
The politics of domestication: A new paradigm in German foreign policy?

German Politics Lecture

27.05.09

35th Annual conference of the IASGP, Birmingham

The Argument

1. Delegation of competences has become a core feature of contemporary democratic governance in Germany and elsewhere.
2. Historically, Germany possesses high willingness to delegate power domestically and internationally (Katzenstein/Paterson)
3. Two delegation levels form cross-cutting patterns with a strong impact on policy formulation and implementation
 1. European Policy
 2. Security Policy
 3. (Monetary Policy)

Definition: Domestication

„Domestication is a process by which domestic political actors aim at limiting the executive’s autonomy in foreign policy through improved procedural participation and normative safeguarding clauses in both legislative acts and constitutional law as well as practices (Harnisch 2006).“

The domestication process: three analytical stages

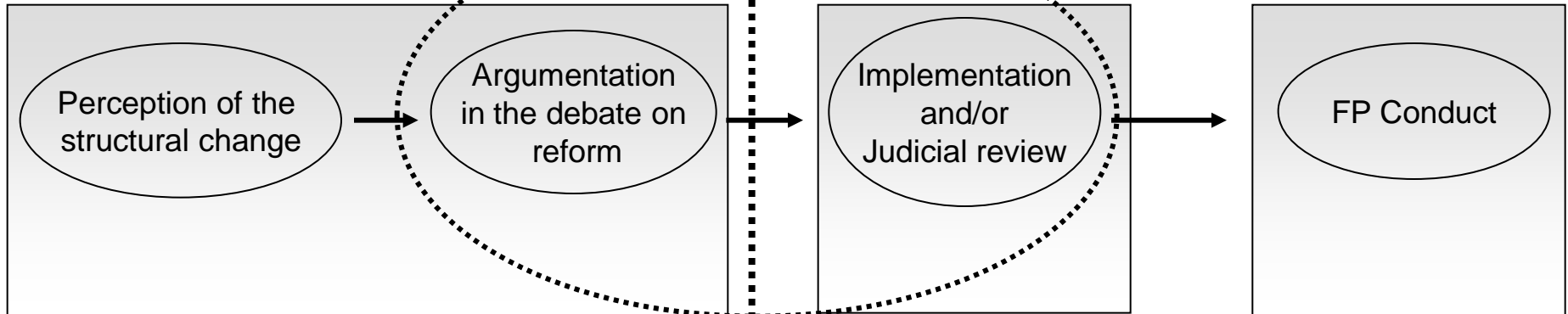
Structure => Agent

Agent => Structure

Structural change I:
Europeanization

Structural change II:
e.g. Blockade; German
Policy model upload

Actor change **Domestication thesis**



1. Discourse analysis

2. Institutional analysis

3. Behavioural analysis

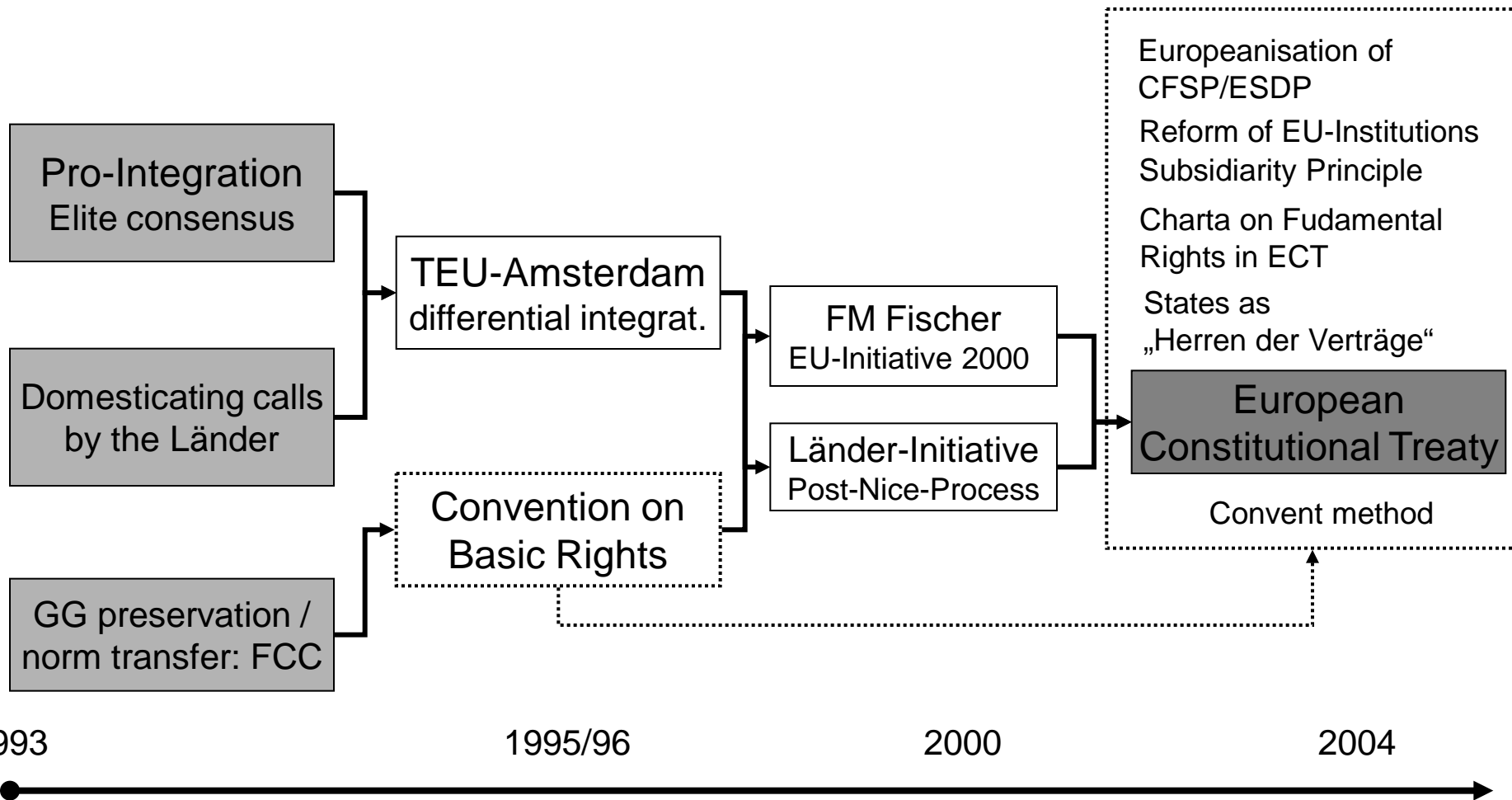
Article 23 [Structural Safeguarding Clauses]

(1) With a view to establishing a united Europe, the Federal Republic of Germany shall participate in the development of the European Union that is committed to democratic, social and federal principles, to the rule of law, and to the principle of subsidiarity, and that guarantees a level of protection of basic rights **essentially comparable to that afforded by this Basic Law.**

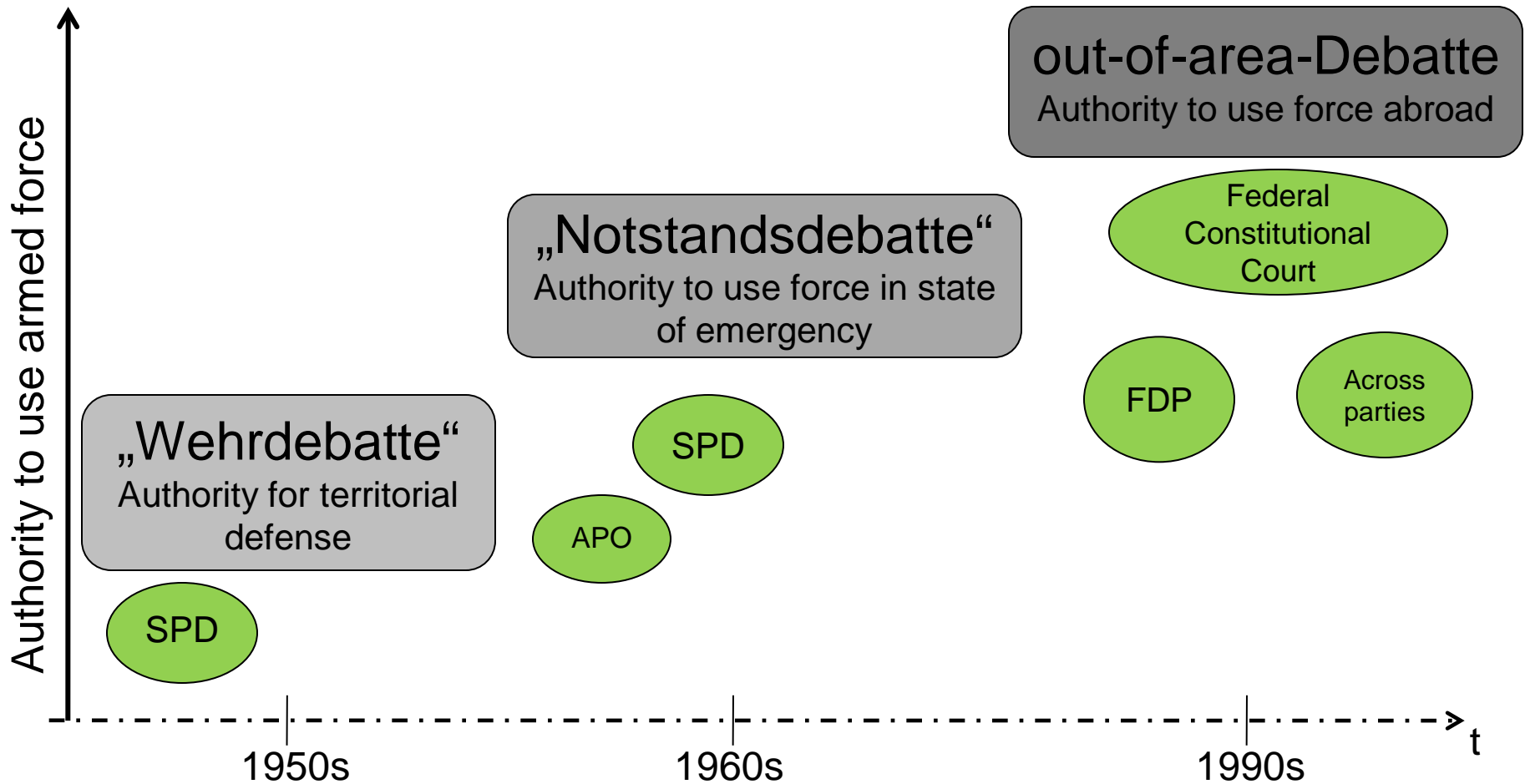
The FCC's Maastricht Judgement: Safeguarding Germany's domestic order

1. Only an existing demos can create a state.
2. Since there is no European demos (a European Volk) there can be no European state in the foreseeable future.
3. To ensure legitimacy of a „confederation of states“ (Staatenverbund) three conditions have to be met:
 1. Procedural transparency
 2. An adequate determinability of the scheme of integration
 3. Obligations and competences of substantial importance remain with the Bundestag

Germany's Constitutionalisation Policy for the EU: Initiatives und Policy outcomes



Domesticating the authority to use of force in Germany



Domestication process in security policy

Structure => Agent

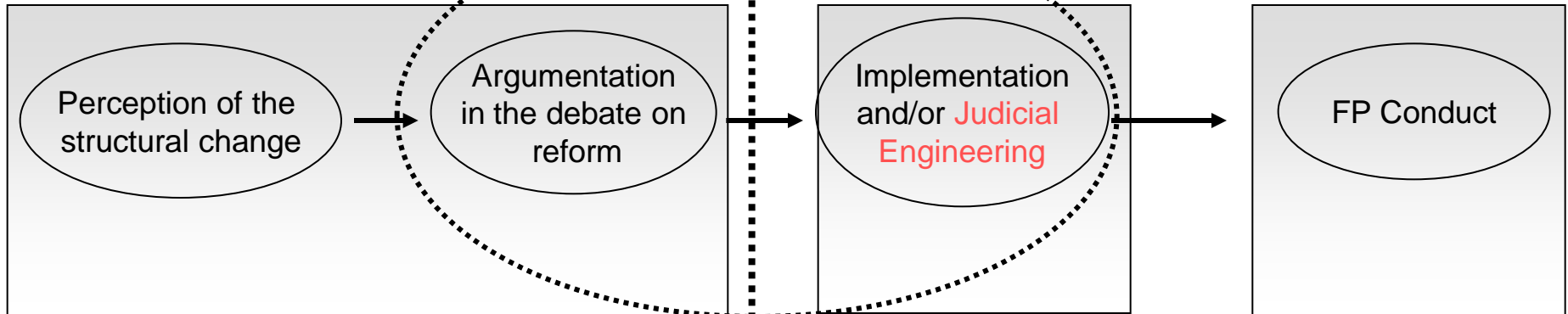
Agent => Structure

Structural change I:
Germany's
new responsibilities

Structural change II:
Schröders „Nein“, Pre-
ference for ESDP, Nat. caveats,
Intergouvern. EDA

Actor change

Domestication thesis



Domestication and Institutional Choice

“This whole process [of reconstruction in Afghanistan, S. H.] would be endangered, if the US would follow the advice of hardliners that want to take on Somalia and Iraq next”

Winfried Nachtwei, Foreign Policy Spokesperson, Green Caucus, in an open letter to colleagues on the eve of the Confidence vote November 16, 2001

“We must not – we cannot – become a two-tiered Alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not. Such a development, with all its implications for collective security, would effectively destroy the Alliance”.

Robert Gates, US Secretary of Defense, 44th Munich “Wehrkunde” Conference, 02/10/2008

Conclusion: A call for dialogue and synthesis

- The domestication approach is not a „rivalling approach“, but a call for synthesis and dialogue.
 1. Rationalist approaches: unitary actors and fixed preferences
 2. Europeanizationists and historical institutionalists: co-constitution and critical junctures
 3. Liberals: Domesticating actors and the „rescue of the German nation state“
- German semisovereignty reconsidered: towards a comparative agenda