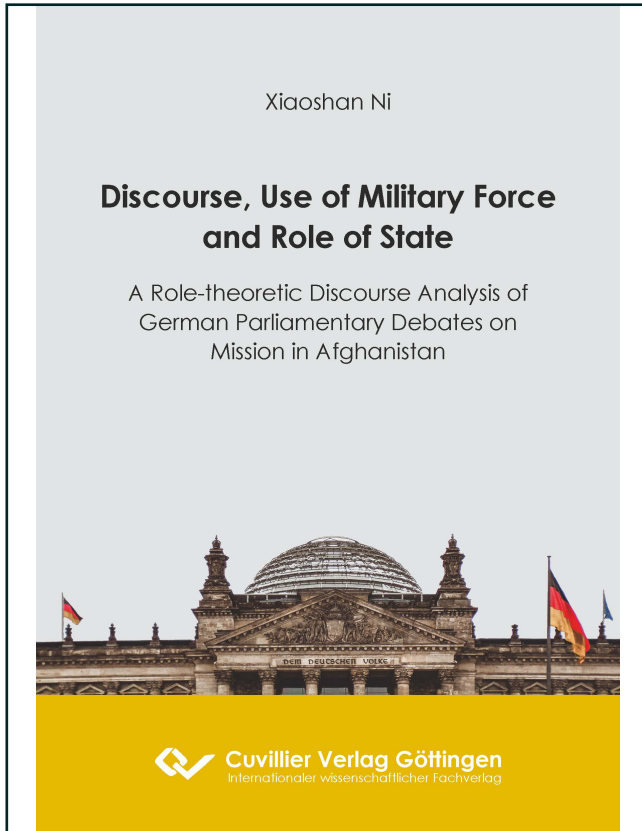




Xiaoshan Ni (Autor)

## **Discourse, Use of Military Force and Role of State**

A Role-theoretic Discourse Analysis of German  
Parliamentary Debates on Mission in Afghanistan



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# I. Introduction

## 1.1 Research Background and Research Questions

It is widely acknowledged that since the end of the East-West conflict and the reunification of the two German states, German foreign policy, particularly security policy, has demonstrated continuity. However, Rainer Baumann's (2006) study of the multilateralism discourse in German foreign policy confirmed a shift, whereby a policy of multilateralism based on obligation has gradually been replaced by a policy of multilateralism based on pragmatism, or that multilateralism is now pursued more out of Germany's own need to gain influence and status, and that multilateralism has thus been relegated to a form of policy that can be used as a means to gain influence. In this sense, Ulf von Krause (2013) stated that the rise in Bundeswehr deployments outside of NATO's "aid commitments" after 1990 and the rising use of military force as a "ultima ratio" are both indications that the Bundeswehr has during the 1990s evolved into a tool of German foreign policy. According to Gunther Hellmann (2007), German security policy was gradually expanded geographically and reinterpreted functionally following the change of government and the election of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (SPD) in 1998. Territorial defense orientation was replaced by securing and promoting democratic change and containing violence in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe; deterrence and territorial defense were replaced by "proactive crisis prevention strategies" and "reactive crisis management strategies". Thus, "security export" and "long-range defense" were hallmarks of the new German security strategy after the reunification, and the Bundeswehr's deployment to Afghanistan was a crucial test of this strategy (Li 2010: 4). In 2012, CSU's Philipp Mißfelder said during a parliamentary discussion

*"That has certainly changed Germany. [...] We show our allies and partners and those who depend on our help that we stand by our alliance commitment in full trust and solidarity, even if we must make sacrifices. If you look at post-war history, you realize: this is a paradigm shift."*

Philipp Mißfelder (CDU/CSU), BT PIPr 17/214, 13.12.2012, S. 26339 B)

Germany's role in world affairs has been a major subject of discussion in the study of German foreign policy ever since 1990. Scholars have analyzed the formation and evolution of Germany's foreign policy role in the light of the interaction of the factors influencing the role in the Role Theory, and have constructed, for example, "Germany as European" (Banchoff 1999; Liebert 2010), "Civilian Power" (de: "Zivilmacht") (Harnisch & Maull 2001), "Normal State" (de: Normalstaat) (Baumann & Hellmann

2001), “Economic Power” (de: Wirtschaftsmacht) (Staack 2007) and “reluctant hegemon” (Bulmer & Paterson 2013) and other roles to describe the overall characteristics and trends of German foreign policy in a given period.

Politicians or political science research are the main sources of the judgments concerning German foreign and security policy. However, as SPD member of parliament Niels Annen noted on 13 February 2014 in the Bundestag about the most recent authorization request for Bundeswehr participation in ISAF:

*“The Bundeswehr mission has also changed our country and our political language.”*

Niels Annen (SPD), BT PIPr 18/14, 13.02.2014, S. 1006 D

Therefore, it is required to alter the study angle and provide linguistic proof of the changes in German security policy:

**Research question 1:** *How has the ISAF discourse, a representation of German security policy rhetoric from the Schröder era (2001-2005) to the Merkel era (2006-2014), changed?*

**Research question 2:** *How does the evolution of German security policy discourse reflect the role perception and role construction of Germany by German Federal Parliamentarians (MPs) in relation to global security issues?*

## 1.2 ISAF and Parliamentary Debates

Since 1990, the Bundeswehr has been seen as a peacebuilding and peacekeeping force outside German territory, and its operations abroad have undergone a process of development. This chapter will give an overview of the growth of Bundeswehr’s overseas activities, especially the ISAF Mission, and explain the connection between engagement and legislative discussions. The analysis of German security policy discourse will begin with this.

The *German Basic Law* (de: *Grundgesetz*) makes it clear that the use of the German military forces is limited to defense and rescue operations and is not permitted otherwise. However, the *Grundgesetz* also allows Germany to participate in the collective security system. After German unification, the Bundeswehr carried out defense and rescue duties within Germany on the one hand and participated in NATO collective defense operations on the other. Although reunified Germany was restricted by domestic law from sending the Bundeswehr to participate in military operations abroad, every instance of sidestepping the *Grundgesetz*, from the “funding of the military” in the 1991 Gulf War to the “logistical support” of warplanes and aircrews in defense operations in Turkey to the first deployment of armed personnel to humanitarian missions in Somalia in 1993, resulted in the “out-of-area-debate” of the Bundeswehr.

The German Federal Constitutional Court decided on the validity of the Bundeswehr's combat operations in the region of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in Somalia on 12 July 1994, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 2, of the *Grundgesetz*: The decision allowed the Bundeswehr to take part in operations abroad if authorized by NATO or the United Nations (UN), and also required that decisions by the Federal Government on military deployment must in principle be approved in advance by the Bundestag. The Bundeswehr was therefore also known as the "parliamentary army". Although the legal framework for German security policy has changed significantly since then, Germany has not immediately embarked on a "radical" liberalization of the pace of its troop deployment abroad. Germany continued its tradition of cautious restraint and limited involvement in international peacekeeping operations, primarily with the operational goal of preventing conflicts from escalating and eliminating humanitarian disasters, despite growing calls from the international community, including the UN and NATO, for Germany to play a more significant role in international security affairs. Germany's involvement was primarily non-combatant. Even in the operational involvement of the NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany was mainly in non-combatant operations and responsible for rescue, transport, and other logistical resupply tasks.

After the 1998 German elections, the Red-Green government led by Gerhard Schröder departed from the "Kohl Doctrine"<sup>①</sup> and supported military deployments abroad within the framework of a UN mandate. During this time, the SPD, which had been the principal opponent of German military deployments overseas in 1993, underwent a significant attitude change. In 1999, Germany participated in NATO air strikes against the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which were not authorized by the UN. In 2001, the Bundeswehr was permitted to participate in NATO operations in Macedonia despite domestic concerns about the lack of military spending and equipment to support its operational capacity. Subsequently, there has been a growing debate about Germany's military presence abroad, mainly concerning the changing nature of the Bundeswehr —specifically, whether it had changed from a logistical support force to an interventionist force and concerning Germany's evolution in relation to international security challenges.

After 9/11, there was renewed international agreement to combat international terrorism, and Germany has become involved in the global fight against terrorism on a large scale, which has continued today. Since 2001, Germany has been sending special forces to participate in the NATO-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). From 2001 to 2014, the Bundeswehr took part in both the UN Security Council-mandated international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan (ISAF) and the international peacekeeping force in Kosovo. From 2003 to 2006, Germany participated in the UN

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<sup>①</sup> The Kohl Doctrine is the security policy motto of former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl after the end of the East-West conflict in 1989/1990 about "No more deployment of German soldiers to countries occupied by the Bundeswehr during the National Socialist period".

Security Council-mandated EU peacekeeping mission in the Congo. In 2004, Germany participated in the UN-mandated EU peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN-mandated operation in support of the AU mission in Sudan. In 2008, the Bundeswehr was involved in the EU NAVFOR escort mission to Somalia in Atlanta, in 2012 in the EU-led maritime capacity-building operation in the Horn of Africa, and in 2015 in the EU NAVFOR escort mission to the Mediterranean Sea in Sofia, etc. These operations cover a wide range of issues such as military stabilization, counterterrorism, the maintenance of maritime security and the provision of armed training. Germany is also increasingly active in national security practice, not only in NATO-led operations abroad, but also in UN-mandated multinational force operations and in joint operations with EU partners. At the same time, Germany is demonstrating increasing independence in international security matters.

But in the process, Germany has also made two “unconventional” choices: In 2003 Germany opposed the war in Iraq initiated by the USA and in 2011 Germany abstained from voting in the UN Security Council on the establishment of a no-fly zone in Libya.

The Bundeswehr’s participation in ISAF, at the latest stage in the development of Bundeswehr operations abroad, is the subject of this research. Not only was it approved by the UN, but it also included NATO members and European countries. The Bundeswehr participated in several operations in Afghanistan, including ISAF. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the USA promptly established the OEF force in accordance with Article 51 of the *UN Charter* and spearheaded military operations against Taliban terrorist forces in Afghanistan in early October 2001. Schröder advocated for “maximum solidarity” with the USA and declared that Germany would take an active part in the overseas operation, which was in the nature of a war on terror. After the first offensive phase of the OEF operation, the first International Afghanistan Conference was held in Bonn in December 2001, at which the ISAF in Afghanistan operation was proposed in accordance with a UN Security Council resolution. On 8 November 2001, the German Bundestag met for the first time to debate Germany’s participation in ISAF; in December, the MPs voted for the first time to authorize Germany’s participation in ISAF. Thereafter, at least once a year, people debated and voted on whether to renew the mandate for ISAF operations. After the end of ISAF in 2014, Germany continued to participate in the NATO-led “Resolute Support” (RS) mission - a mission designed to provide training for Afghan security forces. This is the continuation of ISAF in Afghanistan, which entails assisting, advising, and training the Afghan security forces. Germany additionally took part in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), a non-military mission that was charged with supporting Afghan institutions in putting the Bonn Agreement’s principles of equality, rule of law, and respect for human rights into practice.

This study focuses on ISAF in Afghanistan because it lasted for more than ten years, from 2001 to 2014 (see Table 1 for details), under two generations of leaders and five chancellorships, from Schröder to Merkel.

**Table 1 Bundeswehr's participation in ISAF**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Main events</b>
27 November 2001	The first International Conference on Afghanistan was held in Bonn (Germany) and the <i>Bonn Agreement</i> was adopted.
22 December 2001	The Bundestag officially authorized the German Armed Forces to take part in ISAF for six months.
14 June 2002	The first extension of the ISAF mandate.
20 December 2002	The second extension of the ISAF mandate, Germany and the Netherlands became "lead countries" for the operation.
24 October 2003	The third extension of the ISAF mandate, ISAF operations extended to all of Afghanistan.
30 September 2004	The fourth extension of the ISAF mandate, the Bundeswehr was involved in ISAF operation in the Kunduz region of northern Afghanistan.
28 September 2005	The fifth extension of the ISAF mandate, Germany took over leadership responsibility for ISAF operation in northern Afghanistan.
28 September 2006	The first ISAF mandate under the Grand Coalition Government.
9 March 2007	Germany was involved in the deployment of Tornado, which was taking place at the same time as ISAF.
12 October 2007	The ISAF mandate was extended, the Tornado operation was incorporated into ISAF.
16 October 2008	The ISAF mandate was extended for 14 months, Germany's ISAF operational participation expanded.
3 December 2009	The first ISAF mandate under the Black-Yellow Coalition Government.
26 February 2010	A new mandate was announced before the previous one had expired, the number of soldiers sent peaked with the deployment of the Flexible Reserve.
28 January 2011	The ISAF mandate was extended, deployment of the Tornado was terminated, Germany announced a drawdown from the end of 2011.
25 March 2011	Approved the participation of the German Armed Forces in the deployment of AWACS within the framework of the NATO-led ISAF operation.
26 December 2011	The ISAF mandate was extended with a focus on achieving the conditions for the transfer of full security responsibility to Afghanistan by the end of 2014.
31 January 2013	The ISAF mandate was extended with no change in mission content, the number of soldiers was reduced.
20 February 2014	The ISAF mandate was extended for the last time with the same content, the number of soldiers continued to be reduced.

## 1.3 Literature Review

The research focuses on two key areas: the Bundeswehr's overseas operations as a starting point for the study of German security policy, and discourse analysis of parliamentary debates as research path. Therefore, a literature review from these two angles will be presented in this chapter.

### 1.3.1 Research on Bundeswehr's Operations Abroad

In the classical understanding of international relations, security policy is a part of foreign policy. Deployment of the Bundeswehr belongs to defense policy, which is also generally considered to be an integral part of security policy (Hellmann 2007: 605).

**(1) Bundeswehr's operations abroad are a key concern for German security strategy.**

Scholars have been examining the growth of the Bundeswehr's abroad operations in terms of mission content, purpose, nature, and geographic extent since the early 1990s and have cautioned about the difficulties and hazards that this could entail. Research on the growth and development of Bundeswehr operations abroad, according to Glatz et al. (2018), focuses on three main areas: modifications to the character, breadth, and depth of military conflicts; adjustments to the international political and legal environment; and changes made to the institutional framework of overseas operations, including the organization's internal plans for peacekeeping operations and their execution. Kaim (2007) argued that since 1949, the purpose of German troop deployments abroad has shifted from the initial regaining of sovereignty to the subsequent increase in international political influence. He studied how multilateral organizations influenced the Bundestag and German Federal Government's decision to send soldiers abroad, using the 1999 Kosovo operation as an illustration to warn Germany against falling victim to the "multilateralist trap" of global military action: due to the binding nature of multilateralist security cooperation, even though the political costs are extremely high, it is difficult for Germany to reject collective action, such as within the framework of NATO. Germany might end up as a "victim" of multilateralism when the German Federal Government's repeated commitment to increased military accountability in international politics. According to Schmidt's (2007) study of the role of multilateral actors in the decision-making process for overseas operations, the EU and UN are having a greater impact on the decisions regarding overseas operations. In the "German-EU-UN" triangle, the UN is also becoming more of a "military partner" and actively seeks support.

The significance of the Bundeswehr's overseas operations for the military as a tool of German foreign policy and the "militarization" of German foreign policy have been debated by academics in light of the significance of overseas operations for German

foreign policy. Von Kraus (2013) traced the changing perception of the Bundeswehr as an instrument of foreign policy in German politics and the public since its creation. He argued that although the acceptance of this view by German politics and the public has been growing, the Bundeswehr has not yet become a “normal” instrument of German foreign policy. The reason for this is that mission, structure and use of the Bundeswehr are still highly path-dependent: for example, early constraints from outside, the tradition of “civilian power” rooted in German society and the underspending of the military from the 1990s to the present day. According to Enskat and Masala (2015), who claimed that since the end of the Cold War, German foreign policy has changed from “cheque diplomacy” to overseas deployments, the Bundeswehr has also transformed from a deterrent force to an operational force, and international military engagement has gradually increased. Nevertheless, Germany is still trying to figure out how to use the Bundeswehr as a “instrument of greater responsibility”. Gratz and others (2018) argued that sending troops abroad is a foreign policy tool, an expression of German political solidarity within NATO and the EU, and that “the expectations of the allies should not be rejected” is often seen as a “justification theory” for sending troops abroad. However, sending troops abroad has also been seen as a controversial tool for German involvement in crisis management, particularly in dealing with nationalist-driven violence (Bosnia and Kosovo), maintaining local government stability and supporting reconstruction (Afghanistan) or combating piracy (Horn of Africa) and fighting Islamic terrorism (Iraq and Syria). According to Brehm et al. (2012), who examined the decision-making procedures of judicial bodies like the Federal Constitutional Court and the Federal Government, Germany’s foreign policy has gradually “militarized” and the use of military force to achieve political goals is coming to the consensus of German political parties. Germany, however, tended to take part in coalition action rather than acting independently because of the Bundeswehr’s constrained people and material resources. In the long term, reform of the Bundeswehr is imperative to change the limits of the load that the Bundeswehr is facing, to cooperate more effectively with the allies and to expand Germany’s contribution and influence. At the same time, they emphasized that further “militarization” of German foreign policy must be avoided because military operations have shown to be ineffective at resolving significant non-military issues, as well as aggravating ongoing armed conflicts and fostering anti-Western animosity by repeatedly flouting international law. Additionally, it does not promote world peace and security.

Since the early 1990s, mandates for Bundeswehr operations abroad have been subject to intra-party and inter-party debate in the Federal Government and the Bundestag, as well as in German society. Therefore, the reasoning behind whether Germany made overseas deployments has also become the focus of academic research. Meyer (2007) explored the “national interest” in relation to the legality of Bundeswehr operations abroad. He argued that although a 2005 opinion poll on “Bundeswehr operations” indicated that the German public was uninterested in the “German national interest” and displayed “peaceful indifference” to Bundeswehr and security policy



issues, comparing the contents of the two *White Papers* on security policy from 1994 and 2006, there is no doubt that the definition of “national interest” had changed: from defending the freedom, security, and well-being of German citizens as well as the nation's territorial integrity to new problems including dealing with emergencies in far-flung regions, fighting terrorism, and advancing global free trade and economic growth. In this context, the “national interest” should be more of a legitimizing argument for Germany's increasingly frequent operations abroad. Mair (2007) summarized the political and academic criteria for deciding whether the Bundeswehr should be involved in overseas operations, which can be broadly divided into two categories: on the one hand, the legality and legitimacy of the military mission, and on the other hand, the necessity of German military involvement and the ability to assume responsibility.

Following the expansion of the Bundeswehr's overseas operations in terms of geography and types of operations, scholars have taken different overseas operations as the subject of study and assessed them from different perspectives, from political decision-making to operational execution to the end of the operation, with the goal of drawing lessons for additional overseas operations. Tull (2007) used the Bundeswehr's involvement and leadership in the FARDC (EUFOR RD Congo) as an example to highlight that not every military operation can be replicated and that the goals of each military operation are tailored to the national context, either because of significant political demands (such as elections) or to prepare for another mission. He also emphasized the need to focus on the operation's follow-up, as otherwise the political credibility of the EU and its Member States would be at risk. Maaß (2007) reviewed the decision-making and implementation process of the Afghanistan operation and claimed that the concurrent Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) - the military action taken by the USA and its coalition forces against Al-Qaida and the Taliban regime that sheltered it in the aftermath of 9/11 - had seriously hindered the ISAF operation and the “good governance” of the Afghan government was not achieved. This not only meant that the operation as a whole has failed, but also threatens the credibility of international actors, including NATO. The vastly different security situation and political structures across Afghanistan made the ISAF approach universally applicable. As the security situation continued to deteriorate, civilian construction could not reach a sustainable level and ultimately Germany was not only unable to maintain a positive image in Afghanistan, but even at increasing risk. Using the Bundeswehr operations in the Western Balkans as an example, Altmann (2007) emphasized that Germany, as a NATO ally and particularly as the most significant EU member state, must assume collective intervention and peacekeeping commitments deriving from human rights challenges. Sending troops overseas requires strong political justification, and an exit strategy can only be successful if the political landscape fosters the required circumstances. The time cost of coordination between actors in the operation, such as countries, international agencies, and non-profit organizations, is enormous and may have an impact on the overall effectiveness of the operation. In addition to military peacekeeping, Altmann underlined the importance of social and economic assistance on the ground, and the

need to ensure flexibility of action and timely adjustment to changes in the internal situation and the external environment.

Chinese scholars have also focused on the content, purpose, nature, and geographical expansion of the Bundeswehr's overseas operations, as well as the reasons, significance, and dilemmas of the Bundeswehr's reform.

Ni and Chang (2007) offered a historical analysis of the evolution of German military policy regarding the changes in the Bundeswehr's abroad operations. They contend that the goals have shifted from "seeking the country's survival and laying the groundwork for eventual national unification" to "aiming to bear responsibility for the future peace and security of Europe and the world". The importance of sending troops abroad is not only in ensuring the security of the nation but also in reducing Germany's reliance on the USA for security, constricting Russia's strategic space, enhancing Germany's international standing and political influence, as well as being a means for Germany to fully "normalize" the nation. About the various constraints and dilemmas facing German troop deployments abroad, Zhang (2007) examined some of the key operations of the Bundeswehr since it first crossed the border in 1993. He not only summarized the reasons for overseas operations but also explained that the constraints on expanding overseas operations are anti-war sentiment among the German public, international suspicion, inadequate defense budgets, and scandals in operations that have tarnished the image of German soldiers. Liu (2008) interpreted the difficulties in the transformation of the German military and focused on the new mission of the Bundeswehr overseas and its capabilities. He contended that following the decision 1994, the Bundeswehr, fresh from years of retrenchment, has been overwhelmed by crisis management and multinational joint military operations. Despite the military changes of recent years that have improved their capabilities abroad, all NATO allies, including Germany, still struggled to escape the dilemma of the USA as a "leviathan" and other allies as "system managers" compared to USA military technology and modern warfare capabilities. Some academics examined the strategic shifts in Germany's security strategy, mostly by reviewing historical developments and examining the state of German military deployments overseas at the time. Taking the regional crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example, Chen (1996) explored the new mission of the Bundeswehr in the new context of German security policy after the end of the Cold War. This was mainly reflected in the assumption of more "international responsibility". Participation in multinational forces was an important strategy for the Bundeswehr in the international arena, and the sharing of responsibility through overseas operations not only meant that Germany took the expectations and roles of its Western allies seriously, but also that "responsibility" was used as a code word for "power", reflecting the values of German foreign policy. Also taking the Bosnia-Herzegovina operation as an example, Meng and Yu (1995) argued that Germany's overseas military deployment had transcended the realm of humanitarian aid and was the first large-scale post-war military engagement across borders. This was a crucial step in Germany's pursuit of European and even global power status following

reunification. Germany started the first overseas military deployment using the UN and NATO as a platform, and it was also diplomatically advancing the shared European security and defense policy, utilizing the EU as a key tool to compete for European supremacy and achieve the goal of world power.

## **(2) Research of German security policy based on Role Theory**

The role of Germany has been a key topic in the discussion of German foreign and security policy since 1990. Has Germany always been a “civilian power” or a “civilian state” (de: Zivilstaat), or has it once again become a “power state” (de: Machtstaat) or even a “military power” (de: Militärstaat)? Should Germany follow the path of a “civilian state” oriented towards cooperation and the building of multilateral mechanisms, or should it pursue a “normalization” of its foreign policy and “power politics” (de: Machtpolitik) oriented towards its interests? Scholars have argued that the change in German security policy is reflected in the changing role of Germany. Zimmermann (2006) adopted a functionalist perspective, contending that while Germany’s status as a “security exporter” shifted in the middle of the 1990s, it had no direct effect on transatlantic relations. Nor was there a shift in German security policy towards the acquisition of power at the end of the 1990s (Risse 2004: 24). However, it has also been argued that the end of the Cold War has seen the incorporation of new risks and threats into the German concept of security, and with it an increasingly power-oriented shift in German security policy and Germany’s role in it. Bahr (1998) believed that after the beginning of the post-bipolar period, in which the national interests of the member states as well as the interests of the community continued to dominate the decision-making process in alliances, international organizations and forms of regional integration, while Germany began to play a central role in the international system of security policy. According to Berndt (1997), Germany’s new orientation towards a “increasingly instrumental multilateralist foreign policy” through a gradual approach and the deployment of the Bundeswehr to crisis areas in Europe and beyond was putting German foreign policy at risk of “militarization”. Since the end of the Cold War, Germany’s NATO allies, especially the USA, have increased pressured the Bundeswehr to assume more international responsibilities, pressing Germany to modernize its military capabilities in addition to providing humanitarian and economic aid (Hellmann et al. 2007: 63). In this process, organizations like the EU or NATO may turn into tools for Germany to pursue national political interests on the grounds of multilateralism (Fröhlich 2008). Furthermore, Schetter (2009) contended that by combining security policy with its strategy towards Afghanistan in the Afghan operations, Germany was using the strengthening of its traditional development aid policy as a means of obtaining international influence.

The Bundeswehr's operations abroad are thus a useful starting point for the study of the German role in security policy. The Role Theory of Sebastian Harnisch and his study of Germany’s overseas deployments with the help of Role Theory are representative and have a direct bearing on this thesis. Role interaction, according to Harnisch (2015), is a better explanation for German behavior in the Libyan conflict than