GLOBAL SYSTEMIC CHANGE

AND

UNIFICATION DYNAMICS IN KOREA AND GERMANY

by

Roland Bleiker

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The Cold War era imposed a similar destiny upon Korea and Germany. The existence of two ideologically and strategically hostile global alliance systems caused national division in both countries and subsequently accounted for insurmountable external obstacles to unification. These systemic restraints began to diminish when, as a result of internal changes in the Soviet Union, Cold War ideological cleavages ceased to be the driving force behind great power relations. The flexibility provided by the resulting new world order has permitted a swift unification of Germany, yet it has left the Korean situation relatively unchanged. The objective of this thesis is to contribute to a better understanding of the similar yet disparate intra-national dynamics in Korea and Germany. It will be argued that the following four factors best explain why global systemic change has impacted so differently on the two nations:

(1) Unification cannot occur without at least tacit endorsement by the great powers involved. Their approbation depends largely on how they perceive unification as influencing their own interest and policy options. If unified, Korea and Germany each have economic and strategic potentials that could be threatening to the surrounding countries and to the great powers. However, the great powers' perception of this threat is mediated by the context within which unification would occur. While Europe's institutional framework greatly tempers the potentially destabilizing impact of German unification, the bilateral nature of transnational interaction in East Asia does not provide a comparable antidotal component that could mediate the impact of Korean unification.

(2) Historical differences between Korea and Germany decisively influenced internal
perceptions of unification. Post-1945 intra-German relations were characterized by Cold-War tension, rather than direct military confrontation. Hence, intra-national antagonisms have never spread far beyond the problems associated with the competition of two ideologically incompatible social systems, making unification relatively easy once the external obstacles had vanished. By contrast, the Korean War and the countless postwar incidents created a domestic atmosphere of hate and distrust that must first be reduced before constructive talks on unification can begin.

(3) A requisite for unification is an elimination of the ideological differences within the divided nation, which can only be achieved through a fundamental régime change on at least one of the two sides. Régime stability, in turn, is directly linked to at least two factors. It is dependent on the compatibility of the employed ideology with its cultural environment. The link between ideology and culture was considerably weaker in East Germany than in North Korea. Germany’s linguistic, cultural, and philosophical tradition is fundamentally individualistic. Hence, it provided a much less suitable breeding ground for authoritarian Communist rule than Korea’s hierarchical cultural tradition, which facilitated the sustenance of totalitarianism, thereby impeding a removal of intra-national ideological obstacles to unification.

(4) The stability of a régime is also dependent on the level of hegemonic control that the ruling social group can impose. Despite possessing similar coercive capacities, the North Korean and East German régimes greatly differed with regard to their dominance over civil society. The continuous penetration of Western media sources into East Germany inhibited the SED régime from winning tacit popular support for its narrow class-related interests. The resulting increase in popular dissatisfaction substantially contributed to the downfall of the Communist régime. Pyongyang, by contrast, was able to filter exogenous influences and limit information sources for
the population to the government censored media. Hence, a popular challenge to authoritarian rule was less likely to arise because it was relatively easy for the ruling social group to impose its subjective agenda and its egocentric interest.
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INTRODUCTION

Post-World War II historical evolution in Korea and Germany displays a number of quite striking similarities. In both cases, a supposedly temporary division of the country into different occupation zones led to the establishment of two politically and ideologically distinct states within the same nation. However, the two divided nations have travelled very different paths in recent years. Bifurcation has persisted in Korea up to the present. Germany, by contrast, was reunited in the fall of 1990, overcoming more than four decades of national division.

This thesis will construct an analytical framework within which similarities and divergences between intra-Korean and intra-German dynamics can be better understood. The thesis is divided into six chapters. Following an introductory chapter that draws attention to the structure and the method of the analysis, the second chapter examines the origins and implications of national divisions. Its objective is to facilitate the subsequent analysis of diverging intra-national evolutions by first placing the division of Korea and Germany into the broader context of competing alliance systems in the bi-polar Cold War order.

The purpose of the substantive chapters (3-6) is to facilitate understanding of the origins of intra-national dynamics. This attempt will be limited to a discussion of the following thematic sets of questions:

Chapter 3: Unification can only occur with support by the great powers. What factors determine their decision to either endorse or oppose unification? Would Korea and Germany possess similar economic and strategic potentials in a unified form? Does global systemic change alter these potentials? Could unification be threatening to the great powers? Would it affect the
foreign policy options of the great powers? Are there regionally specific influences that could mediate the impact of unification?

Chapter 4: The prospects for unification depend on both parts of the divided nation being able to reach a compromise. What conditions the chances for such a breakthrough? Were Korea’s and Germany’s levels of intra-national antagonism comparable? If not, what explains their divergence? How has historical evolution conditioned inter-régime perceptions and attitudes within the divided nations? Can the precedent of German unification alter Korea’s own intra-national dynamics?

Chapter 5: The German precedent suggests that without a prior removal of intra-national ideological differences, unification is not likely to occur. What accounted for the varying stability of Communist régimes in Korea and Germany? Could cultural and linguistic factors have influenced the course of events? Is authoritarian rule easier to sustain in some cultural contexts than in others?

Chapter 6: What other factors explain the different stability of the East German and North Korean régimes? Did they possess similar capacities of coercion and indoctrination? To what extent were these régimes able to win tacit popular support for their ideologies and their class-related interests by exerting control over civil society? How did North Korea and East Germany differ with regard to the relationship between ruler and ruled?
1. **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHOD**

The main objective of this thesis is to compare and contrast intra-national evolutions in Korea and Germany. Due to the lack of a coherent theoretical concept that deals with the problematique in its entirety, the thesis will attempt to construct an analytical framework that contributes to an increased causal understanding of unification dynamics in the two divided nations. Chapter 2 examines the forces that led to the partition of Korea and Germany. The substantive chapters (3-6) investigate why, alongside the seemingly parallel evolutions, the two nations have developed different foundations that explain the striking contrast in unification dynamics during the later half of the 1980s. While the thesis looks primarily at specific and contemporary events, the aim is to recognize static and dynamic patterns as well as underlying forces that go beyond the mere idiosyncratic significance of the observed occurrences.

Four factors, each corresponding to one of the substantive chapters, will be singled out as being particularly relevant to the emergence of varying impetuses for unification in Korea and Germany. Although each of these factors decisively influenced the course of recent events, none of them can by itself claim to be responsible for the diverging evolution of intra-national dynamics. Any monocausal explanation is likely to fail in its task to compare specific phenomena. Hence, the thesis seeks a multi-level explanation of unification dynamics.

Kenneth Waltz’s typology (1959) will be used as a methodological starting point for the analysis. Waltz differentiates among three approaches to the study of international relations. Depending on whether the causes of war are seen in human nature, in the structure/attributes of the separate states, or in the state system, he labels them first, second, or third image analysis.
In a strict interpretation, Waltz’s typology is only relevant within the narrow confines of international relations theory. Yet, a similar tripartite typology could also be employed for the present analysis, which is less concerned with the study of direct inter-state conflict, but, instead, focuses on an examination of separatistic and amalgative forces within Korea and Germany.

The thesis disagrees with Waltz’s assertion that the three levels of analysis are clearly separable and, from a theoretical point of view, mutually exclusive domains. Not only is the intellectual disconnection of one realm from all others incompatible with the holistic Asian tradition, but also the very attempt of isolating several levels of analysis imposes closure on a text. It inhibits an appreciation of what Ashley (1989) called the 'borderlines’, i.e., all the issues that do not neatly fit into the rubric of human nature, the state, or the state-system. Hence, the principal methodological objective of the thesis is to examine the links among the three level of analysis.

Chapters 2 and 3 link the systemic and state levels of analysis. In section 2.1., the examination focuses on how emerging global bi-polarity accounted for national division and subsequently conditioned domestic evolution in Korea and Germany. Section 2.2. and chapter 3 analyse the effect of fading bi-polarity on unification dynamics, concentrating on how specific forms of regional inter-state interactions altered the impact of global systemic change. Chapter 3 is predominantly concerned with a second image analysis. It investigates how inter-state interaction in Korea and Germany conditioned the subsequent evolution of unification dynamics and how state policies in unified Germany influence unification dynamics in Korea. Chapters 5 and 6 explore two aspects that are concern with the linkage between the individual and the state levels of analysis. First, it will be examined how cultural, linguistic, and informational
factors influenced the thoughts and perceptions of individuals. Then the study proceeds by exploring how the mediated behaviour patterns of individuals conditioned state policies in Korea and Germany.

The hypotheses presented in the thesis will not be tested by empirical data. In view of the limitations imposed on the length of this thesis, a quantitative study of Korean and German unification dynamics could not be undertaken. When available, existing empirical evidence was given consideration in the construction of the arguments. However, such evidence does not exist in a number of areas that are examined. German unification is still too recent for substantial empirical work to have emerged on the subject. The North Korean society has been sealed off from the outside world for almost half a century. Thus, the analytical value of existing empirical assessment of domestic policy aspects is highly questionable. Most of the studies undertaken are of a selective, propagandistic, and distorted nature since they were either directly carried out by the North Korean régime or destined to strengthen the ideological position of the South Korean government.

An empirical study could supplement a number of arguments presented in the thesis. For example, the content and degree of intra-national verbal hostilities (chapter 4) or the extent to which external sources have penetrated the domestic information network (section 6.1.), could be measured empirically. Yet, quantitative methods are of little help for detecting a causal relationship (cf. George, 1979:50; Strange, 1988:10; Waltz, 1979:3). Because the present thesis proceeds from the assumption that monocausal explanations are doomed to fail, testing causal links by empirical evidence is all the more problematic. Since each of the examined influences only achieves meaning in relation to the remaining factors, it appears fruitless to speculate on the
degree to which one specific causal aspect conditioned the overall course of events. Hence, an approach that singles out particular influences and measures their impact in a quantitative manner is unlikely to enhance the persuasiveness of the arguments. Instead, etiological arrow-diagrams will be employed in order to clarify the arguments and to impose a certain level of discipline on the search for causes and effects (cf. Frei and Ruloff, 1988:105-108). A simplified version of the main diagrams for chapters 2-6 is presented in tables 1-3 at the end of this chapter (pp. 8-10).

The thesis does not intended to predict a future course of evolution, such as a possible scenario or time-frame for Korean unification. A predictive enterprise can only result in speculation for all of the numerous rational, irrational, dependent, independent, and intervening variables involved cannot be assessed by an analytical framework. However, if the conclusions are persuasive, the present study can draw attention to certain restraints and dynamics that will condition the future course of events.

Finally, it is important to underline that the factors examined present only a selection of possible influences. For example, the impact of mass demonstrations (particularly non-violent direct action) and intra/inter-national integration will not be examined. The frequency of economic, cultural, and political interaction within the divided nations and between the opposed régimes and tertiary states display salient differences which had a tremendous influence on intra-national impetuses for unification. However, the impact of these phenomena can largely be assessed with the help of already existing theories, especially the extensive body of literature that has evolved around integration theory. Since the theoretical concepts of the likes of K. Deutsch, E.B. Haas, and P.C. Schmitter were already applied extensively to the Korean and German cases (cf. Haas, 1984; Lee W.M., 1989:239-255), a meaningful further theoretical pursuit of the subject
would require the care of an entire thesis. Hence, the present attempt is limited to an exploration of theoretical areas that have not yet been widely used to explain intra-national dynamics in Korea and Germany.
TABLE 1

ETIOLOGICAL ARROW-DIAGRAM FOR CHAPTER 2, SECTION 2.1.

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<td>Ideological, Economic, and Geopolitical Importance of Korea and Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergence of a Bipolar Cold War Order</td>
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<td>Hegemonic Aspirations of Both Alliance Systems</td>
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<th>NATIONAL DIVISION OF KOREA AND GERMANY</th>
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<td>Level of Ideological and Geopolitical Antagonism between the two Alliance Camps</td>
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EXTERNAL OBSTACLES TO KOREAN AND GERMAN UNIFICATION

Leadership Change to Gorbachev

Socio-Economic Deficiencies of the Soviet System

Level of Control over Civil Society

Priority of Economic Reconstruction

Internal Chaos and Devolution of Power within the USSR

Decomposing Global Ideological Schism

Disappearance of the USSR as a Superpower

Global Systemic Change (Fading Bipolarity)

PRECONDITIONS FOR UNIFICATION OF KOREA AND GERMANY
CHAPTER 3
Economic and Military Potentials of Unified Korea and Germany

Bilateral Regional Inter-State Interaction

Attenuating Effect on Perceived Unification Potentials

Great Power Support of Unification

CHAPTER 4
Intensity of Direct Military Confrontation in the Divided Nations

Level of Intra-National Antagonism

Success of Intra-National Negotiations on Unification

CHAPTER 5
Individualistic Logo-Cultural Tradition

Cultural Influences on Regime Stability

Impetuses for Régime Change (Instability of Authoritarian Communist Régimes)

Elimination of Ideological Obstacles to Unification

CHAPTER 6
Level of Régime Dominance over Political and Civil Society

Level of Organic Unity between Ruler and Ruled

IMPETUSES FOR UNIFICATION
2. THE CONTEXTUAL EVOLUTION OF INTRA-NATIONAL DYNAMICS

Let me say quite plainly that all these statements about the revival of 'German unity' are far from being 'Realpolitik'.... There are two German states with different social and political systems...and what there will be in a hundred years is for history to decide (Mikhail Gorbachev, 1987:199-200).

Dem Morgenrot einer neuen Idee geht es wie dem Morgenrot überhaupt - die meisten findet es schlafend (Peter Sirius, 1899).

2.1. THE EMERGING COLD WAR ORDER AND NATIONAL DIVISION

Following Germany's capitulation at the end of World War II, the Allied Forces assumed the 'supreme authority' over the defeated country and divided it into four occupation zones: American, British, French, and Soviet. Korea was subjected to a similar form of external intervention in the immediate postwar period. With the objective of terminating 45 years of Japanese colonial occupation, US forces occupied the southern and Soviet forces the northern half of the peninsula. The German and the Korean divisions were meant to be temporary arrangements designed to facilitate a smooth transition into a new and more peaceful world order. In Germany, the initial aim of the occupation forces was to dismantle the political and military apparatus of the Nazi régime. In Korea, outside interference in domestic affairs was justified with the need for a rapid and total dissolution of the Japanese colonial empire (cf. Duroselle, 1981:433-439, 551-562).

1 The dawn of a new idea is like the dawn at daybreak - it emerges while most people are still asleep.
However, less than two years after these arbitrary and supposedly transitory partitions, a de facto bifurcation of Korea and Germany started to emerge. By 1948 two politically and ideologically distinct states, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea had been established on the peninsula. In Germany, the four legal occupation zones became gradually transformed into two distinct political zones, one under Soviet influence and the other under control of the Western allied nations. One year after Korea, Germany was also divided into two separate political entities, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic.²

With justification, it is often argued that the seeds of Korean and German division were sown by agreements among the allies in the later stages of the war (Schweppenhäuser, 1967:21). However, had World War II not resulted in a bi-polar, but in a mono-hegemonic or a multi-polar order instead, the national divisions in question would likely have remained short-term historical aberrations. The seeds of division could only grow because they were nourished by the emerging global rivalry between the US and the USSR.

It is important to underline that hawkish attempts to attribute these divisions to Soviet violations of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements do not assess the problem in its totality.³ A

² In order to limit an excessive use of tangling acronyms, the unofficial terms 'South Korea', 'North Korea', 'West Germany', and 'East Germany' will be employed to refer to the distinct political entities in divided Korea and Germany. For the same reason, the term 'China' will be used, unless otherwise indicated, to describe the People's Republic of China.

³ Hawks tend to see the main causes of the Cold War in the expansionist behaviour of the Soviet Union and the inherently belligerent nature of Communist ideology (cf. Brzezinski, 1960:131-174; Kirkpatrick, 1988:49-53, Pipes, 1980:171-193, 1986:276-287). A textual interpretation of hawkish discourses would draw attention to the dualism created by the psychological and ideological tension that existed during the Cold War period. Societal pressures forced North American academia to split into two antagonistic camps, Hawks and Doves, leaving only little ground for more pluralistic analyses. Hence, a large number of academics associated themselves with the ideology and the political leitmotifs of the US government, perceiving the Cold War to be a zero-sum game that did not permit concessions to the ideological, political, and strategic arch rival.
holistic understanding of the Cold War can only emerge if we analyze the ideological commitments and actions of both superpowers within the structural constraints of a bi-polar and anarchical international system. This does not mean that leaders' personalities or specific foreign policy leitmotifs have no impact on superpower relations. Neither does this argument contain value judgments about the ethical and social desirability of communism or liberal capitalism. It only suggests that approaching the question of national division from a black and white, victim versus aggressor, point of view is neither for political or analytical reasons a meaningful exercise. It places the focus on immediate and very specific events and thereby obstructs the possibility of reaching a more holistic understanding of the underlying dynamics behind them. Specific occurrences, such as the division of Korea and Germany, achieve meaning only if placed in the larger context within which the ideological schism of the Cold War period was embedded.

A reexamination from this perspective suggests that the arbitrary partition of Germany and Korea and the transformation of these supposedly provisional settlements into quasi-permanent national divisions must, to a considerable extent, be attributed to Korea's and Germany's importance in the Cold War power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union (Cumings, 1987a). The nature of the postwar international political system, particularly the emergence of a bi-polar power structure that symbolized the competition between two antagonistic societal systems with exclusive global aspirations, accounted for the establishment of two alliance formations. Each of these systems comprised a certain geographical parameter of hegemonic influence and control.\(^4\) Hence, the specific motivations and means that the two

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\(^4\) With the exception of Antonio Gramsci's concept of 'integral hegemony' used in chapter 6, hegemony is understood, in Bruce Cumings definition (1987b:49), as "...the demarcation of outer limits in economics, politics, and international security relationships, the transgression of which carries grave risks for any nonhegemonic nation".
alliance leaders had for keeping Korea and Germany divided are essential to an understanding of unification dynamics.

Both divided nations occupy territories that are geopolitically important for the superpowers. Germany is located in the middle of Europe, separating the western part under US hegemonic influence from the eastern one, dominated by the USSR. Thus, the divided German territory was doomed to assume the role of a buffer zone. Each of the two separate German states served its alliance leaders as both a crucial forefront designed to deter and repel a hostile invasion and as a useful stepping stone for a potential assault of the enemy's territory.

Korea's location is of equal geopolitical significance. Constituting a natural link between the Asian mainland and Japan, the Korean peninsula has always been an important factor in the security policy of the surrounding powers. At the turn of the century, two major wars were fought for control over the peninsula; one between Japan and China (1894/5), the other between Japan and Russia (1904/5). With the increased globalization of inter-state interaction, Korea became the only area in the world where the security interests of the US, the USSR, China, and Japan confronted one another.

The official reason for the US military presence in South Korea was to dissuade a potential North Korean aggression (Menetrey, 1989:243). However, the true purpose behind the long-term deployment of such a substantial contingent was linked to the regional confrontation of the two alliance systems. South Korea was one of Washington's strategic outposts in East Asia and, particularly after the Korean war, an indispensable regional element in the policy of containment directed against the Soviet Union. Consequently, North Korea was, particularly after the Sino-Soviet split, an equally important element in the Soviet security system, serving as a
buffer zone against an American, Japanese, or Chinese attack on Siberia. Naval strategic considerations alone gave the Soviet Union reason enough to prefer a divided peninsula. In light of the climatic restraints imposed on its East Asian naval bases, Moscow was keen on gaining and maintaining access to North Korea’s warm water ports.

Restrained by these perceived geopolitical imperatives, the divided Korean and German territories soon became closely integrated into opposing alliance systems. In Europe this strategic incorporation occurred within a concise institutional framework. With a separate German integration into the newly created NATO and Warsaw Pact, the fate of the divided nation became intrinsically linked with the interactive dynamics of two antagonistic regional defense organizations. East Germany’s maneuverability was particularly restricted. The principle of eternal and irrevocable linkage with the Soviet Union was entrenched in Article 6.2 of the GDR constitution. According to a 1975 treaty between the two countries, Moscow was entitled to use East German forces for the ‘defense’ of the Soviet led alliance system (Macgregor, 1989:82; Schmid, 1982:179).

In Asia, most security arrangements took the form of bilateral agreements between the alliance leaders and their ‘clients’. US military support to South Korea began in the early Cold War period, and since the end of the Korean War the two countries have been bound by a security treaty. Among the four countries examined, North Korea is the least integrated into a specific alliance system. As a result of China’s direct involvement in the Korean War and the

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5 The structure and the decision making process of South Korea’s Armed Forces are partly controlled by Washington. Two key elements of the South Korean defense system, the US-ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC) and the United Nations Command (UNC) are headed by an American four-star general. Most central functions within the CFC and the UNC are carried out by American generals, assisted by Korean officers in a deputy position.
existence of deeply rooted Sino-Korean historical, cultural, and ideological ties, Beijing emerged as Moscow’s competitor for gaining influence over Pyongyang. The leverage that North Korea acquired as a result of this competition provided Kim Il Sung with a level of political maneuverability unknown to East Germany and to most other allies of the Soviet Union.6

Strategic considerations were not the only factors that cemented the division of Korea and Germany. The incorporation of two separate states into opposing alliance systems was also intended to demonstrate the superiority of each superpower’s ideological and social system (Walt, 1989). Economic prosperity, elevated living standards, and high GNP growth rates, were important indicators for measuring the 'success’ of the rival régimes in Korea and Germany. The prestige that each alliance leader could gain as a result of successful socio-economic performances within its hegemonic realm of influence, accounted for the superpowers’ motivation to provide substantial economic aid and trade privileges to their respective Korean and German allies.7

As in the strategic realm, the economic integration of the two German states with their hegemons occurred within an institutional framework. In the immediate postwar period, American economic aid to Bonn was provided by the Marshall Plan. By 1957, West Germany’s economy was incorporated into the newly created European Economic Community. East


7 In the case of Soviet-East German relations, an additional motivation was present. The eastern part of Germany was highly industrialized already before World War II. In order to reconstruct the devastated Soviet economy in the postwar period, an undertaking considered essential for an enhancement of national security, Moscow needed access to important East German resources. This form of industrial linkage was particularly crucial for the Soviet Union during the technology embargo imposed by the West (Philips, 1983:215-7; Pfeiler, 1988:112-5).
Germany’s economic integration was characterized by its inclusion into Comecon and further entrenched by direct economic links with Moscow. In Korea, economic incorporation took place mostly in a bilateral form. Soviet aid to North Korea was substantial, albeit largely comprised of military hardware. South Korea was one of the world’s principal recipients of bilateral aid in the postwar period.8

These forms of economic integration cemented national division because substantive and long-term aid creates a strong dependency relationship between a 'client' and its hegemon. This applies to socialist countries with limited access to foreign capital, but also to non-socialist countries, because an aid related integration into the American-led capitalist world economy increases their structural dependence on private capital accumulation (Woods, 1980:1-34). In addition to aid related dependencies, the trade patterns of the divided Korean and German states with their hegemons display what Albert Hirschmann called 'dyadic dependency', i.e., a situation where bilateral trade constitutes a major part of the 'clients' economy, but only a minor one of the hegemon’s.9

8 The US$ 6 billion American economic assistance, offered to Seoul from 1946 to 1967, amounted to nearly the total economic aid extended to the entire African continent during the same period (Cumings, 1987a:67, cf. also Mason et al, 1980:165). The fact that until the mid-1960s most of this aid was provided in the form of grants, rather than loans, made South Korea even more unique among developing countries (Krueger, 1979:152).

9 Korea is a perfect example of dyadic dependency. Between 1946 and 1988, the Soviet Union’s share of the total North Korean trade volume ranged between 35.7 and 81.1% (Chang, 1990:350-1, Chung, 1974:130-1, Yu, 1987:87). During the 1970s close to 50% of South Korea’s exports went to the United States. This figure decreased to 30% during the 1980s, when South Korea diversified its trade patterns and began economic interaction with China and the Soviet Union (Asia Yearbook, 1989/1990:8; Korea Trade & Business, 1990.11.21). Dyadic dependency was slightly less pronounced in Germany. Between 1949 and 1987, East German trade with socialist countries averaged between 65 and 70% (Veen and Weilemann, 1989:334-5). It was only in the last few years that OECD and intra-German trade started to take priority in East Germany (Haendcke-Hoppe, 1988:65). West Germany has always displayed trade patterns that were diversified among several EC and OECD countries. For more statistical details and analyses of Korean and German economic links to their alliance leaders see Childs (1988), Cumings (1987b), Dennis (1988), Francisco (1989), Haggard and Moon (1983), Hamilton (1986), Philips (1986). For a surprisingly frank official statement of US economic goals in Korea see Eisenhower (1961).
It is true that this situation has resulted in a relatively successful form of 'dependent development' in Korea and Germany. North Korean and East German economic growth rates were among the highest in socialist countries; South Korea and West Germany are well known economic 'miracles' of the postwar international economy. Each of these 'successes' was only possible with the assistance of the alliance leader. For example, the US granted South Korea substantial trade privileges while not demanding any reciprocal rights. Strong protective measures ensured the survival of the young South Korean economy, and open American markets provided the prerequisite for Seoul's successful export oriented-development strategy. As the world's dominant economic power, the US was able to sacrifice part of its own economic interests for the pursuit of a strategy that aimed at containing communism by economically supporting a network of key allies.

While dyadic dependency has stimulated economic growth in Korea and Germany, it also accounted for insurmountable external obstacles to unification. Neither of the two alliance leaders was willing to relinquish hegemonic control over its Korean or German ally, for such a surrender would have been interpreted as a loss of international prestige and could have resulted in a widening of the adversary's hegemonic realm of influence. As long as two ideologically hostile alliance systems were competing for global influence, the alliance leaders would attempt, at almost any price, to sustain militarily and economically strong allies in Korea and Germany. Hence, external obstacles to unification would only diminish with a dissolution of the bi-polar and ideologically hostile international power structure, a possibility that started to be more and more likely when leitmotifs in Soviet foreign policy began to change radically in the mid-to late 1980s.
Since Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at the 27th Party Congress in 1986, Soviet national security and foreign policy concepts have undergone dramatic transformations. Most previous Soviet leaders, with the partial exception of Khrushchev, emphasized the inherently antagonistic nature of a world divided into capitalist and socialist states. Gorbachev argues that the destructive potential of the two superpowers' nuclear arsenals and the emergence of global interdependence make a reevaluation of the old doctrine absolutely necessary. Instead of referring to the traditional concept of the correlations of forces, Gorbachev emphasizes that the security of one country can no longer be achieved at the expense of another. True security can only be reached on a global scale and has to be defined mutually with the United States (Gorbachev, 1986:73). Moreover, because of the urgency and supreme importance of preventing a nuclear war, ideological differences should be removed from interstate relations and cease to be the dominating force behind foreign policy decisions (Gorbachev, 1987:143).

The emergence of these unorthodox foreign policy concepts, termed 'new thinking', has a number of far-reaching implications. According to the principle of 'reasonable sufficiency', global stability can only be maintained by political and legal means. Hence, Soviet military strength should not exceed the level that is necessary to deter and repel an attack. This view not only rejects the traditional zero-sum game image of East-West relations, but also implies that the Soviet security system can no longer rely solely on military strength. Equally important are such factors as a healthy national economy and, as Gorbachev suggested, trade and economic cooperation on a global scale (Gorbachev, 1986:85). The most consequential effect of 'new
thinking’ is its explicit recognition that ideology and geopolitics should occupy a far less dominant role in Soviet foreign policy.

The key elements of 'new thinking’ stand in sharp contrast to the traditional neo-realist contention that the fragmentation of power in the international system forces states to live in permanent competition with each other. Gorbachev’s concept considers the world to be too small and too fragile for realist power politics. His view bears many similarities with the Grotian tradition, which presupposes the existence of order in the anarchical international system (cf. Bull, 1977). Yet, while Hedley Bull and other Grotian scholars derived their theories from analytical reasoning, Gorbachev’s concepts are more likely the result of pragmatic considerations and imperatives imposed by socio-economic forces.

The main reason behind the radical changes in Soviet foreign policy was of a structural, political, and above all, of an economic nature. Deteriorating living conditions and the inflexibility of a state-directed economy have raised questions, even among the nomenklatura, about the efficacy and desirability of an unreformed socialist system. Furthermore, extremely high military expenditures and the endeavour to maintain a costly network of allies have put additional restraints on an already weak Soviet economy. Hence, to refer back to the quote by Peter Sirius, the true 'new idea’ that emerged in the Soviet Union was not Gorbachev’s revisionism. It was, rather, the result of socio-economic imperatives that emerged out of the inefficiencies of the Soviet system. Gorbachev’s main achievement should be seen as having realized this imperative and having abandoned his predecessors’ policies of artificially postponing
what was ultimately inevitable.\textsuperscript{10}

Two aspects of internal changes in the Soviet Union are of particular relevance to the situations in Korea and Germany. First, the domestic equivalents of 'new thinking', perestroika and especially glasnost, carried Gorbachev's reforms far beyond the initially envisaged realm. The gradual loosening of the rigid censorship practices ensured that 'peaceful coexistence' became a permanent and applied foreign policy leitmotif and not, as it had been the case with Khrushchev's reforms, only a theoretical and temporary deviation from orthodox principles. Using this previously unknown possibility to express criticism, Soviet academics and parliamentarians soon demanded that military expenditures be cut and support for allies be sharply reduced. Increased democratization further strengthened this call for disengagement from ideological and geopolitical involvement abroad.\textsuperscript{11}

Given these pressures and the deteriorating economic situation within the Soviet Union, internal reconstruction has received commanding priority, reducing the task of foreign policy to shaping an international environment that facilitates domestic reforms (Lynch, 1990a:21-2). As a result of this new foreign policy of decline, faith in the inevitable victory of socialism largely

\textsuperscript{10} Stephan Kux (1991:1-19), by differentiating between systems transformation as a result of a deliberate choice (evolutionary change) and change as the product of system crisis and collapse (revolutionary change), convincingly argues that Gorbachev had not envisaged the far-reaching implications of perestroika. The best endorsement of this argument is presented by Gorbachev himself, who, as late as 1987, still displayed an unwillingness to 'theorize' about the question of the German nation (Dennis, 1988:198, cf. also quote at the beginning of this chapter).

\textsuperscript{11} As early as 1987, demands for limiting external commitments appeared in Soviet academic journals, although first in a somewhat camouflaged way. Soon afterwards, reduced military support to totalititarian regimes was interpreted as a logical consequence of 'new thinking'. Academics increasingly demanded that resources be directed towards perestroika by eliminating the costs that are caused by the rivalry with the US in the Third World (see Daily Report: Soviet Union, 1988.5.20, p.6; Izyumov and Kortunov, 1988:54/5; Kozyrev, 1988:10; Malashenko, 1989:80; The Current Digest of The Soviet Press: 1987.8.12, p.2; 1990.8.29, p.10; 1990.9.5., p.6). The impact of this new form of popular Soviet criticism on the acceleration of reforms was tremendous. The Kremlin's inability to control the population's information sources seriously undermined the power base and the stability of the Communist régime (for a theoretical analysis of this issue see section 6.1.).
disappeared, and the Brezhnev doctrine was replaced by a much more 'laissez-faire' attitude towards Moscow's allies. The immediate implications for the North Korean and East German régimes were less economic support and fewer military hardware deliveries. From a long term perspective, Moscow's policy change provided Pyongyang and Berlin with more maneuverability and permitted intra-national dynamics to take their own course, free of restraints imposed by Soviet geopolitical and ideological interests.

The second and most profound impact of Soviet domestic reforms on intra-Korean and intra-German dynamics is linked to the changing nature of superpower relations. Moscow's renunciation of ideological principles and expansionist policies, combined with the initiated process of domestic democratization, substantially improved East-West relations. Ideological schism has ceased to be the driving force behind great power rivalry. Allan Lynch (1990b:1-8) suggests this evolution does not necessarily constitute the end of ideology in Soviet foreign policy. Decades of ideological domination of the education system, he argues, have altered the way people perceive and interpret reality, to the point that deeply rooted ideological values are likely to persist in Soviet foreign policy.

However, the effects of glasnost have rendered this argument largely irrelevant for an analysis of East-West relations. The devolution of power and the resulting chaos within the Soviet Union have dramatically reduced Moscow's capacity to influence the course of world politics. Hence, ideological components, even if they continuously shape Soviet foreign policy, are not likely to have a great effect on the outside world. The Soviet Union, due to its
overwhelming internal difficulties, has de facto ceased to be a superpower.12 This evolution constitutes what could be called Moscow's unilateral dissolution of the Cold War. Despite still possessing nuclear weapons, a Soviet Union on the verge of disintegration is no longer perceived as a threat to the West, either from a geopolitical or from an ideological point of view. Due to the disappearance of this threat, the Cold War has lost its raison d'être and the bi-polar international system was replaced by a new global power structure. Being only at the threshold of this new era, there is not yet a clear academic consensus on whether the post Cold War international system will result in a multi-polar structure or whether it will evolve in a new hegemonic era, a Pax-Americana II. What remains clear, however, is that this transformation constitutes what Robert Gilpin (1981:40-3) has labelled 'systemic change', an alteration of the international distribution of power and the hierarchy of prestige.

As a result of this systemic change, the main external obstacles to German and Korean unification, the existence of global ideological cleavages embedded in a bi-polar power structure, have vanished. The dramatic impact of this transformation on intra-German relations is well known and does not need to be recapitulated in detail here. What started with tens of thousands of East German citizens emigrating to West Germany via Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1989, led to several popular demonstrations in Leipzig and the creation of an East German opposition group, the 'New Forum'. Bowing to increasing popular pressures, East Germany's

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12 Despite possessing more constitutional powers than any previous Soviet president, Gorbachev and his centrist policies are increasingly challenged by conservative Communists, progressive liberal reformers, and leading politicians of the increasingly autonomous republics (i.e., Yeltsin, Kravchuk, Nazarbaev, Landsbergis etc.). Labour unrest and strikes are becoming more frequent. With most republics seeking either greater self-government or even independence, the Soviet Union is virtually paralysed. Internal cohesion has given way to chaos, or, as Gorbachev himself has put it, "...in place of totalitarian power, we have a vacuum of power" (Gorbachev quoted in The New York Times, 1990.11.17, p. 6). Moscow's foreign policy has, as a result of this vacuum, become increasingly passive and will, according to Robert Tucker (1990:95), continue to be so in the years to come.
(in)famous autocrat, Erich Honecker, soon resigned. Continuous mass demonstrations forced the East German leadership to open all borders with West Germany on November 9, 1989. From then on events precipitated quickly. By May 1990, monetary union between the two German states was achieved and a basic unification treaty (Staatsvertrag) between Bonn and Berlin was signed in August. On October 3, 1990, less than one year after the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, Germany was formally reunified.\textsuperscript{13}

In sharp contrast to these dramatic developments, global systemic change has not greatly altered the dynamics of intra-Korean relations. The fading of global ideological schism may have moderated Seoul’s obsession with anti-communism and reduced its fear of subversive influences. President Roh Tae Whoo’s Nordpolitik is clearly more flexible than the policies of his predecessors Chun Doo Hwan and Park Chung Hee. The new international political climate has enabled the realization of unprecedented meetings between the North and South Korean Prime Ministers, Yon Hyong Muk and Kang Young Hoon. Moreover, after decades of deadlock, Pyongyang and Seoul have overcome their differences with regard to the UN-membership question, suggesting that a compromise between them is at least theoretically possible. Yet, besides its symbolic value, this 'progress' has not yet provided major impetuses for unification. Mutual promises for improved relations remain nothing more than empty promises and the dialogue between the two Koreas can still best be described by what the French call 'un dialogue des sourds'. As in most previous years, in the spring of 1991 North Korea suspended the dialogue with the South as a result of the annual ROK-US 'Team Spirit' military manoeuvre.

\textsuperscript{13}Since these events have occurred only recently, detailed academic analysis of German unification are still spare and often of a journalistic nature. Among the works that have so far emerged are Brady (1991), Brauch (1991), Golombeck and Ratzke (1990), Knopp and Kuhn (1990), Menge (1990), and Naumann (1990).
The diverging evolution in Korea and Germany suggests that global systemic influences are not the only factors that determine the course of intra-national dynamics. While this thesis is trying to establish a regionally specific analytical framework for the explanation of the deviating events, it is important to consider this effort in the context of the aforementioned externally imposed structural conditions.
3. THE INSTITUTIONAL MEDIATION OF EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS

Do not move unless it is advantageous.
Do not execute unless it is effective.
Do not challenge unless it is critical.
(Sun Tzu translated by Wing, 1988:160)

Although global systemic change has removed Cold War antagonisms from world politics, a unification of Korea and Germany is contingent on either the explicit endorsement or tacit approval of the great powers involved. In Germany this prerequisite was achieved with the 'two-plus-four' negotiations, which led to the unification treaty signed in September 1990 by both German states, the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain. In order to replace the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace or unification treaty, the approval of the signatories, North Korea, China, and the United Nations Command (read United States), is a sine qua non. Given the political situation, such a treaty can be successfully concluded only with the approval of South Korea, Japan, and the Soviet Union (Russia in particular).

What factors influence the great powers in deciding to endorse or oppose unification? Among several mediating components, two stand out as the most influential. Support for unification by the great powers is conditioned by the specific security and economic situation in the region (3.1.) and it is largely dependent on how the great powers perceive the potential impact of unification on the region and on their own interests (3.2.).
3.1. REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE

In order to delineate the analytical limits of the present chapter it is important to emphasize that the examination of institutional mediation is based on two subjective assumptions: (1) that a systemic change from a bi-polar to a multi-polar order is occurring, and (2) that bi-polar orders are, as a general principle, more conducive to stability than multi-polar ones. Both of these hypothesis are contested by a number of scholars. The contention that the disappearance of the Soviet Union as a superpower resulted in a move to a multi-polar power structure, rather than a Pax-Americana II, is directly dependent on the thesis that the US has lost its position as the hegemonic leader of the world economy. This position is widespread among both liberal and neo-realist scholars (cf. Gilpin, 1987; Keohane, 1984). However, several academics agree with Bruce Russett’s assertion (1985:229) that American hegemony has led to a structural transformation of the international system through which the US retains some control without having to use coercive methods. Crucial to this argument is Susan Strange’s distinction between relational and structural power. She admits that the US may have lost some of its relational power, but asserts that through the ability to exert structural power, which is based on control over security, production, credit, and knowledgebeliefs/ideas, Washington is able to retain the role of a hegemon (Strange, 1988:23-115,235-240; 1987:551-574).

While accepting most core points of Russett’s and Strange’s arguments, this thesis

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14 Other scholars that oppose the declining hegemon thesis point towards the strong position of the US dollar or the impact of Washington’s military might (Huntington, 1989:76-96). This position may have been vindicated by the role that the US played in the Persian Gulf war, especially by the projection of US military power and the resulting acquisition of new prestige (cf. The Economist, 1991.3.9., p.16-7). Also, the Gulf War has somewhat moderated the often presented claim (Olsen, 1990:41, Evans, 1990:11) that confrontation among states is shifting from strategic to economic issues.
questions Washington’s ability to use its structural power. The increasing importance of transnational actors and capital may not (yet) have transformed the nature of the international system, but its impact is sufficiently strong to question the adequacy of perceiving the international system to be dominated by a hegemonic nation-state. It is much more useful to distinguish between a hegemon and a hegemonic system. Although the US, as a nation-state, has ceased to be the world’s dominating hegemon, the structures set in place during the period of uncontested American hegemony still determine the rules of interaction among state and non-state actors. Given the increasing importance of such actors as Japan, China, the emerging European confederation of states, and multinational corporations, we will most likely witness a move towards multi-polarity within a structurally hegemonic system.

The traditional neo-realist assertion is that such a move from (stable) bi-polarity to (unstable) multi-polarity is a major systemic source of military and economic conflicts (Gaddis, 1987:219-223; Gilpin, 1989:67; 1987:72-89; Mearsheimer, 1990:13-40,51-4; Tucker, 1990:105-6, Waltz, 1979:161-193). Although this viewpoint is far from uncontested, this thesis will not address these debates. Instead, it is assumed that the move towards a multi-polar world order constitutes a possible source of increased instability. What should be underlined is that a simple bi-polar versus multi-polar approach alone cannot predict the likelihood of instability since a number of other variables are also involved (Strange, 1988:57). Bruce Cumings (1991:195-222)

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15 The aforementioned assumptions are based on the neo-realist contention that the international fragmentation of power forces states to live in permanent competition with each other. R.B.J. Walker (1988:33-53), for example, points out that contrary to the neo-realist viewpoint, the state centred international system is not a natural phenomenon but a human construct. Yet, since this paper is examining existing dynamics (which are still conditioned by a predominantly state-centric system) rather than proposing solutions for overcoming the security dilemma, the neo-realist approach appears to be the most adequate framework for analyzing the impact of systemic change.
draws attention to one of these variables that allegedly leads towards the dawn of a new crisis. He argues that the likelihood of conflict will increase because the US clings to the domestic and global structures of the Cold War period (i.e., projection of global hegemony and allied containment) while being forced to move towards trilateral accommodation with Japan and Germany. Another variable in unification dynamics that cannot be captured by a bi-polar versus multi-polar approach, is the institutional mediation of systemic change.

The previous chapter briefly alluded to the different institutional or bilateral contexts within which economic and strategic integration took place in Cold War East Asia and Europe. While elaborate academic examinations focus on such differences as finite versus extended deterrence or liberalism versus mercantilism (cf. Kurth, 1989:34-67, Scalapino, 1988), the diverging situations are well summarized by former Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone, who employed the following analogy:

...in a European painting every detail is filled in and very little is left to the imagination. In a Japanese painting it is the empty spaces which give meaning to the design and they leave a great deal therefore to the perception of the observer (Nakasone quoted in Kissinger, 1987:3).

Although recent changes in Europe suggest that fixed details are giving way to more maneuverability, the key elements of Nakasone’s analogy are still intact. With the vanishing of the Soviet-led alliance system in Eastern Europe, particularly the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the schism in Europe’s security arrangement has disappeared. Yet, Western Europe’s institutional structures have survived the turmoil largely intact. The European Community is still continuing
its integrative process, approaching Jean Monnet’s original vision of European solidarity. Despite the fading Soviet threat, the US and virtually all Western and Central European states consider a maintenance of NATO structures and troop deployments an essential element of future security policies (International Herald Tribune, 1990.12.21, p.6; The Globe and Mail, 1991.5.20., p.A3). Pessimistic assessments of European security prospects along the lines of John Mearsheimer’s analysis (1990) adequately capture the dynamics in Eastern Europe, yet, they do not correctly evaluate the situation in Western Europe, where the partial preservation of institutional structures contributes to a moderation of instability caused by multi-polarity.

In East Asia, where inter-state relations are still characterized by the flexibility of Nakasone’s Sumive, instability is more likely to occur. Given the absence of an institutional framework that stabilizes bilateral links, a possible enlargement of the ’empty spaces’ causes concern. Singapore’s former Prime Minister, Lee Kwan Yew, is only one among several observers who believe that the power vacuum, created by a reduction of American and Soviet troop contingents in Asia may intensify regional tensions and increase the possibilities of conflict (The Toronto Star, 1990.2.25, p.H3, cf. also Arbatov, 1990:2,17).

Two elements of perceived instability deserve brief mention. First, a power vacuum can have a destabilizing effect on the Korean peninsula. Soviet leverage over North Korea, which undoubtedly had a tempering effect, will sharply decrease in the future. This, combined with the flexibility that the transforming world order provides, could motivate Pyongyang to resume its adventurist policies of the early Cold War period, a possibility that seems not unlikely if we accept Robert Jervis’ contention that misperceptions are often the main cause for a breakdown of security structures.
Second, emerging multi-polarity will entail more maneuverability and probably more responsibility for Japan. With the aim of filling the dangerous power vacuum created by American and Soviet disengagement, the Tashiki Kaifu government declared that Japan will seek a more active political role in Asia (FEER, 1991.5.16, p.11-12; Tages Anzeiger, 1990.12.22, p.4). This move has given raise to concern in East Asia. It is true that shifts in the Dollar-Yen exchange rate elevated the Japanese defense budget to the third largest in the world. Yet, if measured in Yen figures, Japanese defense spending has not increased substantially during the last five years. Also, regional perceptions of Japan have clearly changed for the better. However, restraints in augmenting defense spending and Tokyo’s symbolic move of naming the post-Hirohito era Heisei (peace with honour), cannot eradicate entirely the widespread concern in East Asia about the revival of Japanese imperialism based on economic power and backed up by military strength. The emergence of such a Pax Nipponica, to use Takashi Inoguchi’s term (1989), could easily destabilize the region.16

Differences in security and economic arrangements between East Asia and Europe not only affect the regional environment within which intra-Korean and intra-German relations take place, they also condition the great powers’ perception of the potentialities that could be unleashed by Korea’s or Germany’s reunification.

16 While Tokyo’s decision to abandon its traditional low posture in international politics is welcomed in most parts of the region, the more unofficial Japanese suggestions frequently give rise to concern. For example, Shintaro Ishihara (1990) and Akio Morita argued that Japan has the means to assume a leading role in world politics and can change the global balance of power by refusing to provide the US with semiconductors, essential for the guidance of ballistic missiles. Although a revival of Japanese hegemony is unlikely given Tokyo’s dependency on energy sources, raw materials, and market access (cf. Gibney, 1985:296-314, Reischauer, 1988:351-412), the mere appearance of increasing Japanese influence may be enough to revive old historical and cultural antagonisms in the region. See also Cumings, 1991:211; FEER, 1990.12.13, p.25-32.
3.2. **EXOGENOUS PERCEPTIONS OF UNIFICATION POTENTIALS**

National division constituted for Germany and Korea an artificial separation of a well-established and integrated political, social, and economic unity. Already before the division, the eastern part of Germany and the northern part of Korea experienced industrialization, a process that later continued under socialist régimes that emphasized the development of heavy industry. Substantial raw materials and energy sources exist only in one part of the divided nations, in the north of Korea (coal, iron, magnesite etc.) and in the west of Germany (coal and steel). Technology, know-how, and capital are found primarily in South Korea and in West Germany. Due to the complimentary nature of the divided national economies, unification would, in the long run, most likely result in a substantial stimulation of economic growth.

Long term economic growth in a unified Korea and Germany is all the more likely to occur since national division forces the opposing régimes to dedicate a significant portion of their economic resources to defense against each other. Moreover, the accumulation of the opposing régimes’ military arsenals, which are mutually cancelled out as a result of national division, would provide the reunited nations with considerable military strength. Hence, even without entering into numerical details, it seems safe to assume that both Korea and Germany have the potential to become economically and militarily powerful actors in the international system; actors that may emerge as unwanted competitors not only for their neighbours but also for the great powers.\(^{17}\)

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Although both divided nations have comparable potentials in a unified form, the different economic and security contexts account for a great variation in the externally perceived manifestation of these potentials. The great powers' endorsement of German unity was significantly facilitated by the European institutional framework that absorbed, or at least attenuated, the impact of national unification. Given the existing cultural differences and the lasting mark that World War II imposed on the region, it was only logical that popular opinion in a number of European states, particularly France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Poland, initially displayed hints of disapproval toward German unity. Yet, the historic momentum created by the dramatic changes that swept Eastern Europe in 1989, made it politically unwise for Germany's neighbors to oppose unification. Hence, all three Western powers involved in the two-plus four negotiations approved unification, provided that the united German territory remain integrated into the NATO and that Germany's armed forces be reduced substantially. Europe's institutional framework also tempered the economically threatening potential of German unification. Germany's continuous incorporation into the European Community has almost neutralized the economically destabilizing effect that unification would have caused in the absence of such a regional institution.¹⁸

Aware of the positive effects of institutional integration on great power support for unification, Helmut Kohl and Richard von Weizsäcker continuously emphasized the need to move

¹⁸ German unification is also one of the reasons for the emergence of a European consensus about the desirability of maintaining NATO structures despite the fact that this occidental defense system has lost its principal raison d'être with the disappearance of the Soviet threat. German unification will most likely also accelerate the integrative course of the European Community, since none of its member states has an interest in seeing a united Germany emerging as a separate and dominating economic unit in Europe.
away from nation-state oriented politics towards an all-European level of problem solving (The Economist, 1990.12.8., p.58; The German Tribune, 1990.10.7, p.3). Peter Katzenstein (1987) even considers the European multilateral security/economic structures as sufficiently strong to label (West) Germany a 'semisovereign' state. It is this contextual aspect of German unification that provided the two-plus-four negotiations with the basis for success, a basis that is missing entirely in the case of a potential unification of Korea.

The bilateral nature of security and economic relationships in East Asia does not provide an antidotal framework that can moderate the effects of Korean unification. Instead of mutually cancelling out their military strength, as the two Koreas do now, the military potentials of a unified peninsula would decisively alter the distribution of power in the region. Hence, the present situation is for Korea's neighbours, and for the great powers, clearly less threatening than the unpredictable impact of Korean unification. Given the instability of a multi-polar world order, a united Korea under the influence of one or two of the great powers is under no circumstances acceptable to the remaining ones.

At first sight, the idea of a neutral peninsula seems to be the most plausible way to overcome this dilemma. However, a neutralized peninsula cannot greatly temper threat perceptions. As the case of Laos demonstrated, neutrality may, despite acceptance by the great powers and entrenchment in international law, not last very long. Moreover, a neutral Korea

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19 A somewhat exaggerated but not unrealistic representation of this perceived threat is provided by the influential Japanese academic Kenichi Takemura. In November 1990 he stated that "...an all-out invasion of Japan by Korea is inevitable if Korea is reunited ... therefore it is in Japan's best interest to help North Korea economically so the Korean peninsula remains divided as now" (Takemura quoted in FEER, 1991.1.31, p.39)

20 The concept of relieving Korea, through the principle of perpetual neutrality, of the burdens imposed by its strategically important location, is not new. Since the 1880s, numerous proposals, focusing on Switzerland's or Austria's experience with neutrality, have tried to deliver the solution to Korea's old problem of interference and invasions by foreign powers (cf. Hwang, 1987; Lee H.J., 1987).
cannot attenuate two destabilizing effects of Korean unification.

First, it cannot soften the economic impact of a united Korea. The complimentary nature of the Korean economies, particularly the combination of northern resources with southern technology and capital, would equip a unified peninsula with a considerable economic potential. Although this potential may not be quite as high as Germany’s, East Asia does not possess an institutional forum comparable to the European Community that can mediate the economically destabilizing effect of unification. China and the Soviet Union, both struggling with reviving their stagnating economies, and the United States, facing an enormous balance of payments deficit, would be confronted with the emergence of a strong economic competitor. Even Japan’s dominant economic position would not remain unaffected. Gavan McCormack, for example, has suggested that a unified Korea would, because of its economic threat to East Asia, not be desired by Japan (McCormack, 1982:26; cf. also Kim H.U., 1986:312).

The second shortcoming of the neutrality proposal is that it cannot provide the great powers with a substitute for the strategic benefits that they gain through the division of the country. Because of the instability of a multi-polar power structure and the absence of collective security arrangements (such as the NATO) that guarantee the great powers a continuous representation of their strategic interests, they are dependent on bilateral links with regional states. The uncertainty about continuous deployment of US forces in Asia, particularly in the Philippines, accounts for an increased importance of South Korea in the US defense network.

The true significance of this strategic link can only be assessed by looking at Japan’s security interests. The situation in Korea has always been of utmost importance to Japan’s defense. The deterrent effect of US troops stationed in Korea provides Japan with a protective
shield. Hence, Tokyo has no interest in seeing the 8th US Army withdrawing from Korea. Given the interdependent nature of the Nichibei economy, it is likely that the division of Korea and the present tripartite security and economic relationship among the US, Japan, and South Korea will remain intact in the near future.\(^{21}\)

While the maintenance of this tripartite relationship is crucial to the US and Japan, the Soviet Union is no less concerned by the situation in Korea, at least as long as the Kremlin is able to withstand the disintegrative pressures that emerged as a result of autonomy movements within the individual republics. The economic imperative that pushes Moscow towards increasingly close ties with Seoul, does not eradicate the Kremlin’s desire to maintain strategic links with North Korea. In view of the climatic restraints imposed on its East Asian naval bases, Moscow is keen on gaining and maintaining access to North Korea’s warm water ports. It is true that Soviet military commitments in the region were reduced, but the fact that Moscow was, at the same time, upgrading its tactical capability, indicates that North East Asia is still considered important to the defense of the Soviet Union (cf. FEER, 1991.6.27, p.23-30).

Korea is equally important to China’s defense. A lessening of the traditional Sino-Soviet rivalry has not changed this fact. Aggression towards China has, on several occasions, occurred by forces using the Korean peninsula as a starting point. While increasing its economic links

\(^{21}\) Japan’s emergence as the world’s largest creditor nation, combined with America becoming the largest debtor nation, led to what Gilpin (1987:328) called ‘a historic reversal of financial positions’. Increased intertwining between the Japanese and American economies, often referred to as the Nichibei economy, resulted in Japanese balance of payments surplus being used to maintain American military hegemony. Because of the dependent nature of the American-Japanese-Korean relationship, the cooperative attitude is likely to remain intact. South Korea is dependent on Japan and the US, especially for capital, security, and market access. Japan is dependent on the US and, to a certain extent also on South Korea and the rest of East Asia, for raw materials, market access, and its national security. The US in turn is dependent on the current financial power of Japan and on the entire Northeast Asian region for its security (cf. Bernard, 1989; Brzezinski, 1988:680ff; Cumings, 1988a:80ff; Gilpin, 1987:336-340; Scalapino, 1987a:106ff).
with South Korea, the vulnerability of its northeastern frontiers accounts for China’s interest in keeping North Korea within its sphere of influence (Kim I.J., 1984:127; 1987:176). In light of these facts, Deng Xiaoping’s prediction that there is no possibility of a major change in the political stalemate on the peninsula in the near future (Chung, 1987:192), seems not only to be a description of the present situation, but also an expression of Chinese interests. China and the Soviet Union are, in fact, trying to derive a maximum of economic and strategic benefits from the two Koreas, without having to face the disadvantages of seeing the peninsula reunified.

Thus, a successful equivalent to Germany’s two-plus-four agreement does not seem to be within close reach for Korea. East Asia, in contrast to Europe, lacks a multilateral structure that can dilute the effects of unification. In such a context, promoting Korean unification is, to refer back to Sun Tzu’s advice, for any of the great powers involved neither advantageous nor effective, and especially not critical to the pursuit of their own interests.
Um eine Niederlage zu vermeiden, muss die Politik sich solche Ziele setzen, die den realen Möglichkeiten ihrer Verwirklichung entspricht (Karl von Clausewitz quoted in Knopp and Kuhn, 1990:7).

In divided Korea and Germany, national unification constituted a deeply rooted popular desire. This symbolic issue has dominated the domestic political agenda of each of the various régimes. The two opposing régimes in Korea and in Germany elevated unification to an official and constitutionally entrenched national leitmotif (Haack, 1989; Kwak, 1987:319; Korea Annual, 1989:349). Korean scholars have often argued that their country is in a more favourable position than Germany to achieve national unification (Oh, 1987:244). Among the arguments that are commonly presented in defense of this position are the following;

(1) Prior to the division of the peninsula, Korea had been an amalgamated political entity ever since the seventh century, when the Silla kingdom absorbed Paekcke and Koguryo. The emergence of a unified German state is a relatively recent phenomenon, dating back to the proclamation of the German Reich under Bismark in 1871. (2) Germany’s division was in part the result of a punitive action by the victorious forces against the alleged initiator and aggressor of World War II. Korea was only an innocent victim of the power struggles during the second global conflict. Moreover, throughout the entire history of the peninsula (save the

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22 In order to avoid defeat, politics has to set goals that correspond to the realistic possibilities of their implementation.

23 Among the most authoritative accounts on nation building in Korea and Germany are Lee K.B. (1983) and Mann, Golo (1983).
recent exceptions of the Vietnam and Gulf wars), not one single Korean soldier had ever set foot on foreign soil. (3) West and East Germany played host, even on the eve of unification, to a large number of non-German NATO (400,000) and Warsaw Pact (360,000) troops while the 'only' foreign contingents stationed in Korea are 43,000 American soldiers in the South and a handful of military advisors in the North.

All of these factors suggest that the Korean situation would be more conducive than the German one to an eventual unification. However, one very simple and often ignored difference is strong enough to account for the emergence of domestic obstacles to Korean unification that by far outweigh all the remaining positive influences. While Germany was able to avoid the hatred-creating impact of a direct military confrontation between the opposing régimes, a three-year long internationalized civil war devastated the Korean peninsula and conditioned the subsequent intra-national dynamics up to the present day.

4.1. INTRA-NATIONAL HOSTILITIES AND ENDOGENOUS PERCEPTIONS

With the exception of occasional skirmishes and incidents related to the crossing of the 'iron curtain', inter-régime interaction in Germany was characterized by psychological Cold War tension, rather than direct military confrontation. Given the absence of an open conflict and the existence of relatively frequent official and unofficial contacts between East and West Germany,

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24 The arguments presented in this section are partly based personal impressions derived from repeated visits to both parts of divided Korea and Germany.
intra-national antagonisms have never spread far beyond the tensions and problems created by the competition of two incompatible ideological and social systems. Neither East nor West Germany has ever even approached the levels of antagonism, mutual hatred, distrust, and ideological indoctrination that characterized domestic politics and régime interaction in divided Korea.

More than one million Koreans lost their lives during the fighting between 1950 and 1953. Thirty-eight years after the termination of the war, about ten million Koreans are still separated from their families (Yi, 1985:4). The Armistice Agreement, signed in 1953, constitutes only a cease fire. A clause in the Agreement called for a political conference, on the basis of which the terms of a peace treaty were supposed to have been discussed. This conference, which took place in Geneva in 1954, did not succeed in establishing a peace treaty. Therefore, in juridical (and psychological) terms the two Koreas are still in a state of war. A reminder of this situation are the one million plus soldiers that still face each other across the Demilitarized Zone.

Given the psychological impact of the war, it is only natural that the rivalry between North and South Korea has no equal for sustained intensity, bitterness, and antagonism. Countless post-war incidents largely inhibit a healing of the wounds that the war inflicted on Korea. These numerous incidents are accompanied and reinforced by a permanent propaganda

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25 For one of the most thorough (and most controversial) analyses of the Korean War (1950-53) see Cumings (1981 and 1990). Rather than adapting North or South Korean positions that tend to blame the war entirely on evil intentions and aggressive behavior of the other side, Cumings draws attention to the global structural conditions that nourished and intensified existing Korean cleavages.

war between the North and the South. For example, at the time of the so-called 'first peaceful transfer of power' in South Korea, the outgoing and incoming presidents, Chun Doo Hwan and Rho Tae Whoo, had the pleasure of receiving the following honorific attributes from the North Korean media:

...prime mover of the Kwangju massacre and human butcher; rare human rubbish; chieftain of irregularities and corruption and human scum; chieftain of tyranny and murder; pro-US flunkeyist traitor; bloodstained master of torture policy; culprit who has turned the South into a kingdom of tear gas canisters; war-maniac; principal criminal who invigorated the sponsorship of the 88-Olympics in a bid to perpetuate the present military fascist dictatorship and fix national division; political charlatan without parallel in history, etc. etc. (appeared in Jan/Feb 1988 issues of KCNA-Bulletin, Korea Today, Korea Youth, and The Pyongyang Times).  

Although South Korean newspapers are slightly more selective in the choice of their vocabulary, the enormous attention and propagandistic usage of such events as (well timed) infiltration tunnel discoveries or defections of North Korean citizens underline Seoul's uncompromising position towards accommodation with its arch rival. It is not very likely that these mutually antagonistic approaches will improve intra-Korean relations and establish an environment that is conducive to confidence building and compromise politics. Rather, they create a level of psychological tension that severely hinders a substantial rapprochement between North and South. Every one of the Military Armistice Commission's meetings (the only

27 So far there have not been any signs of fading North Korean verbal hostilities towards the South. A recent operational code analysis suggests that Kim Il Sung's son and designated political heir, Kim Jong II, evokes an even greater number of pessimistic and negative scripts than does his father (Bond, 1991:33). Drawing on George F. Kennan's hypothesis in his influential X-Article (1974), it can be argued that the stability of the North Korean régime depends on its ability to convince the population of a continuous external threat, which suggests that a substantial reduction of verbal hostilities is not likely to occur.
permanent forum in which North and South meet in irregular sequence to 'discuss' urgent problems) that this writer has observed between 1986 and 1988 was no more than an exchange of prepared statements that accused the other side of violating the Armistice Agreement. There were never any signs of a constructive exchange of ideas or a fruitful dialogue. The present inter-régime contacts in Korea are in fact comparable with the German situation during the apogée of the Hallstein doctrine.

It is important to underline that the differences between Pyongyang and Seoul in approaching the question of unification are not the main cause of the stalemate in which inter-régime negotiations are held up. They are only manifestations of deeper rooted psychological obstacles. Given the absence of an open conflict, Germany was able to begin promising talks on unification as soon as ideological and geopolitical obstacles vanished from domestic politics. Korea, however, must first reach a modus vivendi by reducing the level of mutual antagonism and establishing an environment within which a constructive and compromise oriented dialogue can take place. If Karl von Clausewitz’s advice is at all applicable to the Korean context, then the task of peaceful unification will be a relatively long-term undertaking; a process that may even be prolonged by the impact that German unification will have on Korea.
The immediate impact of German unification on Korea was, without any doubt, an encouraging one. It raised hopes that Korea might also soon move toward national reconciliation. The evolution of the German situation in the next few years could, however, have a negative effect on Korean unification dynamics. While long-term economic predictions are still pointing towards a German success, the short-term effects of unification are considerably more destabilizing and devastating than was commonly anticipated. Contrary to popular East German expectations, the shredding of the *Communist Manifesto* and the introduction of a market oriented economy has not brought instant wealth and automatic leaps in standards of living. Instead, unification has created economic and social problems that will preoccupy Germany for the coming years.

The direct cost of unification, initially envisaged at DM 15 billion, is now estimated to reach almost ten times that amount. Soon after the CDU election campaign promise that unification would not require new taxes, Helmut Kohl was compelled to announce one of the highest tax hikes in German history. For the first time in ten years, Germany is facing a net trade deficit. The head of the German Central Bank, Karl Otto Poehl, even described the inflation creating monetary union as an expensive 'disaster' and resigned from his post.

The problems are most evident in former East Germany, whose territory requires an almost total economic rebuilding (costing between 550 and 830 billion US $).\(^{28}\) It is estimated that by the end of 1991, east German industry will have entirely collapsed. The infrastructure,

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\(^{28}\) In order to differentiate between pre- and post-unification, the adjectives 'East' and 'West' will only be capitalized in specific references to pre-unified Germany.
particularly the railway and telephone systems, are obsolete and require a fundamental reconstruction. Nearly half of the east German work force is either unemployed or underemployed, suggesting that a socio-economic division has replaced the former political-ideological one. It is only natural that the tremendous tensions created by the differences in income, wealth, and standard of living between east and west Germany has a spill-over effect on social stability. Among the many signs that testify to a rising level of instability in post-wall east Germany are dramatic increases in the number and intensity of strikes, fraud, real estate and currency speculation, bank robberies, neo-fascist youth gangs, prostitution, drug consumption, suicides, and road accidents. Indeed, the amalgamation of two states made up of entirely different legal, administrative, and school systems (not to speak of behaviour patterns, value conceptions, and expectations) has proven to be more difficult than anticipated by the German political leadership.

It is likely that the critical voices of academics and left-leaning politicians (i.e., SPD and Greens), which literally drowned in an ocean of mindless euphoria for unity, will increasingly be heard in post-wall Germany and also in Korea. Intellectuals like Willy Brandt, Jürgen Habermas, Günter Grass, and Wolf Biermann have sharply criticized the legal and political framework as well as the hasty implementation of unification. They argue that what could have been a chance to build a more just and democratic Germany (and Europe) ended in a complete subordination to capricious market-oriented incentives, or, as Günter Grass has put it,

...what triumphed in Leipzig and Dresden, in Rostock and East Berlin, was not the people of the GDR but Western capitalism.... No sooner does one ideology loosen its grip than another swoops down and seizes the prey (Grass, 1990:2-3).

What is particularly emphasized by a considerable part of the German intelligentsia is that unification was not the result of a mutual agreement between two equal and sovereign states. It was, rather, a total submission of East Germany's fate to the will (and the currency) of West Germany. In fact, the negotiations and the constitutional arrangements that led to German unity are much better characterized by the word Anschluss (annexation) than Wiedervereinigung (reunification). Unified Germany is exclusively built upon the West German political and constitutional structure (including its name, currency, federal system, legal norms, diplomatic corps, and military personnel).

The complete domination of the unification process by West Germany has far-reaching implications. It creates a dependency relationship that breeds resentment on both sides and accounts for a level of intra-national antagonism that is higher than during the bleakest days of the Cold War. Within a few months, all of East German society has forever lost the identity and the cultural tradition it had acquired during a long and painful process. The fact that a removal of the East German institutional structure was overwhelmingly desired and long overdue, neither moderates the destabilizing effect of such a radical change nor provides the concerned citizens with an immediate substitute for the lost cultural identity. Moreover, the driving forces behind the unification process, aptly termed DM-Nationalismus by Juergen Habermas, render the realization of a post-national era in Europe more difficult, especially if we realize that German unity does, in the long run, nothing but remove the European prosperity boundary further east.
to the Oder/Neisse line.\textsuperscript{30}

How do these difficulties and evident shortcomings of German unification affect intra-national dynamics in Korea? Besides discouraging Korea from opting for a similarly hasty unification, the German example may decisively influence North and South Korean policies. Given the ever increasing estimates of German unification costs, South Korea may realize that it does not have the financial capacity to absorb the North as West Germany did the East. Even more importantly, the fact that German unification occurred as a result of one principal factor, the complete dissolution of the East German communist régime and its almost unconditional subordination to West Germany, will have a lasting impact on Korea. Not only does the German precedent undoubtedly motivate Pyongyang to do its utmost in order to avoid a similar fate, but it also suggests that a requisite for an intra-national rapprochement and eventual unification is an elimination of the ideological and institutional differences within the divided nation or, in other words, a fundamental régime change on at least on of the two sides. It is the objective of the remaining two chapters to determine what forces encourage or temper régime change in Korea and Germany.

\textsuperscript{30} Detailed elaboration of these arguments are contained in Grass (1990), Habermas (1991), and Schalhorn (1990:105-115).
5. CULTURE, IDEOLOGY, AND REGIME STABILITY

Though this frame should die and die,
though I die a hundred times,
My bleached bones all turn to dust,
my very soul exist or not.
What can change the undivided heart
that glows with faith toward my lord?
(Chung Mong Joo, translated by Rutt, 1971:56). 31

One of the most striking contextual differences of intra-Korean and intra-German dynamics is the varying regional stability of authoritarian Communist régimes. Following the crumbling of the Berlin wall, Eastern Europe witnessed the fall of one orthodox Leninist régime after another. These radical changes, which were essential for enabling German unification, have so far not reached East Asia. The main leitmotifs of North Korean and Chinese policies are still guided by Communist principles. Ideological schism, which was identified in chapter 2 as a principal component that reinforced external hindrances to unification, continues to inhibit an improvement of intra-Korean relations. As long as two antagonistic and exclusivity-seeking ideologies compete for influence on the Korean peninsula, it is highly unlikely that an agreement on unification can be reached.

Hence, the question of régime stability is of crucial importance in a comparison of Korean and German unification dynamics. Why is it that most Asian authoritarian Communist régimes have resisted pressures for substantial change while the European ones have completely crumbled

31 With this sijo poem, composed at the end of the Koryo Dynasty, the Korean scholar-official Chung Mong Joo (1337-1392) wanted to express his unconditional loyalty to the Buddhist dominated Koryo dynasty, opposing the challenger, General Yi Song Gye. Shortly afterwards, Chung Mong Joo was assassinated and General Yi seized power, starting what would be a five-century-long dynastic incarnation of Confucian principles.
within a few months? This chapter suggests that among the factors that conditioned the striking
divergence of régime stability in East Germany and North Korea is the intensity of the interactive
link between culture and ideology.32

5.1. THE INTERACTIVE LINK BETWEEN CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY

The study of political culture constituted one of the main fields of political science in the
1950s and 1960s. The largely behavioral/functional works of such authors as Parsons,
Huntington, Almond, Verba, Pye, and Finer aimed at detecting culturally influenced behaviour
patterns and societal structures in order to derive from them generalizations that, allegedly, could
be valid for all societies. This approach, which could roughly be labelled as the 'modernization
paradigm', became increasingly criticized by the 1970s as ethnocentric, static, and conservative.

It appears as though this widely accepted dismissal of culture as an explanatory factor for
political outcomes was premature.33 Clearly, modernization theorists are susceptible to at least
two major criticisms. First, it can be argued that their approach is grossly ethnocentric since they
proceed from the assumption that societies move, in a unilinear way, from 'backward' to

32 Given the evolution of intra-German dynamics and the present global decline of 'Communist' ideology, the
main focus of the following two chapters (5 and 6) will be on régime stability in East Germany and North Korea.
However, in order to reach a more detached viewpoint that facilitates a theoretical approach, West German and South
Korean examples will also be included in the analysis.

33 This assumption is confirmed by the recent reemergence of literature on culture and politics. Some of these
authors, who are considerably more aware of their ethnocentric constraints than their predecessors, focus on
redefining the old functionalist approach (cf. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky, 1990), others are more influenced by
the arguments of critical theorists (cf. Chay; 1990; and Walker, 1984).
modern', continuously approaching an application of (Western) democratic principles. The very nature of the vocabulary employed by modernization theorists (such as low/high political culture, backward/modern, developed/underdeveloped) exemplifies the existence of a strong normative position based on subjective Western judgments. Second, some modernization theorists assign analytical priority or even exclusiveness to an examination of cultural influences on political and socio-economic events (cf. Henderson, 1968:7). Not only are monocausal explanations unlikely to grasp a phenomenon in its entirety, but also a quantification of endogenous components (i.e., culture, institutions) vis-à-vis exogenous ones (i.e., global structure, geopolitics) is an exercise of hypothetical speculation which is not testable by empirical evidence. Hence, the very attempt to attribute analytical priority to domestic factors will always be difficult to defend against critical scrutiny. However, these two criticisms do not question the explanatory power of a cultural analysis as such. They only challenge the normative-ethnocentric approach and the exclusive aspirations of modernization theorists. Arguments against the analytical value of culture (cf., for example, Gourevitch, 1989:12) would assert that a monocausal and static component (i.e., culture) cannot explain dynamic evolutions, such as the sudden fall of European Communist régimes. Besides ignoring that culture constitutes only one among several influences, this viewpoint mistakenly characterizes culture as a static component.

Political culture is dynamic, it emerges from a combination of traditional beliefs and constantly changing contemporary influences such as ideology and geopolitics. Similarly, ideology is not a set of immobile philosophical values that constitutes an entity in itself. It is, rather, a combination of abstract theory and its utilization within a concrete socio-political environment. Ideology is submitted to a subjective filtration process as it is incorporated into
a cultural context. It subsequently undergoes continuous transformation in relation to the changing leitmotifs of the régime that employs the particular social doctrine in order to claim legitimacy.\textsuperscript{34} Hence, ideology and culture merge in a dialectical way to the point where ideology becomes culture and culture becomes ideology. Consequently, a change of ideology entails a fundamental alteration of political culture.\textsuperscript{35}

Korea perfectly illustrates this link between culture and ideology. Both North and South Korean political cultures have undergone fundamental transformations as a result of their contact with Communist and Capitalist ideologies. In a careful selection process, certain aspects of Korea's cultural heritage were isolated and emphasized, others vanished from the (elite influenced) popular consciousness because they neither fitted into the new ideological context nor were they compatible with the political objectives of the ruling class.\textsuperscript{36} Instead, principles of hierarchy, obedience, and unconditional loyalty (which will be examined more carefully in section 5.2.) were taken out of their context and used to facilitate ideologically-based authoritarian and totalitarian practices, completely undermining the moral ground upon which the ruler's cultural legitimacy traditionally rested in Korea.

\textsuperscript{34} For convincing contextual illustrations of this point see Brzezinski (1960:131-174, for the Soviet context) and Park H.S. (1990:253-266, for the North Korean context).

\textsuperscript{35} This is precisely the reason why the rapid ideological change that is occurring in East Germany causes, as mentioned in the previous chapter, such a high level of social instability.

\textsuperscript{36} The dictatorial character of postwar Korean politics sharply contradicts several key elements of the Asian cultural tradition. It is true that democratic rights were less prevalent among Asian philosophers than among their Athenian contemporaries such as Socrates and Aristotle. Yet, they clearly do exist and even date back to the Axial period. For example, Mencius talks of popular rights for overthrowing (and executing) a ruler should his conduct be judged untrustworthy by the people (\textit{Book of Mencius}, IB:7, in Chan, 1973:62). Furthermore, the state during the Yi-dynasty was relatively weak, largely overshadowed by the Yanbang, an agrarian upper class. This form of non-interventionist rule, completely abandoned in contemporary Korea, is to a certain extent a reflection of Confucius' model of decentralized government (cf. Koller, 1970:218) and Lao Tzu's \textit{wu-wei} (laissez-faire) concept, which entails that "...governing a large state is like boiling a small fish", i.e., a small fish can be spoiled if it is handled too much during the cooking (Lao Tzu, 1986:121).
This apologetic and justificatory use of ideology (and culture), to use Geertz’s terminology (1973:231), becomes clearer when we examine how the introduction of capitalism in South Korea has virtually reversed another key Confucian principle, the priority of virtue and ethics over profit. In traditional Confucian-influenced societies, merchants occupied one of the lowest social strata, leaving leadership to the literati. Given that the foremost engine of capitalist growth is the search for profit, the formerly disrespected ‘merchants’ now occupy position of power, wealth, and honour, by disrespecting one of the most fundamental Confucian principle. Communist North Korea equally abused its cultural heritage by, for example, altering the Confucian principle of filial piety. In removing filial piety from its familial level and employing it solely to gain and maintain popular loyalty towards the ruler, North Korea has entirely destroyed the crucial Confucian link between family and the state.

Parallel to this ideological transformation of culture, the ideologies applied in Korea were fundamentally altered by the cultural context in which they were used to legitimize a particular régime. Communism and Capitalism alike are Western concepts that philosophically originate in an egalitarian basis that stands in sharp contrast to the hierarchical principles which characterized traditional Korean culture. Some of these values still influence contemporary Korean politics, decisively altering the philosophical bases of the ideologies used by the two Korean states. South Korea has successfully (in GNP terms) combined hierarchical and collective organizational patterns with capitalist individualism. North Korea has established its own hierarchical power structure, mainly organized according to the Chuche (self-reliance) idea, which

37 Confucius argued, as quoted in the Analects, that "...the superior man thinks of virtue; the inferior man thinks of possessions..., the superior man understands the higher things [moral principles], the inferior man understands the lower things [profit]" (The Analects, 4:11, 14:24, cf. also 1:14, 4:5, 8:5, in Chan, 1963:18-48).
is a selective, distorted, and nationalistic version of supposedly egalitarian and post-national Communist ideology.\textsuperscript{38}

Finally, the volatile post-1945 situation on the Korean peninsula is responsible for an alteration of both traditional culture and imported ideologies. In South Korea, as well as in North Korea, the military has assumed a role that goes far beyond the one of national defense. The existence of a mutually perceived military threat caused by two antagonistic régimes made the task of national defense and the establishment of order a (perceived) prime objective of the state that could, allegedly, only be achieved with an extension of the military’s traditional task. Hence, the particular geopolitical situation provided the rationale for the military’s involvement in politics and, as some Koreans claim, rendered it culturally legitimate. However, grounds for legitimizing praetorian régimes cannot be found in neo-liberal capitalism, in Marxism (especially not in the post-transitional phase, where the state is supposed to wither away), or in the Korean cultural tradition. Despite its tendency towards authoritarian rule, Confucianism advocates leadership by the literati rather than the military. As the civilian-ruled Yi dynasty demonstrated, the very concept of involvement by the military was alien to the traditional political structure of Confucian Korea (cf. Büttnner, 1976:331, Kim E., 1975:303)

The Korean example shows that the interactive link between culture and ideology gives rise to a continuously changing political culture that is only sustainable within its particular environment. Hence, North Korean and East German Communism must be treated as two

\textsuperscript{38} South Korean analysts of the North Korean society argue that Kim Il Sung’s régime classifies people into three general categories and 51 specific classes on the basis of such criteria as loyalty to Kim Il Sung, (proletarian) family background, and birth place (\textit{Vantage Point}, Sept 1990:11). \textit{Chuche}, the constitutionally entrenched (Article 4) state ideology of North Korea, is in its essence highly nationalistic and anti-Marxist. This doctrine of self-reliance rests on three core points, \textit{chaju} (political independence), \textit{charip kyongje} (economic self-sustenance), and \textit{chawi} (military self-defense) (Suh, 1988:302-7).
entirely different ideologies. The staying power of these ideologies and the stability of the regimes that incarnate them largely depend on how compatible the employed social doctrine is with its cultural environment.

5.2. POLITICAL CULTURE, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND REGIME CHANGE

The distorted version of Marxism that served the North Korean and East German elites as a means to gain and maintain power was, at best, a prolonged version of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This supposedly transitional authoritarian stage became a sustained societal structure instead. Hence, the North Korean and East German régimes should not be classified as Communist, but as authoritarian or totalitarian. Without falling into a tendency of cultural determinism, it can be argued that authoritarian rule is easier to sustain (but not necessarily unavoidable) in some cultural contexts than in others. In other words, the interactive link between culture and ideology may be stronger and more difficult to break in one societal environment than in another.

A number of German philosophical concepts, particularly the ones belonging to Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Heidegger may have been taken out of context and used to justify totalitarian Nazi rule, but an inherently authoritarian philosophical and cultural tradition is lacking in Germany. Admittedly, Germany is not the direct source of leading democratic ideas. However, intellectual interaction in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe was intense enough
to create a German cultural awareness of the egalitarian and individualistic arguments presented by their French, Swiss, and English neighbours. Almond and Verba’s analysis, which characterizes West German civic culture as hierarchical and dominated by passive/detached popular attitudes towards authority, must be placed in the right context (Almond and Verba, 1963:428-39,495; Almond, 1974:46-55). In comparison with the Lockean North American political culture, Germany may display a relatively low level of beliefs in (Lockean) freedom and equality. In a comparative non-Western context, however, the German political culture is clearly among the more individualistic ones. Pre-Nazi Germany had in fact experienced a brief period of democratic politics and parliamentary rule.

Korea, however, was never in direct contact with comparable ideas and practices. It moved directly from the feudal Yi(Chosun)-Dynasty to the harsh Japanese occupation and then to the present two authoritarian states. This situation enabled the Korean elites to eliminate certain cultural concepts while developing others in order to sustain their dictatorial rule. Continuing in the broad tradition of Karl Wittfogel’s ‘hydraulic theory’ and Gregory Henderson’s ‘politics of the vortex’, various academics draw a direct link between specific cultural values and the tendency toward authoritarian rule in both parts of divided Korea.39

Confucianism is the element of Korea’s cultural heritage that was best suited for legitimizing authoritarian rule. Confucianism assumes the existence of a preordained natural order. Central to this philosophy are the five cardinal relationships which characterize all human

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interaction in a very ordered and paternalistic-hierarchical way. They are sovereign-subject, father-son, old-young, husband-wife, and friend-friend. Rather than advocating the rule of law, Confucius recommended that a country be governed by a man of Jen (humanity, superior moral values), a so-called chün tzu or 'superior man'. Since Confucian ethics are based on filial piety (Hsia) and hierarchical principles, emphasizing the relationship between superiors and subordinates, rather than advocating equal rights and duties, this supposedly benign philosophy is highly susceptible to abuse.

Confucianism also hampers any régime change, be it in the North or in the South, because its values stress compliance with the established societal order. Despite the reforms that were recently introduced by the Roh Tae Whoo government, characterizing his régime as a freedom-loving democracy (cf. Lee W.M. 1989:119-22) does by no means reflect reality. South Korea still displays a highly centralized power structure where opposition politics is largely confined to the activities of counter-elites that espouse the same hierarchical values as their governing opponents. If there is a movement towards democratization in South Korea, it occurs against the tide of cultural values, being solely linked, as Cumings (1989) suggests, to the fact that democracy is better suited than authoritarianism to address and solve the problems that arise in developed capitalist societies. North Korea, however, lacks a comparable structural incentive that could lead towards an anti-totalitarian governing style. Given that the tight control over the information network filters the inflow of 'subversive' cultural and ideological influences (cf. chapter 6), the still prevailing Confucian values can be successfully used by the elites in power

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40 For example, Kim Dae Jung, Korea's most famous opposition leader who has a (Korean) reputation as being a radical liberal, displays an extremely strong adherence to hierarchical Confucian principles (cf. his Prison Letters, 1986). Moreover, each opposition party and even the seemingly sporadic student movements are structured in a rigid and hierarchical manner.
to impede, or at least postpone, any substantial régime change.\textsuperscript{41}

The extent to which the intensity of the link between culture and ideology influences régime stability and unification dynamics cannot be appreciated fully without at least briefly mentioning some of the arguments presented by the literature of theoretical linguistics and the sociology of knowledge. The difference between the German cultural tendency towards individualism and the Korean tradition of collective-hierarchical organization is both etymologically reflected in and reinforced by the linguistic context within which social interaction takes place.

Languages are never neutral. They reflect particular values and ideas. Each language embodies in its structure a specific image of reality and, therefore, conditions an individual’s perceptions and circumscribes the modes of human interaction.\textsuperscript{42} Given that languages naturally seek exclusive (unilingual) dominance within an individual and a specific territory (Laponce, 1984), an escape from logocentric mediation is all the more impossible. J. Pocock (1984:25-34) even considers language itself as a political system and politics as a language-system. One of the elements in his presentation of the power-language relationship is that languages assign

\textsuperscript{41} The contextual background of Korean and German politics confirms the influence of culture on régime stability. All societies that have so far undergone the radical change from authoritarian Communism to liberal Capitalism are to be found in the (individualistic) indo-European cultural sphere. Even Albania, where Enver Hoxha practised an iron rule comparable to Kim Il Sung’s dictatorship, has not been able to withstand the anti-totalitarian wave that swept the whole of Eastern Europe. The societies that were most ‘successful’ in maintaining authoritarian Communist rule belong, with the exception of Cuba, to the Confucian influenced cultural sphere (i.e. North Korea and China). The only Asian Communist state where substantial changes towards democratic pluralism have occurred is Mongolia. This evolution can partly be attributed to Mongolia’s dominant cultural influence being Buddhist, rather than Confucian.

\textsuperscript{42} These semantic impositions, which mediate all higher levels of thinking, are well captured by the Saphir-Whorf hypothesis (Whorf, 1956:esp.252-256) and eloquently summarized by Jacques Derrida, who argues that "...toutes les déterminations métaphisiques de la vérité ... sont plus ou moins immédiatement inséparable de l’instance du logos ou d’une raison pensée dans la descendance du logos..." (Derrida, 1967:21).
specific functions to people. These linguistic role assignments are particularly pronounced in the structure of the Korean language.

Korean grammar creates perceptions that are conducive to a hierarchical societal fragmentation into different social strata, which are status-oriented in a Weberian interpretation, rather than class-related in the sense of Marxian economism. In every sentence a speaker is forced to indicate a specific subordinate or superior societal relationship between him/her and the addressee and between him/her and any third person mentioned in the dialogue. These subtleties are precisely grammaticized. Through the introduction of (mostly verbal) suffixes, the Korean grammar distinguishes between two levels of speech, polite and impolite, as well as between two styles of speech, formal and informal. This gives rise to a basic framework of four grammatically distinctive speech forms; formal-polite, informal-polite, informal-impolite, and formal-impolite. Other noun and verb related suffixes, such as annexes to names/titles or honorific object and subject markers, supplement the four-fold grammatical system in order to further distinguish more subtle hierarchical nuances.43

The social and political consequences of these structural impositions on verbal interaction are great. The hierarchical speech patterns entrench a popular consciousness that leads to a greater acceptance not only of an individual’s or a group’s specific role in society, but also of

43 These grammatical subtleties of the Korean language cannot be directly expressed in an English text. The English language does not have specific grammatical instruments to determine hierarchy relationships. Some Korean grammarians, who employ Noam Chomsky’s transformational generative framework, assert that because each language possesses expressions of deference and intimacy, at least some specific aspects of Korean speech styles could be retained in an English translation (cf. Kim-Renaud, 1986:153-168). Most importantly, an awareness of these Korean grammatical rules and their conditioning of human thought and interaction can help to stretch the analytical limits of an English discourse that examines Korean politics.
the overall existing societal order.\textsuperscript{44}

The structure of the German language does not provide a similar incentive for authoritarian-hierarchical rule. Although it could be argued that German grammar is slightly more hierarchy oriented than English, in comparison to Korean the structure of the German language is highly egalitarian. The only grammatical elements that arguably could be considered hierarchical are personal pronouns, which are divided into formal (\textit{sie/ihr/en/ihrer/ihr}) and informal ones (\textit{du/dir/dein/deine/deiner}). However, pronouns are not structural grammatical elements insofar as they do not constitute a necessary component of each sentence. Moreover, the German distinction between formal and informal pronouns is not associated with gender or specific social functions/positions. They are used mostly in a mutually agreed and reciprocal way, i.e., both persons involved in the dialogue consent to employing the same set of pronouns. Hence, German grammar does not per se provide a structural conditioning of human thought and interaction that is conducive to the establishment of a hierarchical society based on unconditional submission to authority.\textsuperscript{45}

Linguistic and cultural factors not only condition the societal structure, they also decisively influence what Max Weber (1973:159-166) called the charismatic source of power.

\textsuperscript{44} Given the structural influence of the Korean language, it is likely that hierarchal principles are culturally sustainable independently from Confucian values. This may be one of the reasons for Chung Mong Joo's unconditional loyalty to the Buddhist dominated Koryo dynasty (cf. quote at the beginning of the chapter).

\textsuperscript{45} Two relevant side effects of culture and language are worth brief mention. Both states in divided Germany have always used the same word to describe Germany - Deutschland. The two Korean states, however, employ different names to refer to their country. The South uses Hanguk while the North uses Chosun. Given that the Korean division has persisted over almost half a century, these and other linguistic differences that have emerged between North and South may, in the long run, entrench national partition in the consciousness of the population. Also, as opposed to the German context, Korean culture does not consider compromise to be a positive character trait. It is, rather, an act that is associated with weakness and losing face - which evidently does not greatly facilitate the process of rapprochement through intra-national negotiations.
Since patrimonial loyalty to a ruler is not reinforced by the structure of the German language, the emergence of an authoritarian German régime based on charismatic power is less likely to occur than in the Korean context (but not necessarily impossible, as the inter-war era has shown). Postwar leaders like Walter Ulbricht, Erich Honecker, Konrad Adenauer, Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, or Helmut Kohl have undoubtedly left a lasting mark on German history. However, their main source of power was not of a charismatic, but of a rational-legal nature. None of the German leaders has even approached the level of charismatic authority that characterized Korean politics under the rule of Park Chung Hee or Kim Il Sung.

The personality cult that has developed around Kim Il Sung is unmatched even by such dictatorial equivalents as Stalin, Mao, or Hitler. Not a single aspect of North Korean life escapes the omnipresent influence of Kim Il Sung, who has ruled North Korea with an iron grip ever since its emergence as a state in 1948. Kim’s position as North Korea’s suryong (supreme/great leader) is rooted in his allegedly heroic involvement in anti-Japanese guerilla activities (which provided him with legitimacy), facilitated by the Korean cultural tradition (i.e., deference of authority to the ruler), and entrenched by the media, which portray Kim in a highly hagiographical way.46

This aspect of the North Korean system greatly influences régime stability and unification dynamics because the régime itself, as well as its official Chuche ideology (often referred to as Kimilsungism or Kimology), are intrinsically linked to the personality of Kim Il Sung. His

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46 Objective analyses of Kim Il Sung’s life are difficult to find. Literature form the North portrays him as a superhuman hero who has personally created the El Dorado that North Korea is today. Literature from the South tends to discredit all of Kim’s achievements, reducing him to a mere puppet set in place by the Soviet occupation forces. Among the rare analyses that portray a healthy mixture (and an excellent account) of these two interpretations is Suh (1988).
charismatic authority, combined with his propaganda and repression apparatuses, was strong enough to counter most pressures that would otherwise have led towards a fundamental régime change. Yet, numerous authors, among them Suh Dae Sook, argue that Kim has failed to establish and refine a political system that will survive his personal rule (Suh, 1988:324, cf. also FEER, 1990.11.29, p.27-35). It is pointed out that Kim Il Sung's effort to correct this shortcoming by designating his son, Kim Jong II, as his official political heir, is not likely to succeed. It is true that the cultural conduciveness for charismatic authority is not enough to provide a base for the establishment of the first 'socialist' monarchy. Kim Jong II clearly lacks the personality and historical legitimacy that contributed to the stability of his father's charismatic and monocratic rule. However, cultural and charismatic components are not the only aspects that condition régime stability. A full appreciation of the diverging evolutions in Korea and Germany can only be reached by taking into account the effectiveness of each régime's coercive and propagandistic apparatus or, in other words, by comparing the level of hegemonic societal control and the resulting degree of organic unity between ruler and ruled.
If Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ontological assumption is correct, we would have to acknowledge that the acquisition of an individual's will can only be understood in relation to the dominant societal opinion which, in turn, directly depends on such factors as control over information and education. This chapter will attempt to use Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony, which could be considered as an elaboration of Rousseau's hypothesis, in order to facilitate a better understanding of diverging régime stability in Korea and Germany. After a brief presentation of the relevant aspects of Gramsci's thought and an assessment of the existing levels of organic unity in pre-unified Germany and Korea (section 6.1.), the chapter will examine how hegemonic control/consent mediated the impact of global systemic change on unification dynamics (section 6.2.).

47 While savage man lives in himself, civilized man always lives outside himself. He only knows how to live in the opinions of others and it is solely from their judgments that he derives the feeling of his own existence.
6.1. LEVELS OF ORGANIC UNITY BETWEEN RULER AND RULED

Although Gramsci’s elaboration of the concept of hegemony directly emerged out of his attempt to explain the failure of the Italian Communist Party to reunite the proletariat and the peasantry in order to overthrow the fascist state, his theoretical concept can be useful in shedding light on the issue of régime stability in general. Gramsci’s humanistic approach constitutes a clear break from the deterministic version of orthodox Marxian economism. Rather than professing the exclusiveness of economics in determining class relationships and exploitation, Gramsci pays equal attention to the social, cultural, and political spheres. His concept of hegemony is designed to explain how a dominant social group can impose its ideology and protect its interests by winning tacit popular support thereof. Such an organic unity between ruler and ruled, termed hegemonic rule, is achieved when mass affiliation reaches the point where the existing societal structure and its (exploitative) ruling class are considered legitimate.\textsuperscript{48}

Crucial to Gramsci’s theoretical model is his definition of the state, which is fundamentally distinct from the prevalent Weberian concept (1958:78) that focuses on the monopoly of coercive power. Gramsci notes in one of his prison letters that the state should, rather, be seen as "...a balance between political society and civil society" (Gramsci, 1975:204, cf. also 1988:233-4). Hence, when examining the stability of a particular government, Gramsci not only focuses on a régime’s legal means of domination and coercion (i.e., the institutions of

\textsuperscript{48} The term 'organic' (systemic, permanent) is essential go Gramsci’s thought. His attempt to link dialectically 'organic' and 'conjunctural' (occasional, temporary, idiosyncratic) factors is a reflection of his fundamental opposition to historical materialism. Instead, Gramsci asserts that non-economic and culturally specific circumstances (such as the immediate impact of communication or education) can produce long-term situations of domination and exploitation (Gramsci, 1988:200-209,427). For Gramsci’s model of hegemony in general see Gramsci (1988:esp.173,189-221), Bocock (1986:esp.28-54), and Femia (1981:46ff).
political society, such as the police, army, and bureaucracy), but also on the degree of popular consent that the régime acquires through its domination of the non-coercive sphere (i.e., the institutions of civil society, such as the media, trade unions, religious organizations, schools, and universities). The impact of hegemony as exercised in civil society is crucial for Gramsci because he proceeds from the (Rousseauian) assumption that consciousness is not naturally given, but socially constructed. Hence, the higher a dominant social group’s degree of hegemonic control, the closer is the organic link between ruler and ruled and, consequently, the easier it is for a régime to maintain its position despite widespread abuse of the (imposed) popular consent.

Gramsci’s concept has been applied explicitly or implicitly by a great number of social scientists, yet, it has received only marginal attention by political scientists. Among the researchers who have used a method that is comparable to Gramsci’s are the critical theorists, whose theoretical positions can be traced back to the Frankfurter Schule. One of the most fundamental tenets of critical theorists is the advocation of inter-disciplinary research. Rejecting a traditional Marxian base-superstructure model and professing the need to link areas such as economics, politics, culture, history, sociology, and philosophy, they argued, as did Gramsci, that the economically deterministic position of orthodox Marxism cannot adequately capture the dynamics of historical evolutions.49 A sociology of ’mass culture’, as critical theorists advocate, must be broader in its approach and assess roots of class domination and exploitation that exist outside of the relations of production. Jürgen Habermas, for example, advocated the need to supplement historical materialism by including an assessment of the impact of distorted and limited communication (Held, 1980:277ff).

49 The most thorough account of the theoretical positions of the Frankfurter Schule is provided by Wiggershaus (1986). For a similar, yet condensed, version in English see Held (1980).
How have the various forms and degrees of hegemony in East Germany and North Korea influenced régime stability? Both countries clearly displayed a similar dominance in the realm of political society. Coercive methods were widely used to ensure the survival of the régimes in power. Among the tactics employed were controls and intimidation of the population through societal infiltration by the Stasi (State Security Service) and the Sahoe Anjonguk (Bureau of Social Security) respectively. The two countries are also comparable with regard to their governmental domination of the media and the education system. Their school curricula and media coverage were geared towards the political education of the masses, serving as instruments for disseminating the ideology used by the ruling class to justify its dominance. Although East Germany constitutionally entrenched the existence of press freedom (Article 27), the true role of its media was comparable to North Korea’s, which, according to an official Pyongyang radio broadcast, is "...to propagate the superiority of our own socialism, the teachings of the Great Leader Kim Il Sung and the Dear Leader Kim Jong II, and the Party policies..." (Vantage Point, Oct 1990, p.19). As a result, virtually all domestic East German and North Korean sources of information, such as the daily newspapers SED Neues Deutschland or Rodong Sinmun, were under direct and harsh censorship control of the respective party organs.

Despite possessing similar coercive capacities, the North Korean and East German régimes greatly differed with regard to their relationship between ruler and ruled. North Korea’s control over civil society has been substantially higher than East Germany’s because of Pyongyang’s 'success' in filtering exogenous influences and in limiting the information sources for the

50 The boundaries between the spheres of coercion and consent are fluid. Institutions such as schools and the media are part of civil society. Yet, they also constitute a crucial link between political and civil society, especially if state control over these institutions is as high as in North Korea and East Germany.
population to the government censored media. Ever since national partition occurred, all mail and telecommunication links between the two parts of the peninsula have been entirely cut off. North Korea's population has no access to foreign television programs, radio broadcasts, or newspapers. Being nearly sealed off from the outside world, even North Korea's intelligentsia is deprived of the most basic information about factual interpretations that diverge from the official government position.  

The East German population, in sharp contrast, enjoyed access to foreign information sources for decades. Radio Free Europe intensively counter-indoctrinated Eastern Europe and most East Germans regularly watched West German television programs. Ever since Ostpolitik replaced the West German Hallstein doctrine, mail exchange between East Germany and the outside world was permitted and 'capitalist' newspapers and magazines were relatively easily available. While popular inter-state contact is non-existent in Korea, cross-border visits were relatively frequent in Germany. From 1970 to the early 1980s, between 1.1 and 1.6 million East Germans visited the West each year, while the number of West Germans travelling in the opposite direction ranged between 1.2 and 3.1 million (Jesse, 1985:435-6; cf. also Childs, 51

51 For decades, North and South Korean authorities have attempted to undermine each other’s control over civil society. However, each of the opposing régimes has been highly successful in filtering counter-indoctrination. Since North and South Korea use different television systems (PAL and NTS respectively), regime hostile broadcasts can only be received with the help of a special television set that is not available to the average citizen (a North Korean television set can only receive frequencies that broadcast official government programs). Furthermore, effective scrambling devices on both sides largely inhibit the societal penetration of regular radio broadcast from abroad. Not even short-wave broadcast, which escape scrambling devices, have been able to penetrate the population on the opposing side. Short-wave radios are among the commodities that are inaccessible to the North Korean population, and South Korea imposed prison sentences for possessing short-wave radios and tuning into North Korean broadcast frequencies. Other forms of counter-indoctrination that each of the opposing régime employs are the diffusion of ideological messages via loudspeakers situated along the Demilitarized Zone and balloons that are used to drop flyers in the territory of the opposite régime. Yet, on both sides, these messages never reach the population because they are picked up and filtered by military authorities.
6.2. CIVIL SOCIETY, HEGEMONIC CONTROL, AND REGIME STABILITY

Despite the difficulties of obtaining adequate information about North Korea’s domestic situation, it is safe to assume that Pyongyang’s régime has achieved a much higher degree of organic unity between ruler and ruled than its East German counterpart. This is, of course, not a result of North Korea’s superior moral and intellectual leadership. It is, rather, linked to Pyongyang’s ability to uphold its monopoly over the distribution of information. Given that North Korea’s population has been sealed off from the outside world for almost half a century, it is relatively easy for the dominant social group to impose its subjective agenda and its egocentric interests. The East German régime, by contrast, never reached a substantial unity between ruler and ruled. The long-term and intense infiltration of ‘counter-revolutionary’ doctrines and values seriously undermined the régime’s ability to impose a hegemonic consent.

in the realm of civil society.

These differences between North Korea and East Germany have influenced unification dynamics because they decisively determined the stability of the two authoritarian Communist régimes. \(^{53}\) Two important consequences of varying degrees of hegemonic rule will be examined in this section. They are (1) the conditioning of popular attitudes towards the necessity of change and its implications for régime stability, and (2) the alteration of perceived economic imperatives.

The penetration of 'anti-socialist' values into East German popular consciousness was a key element of the process that led towards régime change. The power of a ruling social group cannot be based on violence and coercion alone. It is also dependent on a certain level of popular cooperation and obedience (cf. Sharp, 1980). Thus, the stability of a régime declines in direct ratio to increasing non-cooperative attitudes of the populace. The infiltration of 'subversive' values, in turn, not only conditions the population's willingness to accept the status quo, but also inhibits the régime from effectively using the institutions of civil society in order to impose hegemonic consent.

The availability of West German media in East Germany decisively altered the relationship between ruler and ruled. Its impetus for régime change was all the more severe since these foreign information sources by no means provided a realistic account of Western European life. Radio Free Europe may have been correct in assessing the contradictions of Eastern European authoritarianism, yet, it certainly did not attempt to expose the evident social and

\(^{53}\) Domestic incentives for régime and policy change in the Soviet Union clearly support Gramsci's theory and are directly comparable to the dynamics that conditioned the evolutions in East Germany and North Korea. The impact of increasingly available external information sources and of loosening censorship practices seriously undermined the Kremlin's ability to impose hegemonic consent in the realm of civil society, leading towards ever increasing popular disapproval of and opposition to the Communist régime (see section 2.2.).
political weaknesses of liberal capitalism. Moreover, commercial advertisements and other features of West German television programs evoked the illusion of a consumer paradise that inevitably must have appeared irresistible to the average East German citizen. Hence, this overly optimistic portrayal of alternatives to communist authoritarianism have increased the level of popular dissatisfaction with the SED régime.54

An application of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony for determining régime stability also warrants an appreciation of societal aspects that have hitherto received little attention by political scientists. For example, West German (popular) cultural and literary traditions deeply penetrated East Germany during the 1970s and 1980s. Among these influences, which were officially denounced by the SED as expressions of capitalist decadence and ideological weapons of the bourgeoisie, were phenomena such as Western rock, beat, and punk music, Franz Kafka and Marcel Proust novels, or, even 'worse', a spread of Western European literary traditions of an existentialist, avantgardist, or post-structuralist nature (cf. Erbe, 1986:157-172; Jäger, 1982:118). These seemingly apolitical influences had a tremendous impact on régime stability because they undermined the ideological base upon which the legitimacy of the SED régime ought to have been based and, at the same time, inhibited the ruling social group from establishing hegemonic control in the realm of civil society. Consequently, the discrepancy between ruler and ruled

54 The application of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is by no means limited to an examination of régime stability in an authoritarian society. Although voices for unity had always been present in postwar Germany, the overwhelming West German consensus about the 'need' for a rapid unification can only be understood by taking into account the impact of the press on opinion formation. A clear majority of the West German media was zealously supportive of unification, particularly the television stations and the conservative newspapers belonging to the Axel Springer conglomerate (i.e., Frankfurter Allgemeine and Die Welt), but also most of the less elite oriented publications, such as Der Spiegel or Bild Zeitung. The hegemonic consensus reflected in these institutions of civil society substantially contributed to the emergence of a low popular tolerance of diverging opinions. Authors who criticized the framework of unification were treated as national traitors (cf. Grass, 1990) and political parties that proposed a more long term approach towards overcoming partition (i.e. SPD and Greens) were overwhelmingly defeated in the 1990 election by the unity promoting CDU/CSU/FDP coalition.
continuously grew and finally led to the 1989 mass demonstrations that forced the downfall of the SED régime.\textsuperscript{55}

A similar popular challenge to authoritarian rule did not arise in North Korea because the tight governmental control over the institutions of civil society artificially sustained a relatively intense organic unity between ruler and ruled. Contrary to widespread academic opinions, this thesis argues that even an erosion of the charismatic power source that would occur with a leadership change from the Kim II Sung to the Kim Jong II, may not be enough to destabilize the totalitarian régime. Ever since the early 1970s, North Korea's media have done their utmost to build up Kim Jong II as the future leader, presenting him as the only possible alternative to his father. It is likely that the population will not object to such a power shift as long as the present régime is able to maintain its monopoly over information sources.\textsuperscript{56}

A second principal impact of diverging levels of hegemonic control is its conditioning of perceived economic imperatives. Both the North Korean and the East German economies have performed relatively well in relation to other authoritarian communist states. However,

\textsuperscript{55} The theoretical literature that has developed around the themes of social non-cooperation and non-violent direct action would provide a good base for a further examination of the link between mass demonstrations and régime change in East Germany. Yet, given the limited length of the thesis, such an analysis will not be attempted.

\textsuperscript{56} Hegemonic control may be easier to achieve in a hierarchical Confucian society than in an individualistic Western one. The structure and the purpose of the South and North Korean school and media systems are strikingly similar and at least partly influenced by cultural factors. Rather than attributing to the press the Western (liberal) role of watchdog and initiator of critical debates, the South Korean Press Ethics Code describes the mass media, in an almost Rousseauian way, as a 'social instrument' that should lead the country in the right direction ("Press Ethics Code", 1984:224-228). The government asserts that important controversies should be sorted out by the law-enforcement authorities, rather than being subjected to open criticism by the mass media (Korea Times, 1988.3.20.). A similar tendency towards homogeneity is prevalent in the South Korean education system, which is geared, as its Northern counterpart, towards creating and maintaining support for the ideological position of the régime in power. For example, the first and most important aim of education of the Tae Sung Dong Primary School is "love your country and lead the way in anti-communism" (Tae Sung Dong Exercises, 1988). Moreover, the Confucian influenced (South and North) Korean education systems reward learning by heart and discourage students from innovative endeavours that question the status quo. These cultural traits greatly enhance the potential influence that a dominant social group can gain by exercising hegemonic control in civil society.
Pyongyang's and Berlin's economic record appear as clear failures when compared to the achievements of their capitalist compatriots at the other side of the divided nations. Hence, popular perceptions of the need for economic reform depend largely on the available information about how other economies perform and how other Communist régimes address shortcomings of a state directed economic system.

Several factors, among them the West German media, the presence of Western tourists, and the (restricted) availability of consumer goods in hard currency stores, were strong influences that rendered the East German population alert to the enormous economic gap that separated them from their Western European neighbours. Given the long-term deprivation of consumer items, the incentives that an awareness of the West German materialistic society provided for East German citizens could only lead towards a strong dissatisfaction with the present régime. A similar rejection of existing economic policies did not arise in North Korea, despite the fact that its economic situation was even worse than East Germany's. Because North Korean citizens have virtually no possibilities of comparing their economic situation with that in the South and in other industrialized countries, economic imperatives appeared less compelling than they did in the Western consumerism influenced East German society.

The diverging incentives for economic reform become even clearer when we consider the

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57 Objective information on North Korea's economy is difficult to obtain. Besides the problems associated with the incompatibility of 'Capitalist' and 'Communist' methods of compiling economic statistics (cf. Chung, 1974:144), the few data are, as Robert Derenberger (1988:243) notes, a 'statistical wasteland'. Yet, commentators generally agree that North Korea's autarkical economy is in a state of crisis. An external debt of US$ 5.200 million (end of 1988) and extremely high military expenditures (estimated at 23% of the GNP) aggravate the 'normal' inefficiencies of a Soviet-style economic planning system. Given that Soviet aid has so far been crucial to the maintenance of Pyongyang's capital intensive industrial activities, the chances for economic recovery will decrease even more with a reduction or elimination of Moscow's economic assistance program. For more detailed statistics and analysis of the North Korean economy and its East German counterpart see Asia 1990 (1990), Derenberger (1988), FEER (1990.3.22, p.22-3; 1991.2.14, p.20-1), Francisco (1989), Suh (1988:209ff), The Economist (1990.9.29), The Europa World Year Book (1990, Vol II, p.1543; 1991, Vol I, p. xv-xvi).
impact of domestic changes in the Soviet Union. Although Pyongyang and Berlin alike have officially denounced Gorbachev's economic policies, their ability to convince the population of the futility of such reforms differed greatly as a result of their varying degrees of hegemonic control. Despite the SED's refusal to accept the logic of perestroika, most of Gorbachev's key speeches were printed, unedited and in full length, by the East German press (Thalheim, 1988:41). Such popular knowledge of alternative approaches to economic planning stands in sharp contrast to the situation in North Korea, where the press has either distorted or entirely ignored the radical changes that swept the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Because of the high degree of hegemonic control in North Korea, domestic incentives for economic reforms can only occur as a result of changes in the political and ideological system. However, given the fate of East Germany and the existence of an increasingly anti-communist external environment, Pyongyang will certainly try to maintain its dominance over civil society. The willingness to resist external pressures is as intense today as it was in 1989, when Kim II Sung stated that

...it is a truism that the old forces will become more cunning and vicious as they approach their doom. ...today, the reactionary forces against history continue their aggression and interference, hiding behind the mask of [peace] and [cooperation] while being ready to throw away and take the road of naked aggression and interference as soon as opportunity arises (Kim quoted in Lee C.S., 1989:1038).

Kim's attitude suggests that an improvement of inter-Korean relations is not likely to be in close reach, for such a breakthrough is to a great extent dependent on domestic reform within North Korea. As long as Pyongyang is able to maintain exclusive control over the domestic
information network, its policy leitmotifs, no matter how irrational and economically counter-productive they may be, will not be subject to popular criticism. This means that Pyongyang will continue its tightrope dance, trying to attract desperately needed foreign aid while resisting all pressures to open up its borders, which would provide the requisite for a threatening popular challenge to Kim Il Sung's totalitarian régime. However, this strategy will be difficult to sustain in the long run. Given the limitations of its domestic markets and productive capacities, Pyongyang will be unable pursue its self-reliant economic policy. The lack of external ideological support and economic assistance will eventually force North Korea to open up its borders and enter into trade relationships with non-socialist countries. Such an evolution will fundamentally alter the dynamics of intra-Korean relations since it will undoubtedly weaken the existing level of hegemonic control and undermine the régime's ability to sustain tacit support of its totalitarian governing style.
CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this thesis was to discover the causal factors that explain the diverging evolution of intra-Korean and intra-German dynamics. However, two additional theoretical attempts were implied in the analysis. First, the thesis tried to ascertain why changes in the international power structure can have a different impact on one region than on another. Second, it investigated to what extent global theories have the potential to account for such diverging evolutions.

The bifurcation of Korea and Germany occurred as a result of superpower rivalry and ideological cleavages between them. The persistence of this global competition cemented the national divisions and linked Korea’s and Germany’s fates directly to the evolution of superpower relations. Systemic theories that aim to capture the dynamics of the international power structure clearly have the potential to assess these events. They contribute to an etiological understanding of national partition and delineate the framework within which intra-national dynamics took their course during the Cold War period. Yet, global theories fall short of accounting for all the aspects of domestic evolutions in Korea and Germany. They are particularity deficient in capturing the dynamics of the post-Cold War era, underlining the need for a regionally specific theoretical framework.

This thesis has suggested that the major causes for the differing evolutions in Korea and Germany include the following four sets of factors:

(1) Given that unification can only occur with support by the great powers, their perceptions of the impact of unification are crucial external factors that influence the evolution
of intra-national dynamics. Both Korea and Germany have, particularly in view of the instability associated with a multi-polar power structure, the economic and military potentials to destabilize the region and emerge as unwanted competitors for the great powers. However, the nature of security and economic interaction in the concerned regions can decisively alter the (real and perceived) impact of unification and great power support thereof. A multilateral and institutionalized regional framework, as it exists in Europe, attenuates the destabilizing effect of power shifts, such as German unification, making changes more acceptable to the great powers. A region, such as East Asia, that is characterized by predominantly bilateral interaction among states lacks the structural means to attenuate the destabilizing potentials of power shifts, such as Korean unification, and cannot provide an institutional substitute for the great powers’ loss of strategic privileges that would occur as a result of unification.

(2) The frequency and intensity of open hostilities within the divided nations decisively influence intra-national levels of antagonism which, in turn, condition the success of negotiations on unification. If the level of direct military confrontation between the two opposed regimes is low, as in Germany, the stage for successful unification negotiations is set, once the externally created political and ideological obstacles have disappeared. If a direct military confrontation between the opposing regimes occurred, as in Korea, it is likely that the level of intra-national antagonism is high and will remain so for a considerable period of time, requiring an extended process of confidence building before talks on unification can become productive. Furthermore, a historical precedent, such as German unification, can provide a nation in a comparable situation, such as Korea, with the benefit of hindsight, which has the potential to considerably alter its own perceptions on intra-national interaction. The annexational nature of German unification, its
tremendous financial burden, and the socio-economic difficulties created by its hasty
implementation are strong incentives for both Korean régimes to opt for a more long-term
approach to the problem of national division.

(3) The German precedent also suggests that as long as two antagonistic ideologies
compete for influence within the divided nation, it is highly unlikely that an agreement on
unification can be reached. Only a fundamental régime change on at least one side of the divided
nation can remove these obstacles. Such a change depends, among other factors, on the intensity
of the interactive link between culture and ideology. Authoritarian Communist rule, as in North
Korea or East Germany, is easier to sustain in some cultural environments than in others. In a
cultural and linguistic setting that reinforces individualistic values, such as in Germany,
authoritarian rule is susceptible to anti-authoritarian challenges, if a number of other factors are
conducive to such an evolution. A logo-cultural tradition, such as in Korea, that conditions
people to perceive human interaction as hierarchically organized and guided by a legitimate ruler,
contributes to a greater acceptance not only of an individual’s or a group’s specific role in an
authoritarian society, but also of the overall existing societal order.

(4) The stability of an authoritarian régime cannot solely rest on its coercive capacities,
but is also dependent on a certain amount of popular consent. Since the formation of an
individual’s will is conditioned by the dominant societal opinion, a ruling group’s capacity to
control the realm of civil society is a crucial determinant for régime stability. If a régime, such
as that in North Korea, can seal off its population from outside information for an extended
period of time, it can gain relatively easily tacit popular support for its class-related interests,
achieve a substantial organic unity between ruler and ruled, and, consequently, minimize the
forces that could lead towards régime change. If a régime, such as that in East Germany, is unable to filter the inflow of ideologically hostile information, its ability to impose hegemonic consent is seriously undermined, leading towards increasing popular dissatisfaction, which eventually will pose a serious threat to régime stability.

The conclusions of this thesis suggest that the applicability of global theories for an assessment of regionally specific phenomena varies greatly, depending on the theory’s approach and the subject of its inquiry. Systemic and culturally sensitive theories have the potential to delineate the framework within which time and area specific evolutions take their course. Also, they can adequately illuminate certain regional issues, such as the impact of hegemonic control or institutional mediation. Yet, global theories are limited by linguistic restraints and, by the nature of their objective, are unable to assess a number of important aspects, among them the conditioning of political trends by cultural values and specific historical events. The shortcomings of global theories are particularly evident if they enter the micro level or profess to have discovered ahistoric and culturally neutral patterns that determine the interaction among individuals or states.

Thus, there is a need for at least two levels of analysis, global and regional, with the former including an epistemological and the latter an ontological component. Neither of these two levels can claim analytical priority or exclusive dominance over the interpretation of 'facts'. Global and regional focuses must complement each other in order to enhance their theoretical and analytical value. Most importantly, the two levels of analysis should not be considered as clearly delineated and mutually exclusive domains, for it is only a synthesis of the two that can provide a contextual and etiological understanding of seemingly idiosyncratic events.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>[Korean] Armistice Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of [West] Germany)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFC</td>
<td>Combined Forces Command (ROK-US)</td>
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<td>Comecon</td>
<td>Council for Mutual Economic Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian-Social Union of [West] Germany)</td>
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<td>DM</td>
<td>Deutsche Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPRK</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDR</td>
<td>German Democratic Republic (East Germany/DDR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDP</td>
<td>Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party of [West] Germany)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEER</td>
<td>Far Eastern Economic Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRG</td>
<td>Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany/BRD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC</td>
<td>Military Armistice Commission, Panmunjom, Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Defense Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NZZ</td>
<td>Neue Zürcher Zeitung</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROK</td>
<td>Republic of Korea (South Korea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED</td>
<td>Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of [East] Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social-Democratic Party of [West] Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stasi</td>
<td>Staatssicherheitsdienst ([East German] State Security Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC</td>
<td>United Nations Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist (Sovereign) Republics</td>
</tr>
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