

SECOND EDITION

# The German Question

*A Cultural, Historical, and  
Geopolitical Exploration*

**Dirk Verheyen**

*Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles*

Westview Press

A Member of the Perseus Books Group

DD257  
.25  
.V47  
1999



# Contents

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Copyright © 1999 by Westview Press, A Member of the Perseus Books Group

Published in 1999 in the United States of America by Westview Press, 5500 Central Avenue, Boulder, Colorado 80301-2877, and in the United Kingdom by Westview Press, 12 Hid's Copse Road, Cumnor Hill, Oxford OX2 9JJ

Find us on the World Wide Web at [www.westviewpress.com](http://www.westviewpress.com)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data  
Verheyen, Dirk.

The German question : a cultural, historical, and geopolitical exploration / Dirk Verheyen. — 2nd ed.

p. cm.  
Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 0-8133-6878-2

1. German reunification question (1949–1990). 2. Political culture—Germany. 3. Germany—History—Unification, 1990. 4. Germany—Foreign relations—1945— I. Title.

DD257.25.V47 1999  
943.087—dc21

99-22456  
CIP

The paper used in this publication meets the requirements of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1984.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

67901  
1223

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<b>Introduction</b>	1
Defining the German Question, 1	
The German National Journey: A Sketch, 5	
Notes, 11	
<b>1 A Troubled Identity and a Difficult Fatherland</b>	13
A Troubled National Identity, 15	
A Difficult Fatherland, 20	
Beyond the Illiberal Tradition: Voices of Doubt and Dissent, 28	
Conclusion, 34	
Notes, 36	
<b>2 Cultural Change and National Identity in West Germany, 1945–1990</b>	43
Postwar West Germany and the Question of Cultural Change, 43	
Political Culture in West Germany, 46	
Burdens of the Past, 57	
Nationalism and National Identity in Postwar West Germany, 61	
Notes, 66	
<b>3 East Germany: An Enduring Legacy?</b>	75
Political Culture and National Identity in the GDR Before 1989, 78	
The Prussian Factor, 83	
Notes, 88	

interprets it as an "assertion of the German soul," a form of German Romanticized fundamentalism filled with backward-looking sentimentalism, uncomplicated by troubling political or historical questions, but focused instead on positive, traditional aspects of "homeland." Kramer, "Being German," in her *Europeans*, pp. 493–508. The broadcasting of a documentary series on the Holocaust triggered very different reactions, however. On these matters, see also Ash, "The Life of Death," in his *The Uses of Adversity*, pp. 120–142.

81. Kohl, *Reden, 1982–1984*, pp. 106, 111. The speech given in early May 1985 by FRG President Richard von Weizsäcker acquired particular fame in this context. It is reprinted in Richard von Weizsäcker, *Von Deutschland aus* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987), pp. 11–35.

82. Quoted in Dennison I. Rusinow, "Old Wounds: Reflections on the Storm over V-E Day 1985," *UFSI* (Universities Field Staff International) *Reports*, nr. 15, 1985, p. 2.

83. On the West German response to these foreign concerns, see Schulz and Danylow, *Bewegung in der deutschen Frage?* See also Beate Gödde-Baumanns, "Die deutsche Frage in der französischen Geschichtsschreibung," and Krzysztof Baczkowski et al., "Deutschland und die deutsche Frage in der polnischen Geschichtsschreibung," both in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 4 April 1987. Shifts in international images and perceptions of Germany and the Germans are analyzed by Karl-Rudolf Korte in "Deutschlandbilder—Akzentverlagerungen der deutschen Frage seit den siebziger Jahren," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 15 January 1988. More generally, see also Manfred Koch-Hillebrecht, ed., *Das Deutschenbild* (München: Beck Verlag, 1977).

## The Unification of Germany and the Transformation of Europe

### Winter of Turbulence and Discontent

The astounding events of fall 1989 completely shook just about all of the German "certainties" of the previous forty years. Events unfolded with a rapidity that left observers and policymakers alike breathless.<sup>1</sup> Amid spreading political protest, the true dimensions of the fundamental crisis of East Germany's socioeconomic and political system became fully manifest, as discussion and recrimination began about its causes and who was to blame.<sup>2</sup> The mass exodus of East Germans to the West led to the collapse of the Honecker regime in November and the breaching of the Berlin Wall. A brief SED interregnum followed, led first by Egon Krenz and then by Hans Modrow, with whom West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl clearly did not wish to deal in any serious longer-term way. As economic and political collapse became imminent, the days of Communist rule in the GDR were numbered. Free elections, the first in that area of Germany since 1932, were scheduled for May 1990 and then rescheduled for mid-March 1990, in view of a worsening crisis.

Meanwhile, events in the GDR began to have their international implications. Kohl offered a rather daring ten-point plan for German confederation, with continued NATO membership, in November 1989, without consulting his closest allies.<sup>3</sup> His go-it-alone assertiveness was a demonstration of West Germany's increased self-confidence in an environment of collapsing Communist rule in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union was about to lose one of its closest allies in Eastern Europe and made suggestions regarding a possible German confedera-

tion outside both NATO and the Warsaw Pact in the hope of salvaging as much of its position as possible. GDR leader Modrow echoed this idea with a January 1990 proposal for a neutralized united Germany. Both ideas were clearly reminiscent of various (Soviet) ideas of the early 1950s, and were flatly rejected by a West German government that had increasingly worried Western allies to contend with.<sup>4</sup> The FRG's allies were concerned about the Federal Republic's future in both NATO and the EC, and it fell especially to FRG Foreign Minister Genscher to provide the needed assurances. It was also Genscher who sought to break a deadlock over possible NATO membership of a reunited Germany by suggesting that NATO forces should stay clear of GDR territory in a united Germany and that the USSR should be allowed to maintain a contingent of forces on East German territory for a prearranged period after unification.

By early 1990, it was clear that full German reunification was all but inevitable, and all confederation ideas, predicated on a continued existence in some form of two separate German states, found their end in history's dustbin. The rapidity of change rendered obsolete the ideas of analysts like Anne-Marie Burley, who wrote in late 1989: "Stability in Europe means the maintenance of the existing international structure: two superpowers and two Germanies. Stability in the G.D.R. means reform without the threat of reunification. . . . [R]ecognizing the German division as permanent could be the final step toward overcoming it."<sup>5</sup>

The human exodus from East to West Germany continued, economic conditions in the GDR worsened steadily, and East German opinion swung clearly in the direction of unification with the West. In a November 1989 survey, only 16 percent of GDR citizens had expressed strong support for unification, while 32 percent were moderately in favor, and 52 percent were either moderately or strongly opposed to the idea. By February/March 1990, however, 84 percent were moderately or strongly in favor of unification, while only 16 percent remained moderately or strongly opposed.<sup>6</sup> In addition, an interesting 60 percent of GDR citizens professed support for the notion of a militarily neutral united Germany.<sup>7</sup>

It is also worth noting, however, that opinion polling in March 1990 in East Germany detected a significant difference among generations as far as levels of identification with "Germany" and the "GDR" were concerned. Of those born before 1930, 74 percent professed a strong sense of being German, with only 22 percent stressing a more primary GDR identity. The respective percentages were as follows for the other generations: among those born between 1931 and 1945, 66 percent versus 28 percent; among those born between 1946 and 1960, 55 percent versus 39 percent; and among those born after 1960, 52 percent versus 37 percent. In other words, although a strong sense of being "German" characterized all generations, a significant identification with the GDR was quite pronounced among those who had been fully socialized by life in East Germany after 1949. In addition, supporters of the SED overwhelmingly continued to identify with the GDR, whereas clear majorities of the supporters of the other major (emerging) parties in East Germany professed a more primary "German" identity.<sup>8</sup>

A major breakthrough occurred in February 1990. Agreement was reached in Ottawa between FRG and GDR representatives and the former Allies of World War II (the United States, the USSR, Great Britain, and France) with their residual legal rights in Germany (including Berlin) on the so-called two-plus-four formula: The two German states would work out the internal modalities of unification, while they would join the Four Powers to make the necessary international security adjustments. As far as the internal German process was concerned, the key issue quickly became the cost of what was no less than a West German bailout of a collapsing GDR. East-West disagreement over a possible NATO membership of the new Germany, plus the sensitive issue of the German-Polish border, clearly topped the agenda on the international side of the bargaining process.

The internal German process was heavily colored by the fact that 1990 became a year of "Siamese" German elections (March elections in the GDR, December elections in the FRG). For the first time since the creation of the two German states in 1949, free elections were to take place on both sides of the intra-German dividing line. And, needless to say, reunification became the decisive campaign issue on both sides. An additional Siamese dimension of this joint German electoral process lay in the fact that in both German states, some of the principal parties in the political contest came to coexist (and be allied) as sister parties. Thus one encountered the phenomenon of Christian Democratic, Social Democratic, and Free Democratic parties on both sides, in addition to parties or movements with Green or ecological orientations.

The partially conflicting visions of West Germany's two key parties, the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats, in the area of foreign policy were discussed in previous chapters. It became obvious rather quickly that these differences would continue to play a significant role in Germany's political future. The dynamic of "competitive nationalism" between these two large parties, aimed at proving one's nationalist credentials to the electorate, tends to be particularly dangerous. Carried to an extreme, such a competition could be highly destabilizing for Germany's evolving democratic political culture, not to mention the country's image in the rest of the world.

Chancellor Kohl's West German Christian Democrats sought to position themselves as true guardians of the nation, but also as the representatives of the Adenauer *Westpolitik* legacy with its strong emphasis on both European integration and Atlantic partnership with the United States. We saw in Chapters 5 and 6 that the CDU's German nationalism has been primarily embedded in a Europeanist, Atlanticist, and procapitalist ideological framework, although older nationalist elements clearly survive in some sectors of the CDU and its Bavarian sister-party, the CSU, and among some of the groups of expellees from former eastern German territories. Yet the possibility also presented itself that if East-West negotiations over NATO membership of a future Germany encountered serious stalemate, the CDU's Atlanticism could become a political liability. Insofar as NATO's purpose had been not only the defense of Western Europe vis-à-vis

the Warsaw Pact but also the control of German power, continued acceptance of NATO constraints (especially foreign troops on German soil) by a CDU-led government could well turn into a deeply emotional issue in a reuniting Germany, an issue with considerable nationalist explosive potential, which the SPD, among others, could be expected to exploit. This is why many argued that the transcendence of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, legacies of a passing era, by means of the creation of a pan-European security order should receive urgent attention.

The West German Social Democrats had tended to be less strongly Atlanticist, and hinted at a willingness to reexamine Germany's role (and membership) in NATO in the context of the overall reunification process, a fact that led some to warn of a resurgence of SPD-led German neutralism. After the late 1950s, the SPD's support of European integration became quite genuine, although it showed sensitivity to domination of the European Community by big business at the expense of social needs. After initial, and electorally costly, hesitation in 1989 about the reunification issue, the SPD endorsed the broad outlines of Kohl's confederation plan, before seeking to move ahead to articulate its own policy preferences on the matter of national unity amid rapidly evolving inter-German conditions. For the SPD, long-standing contacts with the disgraced and disintegrated East German SED were likely to be a political liability in the time ahead. The same could be said of the SPD's historic alienation from German nationhood.<sup>9</sup>

The Free Democrats continued to be a crucial coalition partner for either the CDU or the SPD, despite the party's small size. Although more Atlanticist than the SPD, they did collaborate with the Social Democrats during the years after 1969 in formulating the basic reorientation of West German foreign policy known as *Ostpolitik*. For the foreseeable future, however, the Free Democrats were expected to continue their participation in the coalition with the CDU/CSU. The Greens on the Left and the *Republikaner* on the Right did not appear to be decisive players (yet).<sup>10</sup>

Needless to say, the East German political scene was much more turbulent. The Socialist Unity Party (SED), now renamed Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), continued to disintegrate as 1990 progressed, facing both a basic political credibility problem and a noticeable fragmentation into more conservative and reformist camps. Initial SED attempts to retain influence (if not power) by playing up an alleged neo-Nazi threat clearly backfired. The various opposition groups (New Forum, Democratic Awakening, and Democracy Now) that emerged in the course of 1989 saw their political influence weaken considerably by the beginning of 1990, despite their participation in Round Table talks with the caretaker government and subsequent participation in that government. Some were heavily dominated by groups of intellectuals, and many had to struggle hard to define an electoral identity, to decide whether they wished to be a formal political party at all, and to delineate a position on the twin questions of German unity and the GDR's future.<sup>11</sup> Initially committed to the continued existence of a separate East German state, they were all soon confronted with a seemingly

uncontrollable popular rush in the direction of reunification, and had to adjust their platforms accordingly. Many developed a clearly enduring resentment against what they saw as an East German "sellout" to West German bourgeois capitalism.<sup>12</sup>

The SED's former allies, "bloc parties"<sup>13</sup> like the East German CDU and FDP, appeared to be severely afflicted by a basic credibility problem in the eyes of the GDR's electorate. As a result, the West German CDU and FDP were at first far from eager to lend electoral support and endorsement to these sister parties. Faced with the rapid growth of the SPD in the GDR, however, Chancellor Kohl's CDU swung its support behind a small East German coalition of center-right opposition groups (*Allianz für Deutschland*) that did include the East German CDU.

By the early months of 1990, East Germany's newly reconstituted Social Democratic Party (SDP, subsequently renamed SPD) seemed to emerge clearly as the major new force in GDR politics. This party could not be tainted by the stigma of collaboration with the SED regime, and could tap the historical electoral strength of Social Democracy in the east of Germany. In addition, the party could present itself as a credible defender of those social programs that the average East German might not wish to see eliminated altogether after reunification with the more prosperous Federal Republic.

Yet the GDR elections on March 18 defied all earlier forecasts, turning into a triumph for the CDU-backed conservative Alliance. Unlike a still-hesitant SPD and PDS, the Alliance promised quick unification in the most unambiguous way, and clearly benefited from its closeness to a West German chancellor who would be expected to fulfill his promises of massive economic aid. The fact that the Alliance fell just short of an absolute majority (about 48 percent) necessitated the formation of a coalition. After a brief period of haggling, overshadowed by allegations concerning collaboration with the former state security police (*Stasi*) by many of the GDR's new politicians, a grand coalition was formed, including both the Alliance and the SPD, which had polled 22 percent of the vote. The PDS, which had scored a somewhat surprising 16 percent in the election, was excluded: Communist rule in East Germany had formally come to an end.

With a freely elected East German government in place, the two-plus-four process could now move forward in more decisive fashion. We examine first the internal German process, and then turn to the international ramifications of the creation of a united Germany.

### **Germany Reunites: Economics, Elections, and Emotions**

The intra-German process of unification focused on some crucial constitutional, socioeconomic, financial, and political issues. As far as the constitutional modalities of unity were concerned, several possibilities existed.<sup>14</sup> Usage of Article 23 in

West Germany's Basic Law would necessitate a reconstitution of the original *Länder* (states) in East Germany, which could then vote one by one to accede to the Federal Republic.<sup>15</sup> This was the formula preferred by the Christian Democrats. Another possibility, favored by the Social Democrats, would be to take the route of Article 146, which would involve the drafting of an entirely new constitution by an all-German constituent assembly.<sup>16</sup> A third constitutional possibility, namely the continued existence of two German states in a confederation of some kind, quickly vanished from all official and scholarly discussion. Most observers came to see unification based on Article 23 as the best route, also because it would be the easiest way to bring the GDR into the European Community without elaborate negotiations.<sup>17</sup>

The socioeconomic and financial aspects of unification generated far more immediate controversy, particularly among the general public, than the more technical and even obscure constitutional modalities. The basic question quickly became evident: What would it cost and who would pay? Estimates of the total (long-term) cost of unification would soon range from 500 billion to 1 trillion D-mark (deutsche marks). As 1990 progressed, popular pressure in the FRG grew to put an end to West Germany's generous support of those who had left the GDR. It became clear that the emotional excitement of the fall of 1989 had been replaced by outright worry over the economic and financial consequences of a West German bailout of the GDR, in addition to widespread concern about the need to absorb and integrate a seemingly endless number of "immigrants" (*Übersiedler*) from the GDR.<sup>18</sup> As W. R. Smyser put it at the time, "[t]he unification of Germany is only superficially a merger between a capitalist and a socialist economy. It is really a merger between rich and poor."<sup>19</sup>

Predictions of increased inflation and higher taxes in the FRG created visible uneasiness among the West German public, which in turn was probably responsible for the CDU's loss in two important state elections in West Germany in May that resulted in SPD control of the *Bundesrat* (the upper house of the West German parliament). Clear popular majorities continued to support the objective of unification, but matters of speed and cost became a source of noticeable political divisiveness. The CDU/CSU-FDP coalition government favored a rapid pace and played down the possibility of adverse economic consequences, while the opposition SPD urged a slowing of the pace and hoped to benefit politically from public anxiety over the high cost.<sup>20</sup> Concern over trends in West German public sentiment even seemed to prompt Kohl to strive for earlier-than-planned all-German elections, clearly hoping to cash in on his party's popularity in the East and thereby offset possible voter losses in the West.<sup>21</sup>

Anxiety was also easy to detect among the population in the GDR, focused on fear over increased unemployment, an inability to compete with the more powerful West Germans, the possibility of sudden property claims arising from past confiscations, and an elimination of numerous aspects of the GDR's relatively generous welfare-state provisions. Sadness among GDR citizens over the real

prospect of a noticeable loss of identity also began to surface, as ironic as that may seem in light of the overwhelming anti-SED and prounification mood.<sup>22</sup> Yet the desire for rapid unity, coupled with the expectation of massive West German economic assistance, was sufficient to bring the CDU-dominated Alliance a ringing victory in the March elections, although the Alliance's electoral outlook for the longer term had to be considered uncertain at best.

Particular controversy was generated by Chancellor Kohl's desire to bring about a quick monetary union between the two German states, to be set up by means of a formal *Staatsvertrag* (state treaty). Initial opposition by the FRG's *Bundesbank* (Central Bank) subsided, but uneasiness over the monetary consequences clearly remained. East and West German negotiators haggled over the conversion rate that would be applied between the strong West German D-mark and the GDR's very weak Ostmark. Popular anxiety in the East rose dramatically, since an unfavorable rate could have a devastating impact on savings, pensions, and purchasing power.<sup>23</sup> In the end, a one-for-one rate was agreed upon, although a ceiling was set for the amounts that could be converted at that rate. Early July was selected as the target date for full monetary union, although concerns and disagreements on related economic matters, particularly in the area of market-oriented reform, continued to slow down the process.

But as the spring ended, considerable progress had been made. FRG-GDR negotiations had resulted in a draft state treaty on economic and monetary union that was signed in May. After some complex political maneuvering within the West German SPD, involving the (unsuccessful) demand by the party's chancellor-candidate, Oskar LaFontaine, that the SPD block the state treaty unless certain improvements were made in the text, the treaty was ratified by the parliaments of both German states in June. On July 1, 1990, amid uncertainty, anxiety, and anticipation, the FRG-GDR economic and monetary merger went into effect.<sup>24</sup> And now, more than ever before, the likelihood of all-German elections in December 1990 came clearly into view.

A \$70 billion fund to finance the merger had meanwhile been created, coupled with a "no new taxes" promise from the Bonn government, although widespread skepticism persisted. The fund would cover a four-year period, with expenditures focused on the rebuilding of the GDR's old industries and infrastructure, adjustments in the tax system, and a much-needed cleanup of the heavily polluted environment in East Germany. Yet it was also significant that the state treaty did not address some highly sensitive issues that would have to be settled through separate negotiations, such as ownership of private property in a desocialized GDR and some of the basic aspects of reform of East German industry and agriculture, with a potential for a level of unemployment that some felt might reach well beyond 1, 2, or even 3 million (out of a population of 16 million).

Some, but by no means all, of these issues were decided in a second *Staatsvertrag* that was ratified by the parliaments of both German states on the eve of the formal unification date (October 3, 1990), after a turbulent negotiation process

that saw continued political instability and friction in the GDR's shaky "grand coalition" of conservative Alliance, liberal FDP, and left-wing SPD. Yet property claims and divergencies in abortion legislation remained among the most important issues that promised continued controversy. The signing of the second treaty, and the at times clearly subdued and noticeably nonnationalistic celebration of unification, were followed by elections in the newly reconstituted *Länder* (states) in the GDR (and in Bavaria in the old FRG) on October 14. The Christian Democrats scored impressive victories in four of the eastern *Länder* (Saxony, Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt, and Mecklenburg), whereas the SPD was successful in gaining a majority of the vote only in Brandenburg. The former Communist party managed to gain an average of about 10–12 percent of the vote in each GDR state. The election results also brought a restoration of the CDU/CSU-FDP majority in the *Bundesrat*.

Aside from the many economic difficulties faced by the new Germany in its internal affairs—such as unemployment, the risk of inflation, disputes over property claims, hesitation among potential investors, and instances of criminal financial corruption in a collapsing former GDR—political and basic social problems also came more strongly to the fore. A fundamental revamping of educational policy and curricular content in the primary- and secondary-school system of the former GDR was among the urgent questions to be addressed, in addition to much-needed reform of overstuffed academic institutions. Health care and other social services were on the brink of full-scale collapse. Instances of racism and/or violence by skinheads and other disaffected and alienated groups, including squatters and anarchists in Berlin, emerged as an additional challenge to a virtually disintegrated East German law-enforcement apparatus. Tensions between East Germans and the remaining groups of foreign "guest workers," as well as the thousands of Soviet soldiers, increased steadily.

Political debate over the appropriate policy to be pursued with respect to former GDR spies, *Stasi* (secret police) employees, border guards, and Communist officials, ranging from possible amnesty to full-scale persecution and partial incarceration, continued to flare up with predictable regularity. At the same time, controversy over *Stasi* files and their inherent potential for political embarrassment, if not blackmail, persisted undiminished. Furthermore, former East German political parties, especially the SED, were forced to surrender their extensive accumulations of capital and property.

Meanwhile, the campaign for Germany's first truly national elections since the end of the war had erupted in full force, with the governing CDU/CSU-FDP coalition in Bonn enjoying the clear status of virtually unbeatable favorite in the December 2 ballot-box contest. The polls left little doubt about the likely outcome, especially in light of the CDU's renewed successes in the October 14 GDR elections, and most in the SPD appeared resigned to the inevitable: Helmut Kohl would remain the new Germany's *Einheitskanzler* (chancellor of unity), a new Bismarck in a democratic Germany.<sup>25</sup> Despite widespread West German worry

about the costs of unification, the SPD proved incapable of using this issue to greater political benefit. Its political message seemed to fall on deaf ears, especially in the East German area.

The SPD's prospects were further dampened by the decision of West Germany's Federal Constitutional Court in September that mandated the use of separate five-percent electoral thresholds in former East and West Germany in the December balloting. This would benefit smaller parties, especially in the East, that might not otherwise make it into the new German parliament, but it also deprived the SPD of potential crossover votes from small East German left-wing parties and citizens' movements.

The results of the December 2 all-German vote were largely as expected. Kohl's Christian Democrats, with their Bavarian CSU allies, captured 43.8 percent of the total national electorate, as opposed to the SPD's 33.5 percent, which amounted to the Social Democrats' worst showing in thirty years. The Free Democrats succeeded in reaching 11 percent of the vote and were widely expected to demand more ministerial posts in the new CDU/CSU-FDP coalition government. Parties on the extreme right or left generally fared badly. In the West, the Greens failed to surmount the five-percent electoral threshold and would therefore not return to the *Bundestag*. They had been alienated by the increasingly patriotic mood after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, and their ecological agenda had been in large part adopted by the major parties. Only in the East did a coalition of environmental and peace groups known as Bündnis90 capture enough votes to gain representation in the *Bundestag*. The PDS, successor of the discredited Communist SED, also gained a sufficient number of votes in the East (9.9 percent) to enter the national parliament (although nationally it received no more than 2.4 percent). The far-right *Republikaner* received only a meager 2.1 percent of the vote, well below the required five percent for *Bundestag* representation. Despite a rather low 77.8 percent voter turnout, the message of the election was fairly clear: no experiments, continuation of the current coalition, and a strengthening of the center of Germany's political spectrum.

### Toward a Pax Germanica or a Pax Europaea?

It was in the international realm, however, rather than the internal FRG-GDR sphere with its focus on sometimes bitter electoral contests and the marks-and-pfennigs issues of socioeconomic merger, that the German Question with its four central dimensions of identity, unity, role, and power made itself felt most dramatically after November 1989.<sup>26</sup> One analyst captured the essence of international concern as follows:

There are only two real certainties in European politics today: Eastern Europe has been effectively liberated from Soviet domination, and the reunification of Germany is approaching. For all their historic worth, these certainties, in turn, create new un-

certainties—after all, the postwar system of European stability, of deterrence and détente, was based on the permanence of the Soviet threat and of the division of Europe and of Germany. Now that history has turned the tables, it is the hitherto unquestioned structures of European order that are entering a period of unpredictability: in the East, all structures—from the Warsaw Pact to Comecon—set up to camouflage Soviet centralized control; in the West, the NATO alliance and the European Community (EC); in Europe as a whole the familiar ways in which East-West relations are conducted. Germany is at the center of all these uncertainties, not only geographically but politically.<sup>27</sup>

He added that “Europe’s two new certainties are interdependent: had Eastern Europe not succeeded in slipping away from Soviet control, there would be no chance for the reunification of Germany.”<sup>28</sup>

One basic and decisive question concerned the diplomatic intentions of the various players in this unfolding drama.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps most important, was Moscow willing to abandon its East German ally and permit reunification without major Western concessions? Soviet options were by no means clear, and neither were the Kremlin’s ultimate objectives.<sup>30</sup> After its unsuccessful attempt to bring about an FRG-GDR confederation that would have preserved the Soviet position in Central Europe to its maximum extent under already adverse circumstances, Moscow appeared to accept full reunification as inevitable, but continued to oppose NATO membership of a united Germany, until a breakthrough was reached in July 1990.

The Genscher proposal, discussed earlier, sought to break the stalemate, whereupon the Soviets suggested a German membership in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. But this idea was quickly rejected by both Bonn and its allies. Serious limitations on German military power as part of an East-West compromise remained likely, while Western leaders expected Moscow to abandon its opposition to German NATO membership. Such expectation was fueled by a variety of considerations, such as Gorbachev’s growing preoccupation with domestic troubles, the steady disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, and a widespread Eastern European preference for a NATO-bound rather than neutralized (read: unpredictable and uncontrolled) Germany.

In addition, polls showed that NATO membership for a united Germany remained clearly the preferred option among West Germans. A June 1990 poll, for example, found that 51 percent of West Germans interviewed preferred a united Germany in NATO, 34 percent would opt for neutrality, and 15 percent were undecided. In addition, 53 percent of the sample indicated willingness to “accept the presence of foreign troops [on German soil] as part of [Germany’s] NATO obligations,” whereas 31 percent felt that “foreign troops should withdraw” (16 percent were undecided). Attitudes on nuclear weapons were also interesting. Of the interview sample, 54 percent agreed that nuclear weapons should now be removed from German soil, but 37 percent argued that they should remain, while

9 percent were undecided. When asked whether nuclear weapons should be pulled out of Germany if “the Soviet Union made its agreement to German unity conditional on [such a removal of nuclear weapons],” however, only 25 percent agreed with such a scenario, while 65 percent felt that “we should not allow ourselves to be pressured in the matter of German unity,” and 10 percent declared themselves undecided.<sup>31</sup>

As the months passed, the likelihood emerged that NATO membership of a united Germany would be tied to an overall East-West agreement on conventional forces in Europe (resulting from the CFE negotiations in Vienna) plus extensive Western economic and financial assistance to the struggling Soviet economy. This latter approach, extending beyond the newly created Bank for East European Development, was looked upon skeptically by the United States and Great Britain, but favored by the other Western allies, including especially the FRG, which had already promised Moscow to assume the GDR’s trading obligations vis-à-vis the USSR.

For many, Kohl’s exceedingly clumsy handling of the German-Polish border issue in early 1990 was unmistakable proof of the need to anchor the new Germany firmly in the Western alliance. Allegedly concerned over the potential loss of the West German bloc of expellee votes to the far right, Kohl hesitated badly when asked to declare the Oder-Neisse line as the definitive border between Germany and Poland. His argument that only a newly constituted German government and parliament could effectively make such a pledge was legally correct but politically extremely ill-timed and unwise. Declarations by both German parliaments, plus Allied assurances that Poland would be allowed to participate in discussions regarding its border with Germany in the context of the two-plus-four talks, subsequently defused the immediate controversy and anxiety, but the damage had been done. By July, the two German states and Poland reached a full understanding about the finality of the current German-Polish border, to be formalized in a treaty at the time of Germany’s official reunification and tied to plans for extensive German-Polish economic cooperation. In November, agreement on the formal German-Polish treaty indeed became reality: The existing border was declared fixed once and for all, although the fundamental challenge of reconciliation and cooperation would require more long-term effort on both sides.

The Polish-German border issue was illustrative of more widespread anxiety among many of Germany’s neighbors regarding the prospect of unification, however. A poll conducted in January 1990 in eight countries (Spain, Italy, FRG, Hungary, Britain, France, USSR, and Poland) detected mixed feelings. “Roughly two out of three Poles are opposed to the reunification of Germany, but a majority of Russians and Hungarians feel positively about the idea. . . . [W]hile a solid majority of those questioned in five Western European countries favored a single German state, a significant number of Britons and French—around one in four—were opposed.” The poll revealed “continuing uncertainty throughout Eu-



rope." For example, "[a]mong the Western European countries polled, only Italy had a majority that thought lasting peace was within reach. Forty-nine percent of Britons and 50 percent of French said a serious European conflict was still possible."<sup>32</sup> As the months progressed, some of the international worries seemed to ease, particularly as a result of a variety of diplomatic assurances made by the Bonn government.<sup>33</sup> Jewish concerns frequently persisted, however, in part because no explicit all-German admission of guilt for the Holocaust was included in the final FRG-GDR unification treaty. The likelihood of claims made against a reunited Germany by Jews and others also continued to loom as a source of very probable controversy, as events in the 1990s have indeed confirmed.

As Christoph Bertram pointed out, the basic international agenda resulting from the inexorable drift toward German reunification involved "the security status of Germany, the cancellation of the remnants of Germany's now obsolete postwar legal regime, the special rights of the Four Powers, the status of the city of Berlin, and the finalization of Germany's external borders, particularly with Poland." In addition, the European Community would have to "define the modalities of permitting one of its member states to be enlarged."<sup>34</sup>

The exact ways in which this agenda would be managed, and the various issues settled, could only become clearer as the months and weeks passed, and some aspects might not be fully settled for at least several years after formal FRG-GDR unification. What became very obvious, however, was that this agenda reflected the basic dimensions of an enduring German Question with which Germans and non-Germans alike had to contend. It was clear that one aspect of that Question, namely national *unity*, was at least formally "solved," although lingering revisionism due to the loss of former Eastern territories might have to be watched carefully.

But it was also important to remember that territorial and legal German unification by itself did not by any means result in immediate, genuine East-West German cultural and psychological unity. Forty years of political-ideological and psychological separation could not and would not be undone overnight. What is more, the dismal economic picture in the former GDR all but guaranteed that the population in "East" Germany would for some years to come have to cope with a (perceived as well as real) status as "second-class" citizens in the new Germany, frequently subject to "West" German disdain, ridicule, and resentment.<sup>35</sup> In fact, Michael Meyer suggested that "[t]he German Question has . . . been reincarnated, in a new form," because "[t]he new Germany will be one nation, but two peoples."<sup>36</sup> Interesting in this context of continued "disunity" was also the discussion of what the "eastern" part of the new Germany ought to be called in political discourse: "the former GDR," "the new Federal *Länder*," "eastern Germany"? For many conservatives who continued to harbor revisionist dreams regarding the lost "eastern" territories in Poland and the Soviet Union, of course, the former GDR would always remain *Mitteldeutschland*.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, there was absolutely no doubt that the three remaining dimensions of the German Question—*identity*, *role*, and *power*—would also continue

to preoccupy scholars and policymakers alike for at least the foreseeable future. Beyond the concrete military, political, and economic issues that the international community would face in striving to deal with the new Germany, the psychological aspects, particularly fear of a new German nationalism, would be equally significant.

Western and West German insistence on placing the new German giant firmly in the Western community was the clear outgrowth of perceived lessons of the German and European past. Throughout its history, Germany's geopolitical location in the heart of Europe, coupled with its growing power, have been the source of both trauma and temptation, of insecurity and instability. Germany's alienation from the West was further enhanced by at least partially diverging cultural values and political traditions. In this respect, Germany's reconciliation with the West and the FRG's membership in both NATO and the EC rank among the great success stories of postwar Western, and West German, diplomacy. The steady democratization of West German political culture became a source of reassurance to the country's traumatized neighbors.

In light of these considerations, Western and West German insistence on a Germany firmly tied to the West, militarily in NATO and economically through the EC, was necessary, inevitable, and under prevailing circumstances desirable. A reaffirmation of Germany's Western *identity*, coupled with a well-defined *role* in multilateral (even supranational) Western institutions and organizations, would provide the most appropriate basis for a solution to what has been perhaps the most crucial dimension of the German Question: *power*.<sup>38</sup> In fact, if this study has proved anything, it is that what has tended to be called the German Question is *not* necessarily the problem of German reunification but perhaps primarily the problem of German power. History has given us ample indication that the effective management of German power by the Germans themselves and by Germany's neighbors is crucial to the creation of a stable European order.<sup>39</sup> The Cold War "solution" to this problem, based on the division of Germany and the integration of both states into opposing alliance systems, came to an end in 1990. What would the future bring?

The management of the new Germany's power would be an international task, but, as Bertram stressed, the Germans themselves would now face perhaps the major responsibility:

Germany holds a pivotal role as a generator of policy. The ideas, initiatives and commitments to shape a stable European future will now largely have to come from the Germans themselves—not only because of their weight in Europe's politics and economy, but also because, with the notable and welcome exception of the United States, Germany's main partners in the West have largely retreated into attentive (France) or irritated (Britain) passivity. German politicians must thus display an immense degree of statesmanship, not only in order to manage the domestic process of reunification, but to pave the way for the international one as well. This is a tall or-

der for any country. Germany must accommodate the concern of those worried about the German past as well as that of those troubled by its new power; it must reassure Soviet security interests without arousing suspicions in the West; it must strengthen its Western ties through participation in the reform of NATO and through promotion of political union in Western Europe. In short, Germany has to use its weight and power wisely, considerably as well as confidently.<sup>40</sup>

International concern over German military power was likely to persist, particularly the scenario of a future revisionist German superpower armed with nuclear weapons. Hence there was increased effort on all sides to examine various possible security arrangements, including arms control agreements, that might stabilize the emerging post-Cold War European continent.<sup>41</sup>

Major breakthroughs on the security status of a united Germany were finally achieved during the summer of 1990, after months of intense negotiations and posturing by the various parties.<sup>42</sup> In mid-July, the Soviet Union removed its objection to the NATO membership of a united Germany, in return for extensive Western (especially German) aid for the faltering Soviet economy; a limit of 345,000 on the troop strength of the all-German army; a German pledge not to acquire any nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons; and German agreement to help pay for the maintenance of Soviet troops on East German territory for a transitional period of three to four years as well as for their subsequent removal. The last obstacle to the rapid and successful conclusion of the two-plus-four talks had been definitively cleared, and on September 12, the four wartime allies and the two German states signed the agreement formally restoring full German sovereignty. The Soviet-German breakthrough culminated in a formal treaty of friendship and cooperation between the two continental European giants in November, whereupon a grand European-North American summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe gave its formal endorsement to German unity, a far-reaching conventional arms control agreement between East and West, and the construction of a new European order beyond the Cold War in what became known as the Charter of Paris.

Yet many of the more immediate and realistic considerations focused not on Germany's military power but on its inevitable political and economic clout in a changing Europe. The following (estimated) figures offered an indication of a united Germany's projected economic power as the decade of the 1990s began. Exports by the new united Germany were expected to total \$354 billion a year, compared with \$321 billion for the United States, \$265 billion for Japan, and \$110 billion for the USSR. The new Germany's balance of trade was projected to show a \$74 billion surplus, compared with Japan's \$77 billion surplus, the Soviets' meager \$3 billion surplus, and a \$138 billion deficit for the United States. Per capita GNP was calculated at \$14,000 for a united Germany, nearly \$20,000 for the United States, \$14,000 for Japan, and less than \$9,000 for the USSR.<sup>43</sup> Based on 1988 figures, the united Germany would have a GDP of about \$1 trillion,

compared with \$4.8 trillion for the United States, \$2.5 trillion for the Soviet Union, \$1.7 trillion for Japan, \$762 billion for France, \$755 billion for the UK, and \$754 billion for Italy.<sup>44</sup> Many suggested that Germany's geographic location could be expected to be a key asset in that country's economic future. Smyser, for example, suggested that "Germany [would] benefit from its central position in Europe, not only as a transportation hub but also as a production center."<sup>45</sup>

Some sought to place the economic power of a united Germany in Europe in context, however, attempting to counter undue concerns. Thus John Roper, pointing to the widespread "speculation of the role that a united Germany would play within the [European] Community," wrote:

True, its population of some 78m [million] would be one-third greater than that of either Britain, France or Italy, and twice that of Spain. But the change would be quantitative rather than qualitative. West Germany is already the largest member of the EC with just under 20 per cent of the Community's population and 24 per cent of its economic output (gdp). A unified Germany would increase its share of the EC's population to 22.7 per cent and initially to around 26 per cent of the Community's economic output, but this could rise to 29 per cent if the labour productivity of the two Germanies was equated. On the other hand, if eventually the other five Eastern European countries were to join, the united Germany's proportion of the total EC population would be lower than that of West Germany—at present—only 17 per cent. Its economic share is more difficult to calculate, but it is probable that it would also be less than the present 24 per cent.<sup>46</sup>

He concluded that "the idea that, by unification, Germany would automatically leap from a non-dominant to a dominant role is clearly misplaced." Roper added that "[a]s to the political aspect, there are too many hands on the levers of the Community for any single member state to impose its will on the rest."<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps the hope that a German economic superpower would be effectively tamed in a context of progressive European integration would turn out to be justified, but the fact also remained that the new Germany would wield very significant influence in most areas of Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>48</sup> It would also be the European country most directly affected by any turbulence in East-Central Europe in the wake of the collapse of Communism and its socioeconomic as well as ethnonationalist consequences. For historical, geopolitical, and cultural reasons, it was inevitable that the united Germany would in the coming years and decades once again occupy its Janus-like position as a multifaceted "bridge" between the West and the East, with all the opportunities and liabilities that this might entail, including pressures from an economically troubled Eastern Europe and USSR/Russia for economic and financial assistance.

In addition, it was an unmistakable fact that the process of German unification had run ahead of the process of European integration, which could pose particularly difficult challenges for the entire EC in the time ahead.<sup>49</sup> In a changing

world, where economic strength had increasingly become as important as military capability, Germany could be expected to be a truly decisive actor on the world stage. Yet, as Fritz Stern pointed out in 1989, "[f]or Germans more than for any other people in the Western world, both the past and the future are unsettled, uncertain, open."<sup>50</sup> Whether the reunited Germans would manage their power responsibly and play their new global as well as Central European roles effectively, with a solidly anchored Western identity, became the essence of a lingering German Question as the last decade of a turbulent century began.

## Notes

1. In the course of the 1990s, a considerable number of books were published, ranging from memoirs by key players to edited volumes resulting from conferences, that provided a retrospective on the turbulent events of 1989–1990, as summarized in the following pages, and their implications. See, for example, Pekka Kalevi Hämäläinen, *Uniting Germany: Actions and Reactions* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994); Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage. Innenansichten der Einigung* (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1991); Peter H. Merkl, *German Unification in the European Context* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993); M. Donald Hancock and Helga A. Welsh, eds., *German Unification: Process and Outcomes* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994); Christopher Anderson, Karl Kaltenthaler, and Wolfgang Luthardt, eds., *The Domestic Politics of German Unification* (Boulder, CO/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), especially Part 1; Charles S. Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Helmut Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1996); Konrad Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Manfred Görtemaker, *Unifying Germany, 1989–1990* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); and Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), which focuses also on the years of West German *Deutschlandpolitik* leading up to the reunification drama.

2. See Gert-Joachim Gläßner, "Vom 'realen Sozialismus' zur Selbstbestimmung," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 5 January 1990.

3. See the discussion in "Ein Staatenbund? Ein Bundesstaat?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 49, 1989, p. 24ff., on the visions and possibilities (including Kohl's ten-point plan), ranging from confederation to federation. For a more general discussion of "confederation" ideas in post-1945 German history, see Theodor Schweisfurth, "Die Deutsche Konföderation—der große nationale Kompromiß als tragendes Element einer neuen europäischen Friedensordnung," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 12 December 1987. See also Wolfgang Venohr, "Konföderation Deutschland," in Venohr, ed., *Die deutsche Einheit kommt bestimmt* (Bergisch Gladbach: Gustav Lübbe Verlag, 1982). Some subsequent research has emphasized the role played by luck and coincidence in Kohl's policy responses. See, for example, "Helmut im Glück," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 24, 8 June 1998, p. 54ff.

4. Two good collections of often worried foreign and domestic voices regarding the sudden disintegration of the GDR and the rush toward German unification are Ulrich Wickert, ed., *Angst vor Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1990); and Harold James and Marla Stone, eds., *When the Wall Came Down: Reactions to German Unification* (New York/London: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc., 1992).

5. Anne-Marie Burley, "The Once and Future German Question," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 68, nr. 5, Winter 1989–90, pp. 82, 83.

6. For a discussion of the East Germans' unmistakably economic calculations in their opinions regarding unification, see the discussion and data provided in Manfred Kuechler, "Pocketbook Patriotism: Economic Expectations and the Pursuit of German Unity," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 30 August–2 September 1990, San Francisco.

7. See *Der Spiegel*, nr. 11, 1990, p. 40, for poll results.

8. Data gathered by the Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach 8–15 March 1990, and reported in David P. Conradt, "German Unification and the Remade Political Culture," paper prepared for delivery at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 30 August–2 September 1990, San Francisco.

9. See the essay by Hellmuth Karasek, "Mit Kanonen auf Bananen?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 13, 1990, pp. 56–57. Karasek pointed to the "new gap" that had opened up in Germany "between the Left and the national question." See also Michael Charlier, "Deutschland, schwierig Vaterland," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, February 1990.

10. On the positions taken by West German left-wing groups (including the Greens) during the 1990 election campaign, see "Leere Hände, leere Hirne," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 8, 1990, p. 52ff. On the *Republikaner*, see Hans-Georg Betz, "Politics of Resentment: Right-Wing Radicalism in West Germany," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 23, nr. 1, October 1990.

11. On the various East German opposition groups that emerged in the course of 1989, see Hubertus Knabe, ed., *Aufbruch in eine andere DDR* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1989); Gerhard Rein, ed., *Die Opposition in der DDR* (Berlin: Wichern-Verlag, 1989); Hannes Bahrmann and Christoph Links, *Wir sind das Volk. Die DDR zwischen 7. Oktober und 17. Dezember 1989. Eine Chronik* (Berlin/Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag Berlin, 1990); Charles Schüddekopf, ed., "Wir sind das Volk!" *Flugschriften, Aufrufe und Texte einer deutschen Revolution* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1990); Michael Naumann, ed., "Die Geschichte ist offen." *DDR 1990: Hoffnung auf eine neue Republik* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1990); Detlef Pollack, "Außenseiter oder Repräsentanten? Zur Rolle der politisch alternativen Gruppen im gesellschaftlichen Umbruchprozeß der DDR," *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, nr. 8, August 1990; Walter Süß, "Revolution und Öffentlichkeit in der DDR," *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, nr. 6, June 1990; Ehrhart Neubert, "Eine protestantische Revolution," *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, nr. 5, May 1990; Hubertus Knabe, "Was war die 'DDR-Opposition'?" *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 29, nr. 2, March/April 1996; Karl-Dieter Opp, Peter Voss, and Christiane Gern, *Origins of a Spontaneous Revolution: East Germany, 1989* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

12. See, for example, Jens Reich, "Germany—a Binary Poison," *New Left Review*, nr. 179, January/February 1990; "Die Krake müssen wir sezieren," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 37, 1990, p. 54ff.

13. The SED had always governed as part of what was presented as a truly democratic "coalition" of progressive parties. In reality, the SED had been essentially omnipotent, and the "coalition" was really more like a "monolith." See Wolfgang Mleczkowski, "Bewegung im Monolith," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 21 April 1984.

14. See the interesting analysis of the various possibilities by two FRG Federal Constitutional Court justices in "Nachdenken über Deutschland," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 10, 1990, p. 72ff.

15. The exact text in Article 23 read: "This Basic Law applies for the time being in the area of the *Länder* Baden, Bavaria, Bremen, Greater Berlin, Hamburg, Hessen, Lower Saxony, North-Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland-Pfalz, Schleswig-Holstein, Württemberg-Baden and Württemberg-Hohenzollern. It will enter into force in other parts of Germany upon their accession." Note that, given Germany's postwar fate and the loss of various territories, the phrase "other parts of Germany" is strikingly vague.

16. Article 146 read: "This Basic Law loses its legal validity on the day when a constitution enters into force which has been adopted by the German people in a free decision."

17. In this context, see the discussion by Werner Ungerer, "Die Europäische Gemeinschaft und die Einigung Deutschlands," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, April 1990; Marc Beise, "Die DDR und die europäische Gemeinschaft," *Europa-Archiv*, nr. 4, 1990.

18. See Volker Ronge, "Die soziale Integration von DDR-Übersiedlern in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 5 January 1990.

19. W. R. Smyser, "United Germany: A New Economic Miracle?" *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 13, nr. 4, Autumn 1990, p. 173.

20. The frequent fluidity in West German public opinion throughout late 1989 and 1990 is ably discussed and illustrated in Hans-Joachim Veen, "German Unity: Public Opinion and Voting Trends," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 13, nr. 4, Autumn 1990.

21. Poll data also showed a continued CDU/CSU-FDP lead in the West German campaign, however. See "Kohls zweiter Sieg schon sicher?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 14, 1990, p. 36ff.

22. "Der Heimatverlust schmerzt," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 8, 1990, pp. 27–28; Helmut Hanke, "Identität in der Krise," *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, nr. 8, August 1990.

23. Polls also reflected a continued West German optimism about the unification process as a whole, however, although mixed opinion about the FRG-GDR state treaty was clearly evident (42 percent had a "good impression" of the treaty, 28 percent had "not a good impression," and a significant 30 percent were "undecided"). See Richard E. Meyer, "West Germans Optimistic About Reunification, Poll Finds," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 July 1990.

24. See the special report "Germany Toward Unity," in *Time*, 9 July 1990, especially pp. 76–78. For an excellent overview in English of the various financial, social, and economic aspects of the FRG-GDR monetary/economic union, see the special report ("Survey") entitled "The New Germany" in *The Economist*, 30 June 1990.

25. Poll data can be found in "Ist die Wahl schon entschieden?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 26, 1990; "Nur jeder vierte glaubt an Wechsel," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 31, 1990; "Kohl dem Wahlsieg noch näher," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 35, 1990; "Sieg oder Triumph Kohls?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 44, 1990; "Vor der Wahl noch eine Wende?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 47, 1990.

26. Probably the best English-language scholarly analysis of the international dimensions and dynamics of the reunification process is Philip Zelickow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1997). See also Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

27. Christoph Bertram, "The German Question," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, nr. 2, Spring 1990, p. 45.

28. Bertram, "The German Question," p. 45.

29. Although Soviet objectives and interests were probably most affected by the rush toward German unity, the other great powers with continued legal rights in the divided Ger-

many were also challenged to review and, if necessary, adjust their basic positions. For further discussion, see Michael H. Haltzel, "Amerikanische Einstellungen zur deutschen Wiedervereinigung," Walter Schütze, "Frankreich angesichts der deutschen Einheit," and Richard Davy, "Großbritannien und die Deutsche Frage," all in *Europa-Archiv*, nr. 4, 1990.

30. For some speculation, see Wolfgang Seiffert, "Die Reformpolitik Gorbatschows und die Deutsche Frage," *Osteuropa*, vol. 39, nr. 4, April 1989; Fred Oldenburg, "Sowjetische Deutschland-Politik nach der Oktober-Revolution in der DDR," *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, nr. 1, January 1990. A general discussion of the evolution of official Soviet attitudes regarding the question of German unification and security status is provided by Hans-Peter Riese, "Die Geschichte hat sich ans Werk gemacht," *Europa-Archiv*, nr. 4, 1990. See also Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev and German Unification: Revision of Thinking, Realignment of Power," *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1990.

31. For poll results and discussion, see *The Economist*, 30 June 1990, pp. 45–46.

32. "Survey Finds 2 in 3 Poles Opposed to German Unity," *The New York Times*, 20 February 1990, p. A8. Additional poll results were published in *The Economist*, 27 January 1990, pp. 29, 32. On foreign reactions and worries, see also Wickert, ed., *Angst vor Deutschland*; and James and Stone, eds., *When the Wall Came Down*.

33. "Europe's Fears of a United Germany Dissipate," *Los Angeles Times*, 5 May 1990; "From Germany's Neighbors, Respect and Then Acceptance," *The New York Times*, 27 September 1990. Evidence that worries nonetheless lingered just below the surface was probably at no recent time clearer than during July 1990, when a conservative British government minister resigned after inflammatory statements about the Germans and their alleged behavioral inclinations and intentions. The uproar gathered further momentum when a British government memo was subsequently leaked that contained very sharp and negative evocations of the Germans' purported "national character." An abridged version of the memo was published by *The New York Times* on 20 July 1990. See also Dominic Lawson, "Saying the Unsayable," *Orbis*, vol. 34, nr. 4, Fall 1990; David Wedgwood Benn, "Germany II: Britain and the 'enemy image,'" *The World Today*, vol. 46, nr. 10, October 1990, pp. 181–182.

34. Bertram, "The German Question," pp. 50–51.

35. See the interesting discussion in "Es ist ein anderes Leben," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 39, 1990, p. 34ff. See also the useful poll data on this issue in "Zwei Klassen im einig Vaterland," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 38, 1990, p. 28ff. Of East Germans polled, 78 percent expected to be second-class citizens for the foreseeable future, whereas only 21 percent anticipated equal treatment and equal rights.

36. Meyer, "The Myth of German Unity," *Newsweek*, 9 July 1990, p. 37. A fascinating portrait of differences between Germans in east and west was compiled by *Der Spiegel*, largely on the basis of opinion survey data. See "Den Neuen fehlt Selbstvertrauen," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 46, 1990, pp. 114–128; "Frauen zurück an den Herd?" *Der Spiegel*, nr. 47, 1990, pp. 113–127.

37. See the interesting discussion in "Aehm, also, sag doch mal," *Der Spiegel*, nr. 42, 1990, pp. 51, 54.

38. See "Germany Inc.: Awesome Power Might Be the Only Predictable Trait of a Unified Land," *The New York Times*, 18 February 1990, sect. 4; "The New Superpower," *Newsweek*, 26 February 1990, p. 16ff.

39. See the discussion in Michael Lind, "German Fate and Allied Fears," *The National Interest*, nr. 19, Spring 1990.

40. Bertram, "The German Question," pp. 61–62. As Bertram noted, the United States had indicated that it intended to remain fully engaged in the future of Europe. To some, the U.S. presence in Europe was in fact a key stabilizing factor. See Josef Joffe, "Europe's American Pacifier," *Survival*, July/August 1984; William E. Odom, "Only Ties to America Provide the Answer," *Orbis*, vol. 34, nr. 4, Fall 1990.

41. This crucial issue can only be touched upon in the context of this study. For discussion, see Manfred Müller, "Deutschlands Rolle in einem neugestalteten europäischen Sicherheitssystem," *Europa-Archiv*, nr. 6, 1990; Rupert Scholz, "Deutsche Frage und europäische Sicherheit," *Europa-Archiv*, nr. 7, 1990; Robert E. Hunter, "The Future of European Security," and Joachim Krause and Peter Schmidt, "The Evolving New European Architecture—Concepts, Problems, and Pitfalls," both in *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 13, nr. 4, Autumn 1990; Pierre Hassner, "Europe beyond partition and unity: disintegration or reconstitution," *International Affairs*, vol. 66, nr. 3, 1990; Ian Davidson, "The search for a new order in Europe," *International Affairs*, vol. 66, nr. 2, 1990; Jack Snyder, "Averting Anarchy in the New Europe," *International Security*, vol. 14, nr. 4, Spring 1990; Roger Morgan, "Germany in Europe," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 13, nr. 4, Autumn 1990; Ole Waever, "Three competing Europes: German, French, Russian," *International Affairs*, vol. 66, nr. 3, 1990.

42. The important breakthrough was especially made possible by the results of the summit meetings of the EC, NATO, and the G-7 (leading Western industrial nations) that occurred in rapid succession during June and July 1990. West German success in getting allied support for (its own or joint) economic and financial aid to the USSR, plus subtle but significant shifts in NATO strategy and military/political posture, was particularly decisive.

43. Data adapted from *Newsweek*, 26 February 1990, pp. 18, 19, 21.

44. Figures in *Time*, 26 March 1990, p. 36.

45. Smyser, "United Germany: A New Economic Miracle?" p. 173.

46. John Roper, "Europe and the future of Germany—a British view," *The World Today*, vol. 46, nr. 3, March 1990, p. 48.

47. Roper, "Europe and the future of Germany—a British view," p. 48.

48. In this connection, see "East, West Economies Join, New German Reich Begins," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 July 1990; "A Unified Germany's Foreign-Policy Mantra Will Be: Go East, Young Germans," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 July 1990, explores the inevitably eastward orientation in the new Germany's diplomacy. See also the interview with historian Gordon A. Craig ("Zu groß für Europa?") in *Der Spiegel*, nr. 46, 1989, p. 183ff.

49. See Henry A. Kissinger, "Joining Two Germanys," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 January 1990, sec. M. Or as Roper has put it, "Germans and other Europeans may appear to be working on different timetables" ("Europe and the future of Germany—a British view," p. 48). See also Ungerer, "Die Europäische Gemeinschaft und die Einigung Deutschlands."

50. Fritz Stern, *Dreams and Delusions: National Socialism in the Drama of the German Past* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 20. See also the commentary by A. M. Rosenthal, "The German Question Remains Open," *The New York Times*, 26 April 1990, p. A23.

## United But Not Yet Unified: Germany Between Past and Future

In the course of the 1990s, a series of postcards entitled "*Typisch Berlin!*" appeared on the market in the German capital that provided an often ironic commentary on the challenges faced by the newly unified Germany. One such card showed a reunited couple, he a *Jammerossi* (a constantly whining easterner), she a *Besserwessi* (a just as consistently arrogant westerner). The card used the image of an unexpectedly recovered relationship, involving five children representing the five new *Bundesländer* that once constituted the former GDR, to provide some food for thought about the state of German (dis)unity. The following text appeared alongside a picture of the arguing couple:

They knew each other from a former life, and fate brought them unexpectedly together again. They celebrated three days and nights and fell into each other's arms, weeping for joy. Then they got married. They brought five children into the world with the names *Arbeitslos* (unemployed), *Pleite* (bankruptcy), *Solidaritätszuschlag* (solidarity surtax), *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* (hostility toward foreigners), and *Baustelle* (construction site). What then followed was awful everyday life with all its problems. She always knew everything better, and he did nothing but whine. Where does it go from here? The minister in church says: "Until death does you part."<sup>1</sup>

The card fits Berlin's well-established tradition of political irony and sarcasm, and the problems to which it alludes certainly manifest themselves in sharper outline there than in just about any other German location. Yet the card has been popular because its message transcends Berlin and points to important facets of life in the reunited Germany as a whole. After the heady days of 1989–1990, the euphoria that accompanied what was truly an unexpected "rush to unity"<sup>2</sup> was soon replaced by uncertainty, anxiety, irritation, and indifference.<sup>3</sup> Critics of the