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TAKING IDEATIONAL POLICY INTERDEPENDENCE SERIOUSLY:  
THEORETICAL DIALOGUE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERAL THEORY

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**Abstract** From a liberal point of view, a state's foreign policy behavior depends on two central conditions: Domestic preference formations which capture the state bottom-up and policy interdependence on the international level. The latter imposes constraints for state behavior by affecting the costs and benefits of interest realization. In most liberal FPA approaches, the influence of economic and security policy interdependence on state behavior is well established, but the impact of ideational preference configurations has attracted little attention so far. Ideational interdependencies concerning ideas of an appropriate economic, social, or political order are hardly theoretically systematized and empirically analyzed. This is dissatisfactory. There is good reason to assume that ideational interdependence plays an important role for states' preference realization and the costs of foreign policies.

This paper seeks to expand research on the impact of ideational policy interdependence with regard to states' foreign policy. First, we study how IR theories have operationalized (ideational) interdependence, highlighting convergences and divergences in usage and possible avenues for inter-paradigm dialogue. Second, we theorize the nexus between ideational, economic and republican liberalism with regard to interdependence effects, dwelling on the potential for synthesis within a modified liberal approach. Finally, we apply the insights of our synthesized liberal model to two case studies to provide first evidence for the validity of our theoretical assumptions and explore the implications for inter-paradigm dialogue and learning.

## 1. Introduction

Policy interdependence, the idea that policy outcomes are always the product of choices made by more than one actor (Lake/Powell 1994: 4), is widely understood to be a central characteristic of international relations. International and transnational actors may engage in economic, political, strategic or moral interdependence, thus setting the stage for a wide variety of social mechanism to govern the “costs of interdependence”, e.g. markets, governmental institutions or networks. In recent years, attention has focused on economic, political, and moral interdependence as sources of regime and institution building in general, and the emergence of transnational networks in particular (Zürn 2002; Hawkins et al. 2006; Milner/Moravcsik 2009). Alas, interdependence has received less attention than it deserves in the field of foreign policy analysis.

From a Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) perspective, political interdependence is one of the crucial elements of the external structures shaping decision makers opportunities (Hill 2003: 174-183). In this article, we study the choice between different theoretical conceptualizations of “interdependence” and the opportunities for inter-paradigm dialogue and theory synthesis in a liberal, agent-based model of foreign policy analysis. In this synthetic model, governmental agents choose to cooperate (or not) as a function of their individual *and* social attributes within a social environment. The set of foreign policy goals, strategies and instruments of a governmental actor is thus a product of the choice made contingent on their belief of the structural commodities of interdependence they act upon.

We posit that interdependence has multiple meanings for major research paradigms in the field of IR and FPA, but that these meanings have been converging recently. As a consequence, we hold that a deeper understanding of this convergence will allow for an inter-paradigm dialogue and may foster theoretical synthesis. In our perspective, theoretical synthesis should be conceived as forming a whole by putting different parts together (cf. Hellmann 2003: 149). Thus, we use the changing paradigmatic meanings of interdependence as exemplary for the scholarly struggle to capture the interaction of internal and external factors influencing state goals and actions which more generally characterizes current theory building in FPA.

This is, to our knowledge, the first attempt to explicitly map the different conceptualizations of interdependence across research paradigms, and the first to link it to a liberal model of

foreign policy choices. The notion of interdependence has been employed either explicitly or implicitly for a long time (de Wilde 1991). In the inter-paradigm debates of the 1980s, interdependence became associated with liberalism, with realism stressing a conflictual model of IR based on relative gains seeking and structuralist world system approaches focusing on the ubiquity of dependence. Against this background, it is not surprising that past reviews of the corresponding literature identify a high degree of conceptual ambiguity.

Our discussion of the different meanings of interdependence reveals the limitations and inconsistencies of these conceptualizations, highlighting recent advances within each paradigm and the rapprochement between the respective paradigms usage of interdependence. We thus identify considerable conceptual overlap both between paradigms and within liberalism, thereby opening up a discourse space for inter-paradigm dialogue and theory integration. We start this dialogue effort by addressing the causal nexus between ideational economic and republican strands within liberalism in two case studies focusing on interdependence effects in transitional states and embedded democracies. We find that theory integration, even within one paradigm, is a non-trivial matter. As a remedy, we suggest that the current narrow causal understanding of liberalism should be complemented by introducing constitutive and a broader spectrum of societal preferences.

We proceed in three steps. After reviewing the use of interdependence in IR paradigms in chapter 2, the successive chapter shows the concepts convergence along three dimensions allowing for inter-paradigm dialogue. Chapter 4 suggests such a dialogue based on liberal theory and provides first empirical examples for its assumptions. A conclusion sums up our findings.

## **2. Interdependence: A paradigmatic re-reading of the theoretical literature**

In general terms, interdependence is a “situation of mutual dependence between social actors”, with “dependence” being a situation in which social actors are contingent upon external forces (Zürn 2002: 236). As an analytical concept, the term does not imply the social realm referred to or the distribution of costs and benefits emerging from the interdependent situation. On the one hand, the term can be differentiated from dependence, a situation in which one actor bears all costs within a relationship, whereas the other maximizes his utility. On the other hand, as Inkeles has argued (1975: 469-471), it can be set part from

interconnectedness, because (mutual or inter-) dependence refers to a reliance on an item of exchange which is more or less indispensable to the survival of the actor. As a consequence, a relationship of dependence or mutual dependence involves substantial costs.

The condition of interdependence is widely understood to describe the characteristics of post-World War II international politics.<sup>1</sup> It is the specific condition of interdependence, as Keohane and Nye (1989: 8-19) argue, that separates situations of interdependence and respective interaction patterns from anarchy. They proposed a further differentiation of interdependence along two dimensions: *Sensitivity* interdependence refers to the costs of external changes for an actor in a constant policy framework; *vulnerability* interdependence refers to opportunity costs or the costs involved in terminate or drastically alter the relationship.<sup>2</sup> In a precise reading, the synopsis of sensitivity and vulnerability gives a measure of dependence rather than interdependence, describing the costs of alternative strategies in dealing with a disadvantageous change of an external influence (De Wilde 1991: 26). Sensitivity indicates cost effects of a “do-nothing-strategy”, whereas vulnerability measures the costs of changing to the best alternative of the current relationship of dependence. Hence, if an external influence changes to the negative, the cost ratio of sensitivity and vulnerability indicate whether it is better to maintain the relationship and suffer the worsened conditions, or foreclose the relationship altogether.

For most scholars of international relations, interdependence requires that governmental agents must calculate the expected utility of their foreign policy action with the likely response of the agents with whom they interact, be they governmental or non-governmental, organized or not, etc. Hence, realists, liberals/rationalists, constructivists and cognitivists all employ a certain conceptualization of interdependence in their work. While interdependence figures most prominently in liberalism, and neoliberal institutionalism in particular, we posit that the concept is closely (if implicitly) associated with key causal factors such as anarchy, self-help, bargaining, identity formation, socialization etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Schaezel, the then US ambassador to the EC, describe interdependence in 1979 as one of the few words that “capture the essence of our time, cf. Schaezel 1979: IX.

<sup>2</sup> The definition and utility of these dimensions is highly contested. First, Baldwin (1980) argues that interdependence should be limited to the vulnerability dimension, because this is what is meant by dependence in common parlance and most students have used the concept in this meaning (e.g. Waltz 1970). Second, the logical relationship between these two interdependence concepts is not fully unclear (Kroll 1993)

Since the assumption of interdependence is widely shared, but its consequences highly contentious, we suggest that grasping the differences first is central to promote inter-paradigm dialogue later. We therefore draw on Brian Rathbun's conceptualization of uncertainty and his distinction of rationalism and realism on the one hand and constructivism and cognitivism on the other (Rathbun 2007: 534). Whereas the former group holds that interdependence can be measured more or less objectively (and thus correctly), the latter suggest that interdependence is prone to perception and interpretation. In this view, the respective interpretation of interdependence, the values and identities involved, necessitates an intersubjective approach in which interdependence can be understood more or less "appropriately".

*Realism: From self-seeking behavior to strategic interdependence and back*

For classical realists, such as Hans Morgenthau, anarchy and strategic interdependence did not feature prominently in their causal argument. Rather, the zero-sum nature of international politics emanated from the innate character of political man. For each political agent, then, the problem of interdependence only occurred if this nature – the nature of politics as being distinct from economics – was understood (Morgenthau 1946; 1950). Morgenthau thus challenged the liberal claim that "reason" and the laws of economics would bring about rational and cooperative behavior naturally. In *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* he argued fervently that liberals had completely neglected the spiritual and emotional aspects of political behavior – the animus dominandi. In this classical view, uncertainty about the motives of the opponent necessitated against predatory behavior (Morgenthau 1946: 122). However, the root cause for conflict, the power-seeking nature of political man and the resulting interdependence, opened up the political space for "reasonable statecraft".

In comparison, structural realists attribute the competitive nature of international politics to the combination of anarchy, i.e. the absence of political authority between states, and uncertainty, the fear of predatory behavior (Waltz 1970; 1979: 105). Among structural realists, two distinct schools can be discerned: defensive and offensive realists. The former hold that states will regularly seek security in an anarchic realm, i.e. adopt balancing behavior to offset relative gains by adversaries and maintain their own relative power position in the system (defensive positionalism or status-quo-bias). In this view, states may at times pursue expansionist aims such as prestige accumulation, but more often they act defensively (Grieco

1993; Glaser 1994). The other school, offensive realism, posits that anarchy and the (un)certainly about the behavior of rivaling states induces a thirst for maximizing relative gains or gaining supremacy (Toft 2005). As Mearsheimer states, “other states may be benign, but as it is impossible to be certain about that judgment because intentions are impossible to divine with 100 certainty” (Mearsheimer 1994: 10; 2001).

In structural realism, anxiety about future motives and predatory behavior of others thus drives states to adopt a “possibilistic reasoning” with regard to the potential future costs (and benefits) of interdependence (Brooks 1997). Power, conceptualized here as a material commodity, is always a zero-sum. It follows from this that the costs of the pursuit of any foreign policy goal, strategy or instrument that may or may not give a relative advantage to another state must be weighed scrupulously against the expected benefits. Under these structural conditions: “Intentions are unknowable, and even if known, could be different tomorrow. (...) States must not overlook the possibility that potential adversaries will use their full capabilities against them, and they therefore must focus on adversaries’ capabilities rather than their intentions.” (Glaser 1994: 56; Lobell 2009: 47).

Conceptually, the utility of the accumulated information is low, with agents focusing on current capabilities and possible - but not necessarily probable - future intentions. In this context, foreign policy learning is reduced to accepting anarchy-induced self-help policies and adopting strategies (balancing, preemption etc.) and instruments (nuclear weapons as strategic equalizers etc.). As the anarchical structure socializes states into egoistic behavior (Waltz 1979: 74, 127-128), the foreign policy goals of states – i.e. survival – remain constant and preserve the inter-state character of the system. Against this backdrop, Waltz (1970) considers mutual dependence as a source of conflict, since it negatively affects the states’ ability for self-help (for a rejoinder see Rosecrance/Stein 1973: 3-4).

Neoclassical realists, in contrast, conceive of anarchy and its effects on interdependence more broadly. For them, self-help and predation are, in short, the expected outcomes of anarchy as envisioned in the prisoner’s dilemma games by structural realists (e.g. Steven Lobell’s concept of component power: Lobell 2009). But they insist that states can and do pursue various and even deviant foreign policy goals such as bandwagoning or costly signaling with possible future adversaries (Rose 1998: 146-147; Schweller 2003). Although subject to individual differences, neoclassical authors may be corralled together into groups which focus

on either domestic, ideational or individual additional (intervening) variables: a first group of William Wolforth (1993), Aaron Friedberg (1988) and Jeffrey Taliaferro (2005; 2001) stress individual and ideational factors as “structural modifiers”; a second group consisting of Thomas Christensen (1996), Norrin Ripsman (2002) and Fareed Zakaria (1998) focus on the mobilization of domestic forces, e.g. the resource extraction capacity of the state; in the third group Jack Snyder (1991), Jennifer Sterling-Folker (2002, 2009) and Colin Dueck (2008, 2009) identify ideational factors, such as strategic culture or ideology, and domestic structures as causal explanations for behavior that deviates from structural incentives.

Arguably the earliest and most prominent neoclassical realist approach to probe the narrow conception of “strategic interdependence as a zero sum game” is Stephen Walt’s “balance of Threat (BoT) model. The model considers three parameters - geographic proximity, offensive capabilities and aggressive intentions - which affect the threat level. The material parameters geographic proximity (territorial adjacence and forward-deployed forces) and offensive capacities (type of weapon systems) are defined quantitatively and qualitatively, whereas the immaterial parameter, aggressive intention, is either assumed or deducted from public statements (Walt 1987; 2009: 103; Midford 2007). Walt’s neoclassical BoT-model is open to several interpretations: First, he does not clarify whether capabilities or intentions have priority in causal reasoning. Second, while focusing on aggressive intentions, the model lacks a theory of perception or what aggressive intentions do mean to specified classes of actors. Nevertheless, the BoT model substantially modifies the interdependence conceptualization of structural realists. On the one hand, BoT shifts the utility of information over time, because aggressive intentions – as perceived in the past and today - are causing alignment behavior rather than assumptions about future intentions. As a consequence, actor-specific goals and resources affect policy choices rather than presumed and fixed goals, as in structural realism. On the other hand, BoT shifts the focus from a narrow definition of power as control over resources to a broader conception of power as control over a social relationship. Hence, from Walt’s perspective it becomes possible that actors which are powerless in material terms may be perceived as threatening. As these actors can target intangible values and resources of an actor, they may cause alignment behavior, such as state alignments against transnational terrorist groups, that do not reflect the material power structure.

In nuce, while neoclassical realism is still primarily interested in “refining but not refuting structural realism” (Schweller 1997), theoretically it has opened the door for a more

differentiated (and sophisticated) understanding of “interdependence” through redefining the parameters of information across time and power across the tangible/intangible spectrum. But as Jennifer Sterling-Folker has pointed out, these neoclassical modifications need not necessarily mean that interdependence will naturally result in switching national preferences towards strong institutionalization or even other-regarding behavior (2002, 2009).

*Liberalism: From economic idealism to ideational liberalism*

While the classics of liberal thought have discussed the consequences of international trade relationships for centuries, the systematic use of the concept of interdependence within the liberal paradigm goes back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sir Norman Angell, Francis Delaisi and Ramsay Muir deserve credit for introducing the term to describe a regular interaction pattern in the international system (de Wilde 1991; Baldwin 1980). They argued that international specialization and exchange created an increasing international interdependence, which in turn generated demand for new political institutions to keep up with these social and economic changes. In their reading, interdependence spans time and power spheres, resulting in mixed motive games and time inconsistencies which may be overcome by institutional arrangements. These early liberals held that the realists’ dilemmas of collaboration and coordination could be overcome by using information to bolster the credibility of commitments in common institutions. Political cooperation and the accumulation of information could thus reliably reduce the probability of conflict caused by interdependence.

With the realist paradigm having dominated IR in the interwar years, interdependence reemerged as a buzzword among students of International Political Economy and International Relations only in the 1960s and 1970s (Morse 1969; 1972). The concept helped to describe a perceived growth in connections and institutions shaping the international economy and other issue areas, and the decreasing ability of states to control these relations. Keohane and Nye’s work (1975; 1989) was the most influential in vital to the concept’s revival as a political meaningful category in IR. In contrast to a purely economic reading of interdependence, they argued “that the actions of states, and significant non-state actors, will impose costs on other members of the system” more generally. The resulting problem decision-makers face is “how to benefit from international exchange while maintaining as much autonomy as possible.” (Keohane/Nye 1987: 730)

Drawing on Hirschman's thoughts on asymmetrical economic interdependence, Keohane and Nye treat interdependence as a source of political power which intervenes in the relationship between material means and political outcomes. As a complement to a realist ideal type, Keohane and Nye built on the concept of interdependence to propose the opposite ideal type of complex interdependence, according to which international relations are characterized by three features (Keohane/Nye 1989: 23-29; Milner 2009: 15-16): (1) States and societies are connected by multiple formal and informal channels; (2) These relations include multiple issues without a clear hierarchy among them; (3) Military force is not the primary means to exercise power within these relationships. Rather, power results from asymmetrical interdependence, which – depending on the issue area –does not necessarily favor the militarily more powerful state.

While Keohane and Nye share the systemic perspective of the realist school, they disagree on the probability of durable collaboration: If uncertainty and misunderstandings can be reduced, cooperation is possible. International regimes play a central role in their causality, since they provide information and thus reduce uncertainty as a source of conflict in interdependent relationships. Through institutions, states can learn, i.e. accumulate information, about their partners' intentions and thereby reduce the probability of inconsistencies or cheating. Keohane (1984) expatiated on these assumptions to create a neoliberal institutionalism in international relations.

Students of democratic peace have further extended this reading of interdependence. While complex interdependence and neoliberal institutionalism omitted domestic politics (Keohane/Nye 1987; Keohane 2002: 4; Simmons 2003), the democratic peace literature suggests two extensions in this direction. First, it highlighted the significance of domestic institutions for the patterns of interdependence: Democratic institutions, like international institutions, increase transparency, political consistency and credibility of an actors' intentions, thus reducing uncertainty, a source of conflict and an obstacle to durable cooperation. Second, by rediscovering the economic interdependence as a source of peace, students of democratic peace have caught a glimpse of the domestic forces underlying state interests (Russett/Oneal 2001: 125-155). They argue that domestic traders and consumers pressure democratic elected representatives to abstain from actions disrupting their interdependent economic relations (Mansfield/Pollins 2001: 836). Taken together, by

accessing the domestic level, democratic peace theory extends the reading of interdependence from a systemic condition to a pluralistic two-level concept.

A further widening of the liberal concept of interdependence can be traced back to Wagner's (1988) criticism of Keohane and Nye's reading of asymmetrical interdependence as a source of power. He argues that they ignore the political value decision-makers ascribe to a bargaining outcome. If a state values the political status quo higher than the economic status quo, it will not comply with a partner that tries to exploit its economic advantage for political ends. Thus, Wagner points to the unclear causal nexus between trading power based on asymmetric interdependence in one issue area for an impact in another issue area. In a second step, Parsi and Yetiv (2008) pick up this argument and show that economic sanctions are of little use if the ideational value the sanctioned state ascribes to the policy in question is higher than the expected economic costs. Thereby, they considerably extend the sources affecting interdependence from material to immaterial factors.

Moravcsik's take on policy interdependence reflects developments in the liberal use of interdependence (1997; 2003; 2008; 2010). Based on a pluralistic foundation, he picks up the concept of policy interdependence, describing the costs and benefits which the realization of state preferences imposes on other societies. By linking international interdependencies to a bottom-up process of domestic preference formation, he provides causation for interdependence, which is indeed based on two-level interdependence. Societal actors and state representatives are in an interdependent relationship just as state representatives are vis-à-vis other international or transnational actors (Moravcsik 2010: 3). Moravcsik's work also reflects the tension between material and immaterial state goals by including commercial as well as ideational demands and broadly accounting for the institutions which enable these preferences to capture the state. The different ideational and commercial interests cause varying patterns of externalities, ranging from harmonious coexistence over cooperation to conflict. Theoretically, he claims that the three variants are "mutually reinforcing" (Moravcsik 2010: 11), but how, when and why this is the case is far from clear.

In sum, the early liberal's use of interdependence as a systemic condition based on material structures has made way for a much more complex reading. By opening up the state, causes and consequences of interdependence became embedded in a two-level game. Furthermore, by questioning the interests affecting bargaining positions, research has revealed the

interaction of material and immaterial factors in interdependence. Moravcsik's liberal theory reflects this turn to a pluralistic actorness involved in material and immaterial interdependencies to the greatest extent.

*Constructivism: Speaking of and practicing interdependence*

Social constructivists emphasize the social purpose of states when interpreting interdependence as an interaction pattern in international relations. Where cognitive approaches focus on complexity and the misinterpretation of an objective reality, i.e. a "systematic slippage between policy-guiding mental representation of reality and reality itself" (Goldgeier/Tetlock 2001: 79), by an individual, constructivists draw attention to the social constitution of perception. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, philosophers and sociologists such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, William James and George Herbert Mead set the direction for much research in this tradition. They posited that human beings require a social context – in Jennifer Mitzen's term "ontological security" (2006) – before they are able to state interests and order preferences.

Constructivists hold that the costs and benefits of policy interdependence are socially appropriated and interpreted rather than cognitively received (Wendt 1994). For them, social institutions, such as states or international organizations, serve a dual purpose: on the one hand, they generate shared meanings such as norms of appropriate behavior, thereby distributing interdependent costs and benefits legitimately; on the other hand, they constitute actors in the sense that they provide identities, i.e. self-images of who they are and what they want. Political, economic or ideational interdependence thus does not exist objectively, it is formed intersubjectively as actors do or do not share interests derived from shared norms. For example, Risse-Kappen (1996) argues that the creation of NATO rested on a shared identity of being the liberal democratic "West", which caused the US to engage in highly asymmetric and unattractive security interdependence with Europe.

Hence, the effects of interdependence are explained/understood by the variation in social purpose of the actors involved by social constructivists. In particular, where decision-makers communicate verbally – rather than strategically – constructivists argue that governments can grasp the effects of interdependence symbolically before encountering them and may thus create a shared understanding of the distribution of costs and benefits (Wendt 1999: 346). In

this reading then, states and other actors are not predisposed towards either cooperation or conflict. They may or may not elicit “swift trust” through persuasion and constituting a communal sense, thereby reducing the time inconsistency and commitment problems highlighted in liberal and realist approaches.

Another nascent constructivist explanation for interdependence effects that draws upon American pragmatism and symbolic interaction is under development. In this approach, interdependence management is understood as role taking behavior. Whilst rationalist theories imply that actor’s identities/interests remain stable during interaction, emphasis is placed here on the transformation of the actor’s role through complex learning. In this reading, decision-makers may engage in role making behavior, i.e. actors act “as-if” they take the concerns of the other, the “alter”, into account (Harnisch 2010). If the “other” defects and does not merit the possible communal gains, the practice of interaction does not stabilize the new role taken. However, if the “other” reciprocates, then the actor’s tentative new role will be reinforced. Once constituted, these nascent social institutions have significant power to promulgate old norms in new uncertain situations or to propose new norms in given situations. How? Having stabilized behavior in the past and successfully constituted their members’ identities/roles in the first place, they muster significant trust.

In summation, social constructivists understand interdependence first and foremost as a (a)symmetric configuration of social purposes. They stress the importance of the transformative nature of social interaction for the appraisal of potential interdependence costs and benefits. These externalities and the respective uncertainty thus depend on recurring processes of identity formation which delineate appropriate goals of an actor (or group) vis-à-vis others. In this view, the means by which uncertainty in interdependent situations is reduced are not (mere) information updates, as in Bayesian learning, but appropriations of shared meanings, i.e. norms, values or compatible roles, as in complex learning or identity formation processes (Levy 1994: 287). Conceptually speaking, social constructivists thus move the term interdependence towards a probabilistic, immaterial understanding of interdependence that allows for a broad variation on actorness, depending on their respective social cohesiveness.

### 3. Conceptualizing convergence: towards inter-paradigm dialogue (and synthesis)

Reflecting upon the current debate in IR theory on the possibility of dialogue and synthesis (Hellmann et al. 2003), these understandings of interdependence could be seen as incommensurable and lacking any commonalities. Because in our view, there is no neutral point of reference from which to judge their relative scientific merits, we propose a set of categories through which inter-paradigm dialogue on interdependence should become possible.

Inter-paradigm convergence in the usage of interdependence can be demonstrated in many ways. As conceptualized here, it consists of a specific set of changes in three dimensions along which the term interdependence may oscillate. The direction of change in paradigmatic usage along these dimensions makes the subsequent convergence apparent.

(1) Temporality: inter-paradigm dialogue may involve changes along the inter-temporal dimension of interdependence: from an actor's future-oriented *possibilistic orientation* in which the prohibitive costs of an interdependent relationship induce autonomy maximization, to a *probabilistic orientation* that is focused on the past and present when assessing both costs and benefits.

(2) Ontological Status: Rapprochement may consist of a change in subject matter of interdependence: from assessments of various *material power resources* (military, demographic, political, economic etc.) towards *immaterial power resources* (status, prestige, leadership roles), which are in turn based on socially ascribed values such as trustworthiness, legitimacy etc. The upshot of this change in usage of interdependence may well constitute a "crossing or blurring of inter-paradigm boundaries" (Lapid 2003: 130), as socially constructed power resources may or may not be measured independently according to one's epistemic preferences (for an opposing view Moravcsik 2010: 12).

(3) Referent Object: A shift may occur with regard to the referent object of the cost/benefit analysis, from a fixed, circumscribed self-regarding behavior towards a fluid, variable, other-regarding behavior.<sup>3</sup> Variance across this dimension implies a shift from a highly *coherent*

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<sup>3</sup> As alliance theoreticians within the realist paradigm have suggested all-along, alliance members may accept unequal benefits from their cooperation (e.g. relative gains by free-riding smaller powers) as

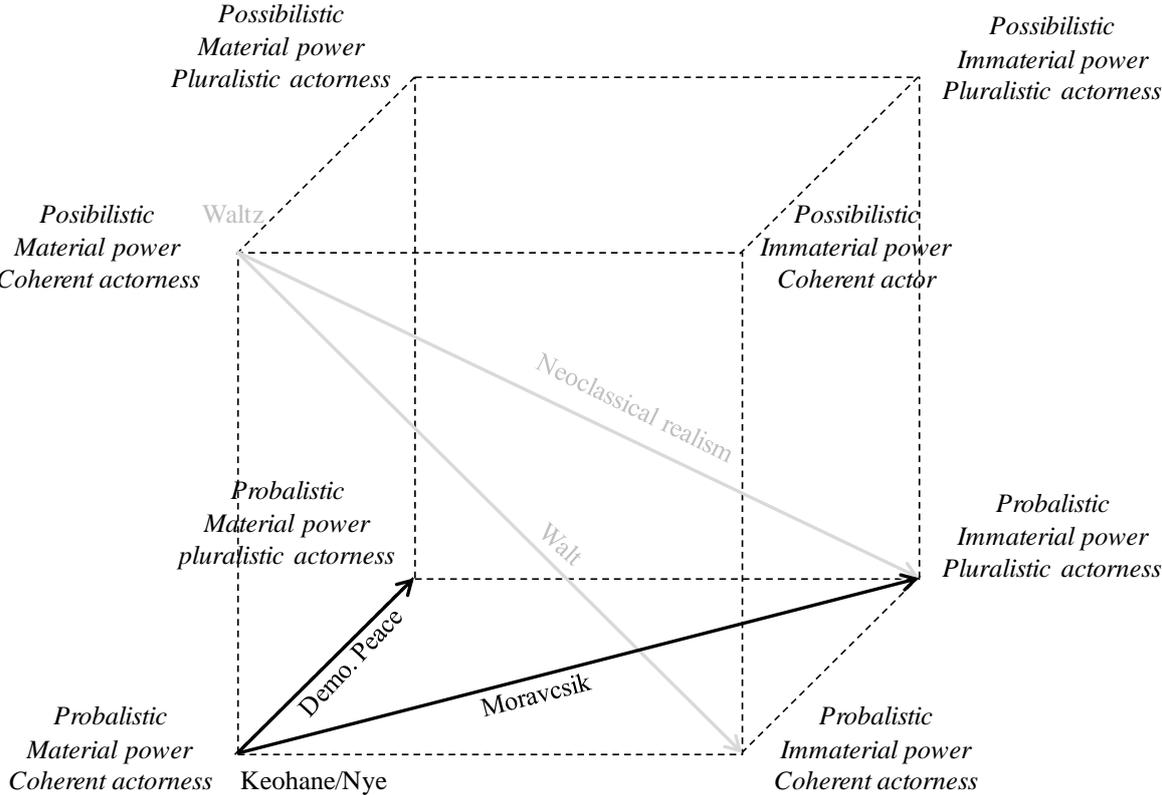
*actorness* and contained entity with only few internal interdependencies which no or only scant attention to domestic redistributive effects towards a *pluralistic actorness* setting such as in democracies or highly integrated international institutions. In these types of settings, cost/benefit assessments regularly require a two- or three-dimensional evaluation since the interdependent effects spread unevenly. By design, such actorness settings may result in “deviant” behavior, depending on one’s point of view, as it follows a cost/benefit analysis that is based on the assessment of one of several possible settings.

Specifically, we posit that rapprochement in the first (intertemporal) and second (material/immaterial) dimensions is crucial for the question whether material always trump immaterial interdependencies (liberalism) or the identification of “status quo-” and “revisionist powers” (realism). Two short examples may suffice how this nexus can be relevant: First, whereas liberal alliance theory holds that political interdependencies may trump dramatic shifts in relative power (e.g. after the demise of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Treaty Organization), ensuring continued cooperation, Walt’s neoclassical Balance of Threat approach may explain why rivaling great powers cooperate against transnational terrorist groups: even though their cooperation is not based on material cost/benefit analyses (e.g. intelligence sharing), but on a common ideological front line against violent non-state actors challenging the present territorial order. Second, there is a dearth of deterrence literature considering the importance of “reputation” (as an intertemporal phenomenon of immaterial interdependence) for the stability of material power (a)symmetries. As Thomas Schelling has argued, reputation “is one of the few things worth fighting for” (Schelling 1966: 124). However, as Jonathan Mercer and others (such as the realist Fareed Zakaria) have shown, the nexus between reputation and the costs and benefits of material power are not as straightforward it may seem: a reputation for being tough does not always prevent predatory behavior in interdependent situations. Instead, being tough may be seen as being “reckless”, i.e. against the perceived self-interests of the actor, or being tough in one situation may be viewed as tied to the situational conditions, so that intertemporal analogies may not suffice – the United States may have invaded Iraq because of the threat of WMD proliferation in 2003 (under G. W. Bush), but it may not invade Iran in 2011 (under Barack Obama).

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long as these contribute to the common goal of accumulating relative power vis-à-vis third parties, i.e. the adversary.

As these changes in the understanding of interdependence pertain to the constitutive parts of the respective paradigms, variance in the rapprochement along one or more dimensions may, depending on one’s epistemological leanings, but must not always extend to a “paradigmatic degeneration” (Vasquez 1997; Legro/Moravcsik 1997). In our view, variation in rapprochement among these three dimensions may fall well short of that and thus open up a “discourse space” for inter-paradigm dialogue and synthesis. Note that our conceptualization of rapprochement is defined by certain structural commodities (temporality, ontological status, referent object) and not in terms of one of the paradigms under review. Consequently, the detected rapprochement should be distinguished from other treatments of inter-paradigm convergence where specific motives, analytical levels etc. are claimed for certain paradigms (Legro/Moravcsik 1999; Moravcsik 2010; Rathbun 2010). Whereas the former imply that paradigmatic diffusion is limited to degeneration or expansion within or among paradigms, we conceive inter-paradigm rapprochement as a common feature of the research field and thus as a potentially fruitful one.



**Figure 1: Dimensions of rapprochement of the rationalist paradigms**

From our brief review of the concept of interdependence in IR paradigms, dynamic movements become apparent, which can be displayed in three-dimensional space. The realist paradigm's early possibilistic reading of interdependence based on material power and closed units, was extended by Walt and the neoclassicists. The latter opened up the closed actor and introduced nonmaterial variables such as influence. Moreover, most neoclassic realists broke with the possibilistic orientation of structural realism by introducing threat perceptions as contingent upon historic information.

The liberal paradigm has maintained a probabilistic understanding of interdependence costs, but recently it also extended its scope along the dimension of actorness and the material-immaterial-divide. As a tool to systematically capture the consequences of globalization, interdependence initially described the condition of the international system in largely material terms. Challenged to provide a causal explanation for their findings, students of the democratic peace soon expanded this initial use by focusing on the causal impact of domestic politics and politics. Hence, the coherent actorness of early liberals was replaced by pluralistic understandings at the center of an increasingly complex two-level interdependence game. With the peaceful end of the Cold War and the expansion of the liberal order, both domestically and internationally, liberals started to take the diffusion and appropriation of ideas and identities more and more into account. Thus, the earlier material reading of interdependence, inspired by the economic literature, was complemented by research on the impact of immaterial factors and the material-immaterial interplay, e.g. in socialization processes.

Pace Alexander Wendt's structural argument, social constructivism as an intellectual movement – rather than a cohesive theory – has increasingly stressed the transformative character of discourse and practice for social interaction and interdependence. As a consequence, constructivist theoreticians shifted back and forward on the temporal and referent object dimension, while agency took center stage in redefining the scope of immaterial interdependencies, such as international humanitarian law.

In sum, in our view theoretical rapprochement on the use of interdependence is as obvious as it is an inter-paradigm phenomenon. Realist and liberal paradigms started by considering interdependence as a description of the international system under material conditions of globalization and mutual assured destruction, while disagreeing over the potential for

cooperation or conflict. Conceptually, this initial dichotomy in a two-dimensional space (intertemporal/ontological) has now made way for an inter-paradigm rapprochement within a three-dimensional space. In this new environment, all paradigms share a tendency to address pluralistic agency and material as well as immaterial factors when assessing interdependent relationships. In our view, there is a good argument to be made that this tendency was fostered by the peaceful transformation of the Soviet Union and the latest wave of democratization, which increased interest in the power of ideas, political participation and the distinctiveness of democracies across IR paradigms. Given this substantial rapprochement, a theoretical dialogue is possible.

#### **4. Policy interdependencies in dialogue**

We argue that Moravcsik's liberal theory is a good – but not the only probable – starting point to systematically use this extended interdependence concept. His theory integrates economic, ideational and republican factors, which are widely understood as the primary causal drivers in liberalism (Milner/Moravcsik 2009; Moravcsik 2010, 2008, 2003, 1997; Narizny 2003). In our view, these factors are also crucial for an inter-paradigm reading of interdependence. Actors may engage in maximizing economic utility in interdependent relationships through policy coordination or integration – so-called pooling and delegation (Moravcsik 1998). Or they may pursue ideational goals such as democratization to bolster the chances for “peace among democracies” by establishing a “liberal international order based on institutions”. In both cases, the formation of preferences deriving from these basic (and fixed) interests will be governed by political institutions which either do or do not translate societal preferences into governmental policies (Moravcsik 1997; Narizny 2003). In recent years, attention in FPA liberalism has focused on economic motives and ideational preferences of democracies to cooperate among each other and to prevent predatory behavior by non-democracies – Democratic Peace and Democratic War hypothesis (Reiter/Stam 2002; Rosato 2003; Geis/Brock/Müller 2006). By including commercial, ideational and republican strands, Moravcsik's theory already covers the two-level characteristic of interdependence and its range from material to immaterial factors. In our view, it is therefore closest to covering the complexity of the concept.

Yet, the nexus between Moravcsik's three liberalisms is not as trivial as the author himself suggests (Moravcsik 1997; 2008; 2010: 12). If the republican thread is taken seriously, i.e. is given causal priority in a strict positivistic argument, then the government is domestically more than a mere representative. Rather than a bottom-up one-way street, the relationship between society and governments is better described as a connected two-level interdependency game, in which the government has considerable, if varying, leverage.<sup>4</sup> In our view, this in turn indicates that liberalism's causal direction oscillates far more than Moravcsik and others would have it.

Moreover, if ideational factors can trump other factors, substantial changes may be more frequent than Moravcsik's assumption of fixed interests suggests. In contrast to material interdependencies, ideational interdependencies are not based on the partners' visible capacity, but on estimates of the relative value of (often invisible) social capacities. In short, while material interdependencies are regularly characterized by inertia, ideational interdependence, because it is constituted intersubjectively, is prone to change more often and more substantially. Rooted in methodological individualism, Moravcsik's reading of ideational interdependence has neglected this crucial effect.

In this section, we look into the nexus between the three liberalisms in a synthesized actor-centric model. In the model, governmental agents choose to cooperate or not as a function of the representative institutions governing domestic interdependencies – the actor's office and respective policy seeking preferences – and their perception of the preferences and commitments of the external actors with whom they interact. Consequently, interdependent relations, in this model, regularly occur on two-levels (see Putnam 1988; Moravcsik 1993), but governmental agents' policy choices are contingent on their beliefs about the scope and intertemporal implications of their foreign policy choices on their domestic position. In our view, this synthesized model reveals the limitations and inconsistencies inherent in current liberal theories by highlighting the nexus between republican liberalism and the two causal drivers economic and ideational preferences (see however Moravcsik 2005).

By illustrating our model in two cases we aim to identify advanced hypothesis that should further theoretical synthesis in the liberal paradigm and foster inter-paradigm dialogue on

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<sup>4</sup> For a similar conceptualization along this line in neoclassical realism see Fordham 2009; Lobell 2009; Sterling-Folker 2009.

variance in the actorness-dimension of interdependent relations. We present two brief case studies reflecting the intricate interaction between all three liberal branches without prematurely subsuming one under the other. We picked two different regime types, a transitional regime and an embedded democracy, to show that the extended reading of interdependence is relevant across different institutional settings.

**a. China's Status seeking: balancing cooperative and confrontational interdependencies**

One recent line of liberal inquiry seeks to integrate governmental actors' domestic concerns with regime stability and the aggressive foreign policy behavior outlined in the "transitional wars" literature (Mansfield/Snyder 1995a, 1995b; 1996; 2002; Snyder 2000). In the primary studies in this vein, Mansfield and Snyder argue that the opening of the political space during democratic transitions intensifies the competition between incumbents and challengers. Since new democratic structures are too weak to dampen political competition, opportunistic elites revert to manipulating domestic political cleavages through nationalistic rhetoric, thus unifying the nation by way of an ideational zero-sum game vis-à-vis "foreign threats" and "domestic traitors" (Mansfield/Snyder 1995a: 7).

The obvious critique of this approach is that not all transitions towards democracy lead to war. As Reinhard Wolf (1996) pointed out, fast transitions in Central and Middle Eastern Europe actually lowered the likelihood of war in the region. He also stressed that the approach largely failed to consider a society's composition: in his view, communist egalitarian societies should cause far less international instability than the liberalization of less egalitarian societies with feudal remnants, because in these societies, the old elites' fear of losing their power, wealth and lives is greatest (Wolf 1996).

We agree with Wolf's assessment and challenge Mansfield and Snyder with regard to the People's Republic of China's foreign policy conduct. Both assert that China's foreign policy will be dominated by expanding economic ties with the West and its security presence in the region (Mansfield/Snyder 1995: 38). In contrast, we argue that China's foreign policy trajectory cannot be adequately understood by focusing on international economic and strategic interdependencies, especially with the United States, only. We suggest that an

explanatory model which takes the ideational interdependence emanating from China's rising nationalism as well as the domestic concerns of the Chinese Communist Party into account, is much more plausible (see also Sterling-Folker 2009).

Our synthesized model suggests that "China's Struggle for Status" (Deng 2009) is a deliberate equilibrium between the cooperative approach towards international economic interdependencies – to further societal preferences for export-led economic development – and a potentially confrontational approach towards ideational interdependencies – to further societal preferences for the recognition of its achievements and its claims on Chinese territory, e.g. Taiwan, Tibet, etc., by other (democratic) great powers (Brittingham 2007).<sup>5</sup> We hold that this causal nexus between ideational and economic components in a policy equilibrium of rhetorically predatory behavior, economic cooperation and actual military restraint.

As indicated above, given a sufficiently strong ideational preference, governmental elites in non-democracies may forgo economic considerations and may succumb to societal pressures in order to bolster regime stability. To improve their domestic standing, they may even engage in self-binding behavior through domestic legislation, thus using institutions to lock-in societal policy preferences (Stanger 1995). As will be shown below, the 2005 Chinese anti-secessionist law (with regard to Taiwanese interdependence) not only mirrors US domestic legislation, i.e. the 1982 Taiwan Relations Act, to balance domestic expectations and foreign interdependencies. It also can be interpreted as a tool to bolster the Chinese government's reputation when pursuing conflictual ideational goals, i.e. changing the territorial order by force, which run counter to China's obvious cooperative material interests, i.e. maintaining and enhancing economic exchanges with Taiwan and the United States.

In the case of China, we hold that the People Republic of China's behavior vis-à-vis Taiwan is driven by its expansive nationalism, which cannot be accommodated easily in the existing international order dominated by elected and free governments sharing strong ideational bonds with Taiwan (Ikenberry 2008). We thus argue that China's strategies and instruments of managing interdependence depend on the perception of the Taiwanese intention to seek

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<sup>5</sup> In contrast to Jennifer Sterling-Folker's constructivist account (2009), we suggest, however, that China's nationalist identity is not a constant, but a variant which in turn can be traced back to both material factors, e.g. unequal distribution of economic success, and immaterial factors, such as active manipulation by the CCP, which are in line with our liberal argument.

formal independence and sovereignty. Hence, the larger the perceived probability of Taiwanese formal defection from China's nationhood, the more likely a confrontational, even military, approach is (Dittmer 2004). However, the larger the negative domestic implications, e.g. the loss in exports to Taiwan (and the US for that matter), the lower the credibility of a "tough and reckless" Chinese approach, because it would undermine the CCP's development strategy.

As Kenneth Schultz and others have showed, non-democracies cannot easily send "costly signals" to their interaction partner because they lack credible popular elections that will oust leaders that forego important domestic concerns: "The problems faced by nondemocratic leaders is not that their threats generate no political risks but rather that the political risks generated by their threats are not obvious to outsiders" (Schultz 2001: 18). As a consequence, domestic costs resulting from foreign ideational interdependence must be made transparent and distributed fairly in domestic institutions to stabilize the agent's position in a two-tiered equilibrium game.

Counter-intuitively for traditional economic interpretations, the PRC's Taiwan policy has become nastier, while economic and social ties have blossomed. Cross-Strait trade exploded from 1979-2006. During the same period, Taiwanese businessmen, starting in the 1980s have invested heavily on the mainland and personal exchanges have increased dramatically in the 1990s. All the same, political and military interdependence has been far less positive or stable. During the 1995/6 missile crisis, China and the United States came close to facing a serious military crisis when a U.S. aircraft carrier group entered the Taiwan Strait after the then Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui visited the United States (Ross 2000). Subsequently, the Clinton administration tried to actively moderate both Beijing's and Taipeh's ideational security dilemma by calling for restraint, but when President Lee in July 1997 referred to cross-Strait relations as a "special state-to-state" one, the situation escalated once more (Bush 2006).

Thus, as the CCP government pursued its concept of "peaceful economic rise/development", the issue of Taiwanese independence became so central to the party's domestic position that a formal declaration of independence was perceived to serve a potentially fatal blow to the CCPs domestic legitimacy (Deng 2008: 259). As the influential Chinese scholar Wang Jisi pointed out in 2004:

“[T]here if the notion among many Chinese that the revival of the Chinese nation would not be meaningful and real if the mainland failed to achieve reunification with Taiwan.” (Wang 2004: 12)

In a similar vein, Yan Tuexong, director of the prestigious Tsinghua University’s Institute of International Studies stressed at the time:

“If China lacks the ability to preserve national unity, it cannot rise to be world power, nor can it achieve national rejuvenation” (cited in Deng 2008: 256f.)

Consequently, the CCP leadership escalated its Taiwan rhetoric and action after Chen Shui-bian, the pro-independence candidate of the oppositional DDP was elected in 2000 and U.S. President G. W. Bush stated that the US would do “whatever it takes to help Taiwan to defend itself.” After the re-election of Chen in 2004, who had promised during the campaign to achieve independence by constitutional referendum in 2008, the CCP leadership feared growing domestic costs in the ensuing cross-strait ideational security dilemma. It thus decided to boost its credibility by enacting the anti-secessionist law which threatens non-military means to prevent Taiwanese formal independence.<sup>6</sup>

In doing so, the CCP sent a costly signal, both domestically and internationally, that it would consider a further erosion of its position in the ideational struggle with Taiwan unacceptable, because this would undermine the CCPs leadership domestically:

“Once a major event leading to ‘Taiwan independence’ takes place, mainland Chinese leaders will be held accountable if they don’t take decisive and effective measures to stop it.” (Xu Bodong cited in Deng 2008: 266).

Conceptually, we claim that the ideational costs of cross-strait interdependence, i.e. the growing ideational security dilemma of the CCP, cannot be accounted for without considering its relative domestic position – growing nationalism – and the strengthened Taiwanese pro-independence position in the wake of the G.W. Bush administration’s material support for

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<sup>6</sup> Art. 8 of the law reads: “In the event that the “Taiwan independence” secessionist forces should act under any name or by any means to cause the fact of Taiwan's secession from China, or that major incidents entailing Taiwan's secession from China should occur, or that possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted, the state shall employ non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.” Anti-Secession Law, adopted at the Third Session of the Tenth National People's Congress on March 14, 2005, [http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200503/14/eng20050314\\_176746.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200503/14/eng20050314_176746.html) [accessed 27.08. 2010.]

democratic revolutions around the globe. Methodologically, we suggest that an understanding of these ideational interdependencies cannot be based on methodological individualism (only), because the relative value of social resources such as “reputation and credibility” and the relative position of an actor in a two-level ideational security dilemma are socially constructed systemic properties, not individual ones.

In summation, we find that China’s foreign conduct cannot be understood without taking ideational interdependence seriously and without conceptualizing its causal nexus with the CCP two-tiered policy agenda of peaceful economic development and propagating Chinese nationalism which lies at the heart of both the PRC’s conflictual and cooperative interdependence in the current liberal international order. Theoretically speaking, we find that the anti-secessionist law exemplifies a disequilibrium between an actor’s ideational and economic interdependency choices may necessitate new institutional arrangements to stabilize the actor’s position in a two-level game and bolster his credibility, thus establishing a causal nexus between ideational, economic and republican liberalism.

#### **b. Germany’s European policy and shifting ideational interdependencies**

In our second case, we argue that recent German European policy is a telling example of the interaction of domestic and international interdependence and the power of ideational preferences over economic preferences in an embedded democracy. We show that ideational interdependencies between Germany and Europe shifted towards conflict in recent years, because the prominent position of the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) in the German political system allowed a minority group of conservative judges to domesticate Berlin’s traditional pro-integrationist policies. Theoretically speaking, we thus highlight that embedded democracies may also have substantial asymmetrical ideational interdependencies with the current liberal institutional order and that these asymmetries may shift because of a bias in representation.

Andrew Moravcsik (2010) argues that democratic institutions most often prevent a bias in representation. We find that Germany’s European integration policy has recently become an interesting exemption to this rule. For decades, benefits from security and economic interdependencies have dominated the German push for European integration (among others

Moravcsik 1998), but a gradual shift in the ideational balance between German and European democracy within Germany has now created an ideational security dilemma of sorts. In this dilemma, proponents of domestication on the FCC's bench argue that there is an emerging zero-sum situation between European integration and German democracy. Conceptually, it is interesting that the majority of elected representatives in the Bundestag and Bundesrat – Germany's legislatures – do not underwrite this perception and that German citizens, although more cautious than before, still view further and deeper integration favorably.

And yet, since the 1970s and paralleling growing economic benefits, the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC), the domestic guardian of the German basic law (Grundgesetz), constituted changing and increasingly negative patterns of ideational interdependencies with the evolving European primary and secondary law, thus also pushing its relationship with the European Court of Justice (ECJ) from conflict to cooperation. Under the Merkel Grand Coalition, the impact of the Court's negative assessment of the ideational interdependencies has come to shape Germany's European Policy more than ever. In fact, the FCC's so-called Lisbon ruling (2009) now fundamentally limits the government's ability to further integrate in the Union, thus bringing EU integration to a virtual halt after decades of expansion (Harnisch 2009).

Four distinct phases of the Court's increasingly negative ideational positioning can be identified, calling into question Moravcsik's assumption of "fixed ideational preferences". During the early years of integration, the FCC allowed for nearly unhindered integration in the 1950s and 1960s. It left considerable discretion to interpret European rules to the German executive and relied on the ECJ's argument that the Community's law constituted an autonomous legal order (22 BVerfGE 293, 296).<sup>7</sup>

In the second phase, however, the ideational interdependence shifted from a situation of harmony to guarded cooperation. Beginning with the so-called "Solange I-judgement", the FCC reasoned that Art. 24 GG only allowed for a limited transfer of competences to interstate institutions and it asserted its position vis-à-vis the emerging powerful ECJ. In particular, in Solange I, the majority of the judges held that as long as European law had not reached a level

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<sup>7</sup> But in doing so, even then the judges in Karlsruhe did not concede that Community law emanates from an autonomous source equal to that of the German Grundgesetz. What the FCC recognized was the supremacy of Community law over national law, not constitutional law, in the form of a "priority of application" (Anwendungsvorrang), but not a "priority in validity" (Geltungsvorrang) (31 BVerfGE 145, 169).

of protection of basic rights (Grundrechte) equivalent to that provided by the Grundgesetz, the Court itself would continue to review secondary European law according to the basic law's standards. Moreover, the judges argued that Art. 24 did not literally transfer national sovereign competences to the European level, but only left room for the implementation of European law within the national legal realm (37 BVerfGE 271 at 280). Hence, the Court recognized that European law raised important concerns with regard to the German constitution, but it also asserted that these concerns affected "only" the realm of fundamental rights and that these may be overcome in the future through a democratization of European legislative process. Based on this generic interpretation of European law, the Court reasoned that the ECJ and the FCC had a "duty" to cooperate to solve conflicts arising from the overlap of the two respective legal orders (37 BVerfGE 271, 278). In this vein, the FCC changed course again in the Solange II decision right after the treaty revision of the Single European Act. It expressed substantial satisfaction with the level of protection for fundamental rights provided by the ECJ and reasoned that "as long as" the European Communities ensured an effective protection of fundamental rights, the FCC would no longer scrutinize secondary Community legislation (73 BVerfGE 339, 384).

But in an important variation from the prior rulings, the Solange II decision also found that the obligation to reach consensus between the Courts did not flow from the European level. It maintained steadfastly the notion that the obligation for consensus emerges from the German law transferring sovereign competences to the Communities (73 BVerfGE 339, 375). Thus the ideational point of reference for the adjudication of that question lay within the German legal sphere and not in European law as an autonomous legal source. In terms of ideational interdependence, the Court now defined cooperation on German terms only.

While the judges in Karlsruhe continued to refer to a cooperative relationship with the ECJ during the third phase, their rulings created an increasingly competitive pattern of ideational interdependence. Despite continuous popular and political support for economic integration, in the 1993 Maastricht ruling, the FCC formulated a ringing critique of the European Union in general and the EU Commission and ECJ in particular, which allegedly engaged in the "transgression of the competences limits confer to them" (ausbrechende Rechtsakte) (89 BVerfGE 155, 188).

The Maastricht decision continued the trend in doctrinal evolution of the Court to qualify, if not undermine, the autonomous status and source of European Community law (Kokott 1998; 81). But more importantly, the Court employed fresh sources to legitimize clear and present limits on the competences of both the executive and legislative branch to delegate authority to the EU. Whereas the Solange I-doctrine had rooted the limits to delegation in the protection of Basic rights – and subsequently conceded the rising EC/ECJ competence to provide for equal protection –, the judges now based their reasoning on a particular interpretation of Art. 38 GG which stipulates the equal and unhampered right to vote, that is democracy itself.

As a consequence, the Court's interpretation did not only refer to democratic processes, but also to substantive issues of democracy, i.e. the political content the representatives of the people had to decide upon: the Courts ideational point of reference thus changed from basic rights to the principle of democracy as such (Kokott 1998: 94), when evaluating the costs of ideational interdependency. This "ideational radicalization" enabled the court to directly change the constitutional limits of German European policy through defining a new, more demanding threshold for integration, rooting its democratic core in the static, primordial concept of the demos, i.e. Staatsvolk, which itself is constituted through pre-legal requirements such as shared culture, a common language and history (89 BVerfGE 155, 185; Weiler 1995). Also, under the banner of the so-called "Kompetenz-Kompetenz", the FCC declared itself as the final arbiter for both German and European law in Germany, relegating the ECJ to a subordinate role. Thus, the court now tried to foreclose further ideational costs coming from the interdependence with the EU and despite vocal criticism by a majority of legal scholars, policy makers acquiesced to this arrogation of the Court.

In the fourth, current phase, the FCC's 2009 Lisbon ruling effectively turned the ideational interdependence into a zero-sum situation, deadlocking judicial and severely circumscribing political cooperation with the EU. The Court held that the Treaty of Lisbon itself is constitutional, but it ruled that the accompanying German statute on the rights of the Bundestag and the Bundesrat in European Union was not. It instructed the legislators to modify the statute in accordance with its own decision, thereby leaving no doubt that the FCC ultimately sets the limits for legislative acts (Niedotibek 2009, 1246).

Arguably, the Lisbon decision marks a clear departure from the Maastricht decision in doctrinal terms (Schönberger 2009: 1207; Halberstamm/Möllers 2009: 1247; Kiiver 2009:

1290; Müller-Graff 2009: 337). With regard to the material limits to further integration, the ruling takes another radical step to delimit the integrative competences of the legislative and executive branch. Under the guise of the new concept of “responsibility for integration” (BVerfG, 2 BvE 2/08, Headnote 2 and paras. 236, 238ff., 243, 245, 264, 272, 317, 319f., 365, 375, 409, 411, 415), the court withdraws a large chunk of procedural and normative competences from the legislative and executive branches which they cannot delegate to the Union under the given German Constitution.<sup>8</sup> Based on its doctrine of democracy and with reference to Art. 20, para. 1, 2 as well as Art. 23 and 79, para. 3, the court substantially expanded the sphere of legal concepts it will protect: democracy, “sovereign statehood” and “constitutional identity”. The FCC thus considerably advances its own position vis-à-vis the state representatives. It also does not refer to a cooperative relationship with the European Court of Justice anymore.

In summation, we find that the FCC’s changing definitions of the “costs of the ideational interdependence with Europe” resulted in an increasingly zero-sum perception of the relationship. With ever new “ideational transgressions” by the EU, the FCC adjusted its own ideational points of reference to reverse the pro-integrationist course of Germany’s European policy. Conceptually, we hold that the Court’s capture of the state cannot be understood without reference to republican liberalism, i.e. the representation bias favoring the FCC’s minority position over the continuous bi-partisan pro-integration consensus in Germany’s parliament. However, methodologically we also find again that the Courts shifting assessments of ideational interdependence are not easily explained when based on methodological individualism. Whereas accommodation and cooperation with the ECJ seemed possible in 1970 and 80s when the Court’s started a dialogue on the relative legal merits of their rulings on fundamental rights protection, the 1990s witnessed more and more unilateral “strategic legal signaling” by the FCC, thus constituting a growing ideational security dilemma of sorts.

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<sup>8</sup> The court defined five specific areas, which have to stay put under the existing German constitution: (1) substantive and formal criminal law; (2) disposition of the police monopoly on the use of force towards the interior and of the military monopoly on the use of force towards the exterior; (3) fundamental fiscal decisions on public revenue and public expenditure; (4) decisions on the shaping of circumstances of life in a social state; (5) decisions which are of particular importance culturally, for instance as regards family law, the school and education system and dealing with religious communities).

## 5. Conclusion

Starting out from the observation that the notion of (ideational) interdependence has gained little attention from students of FPA so far, we first sought to map inter-paradigm rapprochement in its usage to test the waters for dialogue and synthesis. We found that the concept's use in all paradigms moved considerably along three dimensions (temporality, ontological status and referent object) and increasingly converged, resulting in a substantial inter-paradigm overlap. The term interdependence initially served to describe the economic and strategic material relations and its consequences for international cooperation and conflict within the liberal and realist paradigms. Our findings suggest that democratization and the rediscovery of the role of ideas by social constructivism broadened and shifted the scope of the term among paradigms towards more pluralistic actorness conceptions and a closer examination of the nexus between material and immaterial interdependencies.

In our re-reading of the respective interdependence literature all paradigms shifted their use of interdependence, thus allowing for inter-paradigm dialogue and synthesis. While some may have moved more than others along the "interdependence frontier", our findings make clear that when we take ideational interdependence and its nexus with economic and republican interdependency seriously, then all paradigms, including liberalism, may have to move even further towards synthesis.

We then critically discussed the use of interdependence in Moravcsik's treatment of liberal theory, which includes all crucial factors shaping interdependence, thus representing a probable starting point. Yet, in our view Moravcsik's take on interdependence so far proves indeed too closed and parsimonious to allow for both causal and constitutive analysis of economic, ideational and republican interdependencies. His bottom-up perspective fails to systematically account for the two-level interdependence, in which decision-makers take center stage as office and policy-seeking agents. It furthermore fails to account for the different logics which apply for material and immaterial interdependencies: While material interdependencies are based on economic, geographic or strategic factors, in which mutual vulnerabilities maybe defined independently of the actors involved, immaterial interdependencies are based on identities, mutual recognition etc., which are regularly defined intersubjectively through language and practices.

Then, our brief example showed that ideational interdependencies can not only trump material benefits, stretch across the domestic/foreign frontier and affect both transitional states and embedded democracies. The cases also showed that governmental and other political actors themselves may “create” ideational security dilemmas when assessing the costs and benefits of their relative social position vis-à-vis competing actors. The variance we found in conflictual interdependence patterns for an embedded democracy and a transitional state should give pause neoclassical realists when they stress the unchanging nature of conflicting identities among social groups.

To be sure, from our point of view, the two cases *could* also be interpreted as cases of political actors – the CCP and the FCC respectively – within a two-level game Balance of Threat situations in which their authoritative claims to govern/control governance is challenged by both domestic and foreign competitors. While this may be a conceptual stretch for many neoclassical realists (and competing theoreticians), we gather that the exploration of ideational interdependencies and their nexus of economic and republican interdependencies has only just begun. Cross-paradigmatic thinking, in our view, should be an important source of inspiration in this endeavor.

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