly due to the problems it might present to stability on the European continent. The position of United Kingdom has often been illustrated through the words of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, famous for her "We beat the Germans twice, now they're back" quoted from the European summits. Although seeming rather straightforward, it does illustrate the averseness of the British against a unified, militarized Germany. According to one of her closest advisors and top diplomat Robin Renwick, she feared that "a reunited Germany would be simply too big and too powerful to be just another player in Europe." (Renwick, 2013: 231). The German claims to a right to self-determination should therefore be fine-tuned before they could become a reality. In an interview with the Wall Street journal which took place January 1990, she was asked how she perceived the matter of a unification even if both sides would be willing to go through with it. Thatcher replied, while taking a stance on the compatibility of Western democratic values:

> "[…] the division of Europe is not only a geographical, it is also a ideological division, and of course you will say that Eastern Europe wants to go to democracy. It is much easier to tear down than it is to build up a genuine democracy. Democracy is really about more than one person, one vote, even with a choice of parties." (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2016a)

This view on the Westernizing of Eastern Europe fit with Thatcher's approach when it came to addressing Bush on the topic. The United Kingdom had been actively trying to convince the Americans that unification at the time was not the right outcome, but found a Bush who was time and again willing to support Helmut Kohl in the matter (Renwick, 2013). It was at that point, partly due to the unwillingness of the United States to accept the British point of view, that she shifted her attention to another major power in the international system: The Soviet Union.

Although differing tremendously as regards ideology and military blocs, British Prime Minister Thatcher and Soviet Head of State Gorbachev had the overlapping perceptions on what Europe should look like. On a personal level, Thatcher enjoyed negotiating with Gorbachev, as he was a man she could do business with, as she stated in an interview with the BBC in the mid 1980s (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2016b). As mentioned earlier, the Soviet Union would have been the most likely ally in this affair, seeing the overall reluctance among the military and the political higher spheres against a unified Germany (Renwick, 2013). It was Thatcher who signaled to Gorbachev that although NATO in the past "had been calling for German reunification, the United Kingdom and other west European countries were apprehensive about it." (ibid.: 232). This was also the Soviet Union's biggest objection as regards the issue, as a unified Germany serving NATO's interests was the worst possible outcome given the range of possibilities. Thatcher instrumentally used Gorbachev's unstable internal position in order to try to persuade the U.S. leadership to slow down the process of unification. Why should the positive relations between East and West be risked in order to secure something which can be postponed if needed? New leadership in the Soviet Union was less likely to be as progressive as Gorbachev, and the arrival of a potential hardliner would damage relations further.

As mentioned earlier, the British were not the only ones who cared and worried about the position of the Soviet Union. The French had linked the future of the European continent directly to the internal position of Gorbachev, and his capacity to realize his modernization policies. The French and the Soviets had traditionally close ties, and saw in European cooperation the solution to potential instability. Mitterrand was therefore rather worried when the wall tumbled down and the prospect of a unified Germany arose, not due to the threat a militarized Germany might pose in itself, but rather what the potential rise of a Soviet marshal in the political elite of the Soviet Union might invoke. This was confirmed in a meeting Mitterrand had with Gorbachev in early December, 1989, discussing the matter at hand. Although they were linked through NATO to the West-Germans and the United States, in his perspective on how to secure stability on the European continent Mitterrand "felt more comfortable with you", referring to Gorbachev (Bozo, 2015: 116). During the entire process of the German reunification the French would be arguing for a European solution including both German and Soviet interests in order to secure a safer Europe.

4.3 Phase three: Two plus four equals one Germany

With the free elections in East-Germany in March 1990 the process of unification was accelerating tremendously. When the communist party in East-Germany lost significantly to the Christian

democrats, the instabilities of the East-German economic system became evident. With the emergence of an economic emergency plan resulting in an economic merger between West and East, both sides drew closer. Both areas would be using the Deutschmark as a currency, which the East-Germans could trade their Marks for on a one to one basis. This merger lead to external perceptions on a unified Germany combined with already favorable tendencies among the Americans and the West-Germans to be a very probable outcome. The ten-point plan proposed by Kohl on how to proceed on the matter of unification, which previously had no timeline, could now serve, if accelerated, for the purpose of helping the East-Germans save their economy and furthering political cooperation. The U.S. and the West-German heads of state George Bush and Helmut Kohl were having frequent meetings in order to get their views in accordance with each other and ensuring they would project the same timeline for future reunification. French and British policy makers had overall been persuaded into at least consenting with reunification in the preceding months, and the major obstacle for reunification would seemingly be persuading or coercing the Soviet Union into agreeing upon the matter. Either way, the Two Plus Four treaty kicked off, being initially a Soviet proposal (albeit as a Four-plus-Two, with emphasis on the four powers), which would provide clarity as to how matters would unfold in the future. These official early documents of the Two Plus Four meetings will be looked at to determine what the parties signaled to the outsiders, before moving on to the more informal interstate meetings.

4.3.1 Two Plus Four reports

The initial standings of all parties during the beginning of the Two Plus Four meetings have been archived by Paul E. Gallis (1990) in a report made by the Congressional Research Service. Dated April 16th, the official standings of the four powers are documented. Although still early in the process of the official talks regarding unification, seeing how states presented their motives helps us to distinguish between off the record talks and official meetings. The opening description of each party's perspective is as follows (Gallis, 1990: 3):

> The Federal Republic is seeking to terminate the remaining legal rights and responsibilities held by the four powers over the whole of Germany and Berlin. At the same time, the FRG is seeking to reassure the four powers, as well as other interested nations, that its concomitant goal is to create a framework for European stability within existing institutions. Bonn opposes a general peace treaty and will instead seek bilateral agreements and a multilateral agreement at CSCE that endorses the results of Two Plus Four.
>
> The United States has long supported unification and is pursuing a policy intended to return full sovereignty to a Germany within the NATO structure, and to assure Germany's neighbors, including the

> Soviet Union, that Washington desires a Europe in which stable political and economic relations will replace the forty-five years of division into competing security alliances.
>
> The Soviet Union has consented to unification but remains concerned about the strength of existing NATO forces and the surging economic and political power, centered in the Federal Republic, of the European Community. Soviet leaders seek commitments to reduce the West's conventional and nuclear forces in Europe, and to harness elements of the West's economic strength to the Soviet Union's needs for modernization and internal stability.
>
> France desires a settlement at Two Plus Four that achieves unification and maintains its close ties with the FRG, but preserves French independence of action in the security field and encourages German commitment both to NATO and to European integration through the European Community.
>
> Great Britain has cautiously embraced unification and recognizes the Soviet need for reassurances as Moscow takes decisions to withdraw from Central Europe. London intends to pursue a settlement at the talks on Germany's future that will secure Bonn's continued commitment to NATO arid to a politically visible nuclear umbrella for the Atlantic Alliance which includes a substantial U.S. political and military presence in Europe.

While looking at the official reports on the standings of the different parties, we see that some comments should be made as they are not totally in line with how the different authors for each of the countries have taken the issue into perspective. As Gallis presents it, the Soviets were rather willing to see a Germany unified. According to Zelikow & Rice, the Soviets were in an internal struggle as to whether they could use total rejection as some sort of leverage if NATO was, indeed, not reformed or if it seemed the single Germany would end up in a NATO-centered political structure. The attitudes of the S.U.'s public officials, however, would change drastically over the span of March through the early days in June.

4.3.2 Removing the last barriers

An iteration of meetings between the heads of states of in particular West-Germany and the Soviet Union and their respective ministers of foreign affairs have over the course of three months have had a significant impact on the Soviet Union's stance on the matter of unification. A further peek into Soviet domestic affairs is required In order to make sense of the turnaround in the early summer of 1990. Gorbachev's rise to power and his accompanying policies of political openness and economic reform did not come unchallenged and were highly contested by high-ranking political figures and members of the military. Internal tensions within the Soviet Union's political structure have led to Gorbachev initially being extremely cautious on the issue of a German reunification. As mentioned

earlier, the Soviet grip on territories previously belonging to the former archenemy had been an object of prestige and had simultaneously provided a steady flow of income for the Soviet Union in the preceding years. Losing influence in the heart of Europe would mean that the Soviets had basically lost the cold war, worsening Gorbachev's position even further. It would imply political change of a severe magnitude internally, which would also be rather costly for the Soviet state as a whole. This was amplified further with the increasing influence Western states were gaining in eastern Europe, as they were substituting the lack of Soviet investments with their own (Zelikow & Rice, 1997). The minimal requirement for the Soviets to agree upon a reunification in the very end would be for the Americans to reform NATO into a less anti-Soviet organization (ibid.: 266).

There was, however, a big strategic incentive for Gorbachev to stay on good foot with western leaders. The modernizing of the Soviet state was a rather costly process. Gorbachev needed funds to reform both the political and economic sphere, but there was little. Kohl was very willing to fill the gap partly in order to smoothen out east-west tensions, making reunification a more probable outcome. In meetings during the early months of 1990 Gorbachev and his minister of foreign affairs, Shevardnadze had several meetings with Kohl and Genscher to discuss the topic of favorable loans, often on German initiative (Zelikow & Rice, 1999). As time progressed, so did FRG-Soviet relations through western funding of reform policies. The biggest of these contributions had been made in the middle of May, where Genscher offered the Moscow DM 5 million in credit guarantees (ibid.: 269). Contrary to the Germans, the United States public officials were unwilling to grant the Soviet Union funds, as they would not spend tax-payers' money for the Soviets to subsidize Cuba and renew their grasp on Eastern Europe (ibid.: 265). Guarantees of Genscher to Shevardnadze to keep Soviet monumental landmarks intact smoothened the conversations even further, making continued cooperation a likely path for the future to progress towards.

The most interesting of all meetings between the Soviet and Western heads of states must be the summit of June, 1990. Held in the United States, the main discussion regarded the topic of chemical disarmament on the European continent. However, both parties also discussed the possibility of a potential trade agreement as well as the issue of stability on the European continent. As mentioned earlier, the Soviet economy was anything but stable, and in order to regain competitiveness needed to change significantly. The influx of foreign capital could potentially serve as a stimulator for future productivity growth (Zelikow & Rice, 1999). Where the Americans rather reluctant to provide funds to the Soviets in the past, they were willing to get to an agreement at this summit. When the discussions moved forward towards the issue of a unified Germany, the same old scenario seemed to unfold itself. The Americans claimed that a western, militarized Germany with an increase in the cooperation with the Soviets provided the most stability on the European continent, while the Soviets advocated bipolarity, or at least neutrality, within German borders. After some back

and forth without either party changing their stance on the issue, Bush posited that, given the agreement of Helsinki in 1975, it should be up to the Germans to determine their own political affiliation. The Soviet delegation was shocked to see Gorbachev agree with Bush on the matter. The shifting of mind of the Soviet head of state was formalized shortly after the meeting, with the public declaration of Bush that the idea of the Germans determining what road to wander was indeed shared by both parties. Neither of the two bipolar powers would intervene if Germany were to choose a path the other disliked, and formulated it as follows: "The United States and the Soviet Union are in favor of Germany deciding herself in which alliance she would like to participate after the conclusion of the Two Plus Four settlement. The United States is unequivocally advocating Germany's membership in NATO. However, should Germany prefer to make a different choice, we will respect it." (Zelikow & Rice, 1997: 278). What in the end helped the Soviets ease the blow was the reformation of NATO by encouraging East-West joint operations around the world, making a final end to the anti-Soviet Nature of the western military alliance.

In the final stages of the Two plus Four summits, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was rather disappointed by the lack of support she received from her French counterpart. Although she and her Soviet counterparts had been lobbying for a more active role for the Four powers in the affair (Pond, 1994:157; Zelikow & Rice, 1997: 154), the French were less inclined to settle the German question by only external powers. Even after the Two Plus Four meetings Thatcher remained skeptic towards the issue, and argued the inability of her to put a halt to the reunification is her biggest, unambiguous, diplomatic failure. It tied Europe to Germany, rather than Germany to Europe (Renwick, 2013). Rather than rejecting the matter outright during the Two plus Four meetings, the British voiced a plea for postponement. Seeing the decline of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, Thatcher argued that "only when Eastern Europeans have shown to be capable to function in a pluralistic system, then reunification can be considered." (Renwick, 2013: 231). The English Prime Minister also underlined that the role of the Western powers was vital in protecting West-Germany from Russian forces, and it would only be appropriate if they therefore adhere to the interests of those protecting (ibid.: 231). Having Germany reunified therefore provided no strategic incentives for the United Kingdom intrinsically. The grudging acceptance of the new Germany merely served the purpose of staying on the good side with their long-run ally and future global hegemonic power, the United States.

The literature on the French decision making in the final phases of the reunification process shows a discrepancy between the public officials working under President Mitterrand and head of state himself. Mitterrand is often argued to be very involved with stagnating the process of unification at the time (Pond, 1994: 158), willing to actively shift towards an alliance with the Soviets in order to

put a halt to it rather than relying on U.S. influence (Renwick, 2013). This is, however, not how Bozo (2007, 2015) perceived it according to French historical archives. The French did consult with the Soviets rather often, but differed from them on a crucial point: the German claim to self-determination. As Gorbachev showed to be rather averse of the matter entirely up to the U.S.-USSR summits in June, Mitterrand had always seen the reunification in the end ultimately unavoidable (Bozo, 2015; Lieshout, 2007). In a meeting with Gorbachev when Bush and Kohl were actively steering towards a unified Germany, Mitterrand concluded that "Germany is our friend, but I feel more comfortable with you." (Bozo, 2015: 116). This ambiguity of where the French exactly stood in the issue partly explains why the British did not felt they were supported by Mitterrand as Thatcher expected. It is interesting to see how the positive German-French relations over the course of the years seemed to have influenced the French position regarding the affair. When push eventually came to shove the French president seemed unwilling to pressure the Germans at the Two Plus Four meetings for not going through with the matter. Although not actively stimulating the rise of a single German state, they did not go utmost lengths to stop it either. Instead, as Bozo (2007) convincingly argued, they didn't just settle with but actively pursued a German promise of imminent deepening of European integration through commitments on economic terrains, which would follow in the Maastricht treaty of 1992. Mitterrand had, in its own words, seen the intensified European cooperation as it "preparing for the next century" and in Bozo's (2007: 467) perspective had the increase in European cooperation always been the blueprint of French policy making with the aim of ending possible tensions on the continent. This was a shared feeling by both the French and the German political elite, and in order to smoothen the process and ensure a positive relation between the western parties, the German Bundeskansler made concessions on European economic policy making. Despite internal objections from both the Bundesbank and the Ministry of Finance against a European Monetary Union, Kohl prioritized international cooperation on the political level over national economic interests. Kohl even declared on French national television that the process of a political and economic union as proposed by Mitterrand was agreed upon (Lieshout, 2007). Above all other potential outcomes, the French made it top priority to ensure that political stability on the European continent would be a result of European politics, rather than it, as in the previous half of the century, being solved externally.

5. Analysis

In this section the empirics will be linked to the previously formulated hypotheses that emerged from the theoretical background. As the empirics already consisted of the most relatable events to the puzzle provided, this chapter will deduct the theoretical data which help answer the hypotheses. The chapter will be structured as follows: First off, the main hypotheses formulated under the branch of neoliberal institutionalism will be touched upon. A judgment will be made to what extent the presented expectations fit the evidence provided from the case. After looking into the neoliberalist school of thought, the social constructivist hypotheses will be touched upon in order to get both into perspective.

5.1Neoliberalist hypotheses

For this study we touched upon the neoliberal institutionalist school of thought within the IR discipline to judge the outcome as a result of different state preferences. Given the states' utility functions, interaction would occur in order to secure an outcome which maximizes expected utility gains. We formulated two hypotheses touching upon the nature of the materialist-driven state interaction, one on the concept of Pareto optimality and one which delves into the hegemonic stability theory.

5.1.1 Pareto optimality

States acting in an international system may analyze affairs in terms of absolute gains or losses. That notion is key in order to understand the branch of neoliberal institutionalism and their views on long term cooperation. Under this notion of the importance absolute gains have for states, rather than the more pessimistic view neorealism applies using relative gains, we drew the expectation from the concept of Pareto optimality that states would be indifferent towards other states' gains, as long as the outcome does not negatively affect their utility output. When checking for this Pareto optimality in the process of a German unification, we see that reaching such an outcome is rather difficult. This is partly due to the nature of the issue at hand, and partly due to the difference in bargaining power. As international dynamics regarding state succession almost always involve changes in borders externally or a shift in spheres of influence, there is almost always a loss in utility for one party when the other gains. That factor in itself provides difficulties when reaching an outcome which nears Pareto optimality as it conflicts with the idea that some can benefit without others suffering.

As for the aspect in bargaining power, one could expect a player with a stronger position to be more inclined to take the "easy" gains by playing hardball in interstate interactions, which is exactly what happened in this case. Although the Germans, French and the British were very inclined to take Soviet interests into consideration, letting it affect their expected utility, we see no such behavior with the Americans. Apart from a trade deal which was mutually beneficial to both, there

were no concessions made from the side of the U.S. to soften the blow of a single Germany within NATO. The only small change was the institutional restructuring of NATO itself, but given the U.S. dominance over the Soviet Union, its anti-communist agenda was starting to lose relevance anyway.

It is rather peculiar to see how parties differ in their willingness to grant the other players benefit. One could argue that the unwillingness of the United States to offer the Soviets a better deal should be attributed to their long run rivalry. Taking the materialist perspective, it makes more sense that the United States did not need to come to terms with the Soviets, as an increase in East-West tensions would not result in major costs for the hegemon. Furthermore, with an outcome embedding Germany into a Western political structure, the continental powers would have more material power if a conflict with a possibility for escalation would arise. The military independence of Western Europe would imply less future costs for the United States if push would come to shove. The best possible strategy for the United States was therefore to defect on the other players and pursue their own interests in order to maximize their utility, even in the long run. This was not the case for all other external parties. As France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union did not possess material overweight similar to the U.S., their utility functions were more dependent upon the other players' strategies. This increased interdependency encourages cooperative behavior to emerge, as defecting early may lead to long term losses. It seems Tit-for-Tat-like behavior, and by doing so reaching the Pareto frontier, is less likely to occur when there is a difference in bargaining strength and when utility functions differ significantly. In other words, defective behavior becomes more attractive when the threat of retaliation is not that detrimental. We must therefore refute the hypothesis that the states have been willing to grant other players additional benefits as long as it didn't hurt them in the process. This was as mentioned partly due to the nature of the issue at hand, in which external shifts in borders would always involve winners and losers, but also in the nature of the negotiations, with the global hegemon being unwilling to see their expected utility drop by simply preserving the preferences of other players.

5.1.2 Hegemonic Stability

Given the hypothesis presented under the section regarding the hegemonic stability theory, the expectation was formulated that the restructuring of a state was more likely to be actualized if the outcome was in line with the hegemonic state's preferences. Further insights from the section showed that a hegemonic state could provide long-term stability by adjusting the utility functions of minor states in the system, therefore stimulating cooperative behavior.

Evidence from the case of the German unification implies that the role of systemic hegemony has been crucial in determining the outcome of the emerging German state. More than being an equal partner in the negotiations on the topic and interstate interaction, the United States proved to

be an active player in facilitating and smoothening the process. Being able to cope with three overall reluctant actors that yield significant political influence and override and adjust their preferences gave a clear indicator of the hegemonic state's relative power in the matter. This becomes clear when, due to a change in preferences for the United States, both France and the United Kingdom were forced to alter their preferences as well. This happened as early as in the beginning of the second phase. Although reluctance is the key word here, both actors were already adjusting their preferences to be more in line with the hegemon. As staying on the right side of the Americans was apparently key for both actors, an absolute rejection of a single Germany seemed a too costly strategy to follow. Furthermore, if push eventually would come to shove and matters would escalate, France and the United Kingdom were likely to get to the short end of the stick, given the significant differences in material means. The lack of material power on the French and British side—and therefore the lack of bargaining power—is what forced them to a strategy of making the United States reconsider their position. With the determination the U.S. leadership under Bush showing such a heavy preference of supporting the German people's claim to a single Germany, rejecting the issue altogether seemed likely to result in the worst possible outcome: a worsening in the relation with the hegemon while also standing idly by and having to see a unified Germany.

As for the USSR, they seemed unaffected by the U.S. dominance in the international system until way later in the process of unification than the western powers. During the second phase, the Soviet policy makers were still actively signaling their rejection of the rise of a single, NATO-embedded Germany, even after the U.S. preferences became very clear. It was not until the end of May that the turnaround took place. Looking strictly to material incentives, the late change of Soviet minds compared to West-Europeans can be attributed to two causes: One, the USSR were way more opposed towards a unified Germany than the French and British powers and two, even when cooperating with the global hegemon, the USSR would not have benefitted as much as the Western-Europeans. Although the French and the British had a significant stake in remaining the two major Western powers on the European continent, they did not extend their zones of influence or received payments to such lengths as the Soviets did. When the U.S. policy makers showed their intentions of seeing Germany unified, the Western powers did not refute the idea outright, but tried to steer the eventual solution in a certain direction. The French and British public officials presented their objections as differences in how to achieve the same goal the U.S. had: European stability. For the Soviet Union, the ultimate goal in terms of priority of preferences shifted over the course of time. When it became clear the hegemonic state was determined to see the German unification process succeed, i.e. signaled their optimal outcome, the Soviet Union chose to stay on good feet with the Americans in order to ensure future cooperation, or at least to avoid old Cold War tendencies. The sole commitment the Americans made to the Soviets to ease the blow was the promise of a

reformed NATO, but this would also be in American best interests as, if the Soviets had shown to be willing to cooperate, should not be considered the ultimate enemy.

Given these insights on how the Americans were very active to make all parties conform to the utility function of the hegemonic state, we can therefore corroborate the hypothesis that the states were likely to reach an agreement when it is in the hegemon's best interests. As we can see here, the active pursuing of a Germany unified in Western spheres by the Americans and the proper adjusting of the states with less bargaining power to the hegemon's utility function, has indeed led to the restructuring of the German state in such a way fitting the hegemonic state.

5.2 Social constructivist hypotheses

Applying the social constructivist lens allows for different kinds of observations to be made in the case of the German unification process. As for this study, we looked into the values of spreading democratic ideas and the concept of a German right to self-determination. Although both values seemed to be underappreciated, ideational factors did play a role in smoothening the process in the endgame, especially when looking at the Soviet turnaround.

5.2.1 Spreading democratic values

The appreciation of democratic values is embedded within Western cultures ever since liberalism gained ground in the philosophical sphere. We therefore assumed that Western states were likely to convince other Western states to adhere to those same values. The three Western states were therefore expected to stimulate the process of German unification in such a way that the outcome would conform with their views on democracy. If we look at this case, we find indicators that ideational factors for some parties have been instrumentalized for strategic gains. Although within the ideational discourse on the issue the norm of self-determination was far more dominant than its democratic counterpart, we still found evidence which can place the parties' stance in perspective. Although not actively stimulating the process of democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, and more specifically in East-Germany, the lack of intervention from the side of the Soviets during the *Monday revolutions* is what is most peculiar about the whole affair. Out of respect for the long-term relations with the Soviets and Gorbachev's internal struggle with the communist party, the continental powers did not publicly address the events happening in the Eastern part of Europe. However, the idea of having people determine their own leadership was fitting with Gorbachev's ideals of his *Glasnov* and *Perestroika* policies. We can therefore see, with the lack of Soviet interference while having strategic incentives to do so, that this appreciation of democratic characteristics was way more present in determining the Soviets stance towards the issue than it was for the western Europeans. This is rather peculiar, given the fact that the Soviet state had no such tradition of embracing democratic

values. The Western Europeans could have pushed harder for an outcome which would secure a German democratic system, but refrained from doing so until the United States showed their supportive nature of Kohl's reunification agenda. This holds especially true for the United Kingdom's perspective on the matter, with the head of government arguing that democracy is not something that is easily transitioned into other regions of the world and should be a slow and steady process. This in fact contradicts our expectations given the dominant tradition of democratic values in the identity of Western states. As for the United States, having their strategic incentives in line with their national ideational underpinnings, they have been actively seeking a single Germany under democratic rule, although the norm of self-determination received by far more emphasis.

As for the hypothesis formulated in order to test the effect of the norm of spreading democratic values, we can see that the British have been very instrumental in using this norm to fit their own interests. As Kohl perhaps accurately described it, Thatcher had been "ice-cold in pursuit of British interests" (Renwick, 2013:232), willing to set aside ideational factors if they were an obstacle for material ends. Rather than aiming to spread the cosmopolitan norm at all times, the British in particular refused to do so when the outcome of it would not serve their interest.

5.2.2 German right to self-determination

As opposed to the norm of spreading democratic values, the question as to whether there was a German right to self-determination was more contested. The parties were divided on the topic. France and the United States did think there was one, whereas the British and the Soviets seemed to contest this matter heavily. Far away from the European continent, the Bush administration did not fear the idea of a unified Germany in terms of it threatening American way of living or the American identity. The French did always see a role for active German participation in the constitution of European institutions, and their close cooperation ever since the 1960s contributed to an accepting view of the German people. Over time, the enmity between the French and the Germans had disappeared due to shared goals and a common view on the future that awaited Europe, apparently to such an extent that the French were willing to accept a fully sovereign Germany back on the world stage. It is very peculiar to see how the Soviet head of state turned around in the summit of June 1990. The sudden turn of Gorbachev's position on the matter could be interpreted as a rather elaborate strategy if the Soviets planned on letting go of their claims on Eastern German territories. It makes more sense, however, that given the role of Gorbachev as him being the normative entrepreneur of new values, he simply conformed to his beliefs. By being, in a way, rhetorically entrapped to follow up on his previously initiated path to openness and reforms, defying on those very values would contradict every reform Gorbachev put his effort in. As the main reason for the turn in the Soviet aversion was retraceable to the 1975 Helsinki pact, we surprisingly found not

preferences being the ultimate decisive factor, but ideas. This suggests that the Soviet interests were not simply given but, by initiating an internal process towards a more open and reformist country, became more susceptible to a certain way of reasoning. The Soviet preferences seem therefore to be constituted in a short time-span, which involved the need to take certain new ideational factors into account. As for the British, there was a case for not recognizing a German right to self-determination. Although they had ideational underpinnings to recognize the German state as one which could be given shape by its own domestic population rather than by external factors, they were still troubled by previous disasters with German sovereignty. Other than with the hypothesis on the spreading of democratic values, one could argue that the idea of a German right to self-determination has not been instrumentalized in order to secure material interests by the British.

We can judge the role of the idea of a German self-determination as indeed having a role in determining the outcome of the negotiation processes. This became most evident by the Soviets seeming to be persuaded by the notion of the right of self-determination of states even when it is not in their clear interests, or might even damage their expected utility in the process. The French and American perspective on there being a German right to self-determination seems to have been sincere, but we cannot exclude the possibility that they were not using those values in order to pursue their interests. They were, in this case at least, more strong than the norm of spreading democracy. This can perhaps be retraceable to the overall view on state politics, where state sovereignty is more of a fundamental principle than democratic values are.

6. Conclusion

When looking at the case of German unification which took place in the summer of 1990, we see that a question which arose forty years earlier became relevant again: how should the major powers deal with the always promising and capable German state? In contrast with similar dilemmas in the past, the Germans were now accepted by their former enemies into larger political communities. This study aimed to look into the nature of the dynamics, to answer the underlying question: "*Why did the four victors of World War Two agree upon and contributed to the reunification of Germany?"* By looking into theories put forth by the neoliberal institutionalist and social constructivist school of thought we examined to what extent ideas or interests have played a significant role in determining the outcome of the process. By doing so we touched upon the fundamental debate within the IR discipline: is there room for norms and ideas in interstate interaction? Judging from this case, all participating states were very calculative of their own utility functions and were able to sort their preferences. Three out of four states were unwilling to see a Germany emerge as sovereign and militarized as it once was, but were not blinded by purely normative aspects to lose sight of what was materially achievable and what was not. None of the non-hegemonic states were willing to let matters escalate to a point where they worsened relations with the United States to such an extent that it would become very costly, which provided supportive evidence of the hegemonic stability theory. Yet the unwillingness of the United States to compromise on a potential delay of the reunification, something all other actors wanted as the very least, shows that the Pareto frontier has not been reached. The strong hegemonic position the United States found themselves in enabled them to do close to no concessions on the issue whatsoever, granting the hegemon the best achievable outcome. This left the European powers with no room for actual bargaining, and although they tried, they simply had to conform to the wishes of the U.S.-German bloc as the alternatives were too costly. Where the Americans used coercive bargaining, the West-German political elite adopted a policy of reassurance. Time and again Chancellor Kohl had to pledge his good intentions to his Western European allies although receiving little positive reaction. In the relations with the Soviets, the West-Germans seem to have played a Tit-For-Tat kind of strategy, in which they ensured future cooperation with the Soviets in order to increase the likeliness of a favorable unification process. One could argue the Soviets were "bribed" by short term gains, but this is an inappropriate term for describing the initiation of longer-term financial cooperation. By investing heavily into the Soviet economy the Germans also altered their own utility function, making them willing to cooperate even further with the Soviets and vice versa.

In terms of ideational factors playing a role in the affair, we see to some surprise that the party most susceptible to these was the Soviet Union. Being the most unlikely party to have their behavior steered by these particular ideational variables, we see that in the final stages they have

played a huge role in the accepting of the German unification. The appreciation of democratic values combined with no utmost strategic urgency resulted into a lack of intervention in Eastern Europe as a whole. For the German case this involved the unhindered movement for civil rights in Eastern Germany. The compliance with the set norm in 1975 that states have their own right to self-determination has played a vital role in the final rounds of the negotiations. For those most likely to adhere to these values, we see that in particular the British were very hesitant to comply at the very instant. This should be seen as a strategic failure, as the Western European parties could have anticipated the strong U.S. push for unification, and therefore could have adjusted their preferences accordingly. By arguing the East-Germans are not ready for democratic values and questioning the internal, rather than Four Power, solution of the unification issue the British have suffered tremendously in terms of them being part of the cosmopolitan normative community.

When touching upon the debate of interests versus ideas, we see that state preferences were the decisive factor in determining the outcome of the unification. The strong influence of the hegemonic stability theory provides significant evidence for it. The pace at which matters unfolded was in none of the parties interests, except of the one with the strongest bargaining position. Ideational factors, however, have played a role among some of the actors. The French could and probably would have contested the issue to a larger extent or cooperated with the Soviets more actively if they did not perceive a German right to self-determination as to be appropriate. The final turnaround for the Soviets was also inspired by this notion of a people's right to self-determination, but one can wonder whether they would not have accepted the matter in the end after all if solely looking at material motives. Most peculiar are the British that in a way disproved the significance of the ideational variables in their particular perspective as they discarded many of the norms they previously subscribed to.

All in all, this study has aimed to provide an overview of what the decisive factors were for four different larger powers in the international system to agree upon the restructuring of a specific state. The nature of the study forced us to take a more general perspective, which possibly has its limitations compared to an in-depth single case study. The actual processes and dynamics for a single particular case have been underemphasized by this study, but that was in order to reach a more general judgment of what the decisive factors for the restructuring of this state were. For future research into the meaning of norms, one is advised to look into what exactly happened at the June summits that made Gorbachev change his mindset from purely strategic to partly ideational. Another peculiarity is the non-compliance of the cosmopolitan norm by the British, and one can investigate whether this was case-specific or a more general British perception on the world.

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Appendix A: Two Plus Four Treaty

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Treaty

on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany

Moscow, 12 September 1990;

Declaration suspending the Operation of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities

New York, 1 October 1990

[The Treaty entered into force on 15 March 1991]

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty
November 1991

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TREATY
ON THE FINAL SETTLEMENT WITH RESPECT TO GERMANY

The Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America,

Conscious of the fact that their peoples have been living together in peace since 1945;

Mindful of the recent historic changes in Europe which make it possible to overcome the division of the continent;

Having regard to the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole, and the corresponding wartime and post-war agreements and decisions of the Four Powers;

Resolved in accordance with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations[1] to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;

Recalling the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe[2], signed in Helsinki;

Recognizing that those principles have laid firm foundations for the establishment of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe;

Determined to take account of everyone's security interests;

Convinced of the need finally to overcome antagonism and to develop co-operation in Europe;

Confirming their readiness to reinforce security, in particular by adopting effective arms control, disarmament and confidence-building measures; their willingness not to regard each other as adversaries but to work for a relationship of trust and co-operation; and accordingly their readiness to consider positively setting up appropriate institutional arrangements within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe;

Welcoming the fact that the German people, freely exercising their right of self-determination, have expressed their will to bring about the unity of Germany as a state so that they will be able to serve the peace of the world as an equal and sovereign partner in a united Europe;

Convinced that the unification of Germany as a state with definitive borders is a significant contribution to peace and stability in Europe;

Intending to conclude the final settlement with respect to Germany;

Recognizing that thereby, and with the unification of Germany as a democratic and peaceful state, the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole lose their function;

Represented by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs who, in accordance with the Ottawa Declaration of 13 February 1990, met in Bonn on 5 May 1990, in Berlin on 22 June 1990, in Paris on 17 July 1990 with the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, and in Moscow on 12 September 1990;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

(1) The united Germany shall comprise the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the whole of Berlin. Its external borders shall be the borders of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic

[1] Treaty Series No. 67 (1946), Cmd. 7015.
[2] Cmnd. 6198.

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Republic and shall be definitive from the date on which the present Treaty comes into force. The confirmation of the definitive nature of the borders of the united Germany is an essential element of the peaceful order in Europe.

(2) The united Germany and the Republic of Poland shall confirm the existing border between them in a treaty that is binding under international law.

(3) The united Germany has no territorial claims whatsoever against other states and shall not assert any in the future.

(4) The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic shall ensure that the constitution of the united Germany does not contain any provision incompatible with these principles. This applies accordingly to the provisions laid down in the preamble, the second sentence of Article 23, and Article 146 of the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany.

(5) The Governments of the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America take formal note of the corresponding commitments and declarations by the Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic and declare that their implementation will confirm the definitive nature of the united Germany's borders.

ARTICLE 2

The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic reaffirm their declarations that only peace will emanate from German soil. According to the constitution of the united Germany, acts tending to and undertaken with the intent to disturb the peaceful relations between nations, especially to prepare for aggressive war, are unconstitutional and a punishable offence. The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic declare that the united Germany will never employ any of its weapons except in accordance with its constitution and the Charter of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 3

(1) The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic reaffirm their renunciation of the manufacture and possession of and control over nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. They declare that the united Germany, too, will abide by these commitments. In particular, rights and obligations arising from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1 July 1968[1] will continue to apply to the united Germany.

(2) The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, acting in full agreement with the Government of the German Democratic Republic, made the following statement on 30 August 1990 in Vienna at the Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe:

> "The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany undertakes to reduce the personnel strength of the armed forces of the united Germany to 370,000 (ground, air and naval forces) within three to four years. This reduction will commence on the entry into force of the first CFE agreement. Within the scope of this overall ceiling no more than 345,000 will belong to the ground and air forces which, pursuant to the agreed mandate, alone are the subject of the Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The Federal Government regards its commitment to reduce ground and air forces as a significant German contribution to the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. It assumes that in follow-on negotiations the other participants in the negotiations, too, will render their contribution to enhancing security and stability in Europe, including measures to limit personnel strengths."

The Government of the German Democratic Republic has expressly associated itself with this statement.

(3) The Governments of the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America take note of these statements by the Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic.

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[1] Treaty Series No. 88 (1970), Cmnd. 4474.

ARTICLE 4

(1) The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics state that the united Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will settle by treaty the conditions for and the duration of the presence of Soviet armed forces on the territory of the present German Democratic Republic and of Berlin, as well as the conduct of the withdrawal of these armed forces which will be completed by the end of 1994, in connection with the implementation of the undertaking of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 3 of the present Treaty.

(2) The Governments of the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America take note of this statement.

ARTICLE 5

(1) Until the completion of the withdrawal of the Soviet armed forces from the territory of the present German Democratic Republic and of Berlin in accordance with Article 4 of the present Treaty, only German territorial defence units which are not integrated into the alliance structures to which German armed forces in the rest of German territory are assigned will be stationed in that territory as armed forces of the united Germany. During that period and subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Article, armed forces of other states will not be stationed in that territory or carry out any other military activity there.

(2) For the duration of the presence of Soviet armed forces in the territory of the present German Democratic Republic and of Berlin, armed forces of the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America will, upon German request, remain stationed in Berlin by agreement to this effect between the Government of the united Germany and the Governments of the states concerned. The number of troops and the amount of equipment of all non-German armed forces stationed in Berlin will not be greater than at the time of signature of the present Treaty. New categories of weapons will not be introduced there by non-German armed forces. The Government of the united Germany will conclude with the Governments of those states which have armed forces stationed in Berlin treaties with conditions which are fair taking account of the relations existing with the states concerned.

(3) Following the completion of the withdrawal of the Soviet armed forces from the territory of the present German Democratic Republic and of Berlin, units of German armed forces assigned to military alliance structures in the same way as those in the rest of German territory may also be stationed in that part of Germany, but without nuclear weapon carriers. This does not apply to conventional weapon systems which may have other capabilities in addition to conventional ones but which in that part of Germany are equipped for a conventional role and designated only for such. Foreign armed forces and nuclear weapons or their carriers will not be stationed in that part of Germany or deployed there.

ARTICLE 6

The right of the united Germany to belong to alliances, with all the rights and responsibilities arising therefrom, shall not be affected by the present Treaty.

ARTICLE 7

(1) The French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America hereby terminate their rights and responsibilities relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole. As a result, the corresponding, related quadripartite agreements, decisions and practices are terminated and all related Four Power institutions are dissolved.

(2) The united Germany shall have accordingly full sovereignty over its internal and external affairs.

ARTICLE 8

(1) The present Treaty is subject to ratification or acceptance as soon as possible. On the German side it will be ratified by the united Germany. The Treaty will therefore apply to the united Germany.

(2) The instruments of ratification or acceptance shall be deposited with the Government of the united Germany. That Government shall inform the Governments of the other Contracting Parties of the deposit of each instrument of ratification or acceptance.

ARTICLE 9

The present Treaty shall enter into force for the united Germany, the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America on the date of deposit of the last instrument of ratification or acceptance by these states[1].

ARTICLE 10

The original of the present Treaty, of which the English, French, German and Russian texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, which shall transmit certified true copies to the Governments of the other Contracting Parties.

In witness whereof, the undersigned plenipotentiaries, duly authorized thereto, have signed this Treaty.

Done at Moscow this twelfth day of September 1990.

[Here follow the signatures]

[1] The Treaty entered into force on 15 March 1991.

AGREED MINUTE TO THE TREATY ON THE FINAL SETTLEMENT WITH RESPECT TO GERMANY OF 12 SEPTEMBER 1990

Any questions with respect to the application of the word " deployed " as used in the last sentence of paragraph 3 of Article 5 will be decided by the Government of the united Germany in a reasonable and responsible way taking into account the security interests of each Contracting Party as set forth in the preamble.

[Here follow the signatures]

DECLARATION SUSPENDING THE OPERATION OF QUADRIPARTITE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governments of the French Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America,

Represented by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs meeting at New York on 1 October 1990,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany signed at Moscow on 12 September 1990, which provides for the termination of their rights and responsibilities relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole,

Declare that the operation of their rights and responsibilities relating to Berlin and to Germany as a whole shall be suspended upon the unification of Germany, pending the entry into force of the Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany. As a result, the operation of the corresponding, related quadripartite agreements, decisions and practices and all related Four Power institutions shall likewise be suspended upon the unification of Germany.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, represented by its Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of the German Democratic Republic, represented by its Minister for Education and Science, take note of this declaration.

[Here follow the signatures]

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