



GERMANY'S EU POLICY ON ASYLUM AND DEFENCE

De-Europeanization by Default?

Edited by Gunther Hellmann



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Preface

More than fifteen years have passed since German unification in 1990. Ever since, observers have wondered whether (and if so, how) Germany's foreign policy would change as a result of the dramatic upheavals in Europe in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall. For a long time most observers emphasized aspects of continuity. Only recently (and hesitantly) have voices become more pronounced which are arguing that change in Germany may be more profound and more far reaching than initially expected.

This book summarizes the results of a research project which examined one particular dimension of this process, Germany's European policy. It comes out decisively on the side of those scholars who believe that change in German foreign policy, especially in Germany's policy towards and within the European Union, has undergone significant changes. Once a model 'Europeanist', Germany has become increasingly reluctant during the 1990s to support the progressive implementation of key projects of European integration. Neither an instance of a planned strategic change nor a result of an inevitable adaptation to structural shifts at the systemic level, these changes in German foreign policy, incremental yet significant as they are, evade both deterministic and voluntaristic accounts of foreign policy change. Integrating insights from foreign policy analysis, integration theory and social theory, the volume develops an innovative framework for analysis that is applied to Germany's European asylum and refugee policy as well as its security and defence policy. The origins of both policy fields at the European level can be traced back to initiatives that were supported by or even originated in Germany. However, as the 1990s progressed, Germany increasingly obstructed further institutionalization. While in the field of asylum and refugee policy the Amsterdam summit marks a clear turning point in Germany's position, the transformation of German policies on European security and defence proceeded rather as an incremental decrease in material support, aggravating substantive progress in the policy field more broadly. An unanticipated consequence of earlier initiatives, in both cases Germany has found it increasingly difficult to live up to the expectations it has helped to raise.

The two cases which the two core chapters by Monika Bösche and Wolfgang Wagner examine in depth point to a more far-reaching

conclusion – tentative as it may yet be. The authors of this volume collectively believe (although some may do so more strongly than others) that Germany is in the midst of a process of far-reaching change. This process of change, we believe, is best captured by the formula ‘de-Europeanization by default’ in the subtitle of the book. In a nutshell, the formula tries to capture the argument that the foundation of Germany’s Europeanized identity turns out to be much more fragile than hitherto suggested in the literature. Distinguishing broadly between ‘Realist’ and (liberal) ‘Europeanist’ assessments we find that neither of these two perspectives fully captures the dynamic interplay between Germany’s European policy, on the one hand, and the prevailing (and changing) European governance structures, on the other, since they essentially offer two variants of inevitability. Whereas Europeanists tend to depict Germany’s Europeanization as a one-way street towards ever closer union and a corresponding consolidation of Germany’s Europeanized identity, Realists in contrast think that a return of *Realpolitik* practices is equally inevitable given Germany’s triple increase in power, security and freedom of action. The concluding chapter in particular argues that neither is convincing by showing what value-added our interactionist framework provides. In particular it shows that what we do observe at the micro-level is a mixture of decisions which – even though they may be both driven by a shallow Europeanized predisposition on the part of German decision-makers and constrained by the institutional environment of the EU – combine to produce changing policies, a changing identity and even changing institutions at the macro-level which were either unexpected or not accounted for in terms of their underlying causal mechanisms by traditional accounts. When push came to shove, that is, when a choice had to be made between narrowly defined ‘national interests’, on the one hand, and state-transcending ‘European interests’, on the other, ‘Europeanist’ instincts seldom prevailed over ‘nationalist’ instincts among German decision-makers. This became increasingly obvious as the 1990s progressed. Thus whereas Germany may have appeared to be a ‘tamed power’ against the background of its policies from the 1950s through the first half of the 1990s (as Peter Katzenstein has most prominently argued) it now appears to be more fittingly described as a ‘lamed power’ instead. It is unclear, however, whether the (Europeanized) German eagle is crashing, slowly descending or launching into something, or whether a ‘Germanized’ German eagle may once again be rising. The painting on the cover of this book by the German artist Georg Baselitz (which hangs behind the desk of Chancellor Schröder in the German Chancellery and which was one of

his favourite pieces of art) depicts this as an open question because Baselitz is known among others for his inclination to present his objects upside down. This is also how we would like to look at it: whatever our research may have yielded in terms of results, the future path of Germany's foreign policy remains open.

As always, research projects such as this one are not possible without the support of many others. Generous financial support for the project (and especially for Wolfgang Wagner and Monika Bösche in support of carrying out the research for their case studies) was provided by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) as part of the priority programme 'Governance in the EU' which was coordinated by Beate Kohler-Koch. Support was also provided by the ASKO-Foundation and Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main. Several colleagues have helped along the way to sharpen the argument. Foremost I want to thank Rainer Baumann and Benjamin Herborth. Rainer has accompanied the project from its inception and has contributed constructive criticism all along the way well beyond his role as a co-author of Chapter 1. Although Benjamin joined in later, his input was certainly no less important. He also provided valuable criticism during the second half of the duration of the project, especially by helping out in refining the English version of the case study on Germany's European asylum and refugee policy and in co-authoring an earlier article version of the argument together with the other authors of this volume. We also thank several colleagues who commented on parts of this volume in the context of two workshops and several national and international conferences, in particular: Alberto Achermann, Chaya Arora, Helmut Breitmeier, Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Christiansen, Matthias Dembinski, Thomas Diez, Andreas Hasenclever, Gerard Holden, Markus Jachtenfuchs, Patrick T. Jackson, Sandra Lavenex, Dirk Peters, Ralph Piotrowski, Peter Katzenstein, Frank Schimmelfennig, Alexander Wendt, Reinhard Wolf and Antje Wiener. For research assistance and technical support we thank Sebastian Enskat, Manfred Höh, Philipp Hölzing, Volkan Ictürk, Bianca Kludt, Sonja Schirmbeck, Christian Weber and Lucy Wills. Remaining errors and omissions are the responsibility of the editor and the authors. Finally we thank Georg Baselitz for granting permission to use his painting 'Adlerpartitur III' for the cover of this volume.

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