

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE CONSTRUCTION OF GERMAN MIDDLE EAST
FOREIGN POLICY: AN EXPLANATION OF GERMANY'S
PRO-ISRAEL BIAS

by
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for the degree of Master of Arts
to the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration
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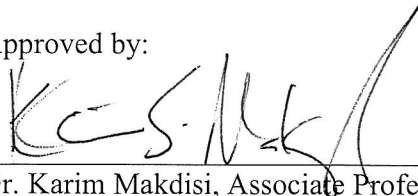
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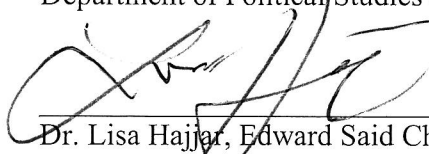
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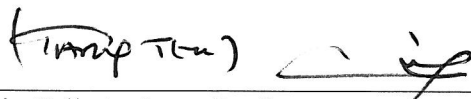
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Robert Wittkuhn for Master of Arts
Major: Political Studies

Title: The Construction of German Middle East foreign policy: An explanation of Germany's pro-Israel bias

This thesis explores the manifestation of pro-Israel bias in German foreign policy (FP) as well as contradictions between Germany's actual Middle East (ME) FP and German FP values.

The thesis applies social constructivist and historical institutionalist approaches. The latter allows the retracing of the historical development of Germany's FP since World War and even before. In doing so German FP values and principles can be identified as well as critical junctures, which significantly influence the formation of German values and the resulting German identity. In combination with social constructivism the state-society relations and their influence on German FP-making are highlighted.

The discourse analysis focuses on parliamentary debates, as the German parliament has the most important information function in the FP-making process. The cases studies are based on two debates each concerned with the Second Intifada in 2000 and 2002, as well as with the Lebanon War and its aftermath in September 2006. In doing so Germany's uniform FP approaches to weak states in form of state-building the global war on terror can be shown.

The study identified constitutionalism, institutionalism, anti-militarism, multilateralism and universalism as important principles of general German foreign policy. German FP values are based on the promotion of liberal democracy and free-market economy. However, German FP is also influenced by pragmatic, economics-driven aims.

The discourse analysis illuminates the pro-Israel bias in the parliamentary debates. They manifest themselves in the FP-making process through different forms of bias justification among the political elite, based on: a lack of knowledge about the ME region, the denial of existing knowledge about the region and the Arab-Israeli conflict, an uncritical perception of German/Western liberalism as universal and "good" liberalism as well as self-censorship due to a fear of delegitimization. The rationales behind the pro-Israel bias justification are opportunistic realpolitik interests, international obligations, and political elite pressure.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDU/CSU	– Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (both parties form one Bundestag faction; the CSU is from Bavaria, where the CDU is not existent)
EPC	– European Political Cooperation
EU	– European Union
FDP	– Free liberal Democratic Party
FP	– Foreign Policy
FRG	– Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	– German Democratic Republic
GLP	– Global liberal project
GWOT	– Global war on terror
ICC	– International Criminal Court
IO	– International organization
IR	– International Relations
ME	– Middle East
MENA	– Middle East and North Africa
MEPP	– Middle East Peace Process
NATO	– North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPT	– Occupied Palestinian territories
PA	– Palestinian Authority
PDS	– Party of Democratic Socialism (until 2007 also called “the Left party”, since 2007 called “the Left”)
SPD	– Social-democratic Party of Germany
The Greens	– Alliance 90/the Greens

- UNIFIL – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
- UNSCR – United Nations Security Council Resolution
- US – United States of America
- WWII – World War II

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Problem statement

1. Motivation

The motives for this thesis are apparent contradictions within German foreign policy (FP) towards the Middle East (ME). Such contradictions appear in various ways. For example, the actual FP on the ground is in conflict with Germany's main interests in the ME, which are all based on realizing long-term stability in the region. Such aims are the realization of concrete interests related to international trade, resource and energy supply, prevention of causes for terrorism and emigration to Europe and the strengthening and extension of the international law and rights regime. Furthermore, the actual German FP is characterized by a pro-Israel bias, which is in conflict with the values German FP is officially emphasizing and promoting. Such values can be basic principles, norms and institutions. Basic principles include international norms such as international treaties, customary international law, general principles of law (e.g. the UN Charter), and final acts of international conferences (e.g. human rights declarations).¹ In turn, such contradictions and violations are challenging and weakening values that are part of Germany's self/identity and which it represents, to influence international relations in a way that improves German citizens' welfare, based on improved global living conditions. In particular, Germany is not defending the

¹ Boekle, H., Rittberger, V., & Wagner, W. (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory. In: V. Rittberger, *German foreign policy since unification* (pp. 105-137). Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 124-5.

internationally recognized rights of the Palestinians. But at the same time it safeguards Israel from international prosecution for violating Palestinian rights. Such political stance towards Israel is not only tolerating but even supporting the infringement of Palestinian rights related to key issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, such as the Palestinian right of return, the status of Jerusalem, and settlements in the occupied Palestinians territories (OPT).

Moreover, questions are raised by the fact that Germany is using the same FP approaches to various conflict situations between Israel and its different neighbors, despite the different, unique contexts and challenges involved.

The following five examples illustrate cases of contradictions and pro-Israel bias in German Middle East FP. The first one is Chancellor Angela Merkel's declaration of anti-Zionism as illegitimate,² which, in the context of the expansionist Zionist policies of the Israeli state and the inherent expulsion of the Palestinians,³ is in

² Merkel, A. (2013, September 13). "Angela Merkel: The interview: 'We will never be neutral. Israel can be sure of our support'". *Jewish Voice from Germany*.

³ Israel has not fully defined its borders. Only the borders with Egypt and Jordan are recognized by Israel, Egypt and Jordan in peace agreements from 1979 and 1995, respectively. The 1995 peace agreement problematically defines the border between Jordan and the OPT as Israeli-Jordanian border. Furthermore, several Netanyahu administrations have expressed their intention to hold onto the Jordan River valley also in case of a realization of a two-state solution. In 1967 Israel annexed East Jerusalem. Israel publicly expressed the intention to, furthermore, annex some of the bigger settlement blocks in the OPT, which are mostly located in C-areas. Israel is, as internationally confirmed, occupying the Gaza Strip, which it besieges since 2007. Israel also seems to plan to exploit natural gas reservoirs, which are located on the Gaza side in the potential future border region between the Gaza Strip and Israel. The border with Lebanon is "internationally recognized, as contemplated by the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement of 23 March 1949", but Israel is still occupying Lebanese territory, including the Shebaa farms area (UN Security Council (2006, August 11). S/Res/1701). Also disputed is the naval border between the two countries, which is of increasing relevance due to newly found natural gas reservoirs in this area. The Israeli-Syrian border is internationally determined but Israel is at war with Syria and is occupying the Golan Heights. Furthermore, Israel is not recognizing sections of the Lebanese-Syrian border demarcation, which was determined by Lebanon and Syria.

contradiction with Germany's support of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) and the Palestinian right of self-determination.⁴ For example, UNSCR1402 reaffirmed UNSCRs 242, 338, 1397 and specifically demanded the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities.⁵ UNSCR 242 is "[e]mphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war . . . , [demands the] [w]ithdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the [1967 War] . . . [and a]ffirms the necessity . . . [f]or achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem".⁶ UNSCR 1397 is recalling UNSCR 242 and 338, is "[a]ffirming a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders", is "[s]tressing also the need to respect the universally accepted norms of international humanitarian law", and "[d]emands immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction".⁷ Merkel's statement is further weakened by the fact that anti-Zionism is not uncommon among left-wing Jews in- and outside of Israel, as well as among scholars focusing on the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁸

Additionally, the illegitimacy statement is problematic due to a recurrent confusion of the illegitimacy concept with the legality concept, which might happen intentionally and unintentionally. *Legality* describes what is based on, in accordance or concerned with the law. In comparison, *legitimacy* is not necessarily related to law. It can also be based on and be defended with logic, reason or justifications. These concepts are more flexible than law as they do not have to be based on written speech

⁴ Regarding the Second Intifada Chancellor Gerhard Schröder stated in parliament on 25 April 2002: "We appeal to the Israeli government to implement all resolutions of the Security Council" (Parliament Report 14/233, 23116B).

⁵ UN Security Council (2002, March 30). S/Res/1402.

⁶ UN Security Council (1967, November 22). S/Res/242. UNSCR 338 recalls the need to implement UNSCR 242 (UN Security Council (1973, August 15). S/Res/338).

⁷ UN Security Council (2002, March 12). S/Res/1397.

⁸ E.g.: Judith Butler, Norman Finkelstein, Ilan Pappé, Noam Chomsky etc.

acts and as they can be strongly influenced by varying moral and cultural values. As a result there can be significant differences between the meaning of (international) legality on one hand and contextualized legitimacy on the other. This offers space for justification of political statements or decisions to policymakers. Richard Falk, referring to the 1999 Kosovo War and the global war on terror (GWOT) after 9/11 speaks of “the recourse to legitimacy as a supplement to legality”.⁹ He states that there can be “political and moral pressures for adjustment with respect to legal restraints” as in the case of “the growing perception of a developing humanitarian emergency in Kosovo”.¹⁰ Merkel’s illegitimacy statement allows her to portray anti-Zionism as being almost illegal, and in turn as being close to Antisemitism.¹¹

A second example is Chancellor Merkel stating “Israel is still the only true democracy in the ME”,¹² despite the fact that Israel as an occupying force has denied Palestinians’ rights for more than six decades, and despite the existence of

⁹ Falk, R. (2005, December). Legality and Legitimacy: The Quest for Principled Flexibility and Restraint. *Review of International Studies*, 31 (Force and Legitimacy in World Politics), p. 34.

¹⁰ Falk (2005, December). Legality and Legitimacy, p. 36, 38. Falk further explains how the effectiveness of the intervention and the inherent conflicts between legal, political, and moral pressures made the Independent Commission on Kosovo distinguish between legality and legitimacy resulting in the assessment: “although formally illegal ... the intervention was nonetheless legitimate in the eyes of the international community” (Ibid, p. 39, 42).

¹¹ On the use of *Antisemitism* instead of *anti-Semitism* Shmuel Almog writes: „If you use the hyphenated form, you consider the words ‚Semitism‘, ‚Semite‘, ‚Semitic‘ as meaningful.“ But the Semites are not a race. “What unites them is a tradition, culture, history, destiny maybe, but not genetics. ... Antisemitism is a generic term which signifies a singular attitude to a particular group of people”. In: Almog, S. (1989, Summer). Company Logo: Anti-Semitism with a hyphen or Antisemitism. SICSA Report: Newsletter of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism.

¹² Merkel (2013, September 13). “Angela Merkel: The interview”.

approximately 50 discriminatory Israeli laws institutionalizing the (partial) exclusion of Arab Israelis from the Israeli rights and welfare system.¹³

A third example is Germany's repeated acknowledgment of the illegality of Israel's occupation of and settlements on the Palestinian territories. Despite that Germany promotes the preferred treatment of Israel as a European Union (EU) partner. Critically this includes research cooperation in the "security" sector as well as trade. But this "security" sector includes military/defense projects, which are significant parts of Israel's illegal warfare and occupation of the Palestinian territories.¹⁴ Furthermore, Germany is refusing to boycott Israeli export goods originating from settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT).¹⁵ Germany is only adhering to EU labeling rules for settlement products, as it is obliged by EU regulations. The resulting trade with Israeli settlements is supporting the sustainability of Israel's occupation system.¹⁶

A fourth example is Germany's promotion of an inclusive approach to the solution of the ME conflict. German FP-makers repeatedly emphasize the importance of including all actors in the region into a peace process.¹⁷ But despite that decision Germany supports the non-recognition of Hamas' democratic election victory in 2006 and the subsequent "West Bank first" strategy, as well as the categorization of the (military) wing of Hizbullah as terrorist organization. Regarding Hamas this strategy

¹³ Adalah. "Discriminatory Laws in Israel", Adalah: The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel.

¹⁴ Groth, A. (2012, May 25). "German aid to Israel's war machine is an invitation to abuse human rights", *Electronic Intifada*.

¹⁵ Regarding possible boycott measures Chancellor Schröder stated in parliament on 25 April 2002: "... we will decide no embargo or boycott measures against Israel, nor will we join such measures, and let alone imposing such ourselves" (Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23114D).

¹⁶ Lazaroff, T. (2014, February 25). Merkel: Boycott not an option, settlement labeling acceptable. *Jerusalem Post*.

¹⁷ E.g. Chancellor Merkel on 6 September 2006. Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4481C.

only increased the instability of Gaza and its dependence on international aid and a tunnel economy.¹⁸

A fifth example is Germany's participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), during which German soldiers are bound to impartiality towards the conflict parties Israel and Lebanon/Hizbullah. Yet German government representatives are describing Israel's security as Germany's *raison d'état*, and Chancellor Merkel is publicly stating that Germany cannot be neutral and does not want to be neutral regarding Israel.¹⁹ Similar to the problematic confusion of the concepts of legality and legitimacy, policymakers are using the terms neutrality and impartiality interchangeably, which can cause misunderstandings with political repercussions as well as it could be intentionally used to deceive the public. To be *neutral* means not supporting or helping either side in a conflict. *Impartiality* is the state of treating all parties to a conflict equally based on a set of standards, norms or laws. In the Arab-Israeli context these are international norms and agreements such as UNSCRs. In the case of UNIFIL Germany is obligated to treat the conflict parties, Israel and Lebanon/Hizbullah, equally based on UNSCR 1701.²⁰ In an extreme case the German Navy would have to stand idly by when Lebanon would defend itself by force against Israeli violations of Lebanese sea or air space by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Based on the German government statements German impartiality in UNIFIL conflict situations is at the least questionable.

¹⁸ Asseburg, M. (2010, March 25). Palestinians: "The isolation of Hamas has failed" [Palästinenser: "Die Isolation der Hamas ist gescheitert"]. *Rheinischer Merkur*.

¹⁹ German Bundestag (2006, September 20). Parliament Report 16/50, Berlin, pp. 4832; Merkel (2013, September 13). "Angela Merkel: The interview".

²⁰ UN Security Council (2006, August 11). S/Res/1701.

2. *German foreign policy*

a. German foreign policy between values and interests

German foreign policy (FP) is significantly influenced by Germany's history, in particular by World War II (WWII) and the Holocaust. Although some scholars speak of an inconsistent FP, which is evidenced by differing FP decisions regarding (military) interventions abroad, this thesis presupposes there is consistency in German FP. This assumption is based on the declaration of the German government, which describes its FP as "value-oriented" and "interest-led", as well as on the theory literature review of this thesis.²¹

From a policymaker's view, FP decisions seem to be the result of weighing values and interests against each other. For example, many German policymakers see Germany as a nation obliged to prevent war because of its responsibility for WWII. Furthermore, German FP is influenced by Germany's Cold War aim to regain its full sovereignty and autonomy vis-à-vis the international community and especially the WWII Allies.²² On the other hand, Germany is a country with an economy that is largely based on exports and foreign trade.²³ The stability and growth of this foundation of Germany's wealth and welfare system represents a significant component of Germany's national interest and is a determining factor in how Germany handles its international relations.

²¹ Federal Foreign Office [Auswärtiges Amt], 2013. "Germany's foreign policy parameters".

²² Von Bredow, W. (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany: An Introduction [Die Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Eine Einführung] (2nd ed.). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 107-33.

²³ Kausch, K. (2015, January). Enabling or evading? Germany in the Middle East. *FRIDE and Hivos Policy Brief*, 191, p. 1.

The weighing of FP values and interests takes place in debates among German political actors – for example in parliamentary debates –, and on both the domestic and the international levels. Starkly opposing positions within the German political spectrum are increasing the complexity of that process. For example, German society is significantly influenced by a socialized historical memory, meaning that also the younger generations without actual responsibility for Germany's WWII history seriously take on moral and political responsibility for the history of their state. Among the German public this widely translates into anti-militarism and pacifism. Parties representing such positions are the Green and especially the Left party. On the other hand, partly the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and also increasingly the Greens, but especially the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) support foreign military interventions as well as weapons and arms trade. Some German policymakers support the latter for pragmatic, economic reasons, which is also a reason for Germany's decades-long history of being one of the world's largest weapons and arms exporters. "The Merkel government loosened restrictions on arms exports at the height of the economic crisis [in the years from 2009 until 2012]".²⁴

Important in the analysis of German FP is an understanding of the large grey area between such conflicting aims. The related German debate about the definition of national interests is not a recent development. It has existed since the birth of democratic Germany after WWII. In part it resulted in a focus on global propagation of Western liberal democracy and the free-market economy. Accompanying these goals, German FP is also based on principles such as institutionalism, constitutionalism, multilateralism and universalism. These principles are linked to Germany's past and

²⁴ Kausch, (2015, January). Enabling or evading?, p. 3.

current aims of regaining sovereignty, preventing war and safeguarding human rights, freedom, equality and the rule of international law.

b. German Middle East foreign policy

In reality the described liberal FP approaches actually translate into less universal policies, which are more based on specific Western liberal worldviews. The related strategies contain righteous elements, which are based on a perception of German (and Western) values and FP as being (morally) “good” and superior.²⁵ When dealing with the conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region Germany and other Western states are mainly focusing on the weakness of the concerned states. Instead of analyzing the causes for this weakness the weakness itself is seen as the cause for the existing conflicts. Firstly, this represents an ignorance of the negative influence of Western colonial and Israeli policies on the region. Instead, mostly the Arab states are made responsible for their situations. As solution Germany is investing into state-building and in particular in the establishment of the rule of law and state monopolies over the use of force as well as the creation of liberal democracies and free-market economies. Secondly, Israel is even seen as essential for the development of the region as it is considered the initializing state for the promotion and dissemination of liberal, democratic values into the MENA region.

This approach is based on orientalist perceptions of Arab and Islamic cultures as well as on political elite philo-Zionism.²⁶ While the former is responsible for the

²⁵ German President Joachim Gauck describes Germany as a “good state”, in: Gauck, J. (2014, January 31). Speech by Federal President Joachim Gauck at the 50th Munich Security Conference: “Germany’s role in the world: Reflections on responsibility, norms and alliances”.

²⁶ The term “philo-Zionism” is used by Anne Kreft in her analysis of German FP continuity. Also confirming the influence of liberal values, she writes: “[FP continuity] is caused primarily by an elite level norm of philo-Zionism [...], although a constructivist

above-mentioned righteousness and the perceived superiority over the MENA region, the latter is the reason for pro-Israel bias in Germany's ME foreign policy. The political elite character of the support for Zionism and the pro-Israel bias is on one hand reflected by the growing difference between German public opinion and German government policy regarding Israel.²⁷ On the other hand it is shown by the unusual uniformity among the German political elite, which is in contrast to the above-described political, ideological differences among the German parties in the German parliament *Bundestag*.

c. German pro-Israel bias

The reasons for the pro-Israel bias in German FP are manifold. Of course the influence of Germany's accepted responsibility for the Holocaust plays a significant role. But Germany is not the only strong Western supporter of Israel, allowing the assumption of rationales transcending the German political sphere. Additionally, Germany has a long history of non-Jewish support for Zionism reaching before WWII and even before World War I.

In general, bias is defined as a "prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair".²⁸

The term *unfair* refers to the mentioned FP and its values, as it is defined as something

reading needs to also acknowledge rational liberal norm compliance". In: Kreft, A.-K. (2010). "The weight of history: Change and continuity in German Foreign Policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict". Western Washington University, p. iv.

²⁷ For public opinion polls: *Der Tagesspiegel*. (2003, November 05). Fear of Antisemitism: Critique of poll, in which Israel comes out as aggressor [Furcht for Antisemitismus: Kritik an Meinungsfrage, in der Israel als Aggressor dasteht]. *Der Tagesspiegel*; *Haaretz*. (2012, May 23). Poll: Majority of Germans think Israel is 'aggressive'. *Haaretz.com*; Hagemann, S., & Nathanson, R. (2015). Germany and Israel today: connecting past, dividing present? [Deutschland und Israel heute: Verbindende Vergangenheit, trennende Gegenwart?], p. 46.

²⁸ Stevenson, A., & C. A. Lindberg (eds.) (2010). *New Oxford American Dictionary (3 ed., online version)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

that is “not based on or behaving according to the principles of equality and justice”,²⁹ principles that are considered main tenants of German values. *Injustice* is a powerful concept in social relations and politics and linked to morality, which in turn can be a significant source of legitimacy. Another key characteristic of a bias is the involved *prejudice*. Prejudice is a “preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience”, or in other words, it is an idea or opinion “formed before having the evidence for its truth”.³⁰ Prejudice can be caused by the above-described righteousness, which is inherent in Western liberalism, as well as orientalism and the uncritical support of Zionism.

As explained in this thesis, German FP decision-makers seek to deny or justify their pro-Israel bias and the inherent contradictions also by emphasizing their support for liberal Zionism as opposed to right-wing Zionism. However, what Eva Illouz is describing about morality conflicts among Israeli liberal Jews then is also valid for Germany’s FP stance towards Israel. Illouz, in her Haaretz article “47 years a slave: A new perspective on the occupation” writes:

“... Israel makes an unacceptable demand: it requests from Jews loyalty to its policies, claims to have a moral and political status superior to that of its neighbors, yet consistently violates the human rights of Palestinians, Arabs, and liberal Judaism; uses violence; violates international law; and practices state-sanctioned discrimination toward non-Jews. For liberal Jews, Israel bullies like a Goliath, yet persists in wanting to be admired as a David”.³¹

Considering German FP support for liberal Zionism, the word *unacceptable* points to the potential resulting damage to German values and interests. In addition, such damage can cause instability of Germany’s identity. For example, the described

²⁹ Stevenson & Lindberg (eds.) (2010). *New Oxford American Dictionary*.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Illouz, E. (2014, February 7). 47 years a slave: A new perspective on the occupation. *Haaretz*.

the growing gap between public opinion and political elite discourse is increasingly endangering the legitimacy of the latter regarding Israel-related topics.

The above-described observations raise questions about the construction of German FP-making, which in the following sections will be summarized into the research question as well as the framework and the methodology of this thesis.

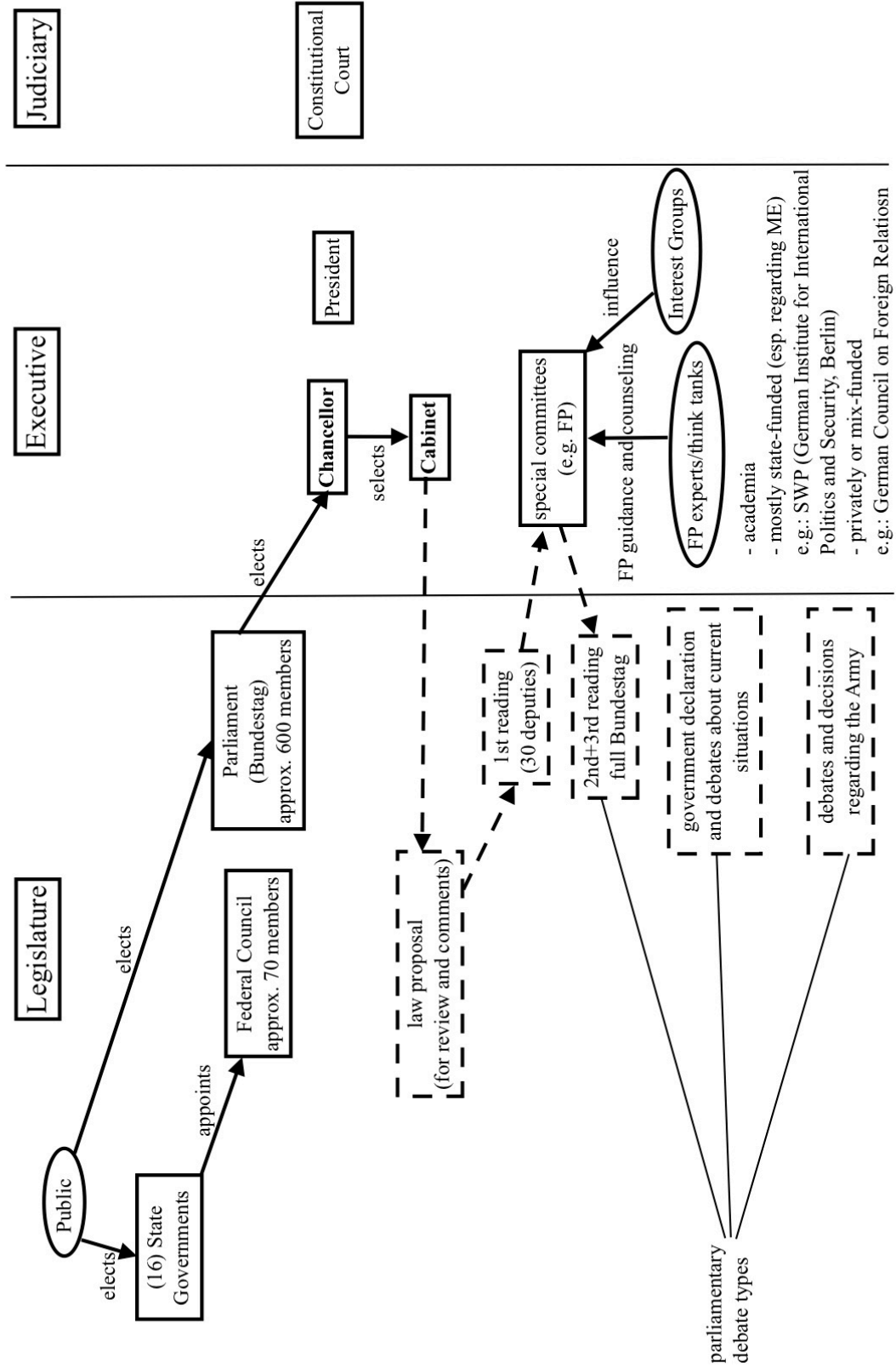
3. Research question

This thesis considers the endangering of German long-term interests and values as well as the destabilization of Germany's identity as unintentional result of German Middle East FP-making, enabled by a practiced justification of the responsible pro-Israel bias. Therefore this thesis will explore the underlying rationales of German policymakers. Hence the research question is, how this pro-Israel bias manifests itself in the construction of German FP, in particular during parliamentary debates concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Besides explaining the relevant justification rationales this thesis will also explore the mechanisms through which they are functioning and influencing the FP-making of Germany.

4. German foreign policy-making process

The German policy agenda is mostly set by the executive branch consisting of the Chancellery and the Cabinet, which is comprised of the ministers of all ministries. The Cabinet, which is making decisions consensually under the guidance of the Chancellor, is proposing new legislation. As shown in figure 1, the cabinet is sending proposals to the Federal Council for review and comments, and from there they reach the Bundestag for a first, small reading by 30 parliament deputies.

Figure 1. The German federal, legislative decision-making process.



They assign it to the appropriate, specialized committees. The structure of these committees is generally organized in the way the ministries are built. In the specialized committees most of the Bundestag work takes place. The committee members have an expertise in the respective political fields. They evaluate the proposals and consult FP experts and think tanks as well as interest groups. The latter seek to influence the states policy agenda especially in the committees, as this phase is the most influential in the policymaking process. The committees mostly work behind closed doors, allowing more frank discussions among the parliamentarians, experts and interest groups. The revised proposals then are sent back to the full Bundestag for second and third readings. Although the Cabinet is representing the majority of parliament, these debates have the most important information function in the policymaking process. It is there where parties present their views to the public and where the opposition can place objections in the public record.³² Furthermore, “the German parliament has greater autonomy than most parliamentary legislatures [as] the government frequently makes compromises and accepts amendments proposed in the legislature”.³³ The parliament can revise and amend all legislative proposals except bills related to spending or taxation. Jeffrey Martinson, in his study “Rediscovering Historical Memory: German Foreign Military Intervention Decision Making Through the Second Lebanon War” assesses the representative character of German parliamentary debates. Based on repeated findings by the German Constitutional Court Martinson states:

“[T]he German parliament has been enshrined as the most important center of German decision making ... based on the concept of ‘overall legal responsibility’ and a

³² Bingham Powell Jr., G., Dalton, R. J. & K. Strom (2012). *Comparative Politics Today: A World View* (10 ed.). Boston: Longman, Pearson, p. 280-1.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 283.

‘doctrine of essentials’ ... [as well as it] has been charged with regulating ‘all essential questions’ of governance and not leaving them to an administration”.³⁴

The Foreign Office plays a core role in the FP-making process, although with increasing globalization more ministries are becoming involved as well. The FP experts from outside the government and parliament, which also can consult the FP committees, likely work for some of the bigger state-financed think tanks and political institutions, such as the German Institute for International Politics and Security (SWP) in Berlin.³⁵ Besides discussing law proposals, the German Bundestag is furthermore debating current situations as well as decisions regarding the deployment of the German Army (*Bundeswehr*). The speakers in the debates are mostly representing the experts in the relevant fields, which are also involved in the committee work.

5. *Bias justification – rationales and mechanisms*

This thesis paper understands that German FP bias, which is based on injustice and FP contradictions, is not deployed intentionally or is seen as justified for reasons that are not necessarily legal, legitimate or moral. The responsibility of Nazi Germany for the Holocaust plays a significant role, as the German government continues to take on repeatedly and publicly the moral and political responsibility for it for seven decades. However, there are other factors besides the guilt for the Holocaust that direct Germany’s Middle East FP. The additional rationales seem to make possible a justification – even if only in the short-term – of the pro-Israel bias in the eyes of German FP decision-makers and the German political elite in general. This thesis

³⁴ Martinson, J. D. (2012). Rediscovering Historical Memory: German Foreign Military Intervention Decision Making Through the Second Lebanon War. *Foreign Policy Analysis* (8), p. 397.

³⁵ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, pp. 60-2.

considers the justification as working consciously and subconsciously, depending on the context as well as on the policymaker herself.

Three main rationales for pro-Israel bias justification are identified as result of this study: opportunistic realpolitik interests, international obligations, and political elite pressure. Examples for opportunistic realpolitik interests are the aims for synergy effects (including securing German jobs) from the defense cooperation with Israel related to technology and tactics. Furthermore, Germany constantly searches for a more diverse and predictable energy supply, which also could be realized in the future through the use of Israeli natural gas extracted from the Mediterranean. In general these interests represent short-term strategies, especially against the background of the German long-term aim for regional stability.

The second category is comprised of international obligations that contribute to the pro-Israel bias directly and indirectly linked to Germany's relationship with and dependence on the US. Such obligations result from agreements and alliances, such as NATO. Generally, the transatlantic partnership is of high importance for the US, Germany and the European Union (EU). Significantly, this partnership is understood as being founded not just on common interests but as a representation of a community of values (*Wertegemeinschaft*).³⁶ The concerned values are critical motives and foundations of the aim to liberalize and democratize the world accompanied by the establishment of a universal, capitalist free market – described in this thesis paper as a global liberal project (GLP) – as well as of the global war on terror (GWOT). Israel is

³⁶ Chancellor Merkel on 20 September 2006: “German foreign and security policy since 1949 has never been neutral. It was and stays value-based. Adherence to values is the opposite of neutrality. This is why we have been committing ourselves for decades to the European Union. This is why we commit ourselves to NATO. This is why we want a strong UN” (Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4832A).

critically interlinked with this *Wertegemeinschaft*, not just because it perceives and portrays itself as a part of it, but also because North America and Europe see it as such too. Critically for the following analysis are the components of the belief in representing (morally) “good” values, the perceived fear and insecurity as well as direct and indirect US pressure to participate in the GLP and the GWOT.

The third category of rationales and causes for being biased is pressure among the German political elite. It results from a fear of being delegitimized by political colleagues in case of expressing real critique of Israeli policies and actions. Often such delegitimization attempts are characterized by indirectly or even directly accusations of being Antisemitic. This threat translates either into silence about illegal actions and injustice or into philo-Zionism. The latter is in particular characterized by support for liberal Zionism, which shows parallels to Western liberalism in regards to the inherent contradictions. On the other hand right-wing Zionism is used as scapegoat for undeniable crimes and illegal actions by Israel. Only the first motive category is considered to function solely consciously. The latter two work through conscious and subconscious mechanisms.

Based on the discourse analysis this thesis identifies four types of mechanisms of pro-Israel bias justification, which can work in interdependent ways. Firstly, there is a lack of knowledge about the region, which translates into false conclusions from observed situations, such as the perception of effects related to state-weakness or terrorism as causes of the problems of the region instead of as indicators of the problems. Secondly, the parliamentary debates show a significant denial of existing knowledge about the region and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The political elite actively prevents the acknowledgement of known illegal Israeli actions and policies. Thirdly and

similar to the support of liberal Zionism, some bias justifications are consequences from the uncritical perception of German/Western liberalism as universal and “good” liberalism. Lastly, the debates show self-censorship due to the fear of delegitimization as well as clear and stark threats of delegitimization against (potential) Israel-critics.

B. Framework

The chosen theory will take into consideration the influence and role of historical, social, domestic and international components of foreign policy-making and international relations (IR). To do so, it adopts a framework that combines historical sociological and social constructivist approaches. The latter are based on Alexander Wendt’s understanding that socially and intersubjectively constructed structures are shaping states’ identities and interests. In turn, states are seen as aiming for stable identities to achieve security. Berenskoetter and Giegerich describe this as a will to manifest identity and to generate and maintain a stable sense of Self. As result, a state, instead of being motivated by its material interests, is considered as focusing on its Self.

Wendt, Berenskoetter and Giegerich, as well as by Kratochwil and Onuf understand the core elements of the social structures as norms, rules and values. But the scholars differ in their assumptions of the political character of norms and rules. This thesis is considering norms, rules and institutions as political. This is important for the analysis of Western liberalism, which is based on the assumption that they can be a political. As further shown in this thesis’ discourse analysis, this view is responsible for the Western perception of Western values and Western state-building as universally aspired concepts.

Also based on the assumption of the political character of rules and norms is the historical institutionalist approach of this thesis, which differs from the approaches

of Wendt as well as Berenskoetter and Giegerich because it is not state-centrist. Especially Barnett highlights historical sociology's detailed knowledge of society-state relations and its greater acknowledgment of the influence of time. The inherent understanding of socialization processes between society and state offer an insight in the construction of Germany's identity and the influence of the domestic population on FP-making. It also enables the recognition of potential instability caused by a continuously growing gap between German public opinion towards Israel and German Middle East foreign policy.

Additionally to Barnett's historical sociologist elements this thesis is also applying historical institutionalist theory, as described by Dannreuther. In doing so the development and influence of state-society relations and the related development of Germany's identity can be retraced over time. Historical institutionalism's acknowledgement of the path dependent development of social structures and institutions allows the identification the critical junctures in the development of German values and interests.

Furthermore, Martinson's approach is serving as a guideline as his study is similar to the analysis of the topic of this thesis, focusing on the German FP-making process, regarding similar or same events and time frames, as well as on the motives of policymakers. In his study, Martinson focuses on parliamentary debates as a platform for problem representation and "option generation", which happens prior to the issue of "option selection".³⁷ He describes different apparent and competing ontologies – representing various interests, values and principles – in the German FP decision-

³⁷ Martinson, J. D. (2012). Rediscovering Historical Memory: German Foreign Military Intervention Decision Making Through the Second Lebanon War. *Foreign Policy Analysis* (8), p. 389, 397.

making process. Identifying the components of ontologies frequently mentioned by decision-makers he is listing four “ideal-type ontology indicators” including: realism, historicism, institutionalism and universalism.³⁸ Additionally, he describes a culture of antimilitarism, respect for institutions and particularly, socialized historical memory.³⁹ These results reflect the assumed components of this thesis, which further justifies the discourse analysis of parliamentary debates.

Martinson’s conclusion that social factors have to be considered in the decision-making process confirms the approach of analyzing conscious and subconscious mechanism involved in the justification of the pro-Israel bias.⁴⁰ Martinson probably was (indirectly) aware of them, describing a so-called “public-private dilemma” of parliament speakers. But, Martinson explicitly leaves out an analysis of the pressures on the political psychology of public speakers, as he is not asking “*why* decision makers profess a particular ontology with some regularity, but *whether*”.⁴¹ In this regard he quotes Sylvan and Pevehouse:

“[T]o the degree that an official frames a tradeoff in one way for public consumption and another in her innermost thoughts, it probably means that the leader in question feels constrained by domestic or international opinion or pressure to articulate the choice in a certain manner. It is that manner—the sum of the views and constraints—that constitutes the particular ontology”.⁴²

In an attempt to also illuminate the *why* this thesis will apply Stanley Cohen’s theory about official state denial to the discourse analysis of the parliamentary debates.

In summary, this thesis will retrace the historical development of German FP, thereby identifying Germany’s FP values, principles and interests, as well as the critical

³⁸ Martinson (2012). *Rediscovering Historical Memory*, p. 396.

³⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 391-2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 389.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 397.

⁴² *Ibid*.

junctures that were involved in the development. It will then apply the gained knowledge in the discourse analysis of the parliamentary debates to identify contradiction and pro-Israel bias in German FP as well as the mechanisms through which they are justified.

C. Methodology

The pro-Israel bias and the contradictions in German Middle East FP become obvious when German administration officials and parliamentarians are debating Israeli policies and actions, as well as during FP decision-making, which influences future Israeli policies regarding the occupation of Palestinian territories or relations to Israel's neighboring states. Using the methodological approach of analyzing the discourse in German parliamentary debates, this thesis examines how these contradictions are manifesting themselves during the policymaking process. This is the case in parliamentary debates, which are concerned with at the time current conflict situations involving Israel, in debates occupied with decision about the use of the *Bundeswehr* in the Middle East as well as during debates over law proposals, which are related to Middle East issues. The aim of the discourse analysis in this thesis is to examine the way parliamentarians describe the conflict situations and how this framing takes place during the dialogue between different political positions. In particular it is of interest how these situations are framed and how the descriptions are linked with the above-described German FP interests and values as well as with the German Western liberal and philo-Zionist worldviews. Through the discourse analysis this thesis investigates how the contradictions are disappear during the process as well as how the pro-Israel bias is directly and indirectly justified.

Furthermore, parliamentary debates are chosen as they involve decision makers representing the German political elite, which is of primary concern, and also in part due to the mentioned phenomenon of philo-Zionism. The analyzed quotes are chosen based on the role and position of the speakers within the FP decision-making process. Almost all of them are representing the Middle East FP experts of their respective parties and/or have key roles in the specialized FP committees of the executive branch.⁴³

The Second Intifada and the 2006 Lebanon War are chosen as representative events in the fourth and in the fifth chapter, respectively. This is due to the proximity in time between them as well as due to similarities in Germany's view of Lebanon and the OPT and the resulting approaches to them. Firstly this is the case because Lebanon and the OPT are "neighbors" of Israel, and secondly because Germany's approaches to the solution of the conflicts fit the suggested concepts of Western liberal state-building. Lebanon and the OPT are seen as weak "states" and Hizbullah and Hamas being (factional) terrorist groups. Due to the theoretical approach the discourse analysis will be complemented by a historical-sociological explanation of the development of German FP towards the Middle East.

D. Chapter outline

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first one will state the identified problem and the resulting research question, and will explain the applied framework and methodology.

The theory literature review in chapter two explores challenges in analyzing FP-making and the differences and convergence with the field of IR. The theory section

⁴³ See Appendix.

will summarize the characteristics of realism and liberalism including their unsatisfying usability for the analysis of German FP-making, which yet can help explain the motives for German FP. By means of explaining different views of constructivism the historical institutionalist approach to analyzing German FP-making, which is applied in this thesis, will be derived. Furthermore, a focus on theoretical understandings of constructivism's key elements of norms and rules will highlight the origin of this thesis' argument that Western liberalism is at the least not as universal as propagated by Germany, and Western states in general. Using explanations and critique of constructivism from a deconstructivist angle will additionally support this view.

Based on the chosen historical institutionalist approach the third chapter will explore the historical development of Germany's FP values and principles up until the time of the case studies in the first years of this century. The division of the subchapters is orientated on the critical junctures identified in the same chapter. The analysis will allow retracing the construction of Germany's pro-Israel bias.

The fourth and the fifth chapter contain the case studies regarding the Second Intifada and the 2006 Lebanon. They are conducted as a discourse analysis based on two parliamentary debates each, which took place in the German Bundestag in October 2000, in April 2002 and twice in September 2006. The two chapters will: demonstrate the influence of the values and principles analyzed in chapter two; show the appearance and impact of pro-Israel bias during present day German FP-making; and provide an analysis of the rationales and mechanisms based on which and through which the bias is attempted to be justified by the policymakers in parliament.

The sixth chapter will summarize the findings of the discourse analysis, by firstly describing and contextualizing the present day German FP values and interests.

Secondly it will explain the observed rationales for parliamentarians' justification of their pro-Israel bias. As this justification is happening often indirectly and/or subconsciously, it lastly will illuminate the mechanisms through which it is functioning.

Chapter II

THEORY

This thesis will combine three sets of theoretical approaches. It will begin with an illustration of the lack of realist and liberal theories in explaining German foreign policy-making. Despite the highlighted flaws this enables an understanding of the worldviews and strategies of German foreign policy decision-makers. In particular this analysis highlights the translation of the German perception of Western values as well as state-building and global war on terror approaches as universal, apolitical and (morally) good. The second part of the theory chapter explains the importance of the understanding of German FP-making for the analysis of Germany's conduct of its international relations. This is important as state-society relations are significantly influencing the development of Germany's guiding values and principles and in particular the construction and the components of Germany's identity. The last part is concerned with a summarizing comparison of various constructivist approaches as well as with an explanation of the chosen historical institutionalist theoretical approach. Despite the application of a non-state centric form of social constructivism, which considers foundational norms and values as political, the theory section will also explain the reasoning behind state-centric approaches, which assume rules and norms as apolitical. Similar to the realism and liberalism analysis, this will further highlight the reasons why German liberalism is not universal but specifically Western and even righteous and superior. The combination of social constructivism and historical institutionalism is providing the framework for the historical retracing of the development of German FP and its inherent foundational values and principles as well

as of the development of Germany's FP identity and the reasons for the path dependent and norm-consistent character of it.

A. Realism and liberalism

Until the end of the Cold War, IR and FP-making were mostly represented by a debate between (neo-)realism and (neo-)liberalism. Both schools consider the state's aim for security as the foundational driver in IR and FP-making. The two approaches are rationalist and functionalist.⁴⁴ But the way in which both schools understand the character of IR, as well as states' available tools for achieving security, differ.

Realist and liberal theory understand concepts like power and security in material terms and consider FP-making and IR as motivated by aims for material gains.⁴⁵ In realism, states are seen as striving for relative power gains with the main goal of securing state survival. Insecurity emanates from the perceived possibility of appearing threats and a resulting distrust among states.

Liberalism acknowledges that international relations are not anymore simply a matter of interstate relations.⁴⁶ Instead with relative power increase, liberalism considers states as satisfied with absolute gains. Less skeptical than the realist school, liberal approaches see the probability, instead of the possibility, of threats as source of insecurity and distrust among states. As part of this view, international institutions and

⁴⁴ Dannreuther, R. (2011). Understanding the Middle East Peace Process: A historical institutionalist approach. *European Journal of International Relations*, 17 (2), p. 190.

⁴⁵ Like Michael Barnett, the scholars Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner describe this as "the concept of utility-maximizing *homo oeconomicus* which is at the core of neorealist and utilitarian-liberal analysis of foreign policy". In: Barnett, M. (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism: an estranged past, a federated future?* In S. Hobden, & J. M. Hobson (Eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (pp. 99-119). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., p.100; and in: Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). *Constructivist foreign policy theory*, pp. 106.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 27.

non-state actors can enable the building and growth of trust between states, because they comprise or create international rules with rights and obligations. The motivational common benefits of respecting such institutions are potential long-term gains in security and prosperity.⁴⁷ Concerning state-internal processes Dannreuther writes that unlike (neo-)realism, (neo-) liberalism recognizes the influence of domestic factors and understands domestic politics as determining the FP of a state.⁴⁸

Despite its state-centrism, realism also recognizes a role for international institutions, though limited in importance. International institutions are considered as just another platform where states perform power politics and reflect the power (im-) balance between states. In the realist approach, institutions yield no capacity to promote trust between states based on common principles or rules, as they have neither the authority to enforce rules nor the capacity to punish those who violate them. The reason is the power of states that protect their autonomy over their own decision-making process, especially concerning foreign relations and defense policy. States are seen as using institutions for short-term gains while reserving the ability to abandon an institution at their discretion.⁴⁹

Paul Noble describes adaptation attempts in the rationalist and functionalist approaches that seek to explain the global south and the Arab world under the influence of globalization. Their main characteristic is the division of the world in two zones. The “core” encompasses the developed world including major powers, and is stable and

⁴⁷ Wendt, A. (2002). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 77-8.

⁴⁸ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*, p. 188.

⁴⁹ Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics. *International Organization*, 46 (2), pp. 391-425; Wendt, A. (1995, Summer). Constructing International Politics. *International Security*, 20 (1), pp. 71-81; Wendt, A. (2003). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 3, 34.

peaceful. The “periphery” consists of the developing states and is turbulent and conflict ridden. Noble summarizes realism, liberalism/institutionalism, as well as a “weak state-fragmented society model” and “economic underdevelopment/dependency approaches”, and their analyses of the causes for security concerns between states.⁵⁰ The latter two approaches are rationalist and functionalist, too, but they are not limiting causes of insecurity strictly to threats based on aims for material gains and hard power. Instead these approaches describe sources of insecurity related to economic weakness and domestic disunity and strife.

The realist model, the liberalism/institutionalism model and the weak state-fragmented society model appear to represent Western views of and approach to the ME. These approaches depict many components of the Western *Weltanschauung* and can explain the logic behind the global liberal project and the global war on terror. They are characterized by a lack of consideration of social components.

The realist model situates power imbalances at the forefront for interpreting causes of instability in the Middle East. As main source of insecurity in developing regions more generally, it describes the “pronounced imbalance of power”, “widespread and often acute differences over distributional issues concerning territory, people, resources, power, and influence”, as well as a “lack of ... checks and balances of great power competition and a balanced diffusion of nuclear weapons”. Noble assesses, that based on “persistent revisionism, arms buildups, and coercive pressure” the Middle East regional system (MERS) is typical for “realist-style territorial/existential, power-political, and military-security concerns”.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Noble, P. In: Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, pp. 67-9

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 68.

The liberal/institutionalist model focuses primarily on economic factors, due to an increasingly globalized and transnational world economy. It asserts that missing or weak structures in the developing world is the main reason for its instability. For it to be able to prosper, liberal democratic structures are needed, which could be supported and facilitated by strong international institutions. Referring to the liberal approach, through economic development, economic/political liberalization, growing regional economic interdependence and increasing linkage to the global economic system, “realist-style problems” could be reduced.⁵²

The weak state-fragmented society model understands, similar to the liberal school, the weakness of state structures, but also the fragmentation of societies, as main reasons for the instability of the conflict-prone developing world. “Th[e] model emphasizes that developing societies are characterized by deep vertical (communal), horizontal (class), and ideological cleavages as well as by institutions and regimes lacking legitimacy and capacity”.⁵³ Furthermore, resulting internal conflict and instability are not just preventing the development of a state, but they can also challenge its national cohesion and territorial integrity, as well as spread across borders and even threaten the development of a whole region.

Based on these views, especially concerning the global south, and the Middle East regional system (MERS) in particular, Korany and Dessouki affirm that realism and neo-realism seem are “at first glance” relevant.⁵⁴ However, the scholars do criticize realism’s lack of acknowledgement of state-internal factors (“black box” approach) and they highlight challenges due to globalization. Despite the shown unsuitability of realist

⁵² Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, pp. 68-9.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 22.

and liberal theory for explaining FP-behavior and the conduct of international relations, these approaches are significant for this thesis. They can partially explain the mindset of German FP-makers and help by retracing the origins of the contradictions in the resulting German FP. For example, German FP is based on the framing of the Middle East as a region consisting of weak states and entities, which need to be stabilized to prevent them becoming fertile grounds for conflicts and terrorism. As explained in the model above, Germany is considering institution building as foundation for economic development and the strengthening of state structures. But instead of analyzing the reasons for the weakness or the fragmentation of societies German FP-makers are considering these characteristics as typical for the region. This in turn justifies German and Western interventionist policies.

B. Foreign Policy and International Relations

For the analysis of Germany's FP towards the Middle East and for a better understanding of its international behavior with its constraints and obligations, it is necessary to look at the process of its FP-making and at its international relations (IR). Korany and Dessouki assess confusion between FP and IR approaches.⁵⁵ In their opinion, too often "emphasis was placed on the general international relations of a country or region rather than its foreign policy proper".⁵⁶ As a main reason they name apparent similarities between state-centric realism in IR and the general focus of FP analysis on the state as the research unit.⁵⁷ The constructivist scholars Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner speak about a flawed separation between a transnational and a

⁵⁵ Korany, B., & Dessouki, A. E. (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Globalization*. The American University in Cairo Press, p. 22.

⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 1-3.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 22.

societal strand in (constructivist) studies of FP behavior.⁵⁸

FP analysis emanates from the major macro field IR. Korany and Dessouki label the two most influential schools of the FP analysis debate “the external-systemic and the psychological-idiosyncratic”.⁵⁹ The external-systemic school is represented by realism, which is predominant in mainstream FP analysis and IR generally. However, due what they see as the “serious conceptual and empirical defects” of realism, Korany and Dessouki consider an individual-based psychological school approach, in which state and national interest are seen as better represented by decision -makers and - leaders.⁶⁰ This approach, they posit, leads to the questioning of the realist assumption that the perceived reality is the singular, true reality that provides inputs into FP-making: “Decision makers act in accordance with their perception of reality, not in response to reality itself”.⁶¹ However, Korany and Dessouki rightly criticize this idiosyncratic approach as it excludes the real, operational environment, represented by the state structure. Indeed, Korany and Dessouki criticize both approaches’ disregard of influential determinants of foreign policy such as the politic, economic or social, whether inside and/or outside the state.⁶²

Korany and Dessouki instead put forward an approach based on a combined political economy and historical sociology perspective.⁶³ That historicizes FP and its decision-making process and locates it at the intersection of domestic and global

⁵⁸ Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory, pp. 105-6.

⁵⁹ Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 22.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 23.

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 11-12.

⁶² Ibid, p. 26.

⁶³ Ibid.

politics.⁶⁴ The ability to analyze foreign policy output, in turn, enables the understanding of states' international behavior. It understands FP as a role in which "opportunities and constraints, rights and duties, are inseparable properties of the actor's position, and capabilities".⁶⁵ Korany and Dessouki consider following inputs as influential in producing outputs/outcomes: domestic environment (such as: geography, population and social structure, economic and military capability and political structure); foreign policy orientation and behavior and the decision-making process.⁶⁶

For Korany and Dessouki, FP analysis should not only describe observable behavior, but also "interpret, explain, or decode the foreign policy mindset and vision or *Weltanschauung*" to accurately analyze foreign policy.⁶⁷ As a consequence foreign policy output is represented as two-dimensional role game on the world stage.⁶⁸ The first role consists of the actor's general objectives, orientation, or strategy ("role conception"), and incorporates specific foreign policy behavior ("role performance" or "role enactment").⁶⁹ This approach allows Korany and Dessouki to identify and analyze the gap between "role conception" and "role performance", in other words the gap between "saying" and "doing".⁷⁰ Although Korany and Dessouki developed their approach based on the Arab states, this thesis extends it to the case of Germany to help explain the gap and contradiction between saying and doing in German FP with respect to its pro-Israel bias.

⁶⁴ Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 26.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 27, 29.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 29.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 27.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 28.

Moreover this thesis also uses Korany and Dessouki's approach in analyzing not just the state unit but also state-society relations, individual motives and worldviews of policymakers, and the interest-related government location in between a domestic and an international level. Furthermore the scholars highlight the importance of acknowledging the historical context of FP-making.

C. Constructivism

Korany and Dessouki's suggested "political economy/historical sociology perspective" shows various similarities to constructivism. In the case of Germany FP, the literature acknowledges social, cultural, and historical factors as influential parameters.⁷¹ These are reasons for paying attention to (social) constructivism, which "since the early 1990s . . . has emerged as the major challenger of rationalist (i.e. both neorealist and utilitarian liberal) theorizing in International Relations".⁷² Constructivism is an IR approach that questions rationalist assumptions, analyzes produced meanings and acknowledges the influence of social structures and contexts on FP and IR. Since different political actors draw on particular (unique) social contexts, their perceived realities to the same "facts" also differ. The resulting decision-making process can be seen as a reason for instability and conflict because it can cause misunderstandings and distrust.

⁷¹ Rittberger, V., & Wagner, W. (2001). German foreign policy since unification: theories meet reality. In V. Rittberger, *German foreign policy since unification* (pp. 299-326). Manchester: Manchester University Press; Martinson (2012). Rediscovering Historical Memory; Berenskoetter, F., & Giegerich, B. (2010). From NATO to ESDP: A Social Constructivist Analysis of German Strategic Adjustment after the End of the Cold War. *Security Studies*, 19 (3), pp. 407-452.

⁷² Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory, p. 105; Dannreuther (2011). Understanding the Middle East Peace Process, p. 190.

Constructivist theory seeks to understand the existing reality that defines the inputs of foreign policymaking in a rational and material way. Social structures that are assumed as having an objective existence, bring these inputs in a context through which they derive their meaning. Constructivists see the ontological approach of taking material factors as point of origin in the FP decision-making process as the foundation of scientific analysis.⁷³ In this view, the real, material world provides the reference points that are needed for truly scientific reasoning.⁷⁴ Maja Zehfuss quotes Emanuel Adler, describing constructivism as “the view that *the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world*” (emphasis Zehfuss’).⁷⁵ The formulation “shapes and is shaped” expresses that this construction is, as Nicholas Onuf summarizes it, an “ongoing” process.⁷⁶

Zehfuss, in her critique of constructivism, focuses on the analyses of Alexander Wendt, Friedrich Kratochwil and Nicholas Onuf on post-Cold war German FP and the development towards using military components in international politics in particular.⁷⁷ This section is a synthesis of her analysis with the work of Berenskoetter and Giegerich,⁷⁸ Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner,⁷⁹ and Dannreuther,⁸⁰ who also focus on post-Cold War German FP, or, in the latter case, on the European and German role in

⁷³ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 103.

⁷⁴ Wendt (1995, Summer). *Constructing International Politics*, p. 75.

⁷⁵ Zehfuss quoted Emanuel Adler, „Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics“, *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (1997), In: Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 322.

⁷⁶ Onuf In: Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 20.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁷⁸ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). *From NATO to ESDP*.

⁷⁹ Rittberger & Wagner (2001). *German foreign policy since unification*.

⁸⁰ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*.

the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). The following sections focus on the role of and approaches to the concepts of identity, norms and rules in constructivist theory that are important for this thesis.

1. Identity

Alexander Wendt describes his approach to constructivism as an alternative to rationalist (neo-)realism and (neo-)liberalism.⁸¹ Despite this critique of realism, Wendt shares many core realist assumptions such as the idea that international politics is anarchic and that states should be the unit of IR analysis. Wendt moves away from realism by emphasizing the necessity to recognize and analyze how the material meaning and understanding of structures in international politics is socially constructed and how these structures “shape actors’ identities and interests, rather than just their behavior (a claim that opposes rationalism)”.⁸² According to him, social structures have three elements: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices.⁸³ The socially constructed context is described as an actor’s identity that results from interaction with other actors hence Wendt’s focus on shared knowledge and practices. Zehfuss describes shared knowledge and practices as “intersubjectivity”. In other words, interaction constructs meaning, and meaning informs action. Foreign policy decisions are an example of such action.⁸⁴ As a consequence, to influence and change FP and IR, identities have to be changed, and for Wendt this translates into state identity.

⁸¹ Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it, pp. 391-2; Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 38.

⁸² Wendt (1995, Summer). Constructing International Politics, pp. 71-2.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 73.

⁸⁴ Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 39.

Like Wendt, Berenskoetter and Giegerich use a state-centric constructivist approach, focusing on the national identity of Germany,⁸⁵ to understand why Germany invested in the European Union's Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), a "potential competitor" to NATO.⁸⁶ They offer a constructivist explanation based on the concepts of friendship, estrangement, and emancipation" in interstate relations.⁸⁷ The basis of their argument is the state's foundational aim for security. Quoting Peter Katzenstein, Berenskoetter and Giegerich write: "security interests are defined by actors who respond to cultural factors".⁸⁸ These cultural factors are seen as parameters of national identity. The main motivation of the state is considered as a "will-to-manifest-identity", meaning to "generate and maintain a stable sense of Self", because an unchallenged identity is seen as providing a sense of security, described as "ontological security".⁸⁹ As a result, the state, instead of being motivated by its material interests, is considered as focusing on its Self. Based on a definition of institutions as having no agency, Berenskoetter und Giegerich focus on the way actors use institutions rather than how these institutions work.⁹⁰ States establish and protect institutions because they "provide cognitive and emotional stability", and therewith ontological security.⁹¹

In Berenskoetter and Giegerich's constructivist approach, meaning and stability are "given by an idea of order made up of basic principles – norms and values – manifesting what is deemed normal or good behavior".⁹² In other words, norms and

⁸⁵ Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 418, footnote #40.

⁸⁶ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). *From NATO to ESDP*, p. 407.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 407.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 418.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 423.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 418.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 420.

values define FP interests. Basic principles “are affirmed through corresponding practices”, which, when repeated, “give meaning to the past and allow for an orientation toward the future by anchoring those basic principles in pertinent lessons and desirable visions”.⁹³ The idea of order in turn defines what practices are considered appropriate. Policymakers seek to decide appropriate practices/policies assuming that their counterpart is likely to accept them. Policymaker behavior is then considered appropriate, meaning “normal or good”, when the “society [the counterpart of the policymaker] judges policies acceptable” in the light of existing basic principles.⁹⁴

The Self of the state is influenced on the domestic as well as on the international level, representing a “two-level discourse”.⁹⁵ Domestically, national identity reflects the diversity of society in the form of disagreements about what basic principles are, and how they should be understood and interpreted in different contexts. These disagreements are represented in debates, for example in the parliament. The government then represents the resulting national identity internationally when interacting with other state actors. On the international level a shared sense of international order can be achieved by negotiations among state actors.⁹⁶ In particular, Berenskoetter and Giegerich, by referring to Wendt, Hall and Katzenstein, understand the relation between actors as a relation between a state and the *other*, assuming three possible types: “the enemy, the rival and the friend”.⁹⁷ Among friends a government is aiming at international stability and order by debating common behavior with other

⁹³ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 420.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 422.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 410.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 421; Wendt (2003). Social theory of international politics, p. 43.

actors.⁹⁸ As Berenskoetter and Giegerich apply the friendship concept to German-US relations, which are similar to German-Israeli relations, the following paragraphs only describe estrangement and emancipation, which represent sub-concepts of the scholars' friendship concept.

Estrangement is “a process of deep and enduring dissonance about ideas of order among friendly states”.⁹⁹ The longer such situation prevails, the more likely it is that a state perceives ontological *insecurity*. This in turn leaves the state with two options of either to adapting to the conditions or to emancipate out of the former interstate relation. The aim for stability and security has an internal/domestic as well as an external/international component. The state can either try to convince the other international actors or the domestic society to accept modifications of the respective common understandings of basic principles. Berenskoetter and Giegerich call this “adaptation”.¹⁰⁰ Failing this, the state will seek to achieve stability by focusing on an alternative platform to negotiate shared principles, described as “emancipation”. Berenskoetter and Giegerich emphasize that “an authentic sense of Self requires coherence in states' narratives”.¹⁰¹ According to these authors, emancipation is a gradual process, which is different from path dependency's critical junctures.

This thesis recognizes potential weaknesses in Berenskoetter and Giegerich's social constructivist approach to identity. The first is the view of international partners as friends, as it assumes that they “regard each other as equals and expect to be treated as such”.¹⁰² The second is their assumption that institutions are more effective the closer

⁹⁸ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 422.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 424.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 425.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 426.

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 422.

the friendship is between states. The third is the flawed belief that since institutions are not socializing agents, it is then difficult to explain why states reduce investment in institutions despite supposedly increasing trust over time. The fourth weakness is the argument of the “little analytical leverage [of the ‘standard constructivist frame’] for explaining German investment in CFSP/ESDP”.¹⁰³ This argument states that an identity cannot be stable over a long time when it invests parallel in two institutions seems to be a consequence of the state-centrism of Berenskoetter and Giegerich’s approach. Barnett, by quoting John Agnew, explains this with the term “territorial trap”.¹⁰⁴ He states that state-centric constructivists “have a difficult time conceptualising space as anything but territorial, or seeing how actors are nested in different organisational arrangements that generate different patterns of interactions within and across these spaces”.¹⁰⁵

2. (A)political norms and rules

A second core construct such as Kratochwil norms enables human association because they make communication possible. Norms and intersubjectivity are naturally linked, because norms are seen as a language that enables the sharing of meanings and values. Kratochwil considers norms as representing common understandings that are able to give legal and constitutional form to practices,¹⁰⁶ and as such can be understood as normative and as sources of legitimacy. Decisions based on common understandings, in turn, can be seen as rational, logical and appearing *morally* right. Applied to politics, Kratochwil describes a debate as a judgment over the *right* course of action in a

¹⁰³ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, pp. 423-4.

¹⁰⁴ Barnett (2002). Historical Sociology and constructivism, p. 116.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, pp. 149-50.

situation with concrete circumstances. The critical judgment, aiming at doing justice, takes place within a rule structure that in turn enables the fitting together of abstract norms and concrete circumstances. He considers politics as being human, and “political association ... [as] based on common notions of the good and the just”.¹⁰⁷

Critically, “Kratochwil does not conceptualize norms themselves and their effects as political”, which might reflect Western liberalist thinking. This, according to Zehfuss, is a “strange exclusion of power”.¹⁰⁸ Kratochwil sees intersubjectivity as unproblematic,¹⁰⁹ and normative reasoning in politics as “detached from the question of power relations”.¹¹⁰ Zehfuss challenges the idea of normative, apolitical and neutral decision-making in politics, stating: “Utilitarian calculation as depicted by an instrumental notion of rationality becomes possible only after an actor has already taken an attitude towards a situation”.¹¹¹ This means that intersubjectivity actually is normative and not neutral, and that “shared meaning ... is inextricably linked to what is accepted as legitimate and good”.¹¹²

For Nicholas Onuf, the material structure of the world is represented by “deeds, which may consist in speech acts or physical actions,” through which actors “use the raw materials of nature to make the world what it is”.¹¹³ “Deeds establish social reality because they carry meaning”.¹¹⁴ This meaning results from rules, because “[r]ules

¹⁰⁷ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 149.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 148.

¹⁰⁹ Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 252.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 148.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 16.

¹¹² *Ibid*, pp. 149-150

¹¹³ Onuf In: *Ibid*, p. 20.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 152.

provide guidance for human behaviour and thereby make shared meaning possible”.¹¹⁵

Onuf is particularly interested in speech acts. According to Onuf, a speech act aims for the influence of another actor – also indicative of the intersubjectivity of this concept. The use of language means describing situations by relating to the social and natural world. Speech acts are debating possible actions in certain situations or contexts. The representation in language depends on an actor’s view of the world and as it is only functioning intersubjectively.¹¹⁶ Therefore, a description of the single truth, of reality, is impossible.¹¹⁷

If repeated often enough, speech acts become conventions that, if accepted and followed by other actors, become rules. Over time rules are followed only because they are rules and not for any other reason. For Onuf social construction is an “ongoing, two-way process”.¹¹⁸ “What people do is not only inextricably linked to rules; it also constructs rules”.¹¹⁹ Additionally, Onuf recognizes agency in rules and institutions, and he considers them as political as well as enabling and influencing power relations. Onuf’s focus on rules is not state-centric but underlines the domestic influence and share in the construction of our world. Like other constructivists, Onuf assumes the existence of one reality.

Volker Rittberger and Wolfgang Wagner compare the ability of realist, liberal and constructivist theory in explaining “German Foreign Policy since unification”.¹²⁰ Referring to their analyses of the three theories, “[n]eorealism’s explanatory record is

¹¹⁵ Onuf In: Ibid, p. 20.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 195.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 21.

¹¹⁸ Onuf In: Ibid, p. 20-1.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 152.

¹²⁰ Rittberger & Wagner (2001). German foreign policy since unification, pp. 299-326.

the poorest [And w]hereas utilitarian liberalism has a mixed explanatory record, constructivism correctly predicts German behavior”.¹²¹ The two scholars together with Henning Boekle use a constructivist approach, which is based on the “assumption that actors follow a logic of appropriateness rather than a logic of consequentiality”.¹²² This appropriateness is based on social norms. Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner describe “socialization processes as the causal mechanism linking social norms and state behaviour”, meaning state FP.¹²³

Social norms are not just a result of FP interests or are only “asserting and justifying” them. Instead norms can independently influence FP interests.¹²⁴ As a consequence, while in realist and liberal theories the weighing of alternative options is motivated by utility-maximization, constructivism assumes an aim for maximizing the stability of an actor’s social role or identity. The “logic of appropriateness” is based on the concepts of common sense and morality, as it considers as appropriate or “sane” what is “maintaining consistency between behavior and a conception of self in a role”.¹²⁵ Because it also defines the origin of an actors’ perception of his obligations linked to his role in a situation, Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner define social norms as “intersubjectively shared, value-based expectations of appropriate behaviour”.¹²⁶

The three scholars consider social norms as political. During a socialization process the actor becomes part of a social system. He “acknowledges the institutionalized modes of thought and behavior as correct, makes them – literally – ‘his

¹²¹ Rittberger & Wagner (2001). German foreign policy since unification, pp. 299-300.

¹²² Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory, p. 105.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid, pp. 105-6.

¹²⁵ Ibid, p. 107.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 106.

own' and brings his interests and preferences into line with them".¹²⁷ Social norms are seen as "hav[ing] a *constitutive* effect, i.e. they 'legitimize goals and thus define actors' interests'. By identifying certain goals as legitimate, norms act as 'motives'".¹²⁸

Developing this logic further Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner conclude: "as 'motives', norms prescribe the goals towards which states legitimately strive. The 'motives' function ascribed to social norms by constructivists manifests itself in that states define their preferences in accordance with the goals that have been designated as legitimate".¹²⁹ Social norms involve "issues of justice and rights of a moral or ethical character", which causes a "'compliance pull' independent of interests".¹³⁰

As "the actions of foreign policy decision makers are shaped by social norms, defined as intersubjectively shared, value-based expectations of appropriate behaviour", Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner conclude that "the dependent variable 'German foreign policy behaviour' can thus be conceptualized as *norm-consistent foreign policy*".¹³¹ By nature, norm-consistent FP might be unlikely to go through quick and sudden changes. Although, importantly, the three scholars acknowledge that during events like the end of the Cold War or the unification of Germany, even firmly institutionalized norms could undergo "substantial alteration or modification", which would in turn result in changes in FP behavior.¹³²

3. *Historical institutionalism*

Michael Barnett generally supports constructivism but prefers a version that

¹²⁷ Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). *Constructivist foreign policy theory*, p. 110.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 107.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 108.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p. 132.

¹³² *Ibid*, pp. 132-3.

combines approaches from historical sociology. He values the latter theory's detailed knowledge of society-state relations and its greater acknowledgement of the influence of time in international change.

Barnett describes constructivism as “attempt[ing] to understand: how agents and structures are involved in a process of mutual creation and reproduction; how actors' interaction is constrained and shaped by that structure; and how their very interaction serves to either reproduce or transform that structure”.¹³³ He highlights constructivism's aim for the comprehension of: “the content and origins of state interests ...; how norms are not merely ‘regulative’ but also *constitutive*, and thus can shape state identities, interests and rationalities; and how global order and global change must include reference to normative structure”.¹³⁴

The important acknowledgment of historical influences is reflected in the attempt to “recover the roots of social constructs” and to understand the influence of “individual acts and events in producing international change”.¹³⁵ Historical sociological theory can contribute with its deep understanding of the socialization process between society and state, of non-state actors' constituting influence on world politics and of the historical development of socialization processes. “Historical sociologists ... take aim at domestic and societal-level phenomena ... [such as] industrialization, democratization, capitalism, bureaucratization, state formation, social inequality, class conflict and revolution”.¹³⁶ They acknowledge that society exists at the transnational and global level, thereby highlighting the need for a *non-state-centric*

¹³³ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 101.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 102.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 101.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 103-4.

understanding of global politics.¹³⁷ Through the recognition of the “path-dependent character of international change”, historical sociologists can analyze “how events and particular acts could be transformative moments”.¹³⁸

Barnett, referring to Weber, speaks of the “rational-legal authority, that modernity views as particularly legitimate and good”.¹³⁹ “This authority is ‘rational’ in that it deploys socially recognized relevant knowledge to create rules that help determine the means that should be selected to pursue already identified ends”.¹⁴⁰ Based on this authority modern bureaucracies gain certain levels of independence and autonomy. The power of bureaucracies stems from their appearance (or “presentation of self”) “as impersonal, technocratic and neutral – as *not* exercising power, but instead, as serving others These are values in and of themselves”.¹⁴¹

Regarding International Organizations (IO) Barnett criticizes the claim that “if states did not like what IOs were doing, they would simply pull the plug on them” similar to Berenskoetter and Giegerich’s argument, as well as the denial of agency of IOs.¹⁴² Referring to him, “IOs are not simply passive mechanisms and hand-maidens of states; rather, they can be creative, energetic and independent entities that have agential properties”.¹⁴³ “IOs have authority in global politics and the ability to shape international public policy because of their ‘expertise’, and our acceptance of their presentation of ‘self’ as apolitical and technocratic”.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁷ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 117.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 100-1.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 106.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 107-8

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p. 112

¹⁴³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 113.

Roland Dannreuther's theoretical approach focuses more on institutions than on organizations. His historical institutionalist approach, considering the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) as an institution due to the protraction of the ME conflict, is based on Barnett's concepts. It "focuses on how institutions develop and adapt rather than on how they function (as with rationalist accounts), and on how the mutual co-constitution and construction of institutions like the MEPP needs to incorporate a stronger temporal dimension".¹⁴⁵ For the definition of institutions, Dannreuther refers to the later scholarly acknowledgment of broader understandings, in particular the one, which "ironically comes from Mearsheimer".¹⁴⁶ He describes institutions as "sets of rules that stipulate ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other", thereby actually referring to the influence of social rules and the concept of intersubjectivity. Furthermore, Dannreuther describes institutions as "arenas within which mutually beneficial cooperation takes place and where states can be encouraged to avoid the temptation to defect or renege on agreements that are in their longer-term interest".¹⁴⁷ Importantly, historic institutionalism attributes interdependent identities and normative meanings to institutions. Through them appropriate behavior is defined, which in the case of the MEPP is commitment and belief in the concept of "territory in exchange for peace".¹⁴⁸

In his approach, Dannreuther is using the institutionalist concepts of path dependency ("the idea of a causal dependence of contemporary reality from prior events"), critical junctures (moments that "forged and reproduced the particular

¹⁴⁵ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*, p. 189.

¹⁴⁶ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*, p. 190.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*.

positions and understandings of the key actors” of the institution) and self-reinforcing positive feedback to explain the FP-making of the involved actors.¹⁴⁹ Path dependency theory states that institutions can remain more attractive than alternatives over time, even if their initial advantage over these alternatives has vanished. The reason is the significant effort that would be necessary to reverse the institutionalization of an event, action or structure. The effort increases positively with the time the institution prevails, as involved actors accustom themselves to it. Dannreuther describes the process of actors’ accustoming to institutions as a ““lock in’ [of] specific development trajectories”.¹⁵⁰ “Lock in” refers to the striving for self-preservation of institutions once they are in place. Based on the above-described idea of socialization through intersubjective sharing of meanings and interaction, actors within the institution are reinforcing its structures and normative power. The power of this institutionalization trajectory gives minor or subconscious initializing events critically meaning, which is often only recognized retrospectively, and the reason for their description as critical junctures.¹⁵¹

Referring to constructivist theory and the logic of appropriateness, a significant norm change is not probable but possible. Such a change should, as described by historical institutionalism, involve a critical event. Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner’s social constructivist approach, assuming that only significant changes in norms would lead to changes in FP behavior, is reflecting this conclusion. They summarize their study of German FP, stating:

“... the assumption that rapid norm change is unlikely is plausible at first sight. Nevertheless, profound changes such as the end of the Cold War and German

¹⁴⁹ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*, p. 187,189.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 195.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp. 194-5.

unification represent unexpected shifts in context, even for firmly institutionalized norms, and may thus lead to their substantial alteration or modification”.¹⁵²

4. Deconstructivism

Deconstructivism¹⁵³ with its epistemological approach, as described by Maja Zehfuss, is, in comparison to the predominantly ontological constructivism, questioning the possibility of comprehending reality, thereby calling rationalism into question.¹⁵⁴ Alexander Wendt describes postmodern critical theorists as “skeptical about the possibility of objective knowledge”.¹⁵⁵ In deconstructivism, however, the lack of material reference points is not understood as disabling a scientific analysis and a responsible deliberation of options. To the contrary, epistemology – the questioning of how actors/decision-makers/we know things – is understood as the only way of analyzing reality.¹⁵⁶ Constructivists criticize deconstructivists’ epistemological approach as impractical and escapist. Wendt, for example, speaks of “reference-failure” in deconstructivism, stating: “Anti-realists want their claims about how the world works to be taken just as seriously as realists do, but ironically the only way they can do that is if in their scientific practice they work ‘as if’ they were realists”.¹⁵⁷ Michael Barnett summarizes that “constructivists ... labored to differentiate themselves from postmodernism and to convince the [rationalist, utilitarian] mainstream that they were

¹⁵² Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory, pp. 133.

¹⁵³ Also called poststructuralism, postmodernism, critical theory, reflectivism, relativism.

¹⁵⁴ Zehfuss’ critique of constructivism is “related to the shift of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) towards using the military instrument in the international realm after the end of the Cold War”, In: Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ Wendt (1995, Summer). *Constructing International Politics*, p. 75.

¹⁵⁶ Reality refers to the very complex, incomprehensible nature of the world.

¹⁵⁷ Wendt (2003). *Social theory of international politics*, pp. 65-7.

committed to ‘science’”.¹⁵⁸ But deconstructivists like Zehfuss consider their epistemological approach as foundation for a scientific analysis as well as for truly responsible political decision-making. In their view, constructivists are not acting responsible, as they actually seek to absolve themselves from political responsibility by describing their decisions as scientifically proven (calculated) and being without alternative. The issue for deconstructivism “is how to deal appropriately with always already being part of reality that cannot be described or grasped other than through our interpretations and in relation to our practices, which are at the same time constituting it”.¹⁵⁹ She refers to Jacques Derrida and his concepts of the “aporia of the undecidable” to argue that truly responsible decision-makers accept that there are always alternatives and that consequences of decisions are never fully predictable. If they were predictable, then decision-making would be “a matter of applying knowledge rather than exercising responsibility”.¹⁶⁰ Quoting Derrida Zehfuss describes the undecidable as:

“the experience of that which, though heterogeneous, foreign to the order of the calculable and the rule, is still obliged ... to give itself up to the impossible decision, while taking account of law and rules. A decision which does not involve this aporia is not free but rather part of a calculable process, merely and application. Where we experience the undecidable, a decision must be made but the decision does not resolve the undecidable. It remains caught up in it. For responsible to be possible, experiencing this aporia of the undecidable is necessary”.¹⁶¹

D. Conclusion

Historical institutionalism and social constructivism are described in the literature as best suited to explain FP and IR in comparison with other theories,

¹⁵⁸ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 103.

¹⁵⁹ Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 255.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 256.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp. 256-7.

especially realism and liberalism. This brief literature review is based mostly on scholarly theoretical work regarding German FP as well as the ME context. It highlights the need for an understanding of state-society relations, for historical contextualization and for a wider definition of the meaning of interests. Significantly the literature describes the influence of identity on the meaning of security in FP and IR. This includes the awareness for its intersubjective creation within a two-level discourse and within a two-way process. The former highlights the influence of domestic factors on identity. The latter emphasizes the continuous way of identity and interests being shaped by past events and shaping future events. The literature review further shows the benefit from considering developments as path dependent, despite the recognition of identity-based FP as seeking for security through consistent, predictable and appropriate FP behavior. The critique of constructivist assumptions of norms and rules as being apolitical is supporting this thesis' critique of Western liberalism's flawed promotion of and appeal to universalism. This understanding is significant for the analysis of the global liberal project, its normative character and its legitimization. The proven suitability of a wider understanding of institutions and its applicability on the MEPP is significant for this thesis' analysis, as the MEPP is playing an important role in enabling bias justification.

For the purpose of historical contextualization, the following chapter will retrace the construction of German FP values and principles, especially since the end of WWII. Special emphasis will be placed on German-Israeli relations and the related meaning of Zionism for German FP-makers.

CHAPTER III

GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

To be able to recognize German FP values and principles as well as their meaning for and influence on German interests and Germany's identity the third chapter will explore their development mostly since the end of WWII. The first part is concerned with the development during the Cold War, which laid the foundation for German FP in the post-Cold War period. The second part focuses solely on Germany's relation to Israel and particular on Germany's understanding of and support for Zionism. The third part explores German FP-making since Germany's regaining of sovereignty in 1990, including its involvement in the global liberal project (GLP) and the global war on terror (GWOT), up until the Second Intifada and the 2006 Lebanon War, which are the focus of this thesis in chapter four and five.

A. The construction of values and principles until 1990

Germany after WWII was faced with the devastating total failure of its foreign policy from the previous forty years.¹⁶² As a result it lost its sovereignty to the Allied forces and was forced to accept its territorial downsizing, culminating in the split into two German states under Western and Soviet spheres of influences. It was, moreover,

¹⁶² The historic-sociological analysis of German FP from the end of WWII until the reunification of Germany in 1990 is limited to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). It, therefore, is simply called Germany, and it excludes the FP of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The GDR focused mostly on its international recognition, a goal that the FRG sought vehemently to avoid, hoping for reunification in the near future. Furthermore, the East German state was pursuing a very different strategy concerning the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, exemplified by its support of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) since the 1970s. In: Timm, A. (1993, Fall). The Middle East policy of the German Democratic Republic. *Journal of Arab Affairs*, 12 (2).

confronted with a quickly emerging Cold War political environment, which had an almost immediately apparent long-term character. Germany's future was determined by learning the lessons from the war and dealing with the responsibility for it. The newly founded Federal Republic began focusing on two goals. One was to regain its sovereignty from the Western allied forces – ideally concluding with German reunification. The other was to ensure its security, which became an immediate necessity as the new German-German border represented the European frontline in the Cold War.

Germany's WWII enemies were challenged to prevent Germany from regaining its dominant power position, as they sought to integrate it into the Western side during the Cold War. For Germany the challenge became finding a means of regaining sovereignty despite total dependence on its Cold War allies. The connection between the two different aims quickly became obvious. Germany realized that it had to convince the Western states, and increasingly the general international community, of the seriousness of its own change, away from being “the pariah of world history”, from being a *bad* nation.¹⁶³

Domestically this change was happening, as the nation was (and still is) practicing *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with one's past), seeking to uncover the past, to explain and illuminate the past but also somehow to escape the past. The German scholar von Bredow describes remembrance of Germany's negative history as “the precondition for the chance of a collective political existence”. It became a basic condition of a new framework for German politics, seeking to avoid

¹⁶³ Spiegel Online (2014, July 17). The bearable lightness of being: How Germans are learning to like themselves. *Spiegel Online*.

developments that could lead to a *Rückfallmöglichkeit* (possibility of recidivism).¹⁶⁴ The resulting intense engagement with its own history represents the foundation of the socialized historical memory component of Germany's newly developing identity.

Significantly, Germany used the same strategy the Western allies chose for dealing with it. Self-criticism on the part of the Germans and distrust on the part of its new allies led to an aim for (self-)control and (self-)constraint of German political and military structures. They were designed in a way that enabled development based on Western values, while limiting the freedom to act unpredictably, inconsistently and inappropriately regarding the promoted values. Germans and the Western allies were aspiring to a stable, controllable and “good” development of the German state. The guiding values and principles were those of liberal democracy and the (social) free market economy.¹⁶⁵

Furthermore, this process sought a credible break from the nationalistic and expansionist past while promoting a combination of multilateralism and institutionalism.¹⁶⁶ Germany needed to be constrained by integration in its alliances and networks, which would be organized in predetermined ways based on the rules and norms prescribed by Western states. The result was a tight incorporation of Germany into European and transatlantic frameworks. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allowed this control of the German military parallel to its deployment in a deterrence and defense capacity in the Cold War environment.¹⁶⁷ This was obvious due to Germany's geographic location. But NATO also enforced the idea of Germany being

¹⁶⁴ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, pp. 60-2.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 27.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 64.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 137.

a Civilian Power,¹⁶⁸ setting the path for Germany's later practice of cash diplomacy in lieu of hard power. At the same time, for Germany, NATO membership meant the realization of necessary security and the foundation for prosperity. Independent from whether it was actually the case, German society increasingly perceived this integration and material support, such as the Marshall Plan, as signs for international trust in, or at least hope for, Germany's transformation from a "bad" into a "good" nation.¹⁶⁹

On the domestic political level, predictability, stability and appropriateness were realized through institutionalization and constitutionalism. Germany's army *Bundeswehr* (Federal Defense) became an important component of an emerging political framework being organized as a *Parlamentsarmee* (parliamentary army). It can be used only for military purposes when authorized by the German parliament. But, as the name of the German military also reflects, the German psyche needed more to credibly minimize the possibility of recidivism. The scholar Thomas Berger calls the result a "new anti-military ethos", which "found its institutionalised expression in the new Basic Law's injunction against waging aggressive war (Article 87a of the *Grundgesetz* [Basic Law, from 23 May 1949]) as well as in provisions guaranteeing the right of conscientious objection."¹⁷⁰ Paragraph 2 of Article 87a states: "Except for defense, the armed forces can only be deployed insofar the Basic Law explicitly allows it".¹⁷¹ Another example for Germany's investment in self-control through institutions

¹⁶⁸ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 427.

¹⁶⁹ Positive perception of Western support (e.g. Marshall Plan) becomes even clearer when seen in the context of the parallel dismantling and removing of East Germany's industrial infrastructure by the Soviet Union.

¹⁷⁰ Berger, T. U. (1997). The past in the present: Historical memory and German national security policy. *German Politics*, 6 (1), pp. 46-7.

¹⁷¹ DocumentArchiv.de (1949, May 23). Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany 1949 [Grundgesetz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949]. *Bundesgesetzblatt 1949*, pp. 1-19.

and its constitution was the evolving structure of its system of checks and balances. The constitution enjoys high legal authority and the German Constitutional Court as its guardian is independent from the government and can be asked to check government policies for their constitutionality, possibly resulting in authoritative orders to the government. Dolf Sternberger and Jürgen Habermas describe this behavior as *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitution patriotism).¹⁷²

Becoming part of Germany's identity, its domestic constitutionalism based in its Basic Law transcended the domestic level and became a supportive factor for regaining international trust. The deep suspicion of the Western allies made Germany aware of the need to only slowly and circumspectly work toward regaining its sovereignty. The strategy was to repeatedly and in as institutionalized and multilateral a process as possible, ensure its international counterparts that if Germany would be trusted with sovereignty, then it would immediately reinvest and share its new autonomy in new multilateral institutions. In Article 24 of the 1949 Basic Law is stated that:

“(1) the [German] Federation can by law transfer sovereign rights to intergovernmental institutions; (2) the Federation can integrate itself into a system of mutual collective security and therefor will allow restriction of its sovereign rights ...; (3) the Federation will join international arbitration for settling intergovernmental disputes”.¹⁷³

In the German opinion multilateral institutionalization had to originate from the European center of World War I and WWII animosities and hate. Successive German governments began engaging one of its biggest WWII enemies, France. Armin Staigis writes: “The reconciliation between France and Germany, finalized with the Élysée Treaty of 1963, was an historical achievement. It turned out to be the precondition for

¹⁷² Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, pp. 65-6.

¹⁷³ DocumentArchiv (1949, May 23). Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany 1949, p. 5.

the European amalgamation that eventually led to the establishment of the European Union”, also described as “European Engine”.¹⁷⁴

The EU was seen and built as a peace and security project, which would use economic ties as means to this end. The German support of and belief in the European project were honest, as they grew out of a necessity into an identity. This transformation of the sense of Self during the Cold War decades became a significant driver of the self-perception of being “good”. The newly build identity was also the reason why Germany assumed that, based on trust and stability, other European states would be increasingly willing to render parts of their authority to the European Union as well, which would make the project mutually beneficial.¹⁷⁵ The transformation included the aim to replace realpolitik zero-sum thinking with an honest aim for win-win situations, resulting in improved stability, predictability and consistency as well as value-based appropriateness.

Von Bredow writes that Germany became the European state with the fewest concerns regarding the integration of supranational structures into the framework of European institutions.¹⁷⁶ Der Spiegel assesses the related trans-generational character, describing that “[Chancellor Helmut] Kohl and his predecessors viewed Germany more in terms of the alliances it was part of than as an individual nation-state”, exemplifying this with “Kohl [who] once uttered a sentence that long defined Germany's relationship to the European Union. ‘Every mark spent for Europe is money well invested’”.¹⁷⁷ Claudia Major from the German Institute for International Politics and Security (SWP)

¹⁷⁴ Staigis, A. (2014, Fall). Germany in a changing world. *World Policy Journal*, 31, p. 76.

¹⁷⁵ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 108.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, pp. 65-6.

¹⁷⁷ Spiegel Online (2014, July 17). The bearable lightness of being.

in Berlin summarizes the result of Germany's development with the words: "German foreign policy DNA – always embedded in the EU, always embedded in alliances, never alone."¹⁷⁸

The way France represented the key nation in Cold War Europe, so the US was regarded the key nation in the transatlantic community of Western states. The US, against initial protest of its European allies, had provided the Marshall Plan, which enabled Germany's prosperity, as well as integration into NATO, including the strong security statement of taking Germany under its nuclear umbrella.¹⁷⁹ US president Ronald Reagan, with his policy of strength and East-West-confrontation, emphasized the traditional political leading position of the US among its European allies,¹⁸⁰ which Germany over time perceived as normal and eventually even as friendship.¹⁸¹ For example, US supervision of Germany's comparatively warm relations with Warsaw Pact countries was seen as normal by Germany.¹⁸² The perception of the friendship character of US-German relations culminated at the end of the Cold War, with America being the most outspoken and significant supporter of German reunification.

Berenskoetter and Giegerich, who share the friendship assumption, write:

"The process leading to German unification in October 1990 was characterized by remarkably close German-American cooperation that affirmed the friendship and the

¹⁷⁸ DW (2015, March 9). EU army a 'wonderful idea' but a long-term project, German security expert says. *DW.de*.

¹⁷⁹ Spiegel Online (2014, July 17). The bearable lightness of being.

¹⁸⁰ Walzel, F. (2006). The 'Near East-Dilemma': Germany's foreign policy elites and their role in conflict management during the First and Second Intifada - a communication analysis of Bonn and Berlin Near East policy [Das 'Nahost-Dilemma': Deutschlands Außenpolitische Eliten und ihre Rolle im Konfliktmanagement während der Ersten und Zweiten Intifada - eine Kommunikationsanalyse Bonner und Berliner Nahostpolitik]. Magister thesis, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main, Institut for Comparative Politics and International Relations, Frankfurt am Main, p. 14.

¹⁸¹ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 410.

¹⁸² Spiegel Online (2014, July 17). The bearable lightness of being.

importance of NATO. Chancellor Helmut Kohl described President George H. W. Bush as ‘the most important ally ... capable of real friendship’ and considered NATO in addition to close ties to the United States as the central stabilizing factors for unified Germany.”¹⁸³

Besides their European and transatlantic multilateral and institutionalist approaches, successive German governments developed the idea of stability and security providing transnational *Wertegemeinschaften* (communities of values) further. Values were not just a means to an end but a stability-providing end in themselves. This view made Germany, in ethical and moral regards, one of the truest supporters of the United Nations and the concept of universalism. Supporting the UN was a logical conclusion of Germany’s multilateral approach to FP and IR. The UN was and is seen as representing very similar principles in comparison to Germany’s Western alliance and EU approaches, such as a world order based on cooperation and multilateralism as well as international conflict management concepts aimed at conflict prevention.¹⁸⁴ An additional motive behind the support of the UN is its birth out of the rubble of WWII, which Germany had started. By accepting and supporting the UN, Germany was able to globally present its acknowledgment and acceptance of its responsibility for two world wars. Furthermore, championing the UN could symbolize Germany’s thorough transformation from the “bad” state of history towards the “good state”.¹⁸⁵

As Berenskoetter and Giegerich describe, the repetition of practices and the debates about them, as in the case of strategic cultures, will eventually define norms, for example those regarding the use of force by states, which in turn represents an identity of a state or nation.¹⁸⁶ Germany’s steady and consistent FP during the Cold War

¹⁸³ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 429.

¹⁸⁴ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 28.

¹⁸⁵ Gauck (2014, January 31). Speech at the 50th Munich Security Conference.

¹⁸⁶ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). From NATO to ESDP, p. 420.

constitutes such development. Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner underline that norms have to be specific. Their meaning should be so clear, that some “behavioural options have to be ruled out as clearly inappropriate”.¹⁸⁷ Specificity is higher when the scope of possible interpretation is limited, which is for example the case with written international conventions or domestic legislation.¹⁸⁸ As described with constitutionalism – and constitutional patriotism – this is the case with Germany domestically. Internationally, German FP represents the aim to institutionalize a value-based multilateralism, ideally in a universal way, for the purpose of optimal interest realization. In this context it is a logical consequence that Germany later would become a strong supporter of the European Court for Human Rights and of the International Criminal Court (ICC).¹⁸⁹

In terms of path dependency, the end of WWII can be defined as a critical juncture in the development of Germany and its FP. Thomas Berger describes WWII as a seminal event due to which “traditional ways of thinking about defence and national security were progressively rejected to give way ultimately to entirely new ones”.¹⁹⁰ There was influence from a change in the international political environment, from a change in the domestic German political structures as well as from a change in the collective (self-)perception of the German state, all initiated by a dramatic and sudden event.¹⁹¹ Germany developed from a nationalist, expansionist state into a multilateral, universalist, institutionalist, constitutionalist, anti-war state that considers it normal to

¹⁸⁷ Boekle, Rittberger & Wagner (2001). Constructivist foreign policy theory, pp. 110.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Asseburg, M., & Wildangel, R. (2014, August 15). Germany's shared responsibility for the Gaza conflict and its end: Déjà vu in Gaza. *Qantara.de*.

¹⁹⁰ Berger (1997). The past in the present, p.42.

¹⁹¹ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 26.

share autonomy for trust-building, and that considers trust as security-enabling. The path was represented by the constant aim for German reunification, which also became a means in itself, as over time more Germans gave up on it. But for German conservative politicians, support for reunification had become a rote component of political identity. Representing the component of domestic debate about identity was the German left-wing opposition, which, unsuccessfully, “insisted that reunification should never happen because of the danger of Germany unleashing yet another world war”.¹⁹² Furthermore, this view aids in explaining pro-Zionism among the left and far-left, which sometimes strangely developed into movements such as the *Antideutsche* (Anti-German) that emerged in the late 1980s and opposed reunification while espousing unconditional support of Israel, Jews and the US.¹⁹³

By the end of the Cold War, Germany’s identity change had achieved functional credibility. Successive German administrations repeatedly expressed to Germany’s neighbors and allies that German reunification would not signal a potential threat, but actually the opposite. Germany portrayed its own potential reunification as a condition for and a part of European unification. Von Bredow speaks of Germany’s credible development into “a post-national society”, which would and wants to be deeply integrated in the West.¹⁹⁴ In addition to four decades of consistent German FP, Chancellor Kohl’s influence was critical, further supporting the individualist components of the above-described theoretical framework. In November 1989 Kohl presented the aim for German reunification as one point in a 10-point plan, of which 5 points were aimed solely at buffering still-prevalent foreign skepticism about a reunited

¹⁹² Spiegel Online (2014, July 17). The bearable lightness of being.

¹⁹³ Erlanger, S. (2009, Spring). "The Anti-Germans" - The pro-Israel German Left. *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 21 (1-2), p. 95.

¹⁹⁴ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, pp. 196-7.

Germany.¹⁹⁵ In December 1989 British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was still saying vehemently: “We beat the Germans twice, and now they’re back”.¹⁹⁶ Thatcher’s deep skepticism is an example for von Bredow’s observation that Germany’s international counterparts always were (and will be) trying to remind it of its history. This might happen out of an opportunistic aim to limit German prosperity but often it is based on a real fear that by regaining its strength Germany will start behaving as it did during the first half of the 20th century.¹⁹⁷ Kohl was very aware of that. He spoke intensively with French President Francois Mitterrand, personally convincing him that Germany never again will be a threat to Europe and that Germany will embed itself in European structures, including a monetary union. “Mitterrand was skeptical at first, but Kohl persuaded him by pledging his commitment to European integration”.¹⁹⁸

Germany managed to create a stable, predictable FP, with an orientation – referring to the definition of Korany and Dessouki – resulting from its “general attitudes and commitments toward the external environment, its fundamental strategy for accomplishing its domestic and external objectives and aspirations and for coping with persistent threats”.¹⁹⁹ Korany and Dessouki further describe FP orientation in general as consisting of ideological and pragmatic components. The former are defined in Germany’s case by the Western values, represented by liberal democracy and the (social) free market economy, as well as increasingly stereotypical views of the non-Western and the non-Christian. This is linked to a new foreign population in Germany

¹⁹⁵ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, pp. 190-1.

¹⁹⁶ Volkery, C. (2009, November 9). *The Iron Lady's Views on German Reunification: 'The Germans Are Back!'*. *Spiegel Online*.

¹⁹⁷ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, pp. 61-2.

¹⁹⁸ Riegert, B. (2010, September 8). *European ties: European neighbors warm to unified Germany*. *DW.de*.

¹⁹⁹ Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 39.

consisting of a few million Turkish “guest” workers whose long-term residence in Germany occurred in the absence of any plan to that effect. The pragmatic component would be increasingly and significantly defined by Germany’s economic capabilities. Developing into the world’s largest exporter made Germany, as well as the rest of the industrialized world, increasingly depend on Middle Eastern oil and gas, and thereby US Middle East foreign policy since the 1967 War.

B. Responsibility for the Holocaust and pro-Zionism

The previous chapter explained the construction of Germany’s FP, highlighting important FP inputs and the resulting values and principles. Regarding the lessons learned from WWII it mentioned the development of an anti-war ethos and an institutionalized constraint of using the military for purposes other than strictly defensive measures. But, as also analyzed by Martinson, the genocide of six million Jews and other minority groups by Nazi Germany bore significantly upon German post-WWII development. This particular lesson translated into a perceived responsibility for the Jews, which, critically, became understood as a (moral) responsibility for Israel in particular.²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Regardless of the theoretical approach, several assessments of German FP, including from Belkin (Belkin, P. (2007, January 19). Congressional Research Service Report RL33808: Germany’s Relations with Israel: Background and Implications for German Middle East Policy. Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, p. 4), and reports by Overhaus *et al.* (Overhaus, M., Maull, H.W., Harnisch, S. (2002, May 17). *German Foreign Policy and the Middle East Conflict*. German Foreign Policy in Dialogue. 3(7), p. 5), by Steinberg and Asseburg (Steinberg, Guido (ed.) (2009). German Middle East and North Africa Policy: Interests, Strategies, Options. *SWP Research Paper*, p. 5), and by Kazleh (Kazleh, M.A. (2008). Determinants of German Foreign Policy toward the Arab Israeli Conflict. *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika*. 4(13), 119-133, p. 123), see the significance of Germany’s perceived moral obligations towards Israel. Martinson’s analysis of German parliamentary debates concerning military interventions showed that only in the case of the 2006 Lebanon war did references to history play a significant role. The 2006 war was the only case study out of five in

The following three subsections are chronologically organized. The first is concerned with German Zionism before WWII, which helps retracing German FP elements within the GLP and the GWOT independently from the Holocaust impact. The second explores German Zionism after the Holocaust until the time around the 1967 War, highlighting its disconnect from the Palestinian question. The last section analyzes German FP's identification with liberal Zionism and the inherent and flawed distinction between liberal and right-wing Zionism.

1. Pre-Holocaust German Zionism

The basis for Zionist thinking is “the concept of the unity of the Jewish people and the concept of their inseparable attachment to Palestine with the goal of *return*” (Emphasis added).²⁰¹ From this principle developed the Zionist ideology, which perceives “the community known as Jews as a separate national people to be resettled as a sovereign political entity in Palestine in order to establish there an exclusively Jewish nation-state”.²⁰² Jewish Zionism began developing in the 1860s and became clearly articulated as a movement with a goal in 1897 at the first Zionist Congress, organized by Theodor Herzl. He had formulated his basic ideas about Zionism and a Jewish State for a Jewish people in his book „*Der Judenstaat*“ („The Jewish State“).

But the idea of a Jewish nation was much more typical for non-Jewish Zionism, which emerged with the Reformation 300 years before the first Zionist

Martinson's research, which was directly related to Israel. In: Martinson (2012). *Rediscovering Historical Memory*.

²⁰¹ Sharif, R. S. (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History*, Zed Press, London, p. 63.

²⁰² Sharif (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 2.

Congress. Zionist propositions, as the idea “of a Jewish national consciousness”,²⁰³ were originally purely non-Jewish.²⁰⁴ The Reformation witnessed non-Jewish Zionism through the emergence of theological doctrine regarding “the Jewish nation, the Jewish Restoration, and Palestine as the Jewish Homeland”.²⁰⁵ But over time, and especially since the 19th century, it was motivated not only by the Bible and theological reasoning but increasingly and ultimately by European colonial political goals.²⁰⁶ The British and German foreign offices in particular were strong supporters of Zionism. Referring to Isayah Friedman,

“in spite of the opposition of its Turkish ally, the German government emerged as the foremost protector of the Zionist cause during World War I. Germany was the first European power to view Zionist aspirations with favour. ... Germany discovered in Zionism an instrument for solving the Jewish problem in Eastern Europe after the war and a means for strengthening its own influence in the Middle East”.²⁰⁷

That support was the foundation for the success of Zionism, which was rather political and dependent upon non-Jewish support, especially among European governments. This was also clear to Herzl. Alan Levenson writes: “Herzl’s own receptivity to gentile enthusiasm and his willingness to gloss over points of difference emerges as an effective and probably necessary tactic for a leader committed to propelling Zionism to world prominence.” The critical Jewish support for Zionism evolved significantly only as a response to the Antisemitic policies of Nazi Germany and their culmination in the Holocaust. Until the regime of Adolf Hitler, especially in Western Europe, the majority of Jews regarded themselves as part of their nations, favoring integration and even assimilation. This was especially true in the case of

²⁰³ Sharif (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 2.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 63.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 22.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p 2.

²⁰⁷ Transaction Publisher (1997, September 30). Editor’s review of: *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism 1897-1918*, by Isaiah Friedman, At The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1977.

Germany, as demonstrated by the Jewish community of Munich's refusal to host the First Zionist Congress.

Hence Zionism originally stood for a worldview in which nationalism and racism were not politically anathema concepts,²⁰⁸ and where Antisemitism was the motivation for the support of a Jewish nation and Jewish resettlement. Many non-Jewish Zionists spoke of Jewish characteristics like particular financial power and manpower. Already Napoleon stated: “[The Jews] will come in crowds not only to make industry flourish, but also to defray the cost of the revolution in Syria and Egypt”.²⁰⁹ In relation to the Arab population it was typical to point to the modern European values Jewish settlers would bring to Palestine. Ernest Laharanne, private secretary of Napoleon III, spoke in 1860 of advantages for Europe if Jews would settle in Palestine, and how this “injection of European civilization” could save the “Middle East's decadent civilization”.²¹⁰ Antisemitism and racism also motivated Lord Shaftesbury's support for Jewish resettlement. He spoke of a “Hebrew race” and opposed the right of Jews to become members of the British parliament.²¹¹ Regarding the understanding of Islam by non-Jewish Zionists, the historian M.E. Yapp concludes: “Islam remained the same static, unprogressive religion resting on superstition, fraud and violence, and the Ottoman Empire was an anachronism, even an excrescence on the face of Europe”.²¹² Considering the critical influence of Antisemitism and racism on Zionism, mostly reflected by Antisemitic motives behind the expulsion of the Jews from Europe, Regina

²⁰⁸ Regina Sharif writes about the so-called “Romantic Racism”. In: Sharif (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism*, pp. 43-7.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 51.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p. 53.

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 55.

²¹² Yapp, M. E. (1987). *The Making of the Modern Near East*, Longman, London, p. 93.

Sharif points out the important fact that Antisemitism is Zionism's "most powerful justification as they are "spiritual counterpart[s]".²¹³

This understanding of Zionism – in addition to the important view of it as a result of the Holocaust – as influenced by religious, orientalist and racist world views, helps to retrace first the European and Western support for it and second the motives behind the critique culminating in anti-Zionism.

2. Support for Israel and Zionism pre-1967

The development of Germany's post-WWII FP towards a new German FP culture and identity also influenced the reparation policy towards Israel. Germany's first Chancellor Konrad Adenauer practiced this policy out of personal conviction.²¹⁴ Based on his approach a general consensus in German politics developed, as represented by the politics of all succeeding chancellors.²¹⁵ Immediately after WWII Konrad Adenauer portrayed the state of Israel as the representative of all Jews, to which Germany would be willed to pay retribution. On 25 November 1949 he said: "The state of Israel is the externally visible accumulation of Jews of all nationalities".²¹⁶ Chancellor Kohl described to whom Germany felt obligated, stating: "We owe especially to the victims of the Holocaust, the unparalleled genocide of the *European Jews*" (Emphasis added).²¹⁷ Moishe Postone offers a critical explanation for Germany's focus on compensation for the Holocaust. He argues that it allowed Germany to avoid an overall

²¹³ Sharif (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 5.

²¹⁴ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, pp. 63-5.

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 107.

²¹⁶ Adenauer, K. (1998). Democracy is a Weltanschauung for us [Die Demokratie ist für uns eine Weltanschauung]. In F. Becker (Ed.), *In Reden und Gespräche 1946-1967*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, p.7.

²¹⁷ Kohl, H. (October 1990). government statement by chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl [Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Dr. Helmut Kohl]. Konrad Adenauer Foundation [Konrad Adenauer Stiftung].

critique and analysis of National Socialism,²¹⁸ including questions about the public's knowledge of the Holocaust or the remaining of many Nazis within the structures of the new German state. Germany, according to Postone, was seeking a revival as fast as possible, within the above-described new FP framework, but this would have been impossible if all "Nazi civil servants, lawyers and judges" would have been removed from their positions.²¹⁹ "[T]he goal was 'normalcy' at all costs – one to be achieved without dealing with the past".²²⁰

This approach to Israel can be seen as a continuation of German support for Zionism. Germany focused on compensation until 1953, and was working towards the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel until 1965.²²¹ Until then there were no significant repercussions of its support for Zionism. The Palestinian situation did not play a role in the German FP, which might be partially explained through Germany's acceptance of its own fate as defeated nation, condemned to accept territorial losses and the resettlement of a large German refugee community from East Europe in the remaining German mainland, without any compensation.²²²

From the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965 until 1969 Germany aimed for a routinization with Israel.²²³ But the 1967 war and subsequent developments represented and caused significant changes in the relations of many states with Israel. Most importantly France stopped being a weapons supplier for Israel and distanced itself from it, while the US stepped in, representing the start of the development of its

²¹⁸ Postone, M. (1980, Winter). Anti-Semitism and National Socialism: Notes on the German Reaction to 'Holocaust'. *New German Critique*, p. 98.

²¹⁹ Postone (1980, Winter). Anti-Semitism and National Socialism, p. 100.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Walzel, F. (2006). The 'Near East-Dilemma', p. 10, footnote #4.

²²² Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 136.

²²³ Walzel, F. (2006). The 'Near East-Dilemma', p. 10, footnote #4.

very close relationship with Israel. Domestically within Israel, society had to redefine its understanding of Zionism, facing a tripling of its territory and the related temptation to hold on to the newly occupied lands. In particular this meant a clearer distinction between the political approaches of liberal and right-wing Zionism. Significantly, the 1967 war and the expulsion of Palestinians, including 1947/48 refugees, and the subsequent Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem and the empowerment of the PLO in the following years, foisted the Palestinian question onto the international agenda.

3. Support for Israel and Zionism post-1967

The West European states feared a loss of influence in the Middle East, which made them, including Germany, invest in a European position towards the ME conflict, seeking to counter the increasingly dominant influence of the US. Dannreuther describes this moment as a critical juncture, starting the path of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), which over time developed into an institution to the mutual benefit of the involved Western countries and Israel.²²⁴ As a result of French opposition to the 1967 war, the distance growing between Britain and Israel in general, as well as the evolving values and principles of the developing European political framework, a rather critical position towards Israel was formulated. Germany, as part of the European initiative, for the first time took an unusually critical stance towards Israel, which also would represent its positions for the coming years.²²⁵ The reasons were Germany's great

²²⁴ Dannreuther (2011). *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process*, p. 187. Due to Dannreuther's broader definition of an institution, the understanding of what actors are involved in the MEPP also is broad. Since 2002 it definitely includes the members of the Quartett which is comprised of the US, the EU, Russia and the UN. Through the UN Security Council at the least also China could influence the MEPP.

²²⁵ Then-Chancellor Willy Brandt eased the "Hallstein-Doctrine" – which demanded cancellation of diplomatic relations with states that recognize the GDR, thereby

interest in European integration, its ability to act in and potentially hide behind a group as well as the parallel formation of its new FP identity which had at its core the values and principles that guided the positions towards Israel by the European Political Corporation (EPC).²²⁶ Through the EPC, which was established in 1970, Germany demanded Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders, the solution of the Palestinian refugee problem and supported the right for Palestinian self-determination, which was supposed to culminate in a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The two-state solution was (and is) seen by the Western and international community and, at least officially, by Israel's liberal Zionists as the best approach to realize Palestinian self-determination and security for Israel.²²⁷ In general, support of the MEPP meant a commitment to the concept of "territory in exchange for peace", as described by Dannreuther.²²⁸

In the following years and decades, these new positions would be very similar to publicly expressed positions of liberal Zionists in Israel, as long represented by the Israeli Labor party. The initiated MEPP gave the international community the impression of working on a solution based on liberal principles. It also represented a convenient excuse for not standing up for Palestinian rights more actively. Furthermore it allowed some, especially the US and Germany, recourse to a two-fold ME strategy of

enabling closer relations with Arab states for economic interests. Jaeger describes this as a "balancing act between *Moral-* and *Realpolitik*" (Walzel, F. (2006). The 'Near East-Dilemma', p. 11). In November 1973, under the impact of the oil boycott, an EPC ME declaration emphasized the legitimate rights of the Palestinians (Möckli, D. (2008). Foreign policy during the Cold War: Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity. London, GB: I.B.Tauris, p. 73.). In 1974, German UN ambassador Rüdiger von Wechmar spoke of the right of self-determination of the Palestinians (Walzel, F. (2006). The 'Near East-Dilemma', p. 8.). In 1978, the EPC was observing Camp David with caution due to the lack of respect for UNSCRs 242 and 338 (Ibid, p. 12.).

²²⁶ Möckli (2008). Foreign policy during the Cold War, pp. 1-2.

²²⁷ Asseburg & Wildangel (2014, August 15). Germany's shared responsibility.

²²⁸ Dannreuther (2011). Understanding the Middle East Peace Process, p. 193.

publicly condemning Israel and aiding the Palestinians within the MEPP framework, while protecting Israel from international prosecution and supplying it with weapons. The MEPP as a platform for escaping the need to face liberal Zionism's inherent contradictions between Zionism on one hand and liberalism's universal values as well as Palestinian (universal) rights on the other, might represent one reason for the strong, injustice-denying, Western political elite pro-Zionism. This characteristic of the MEPP is a further indication of it being a critical juncture.

The mentioned paradox inherent in liberal Zionism is interlinked with the self-censorship of many Western FP decision-makers regarding Israel's violation of Palestinian rights and international law as well as, in Germany's case, with its responsibility for the Holocaust. As was preliminarily mentioned above, Omri Boehm appeals to Germany to abandon its silence regarding Israel's policies. His critique of Habermas' refusal to publicly state his opinion about Israeli politics is on one hand contributing to the explanation of the contradictions of (liberal) Zionism with liberal values. On the other it shows how deep the denial of Zionism's failure goes, as Boehm is not fully making the link between uncritical silence and support of Zionism.²²⁹

Boehm refers to Immanuel Kant's understanding of enlightenment to make an argument for criticizing Israel and against justifying silence with the German Holocaust responsibility. He emphasizes that enlightenment is possible only "through a 'public use of one's reason'".²³⁰ Importantly linked to the definition of bias and the inherent prejudice, is the conclusion that expressed reason can limit bias. Combining this line of thought with drawing the right conclusions from history, Boehm states: "enlightenment thinking can function as a political answer to Germany's past ... [and] do justice to the

²²⁹ Limone (2012, August 16). Germany's most important living philosopher.

²³⁰ Boehm, O. (2015, March 9). The German Silence on Israel, and Its Cost. *New York Times*.

history of the Holocaust”.²³¹ Relevant for the discourse analysis of political speech acts such as the parliamentary debates analyzed below, is Boehm’s further reference to Theodor Adorno’s critique of conditional speech acts. Boehm writes: “[Theodor Adorno] said that enlightenment consisted of resisting the use of the ‘disastrous word “as”’ ... [e.g. in the form:] ‘As a German, I cannot accept that ...’ or ‘As a Christian, I must react in such-and-such a way’.²³² Boehm concludes that silence and conditional speech acts are not only preventing justice but actually are fostering injustice.

“After 48 years of military occupation, eight years of siege on Gaza and more than 2,000 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces just this past [2014] summer, German intellectuals who do not speak are *de facto* endorsing several propositions that they should very much like to deny. For example, that their history as Germans commits them to the Jews — represented by the State of Israel — *not* to universal humanism. There is a sensible answer to this claim, which is that Germans are committed to both, and that there’s no contradiction. But one can endorse this healthy proposition in good faith only by condemning Israel’s international law and human rights violations, thus taking a position that supports both humanism’s ideals *and* the Jews. By failing to speak out against Israel’s violations, Germany will not only fail to meet its own responsibilities; it will undermine the Holocaust as a politically significant past”.²³³

The statement “the Jews – represented by the State of Israel” indicates the Zionist character of Boehm’s opinion. He himself is guilty of ignoring the major contradiction within liberal Zionism. Saying “that there is no contradiction” is representative of the conflict self-perceived liberal Zionists are seeking to settle within themselves. This conflict, and its insolubility is well explained by Asher Schechter in his article “Liberal Zionism: It can’t be dead because it never existed”,²³⁴ and becomes obvious in Jonathan Freedland’s review titled “The Liberal Zionists”.²³⁵ Schechter concludes:

²³¹ Boehm (2015, March 9). The German Silence on Israel, and Its Cost.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Schechter, A. (2014, August 29). Liberal Zionism: it can't be dead because it never existed. *Haaretz*.

²³⁵ Freedland, J. (2014, August 14). The Liberal Zionists. *The New York Review of Books*.

“Israel today is more nationalistic, more bigoted, more separatist than ever, despite the best efforts of those identifying themselves as ‘liberal Zionists’. Liberal Zionists, meanwhile, mourn the ‘romantic Zionist ideal that has been tarnished by the reality of modern Israel’. And that, really, is the whole story: all along, ‘liberal Zionism’ was nothing more than a silly romantic notion”.

And Freedland refers to Norman Finkelstein’s critique of liberal Zionist Ari Shavit’s book “The promised Land”, stating:

“the eventual dispossession of Palestinians was logically entailed in the Zionist project from the outset, ... it could not be any other way. ... [Shavit:] ‘If Zionism was to be, [the massacre of Palestinians by the Israeli forces under the comment of Yitzak Rabin in] Lydda could not be. If Lydda was to be, Zionism could not be”.

Freedland concludes, similar to Finkelstein: “Does that mean that Shavit believes the massacre at Lydda was justified? He avoids a direct answer. The question is ‘too immense to deal with’; it is ‘a reality [Shavit] cannot contain’”. Nathan Thrall in his review of Shavit’s “The promised Land” pointedly sums up “liberal Zionists” aim to deal with the past without acknowledging it fully, with the title “Feeling Good about Feeling Bad”.²³⁶ It is the view of this thesis that the acknowledgment of the above-mentioned contradiction – the end of the denial – is too immense to deal with.

Another factor facilitating the denial of liberal Zionists and their supporters is the possibility of using right-wing Zionist policies and actions as a scapegoat for all undeniable injustices committed in the name of Zionism. There is always the “good” type of Zionism, which can be referred to alternatively. For right-wing Zionists and related Israeli governments this is an acceptable inconvenience, as they can point out their official support of the MEPP. The US and other MEPP actors repeatedly emphasize the basic principle of direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian as a platform for resolving complex issues. This means, conveniently for Israel, that critique-worthy subjects will be protected from judgment by international law, as they

²³⁶ Thrall, N. (2014, October 9). Feeling Good about Feeling Bad. *London Review of Books*, 36 (19), pp. 29-34.

are left for the supposedly fair future negotiation table. For expansionist settler colonial Zionism this translates into valuable additional time to create new facts on the ground, representing one of Israel's main benefits from the MEPP. For example, Germany constantly and publicly criticizes Israeli settlement activities, critically described by Benjamin Weinthal as "Germany's odd fixation on settlement construction as the central obstacle to Mideast peace."²³⁷ But actually, Foreign Minister Steinmeier is relativizing the illegality of Israeli settlements by describing them only as "disruptive" and being an "obstacle" to peace.²³⁸ Anyway, due to the available framework of the MEPP, Israeli and German leaders officially need only to acknowledge that they, regarding Israeli settlement policies, "agree to disagree".²³⁹ Political science professor Ian Lustick describes the ongoing and interminable MEPP as a platform for escaping problematic confrontations with reality in his pointedly named article "Two-state Illusion":

"The two-state slogan now serves as a comforting blindfold of entirely contradictory fantasies. The current Israeli version of two states envisions Palestinian refugees abandoning their sacred 'right of return,' an Israeli-controlled Jerusalem and an archipelago of huge Jewish settlements, crisscrossed by Jewish-only access roads. The Palestinian version imagines the return of refugees, evacuation of almost all settlements and East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital. DIPLOMACY under the two-state banner is no longer a path to a solution but an obstacle itself. We are engaged in negotiations to nowhere."²⁴⁰

As result, over time, German support for Israel becomes increasingly biased. It factually accepts Israeli expansion, leading Heiko Flottau to the obvious and critical question regarding Germany: "Which Israel is it ... Angela Merkel has granted a

²³⁷ Weinthal, B. (2011, February 2). Deciphering German foreign policy toward Israel and Iran. *Jerusalem Post*.

²³⁸ Shackle, S. (2014, February 25). Are German-Israeli relations wavering? *middleeastmonitor.com*.

²³⁹ Keinon, H. (2012, June 12). Merkel, PM 'agree to disagree' on settlements. *Jerusalem Post*.

²⁴⁰ Lustick, I. S. (2013, September 14). Two-State Illusion. *New York Times*.

security guarantee? The one, constantly expanding its boundaries, or the one within the lines of the ceasefire from 1949, which are internationally recognized?”²⁴¹ The bias also shows regarding US and German arms supplies. As highlighted by Judy Dempsey who quotes German Chancellor Schröder and comments on his successor Merkel:

“[W]hen it comes to Israel’s security, there is little or no discussion. As former chancellor Gerhard Schroder once put it succinctly: ‘Israel gets what it needs.’ ... from Merkel’s viewpoint, both policies on Israel align: delivering submarines [which can carry nuclear warheads] to safeguard the state’s existence against enemies from abroad, and stopping the settlements to allow for a two-state solution within. Both, Merkel believes, are needed if Israel is to continue existing as a Jewish state.”²⁴²

This German FP behavior, representing the attitude that there can be nothing wrong with such unconditional support of Israel, is exemplary for the dominance of pro-Zionism among the German political elite, also described as philo-Zionism. It culminated 2008. “[I]n a speech to the Knesset, Merkel said that the responsibility for Israel is ‘part of Germany’s *raison d’Etat*’. It means for me, as a German chancellor, that Israel’s security is never negotiable”²⁴³.

Merkel’s statement might represent the development of a climate among the German political elite in which being pro-Israel is a significant source of political legitimacy in the German domestic as well as international political arena. For policymakers this might go so far as to assume that it could not be wrong and must be morally right to support Israel, independently from its actions and policies. In turn, it could furthermore represent a fear of losing political legitimacy when criticizing Israel.

²⁴¹ Flottau, H. (2013, July 2). The downfall of liberal Zionism: Peter Beinart and Werner Sonne fear for the democratic character of Israel [Der Niedergang des liberalen Zionismus: Peter Beinart und Wernder Sonne fürchten für den demokratischen Charakter Israels]. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

²⁴² Dempsey, J. (2012, June 7). Germany's Gunboat Diplomacy. *carnegieeuropa.eu*.

²⁴³ Ibid: Even German then-President Joachim Gauck was amazed by Merkel’s statement, stating: “I don’t want to imagine every scenario that could get the chancellor in tremendous trouble when it comes to politically implementing her statement that Israel’s security is part of Germany’s reason of state”.

The political philo-Zionism shows similarities with Omri Boehm’s critique of the silence of German intellectuals regarding Israel’s international law and human rights violations. Boehm points to the often-expressed excuse “that while ‘the present situation and the policies of the Israeli government’ do require a ‘political kind of evaluation,’ this is not ‘the business of a *private German citizen of my* [Habermas’ WWII] *generation*’”.²⁴⁴ This reasoning is evidence for two German identity components. Firstly, Germans think, “refusing to comment in this case is only appropriate – German responsibility for the crimes of the Holocaust would make it so”. Secondly, the felt responsibility is so strong that the actively promoted socialization of historical memory erroneously includes self-censorship, which is handed onwards through generations. Boehm states: “[e]vidently, Habermas’s silence speaks for many other intellectuals, including ones who belong to younger generations”.²⁴⁵

German political elite philo-Zionism is very powerful and impacts the whole parliamentary political spectrum and society. Chancellor Merkel stated in an interview regarding Antisemitism with a German Jewish newspaper that in her opinion anti-Zionism is illegitimate.²⁴⁶ As if the vaguely known difference between legitimacy and legality among average citizens were not already enough, a German communal court, when rejecting the claim of a defendant who spoke out against Israel at a demonstration in Germany during the 2014 Gaza war, was concluding that making anti-Zionist remarks is anti-Semitic, thereupon finding the defendant “guilty of incitement against an ethnic minority”.²⁴⁷ Representative of this climate of fear of delegitimization is

²⁴⁴ Boehm (2015, March 9). The German Silence on Israel, and Its Cost.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Merkel (2013, September 13). “Angela Merkel: The interview”.

²⁴⁷ Hamodia. (2015, February 2). Anti-Zionism Equals Anti-Semitism, German Judge Says. *Hamodia*.

another event in 2011 in Berlin in which Charlotte Knobloch, who was the President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany from 2006 to 2010, demanded from a newly elected Berlin assemblyman to take off his Keffiyeh, because it would symbolize anti-Zionism.²⁴⁸

The most telling examples for philo-Zionism are the sometimes existential debates among the most left-wing party of the *Bundestag*, the Left, about its position regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. The involved opinions cover the entire spectrum from anti-Zionism to *antideutsch* (anti-German) ideology.²⁴⁹ Moishe Postone, furthermore confirming the 1967 War as a critical juncture, seeks to explain the anti-Zionist position among the German left in general. He states: "No western Left was as philo-Semitic and pro-Zionist prior to 1967".²⁵⁰ But with the 1967 War this changed significantly. Postone asserts that Germans did not care about the Palestinian expulsion by the Israelis before 1967. Rather, the ideological shift resulted from a "process of psychological reversal ... in which the Jews as victors became identified with the Nazi past Their victims, the Palestinians, became identified as the Jews".²⁵¹ Significantly, Postone points out that this reversal was not initiated by Palestinian flight, but because of the *Blitzkrieg* character of the 1967 War.²⁵² This phenomenon involved denial of the attempted ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian community by Israeli and

²⁴⁸ Mitic, K. (2011, November 3). Pirat with Palestinian scarf: "I will not take of the scarf, until peace prevails" [Pirat mit Palästinensertuch: "Ich werde das Tuch ablegen, wenn Frieden herrscht"]. *Welt Online*.

²⁴⁹ E.g. see Fischer, L. (2014, December 3). The German Left's Palestine Problem. *Jacobin.*; and Erlanger, S. (2009, Spring). "The Anti-Germans" - The pro-Israel German Left. *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 21 (1-2), pp. 95-106.

²⁵⁰ Postone (1980, Winter). *Anti-Semitism and National Socialism*, p. 103.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, 103-4.

²⁵² *Ibid*, p. 104.

pre-Israel Jewish forces before 1967.²⁵³ It represents a key characteristic of liberal Zionism and its non-Jewish supporters, who pretend that acknowledgement of the *Nakba* in 1948 is unnecessary for Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation.

An example for German left-wing pro-Zionism is the working group BAK Shalom, “which has become a leading advocate for pro-Israel positions within the [Left] party’s youth movement”, as described by Stefan Kunath – himself a BAK Shalom member – in his analysis of the Left and its conflicting relation with anti-Zionism and the solidarity with Israel.²⁵⁴ Exemplifying this are repeated cancellations of penal discussions and meetings with Jewish Israeli and non-Israeli Anti-Zionists, such as Max Blumenthal and Norman Finkelstein, due to domestic pressure, which included protest from Zionist members of the Left.²⁵⁵ Regarding the Left party leadership’s reference to Antisemitism when explaining the withdrawal of the invitation of Blumenthal, Leandros Fischer writes:

“That a German party, even a left-wing one, should be somewhat cautious in criticizing Israel, in a country where the definitions of Judaism, Israel, and Zionism have been consciously conflated for half a century, should not come as a surprise. But that parts of its top brass should actively work with the media to smear two internationally known Jewish anti-Zionists as “antisemites” is truly alarming and casts serious doubts on the party’s ability to relate to the global Palestine solidarity movement.”²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Pappé, I. (2006). *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oneworld, Oxford.

²⁵⁴ Kunath, S. (2011). Die Linke: Between anti-Zionism and solidarity with Israel. *Topical Brief* (7).

²⁵⁵ Weinthal (2011, February 2). Deciphering German foreign policy. Blumenthal is an outspoken Israeli critic of Israeli politics. In relation to his book “The 51 Day War“ (Blumenthal, forthcoming (30 June 2015)) about the 2014 Gaza War even Israeli officials describe him as follows: “You do not have to agree, but you’d better listen. Blumenthal’s voice is always surprising, he never compromises his inner compass, never lets the choir silence his unique articulation. . . . His [contribution] should be one of the foundations of any future discourse on Israel-Palestine” (Avraham Burg, former speaker of the Knesset). “. . . Blumenthal has once again demonstrated his devotion to truth and justice” (W. Patrick Lang, Former Defense Intelligence Agency head for Middle East/South Asia).

²⁵⁶ Fischer (2014, December 3). The German Left’s Palestine Problem.

Also representative was the negative response from the Left party's leadership to the refusal of Sarah Wagenknecht, vice-chairman of the Bundestag faction, and three other party members to stand up for Israeli President Peres after he gave a speech in the German parliament on the occasion of Holocaust Memorial Day, at the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.²⁵⁷ Wagenknecht's justification shows the delegitimizing power of the Holocaust responsibility discourse. She responded to heavy critique:

“... [because I] cannot pay such a respect to a statesman who himself is jointly responsible for war. ... My behavior in no way means, that I deny respect towards the occasion of the speech, the remembrance of the crime of the Holocaust committed by the Germans. I bow to the victims of the Shoa in profound humility”.²⁵⁸

The fight over the legitimacy of anti-Zionism also takes place within the German Jewish community. The German-Israeli Society published the statement “Confronting Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism!” on 22 July 2014, expressing its anger and fears about a “new wave of Anti-Semitism” due to anti-Semitic public statements, demonstrations and violence. That the mostly peaceful demonstrations were protesting against the 2014 Gaza War was not referred to in the statement. It represents an aggressive attempt to delegitimize anti-Zionism, as it links it with Islamism, neo-Nazism and Antisemitism, and directly threatens the political elite, saying:

“This new wave of anti-Semitism is carried by an association of Islamists, Neo-Nazis and Leftists and hits a fertile ground of anti-Semitism beyond these groups in the middle of society. They are united by their hate of Israel, which is also expressed in established and political circles in an anti-Zionist manner”.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ “Klaus Lederer, State German of the Left party in Berlin said: “if the President of Israel on 27 January speaks in front of parliament, then it is absolutely unacceptable to deny him the honor’. This is, independently from ones on opinion regarding the concrete politics of Israel, ‘politically small-minded’”. In: TAZ. (2014). Peres-appearance in parliament: The Left argue with itself because of Israel [Peres-Auftritt im Parlament: Linkspartei zofft sich wegen Israel].

²⁵⁸ TAZ (2014). Peres-appearance in parliament.

²⁵⁹ German-Israeli Society [Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft e.V.]. (2014, July 22). Confronting Antisemitism and Antizionism [Antisemitismus und Antizionismus entgegentreten!].

On 31 August 2014, Abi Melzer from the German news page *Jüdische Stimme* (Jewish Voice) commented on the demonstrations against Antisemitism and anti-Zionism, organized by Jewish organizations, which were in Berlin attended by the leaders of all German parliamentary parties and Chancellor Merkel. These events were organized as a response to Israel-critical demonstrations during the 2014 Gaza War, during which demonstrators chanted anti-Semitic slogans. Melzer complained:

“Instead of having a necessary debate about the Middle East conflict we are supposed to be distracted by a superfluous anti-Semitism debate. ... End the hypocrisy. End the equation of anti-Zionism and Antisemitism. An anti-Zionist is against the actions of the Zionist State, an anti-Semite is against Jews as human beings. We are Jews and avow ourselves to that. But we are no Zionists. Zionism is a racist, colonialist and militaristic ideology of the 19th century, which belongs on the dumb of history for a long time.”²⁶⁰

Anti-Zionism is a critique of the racial and nationalistic components of Zionism, highlighting the contradictions within liberal Zionism, for example regarding the demand for Israel to be a Jewish State. The concept of a Jewish State includes the principle of the so-called “Jewish right of *return*” to the land of Israel, which allows practically every Jew in the world to immigrate to Israel, thereby constantly and increasingly diminishing the probability of realizing the Palestinian right of return to the same land. These different rights of return are two of the key challenges in finding a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the perception of Israel as a state for a Jewish nation with its Jewish character, seen as an ethno-religious hybrid, enshrined in its constitutional system at the least jeopardizes equal rights for non-Jewish Israeli citizens and at the most becomes a factor for the creation of a racist apartheid state.

²⁶⁰ Melzer, A. (2014, August 31). Anti-Zionism is not Anti-Semitism! [Antizionismus ist nicht Antisemitismus!]. *Jewish Voice [Jüdische Stimme]*.

The German government under Merkel staunchly supports the principle of Israel being a Jewish State. “In the coalition treaty agreed in 2009 between [Merkel’s] conservative bloc and the pro-business Free Democrats, Israel is referred to as a ‘Jewish’ state”.²⁶¹ In February 2014 Merkel repeated: “part and parcel of the security of Israel is the two-state solution – a Jewish state of Israel and, alongside it, a Palestinian state”.²⁶² And also in the EU UNSCR draft, which was supposed to counter a Palestinian draft, Germany, unlike the two other sponsors France and Britain, was pushing to “address the issue of Israel being the nation-state of the Jewish people” by including a respective clause.²⁶³

The growing divergence between German public opinion and official government policies regarding Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict represents a growing challenge to German identity. It is a result of the obvious pro-Israel bias of German FP. Independent of whether segments of the German public are basing their critical stance towards Israel on the 1948 injustice towards the Palestinians or on the obvious illegality of post-1967 Israeli policies, they will mostly be in conflict with the philo-Zionist approach of their government. This is observable in consecutive opinion polls. In 2003, 65% of Germans (and 59% of Europeans) considered Israel the most aggressive state worldwide, before North Korea, Iraq and Iran. Politicians responded to this result with non-acknowledging reinterpretations of its meaning. German parliamentarian Friedberg Pflüger (CDU) said: “If this means that Israel is endangering global peace, then this would be a sad misjudging of facts”.²⁶⁴ In 2012, again, 59% of Germans considered

²⁶¹ Dempsey (2012, June 7). Germany's Gunboat Diplomacy.

²⁶² Shackle (2014, February 25). Are German-Israeli relations wavering?

²⁶³ Ravid, B., & Khoury, J. (2014, December 3). Three EU powers draft Security Council resolution on Israeli-Palestinian deal. *Haaretz*.

²⁶⁴ Der Tagesspiegel. (2003, November 05). Fear of Antisemitism: Critique of poll.

Israel as aggressive and 70% “agree[d] with the statement that Israel pursues its interests without consideration for other nations”.²⁶⁵ In 2014, 52% of Germans thought their government supports Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while only 20% thought it supports both sides. Only 2% saw the Palestinians as clearly supported.²⁶⁶

The explained construction of German behavior towards Israel shows the pro-Israel bias of Germany’s FP behavior. The potentially instability- and insecurity-causing friction within the two-level discourse of the German government between the domestic and international political scene will need addressing. The question therefore is whether the evolving fusion of the West’s global liberal project (GLP) and global war on terror (GWOT) will prevent citizens’ focus on Germany’s “good” values, including international norms and rules, and fuel orientalist or Huntingtonian worldviews, which would divert attention away from the injustice done toward the Palestinians.²⁶⁷ Many Western and Israeli politicians, for example, see the Arab-Israeli conflict in terms similar or identical to Samuel Huntington’s theory of the clash of civilization, with a Judeo-Christian civilization on one side and Islam on the other, resulting in strong stance pro-Zionism.²⁶⁸ This view is an important factor for the superiority involved in

²⁶⁵ Haaretz. (2012, May 23). Poll: Majority of Germans think Israel is 'aggressive'.

²⁶⁶ Hagemann & Nathanson (2015). Germany and Israel today, p. 46.

²⁶⁷ “Samuel Huntington ... has argued that identitive affinities, defined in broad ‘civilizational’ (religious-cultural) terms, constitute the fundamental factor shaping post-cold war relationships. For Huntington, civilizational differences form the main faultlines in the contemporary international system” (Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 81.; quoted from Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no.3 (1993)). “Consequently, the more heterogeneous an area in civilizational terms, the more conflict-prone it will be” (Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 81.).

²⁶⁸ “Netanyahu has written books about this, and Lieberman has said it time and again” (Strenger, C. (2009, March 11). Israel's new rightwing government is blind to the country's deteriorating status in the western world. *The Guardian*); Kamal Hassan in his article “Islam and the West” critically highlights the belief among Westerners that the Muslim world is embarking a holy war against the Judeo-Christians values (Hassan, K. (1997). *Islam and the West. Intellectual Discourse* , 5 (1), p. 29.); The

the belief to do morally “good”, as in the GLP and GWOT, as well as for prejudices and misperceptions. Both features would show similarities to the motives behind gentile Zionism pre-WWII.

C. German foreign policy after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War, embodied by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent German reunification, was seen, especially in the Western world, as the victory of the values and principles of liberal free market democracy over communism. The until-then championed transnational and multilateral character of liberalism was seen as finally finding its completion in its development into a universal framework for international relations, seeking global peace and security and resulting prosperity, hence its description as the global liberal project (GLP). Regarding the mood in the UN, Bellamy and Williams describe, how this perceived victory over communism “lent credence to the post-Westphalian idea that the spread of liberal democracy constituted the best path to global stable peace Indeed, in 1996 [UN Secretary-General Boutros] Boutros-Ghali recognized an ‘emerging consensus’ on the value of liberal democracy”.²⁶⁹ This time represented for the world at large, as well as Germany, a critical juncture in the development of international relations, shown by the transformational developments of globalization, which began running its course.

Washington Institute for Near East Policy published the paper “Israel: A Strategic Asset for the United States” in which it emphasized the US’ and Israel’s common “roots in Judeo-Christian culture and civilization” (Blackwill, R. D., & Slocombe, W. B. (2011). *Israel: A strategic asset for the United States*. p. 1.); German President Christian Wulff emphasized the Germany’s Judeo-Christian history (Rohan, B. (2010, October 3). German president welcomes Islam during unity speech. *Reuters.com*.)

²⁶⁹ Bellamy, A. J., Williams, P., & Griffi, S. (2012). *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Vol. second edition). Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 100-1.

For the UN, after more than 50 years of being literally vetoed into a bystander role as political formative actor, this finally meant the possibility of realizing its mission of improving living and humanitarian conditions through a more direct role. The demand for possible UN involvement grew intensively, as the steep increase in UN peace operations showed. The UN was dominated by the Western powers, as Russia was turned inward in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This resulted in a UN approach to peacebuilding, which quickly began shifting from a Westphalian approach of status quo protection to actively reshaping countries and regions affected by crises. The foundation to a self-confident state-building approach was built, based on the strong belief in the “goodness” of supposedly universally accepted Western liberal values and the effectiveness and efficiency of Western institutions and modern technocratic bureaucracies and state-structures.

Germany appeared from a convenient Cold War situation in which it reinvented itself and prospered, and for which it was rewarded with reunification and regained sovereignty.²⁷⁰ Germany had developed a strong export-oriented economy, making it the biggest exporter in the world. This also meant increasing influence but also dependence on stable markets and international peace and stability in general. The exemption of Germany from military obligations through the NATO countries, stipulated foremost by the US, helped it form an anti-military identity. Karl Otto Hondrich summarizes this situation saying: “Germans were forced into a political role after World War Two.” But after time because of it “they developed, not just superficially, but ‘really’: into model students of peaceableness”.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Chancellor Gerhard Schröder: “after the attainment of full sovereignty” (German Bundestag (2002, April 25). Parliament Report 14/233, Berlin).

²⁷¹ Hondrich, K.O. “Lehrmeister Krieg [War as Teacher]”. *Spiegel*, 4 (1991): 27.

Germany became accustomed to not being asked for military contributions to international conflicts, and instead, supported by its prosperity, to literally invest in so-called cash-diplomacy, also visibly shown by its above-average engagement in aid provision.²⁷² Cash-diplomacy stood in place of hard power. A potential negative side effect was the evolving German habit of enjoying benefits resulting from the allies' realpolitik decisions, while seeing them more as a result of the new and "good" German identity. Berger summarizes this convenience more critical than Hondrich:

"Insulated in a cocoon of multilateral institutions - NATO, the European Community, the West European Union and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) - Germany has been able to concentrate its energies on economic development and a broad social agenda while other countries, above all the United States, bore the brunt of providing for its security."²⁷³

In this regard, Szabo is even describing German self-deception:

"While Germans can continue to comfort themselves that they are anti-militarist, even pacifist, and exceptionally in their rejection of the use of military force à la the US, France and the United Kingdom, Germany's defence industry reaps profits of being the world's third-largest arms exporter. ... Globalization ... has reinforced these tendencies [such as decreasing limitations of arms exports to regions troubled by conflict, especially the Middle East]".²⁷⁴

Besides pragmatic and even opportunistic motives of some political decision-makers, this could also explain the parallelism of having become the "good" aid provider as well as having developed into one of the largest arms suppliers to the world.²⁷⁵ As with Western liberalism in general, this development might be a reason for

²⁷² Showing similarity to the other defeated country from WWII, Japan.

²⁷³ Berger (1997). *The past in the present*, p.40.

²⁷⁴ Szabo, S. F. (2014). Germany's Commercial Realism and the Russia Problem. *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 56 (5), p. 120.

²⁷⁵ In various cases German governments illegally ignored embargos and sanctions, or did weapons deals hidden from the public due to anticipated domestic or international opposition. Secretly, already in 1957, Germany was agreeing on arms deals with Israel, with which it did not have official diplomatic relations (they were established in 1965) (Sonne, W. (2013). *Raison d'état? How Germany is liable for Israel's security [Staatsräson? Wie Deutschland für Israel haftet]*. Berlin: Propyläen, pp. 41-3). During the Cold War, German governments were actively supporting German weapons manufacturers in arranging and completing deals with states under embargo, with

the lack of the self-reflection that could illuminate negative influences of an increasingly interventionist FP by Western states as well as the above described subconscious perception of moral justification.

Similar reflection was missing regarding the character of the UN, which Germany strongly supports as the only realistic platform for international policy-making based on mutual recognition and universal values. Already in 1992 in front of the UN, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, in the most restrained yet clear language, expressed Germany's serious interest in a permanent UN Security Council seat.²⁷⁶ Critical analysis of the UN does not mean opposition to it, but it might have helped to understand the risks of coming state-building projects, based on a flawed perception of their "goodness", as well as the meaning of lacking UN Security Council (UNSC) authorizations. Barnett's illumination of the Western liberal motivation behind state-building ambitions including the focus on using and building international organizations (IO) explains this perceived "goodness". He states: "Although they routinely claim that they are value-neutral, objective and apolitical, in fact IOs are actively preaching that specific political and economic institutions are the most efficient and normatively desirable".²⁷⁷ In particular Barnett critically assesses the UN:

"The UN system has converged around the desirability of democracy and markets – liberal values and norms – as the 'best' form of domestic governance, and the form that is most likely to generate international peace and security. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations are exemplars here. Attempts 'to save failed states' have required a nearly unprecedented degree of IO intervention, in the hope that by transferring various liberal norms to the local context, these states will become stable and responsible members of international society".²⁷⁸

states which were enemies of German allies, or with states which were known for their disrespect of human rights and international (humanitarian) law (Tagliabue, J. (1987, March 29). Marketing West German Arms. *The New York Times*).

²⁷⁶ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, p. 17.

²⁷⁷ Barnett (2002). *Historical Sociology and constructivism*, p. 114.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 115.

This is because the UN not only grew out of the rubble of a World War started by Germany, but also because of efforts to use the UN framework to preserve colonial power structures. As the successor to the League of Nations it represented a Western attempt, mostly by Great Britain and France, to save the remnants of former dominating colonial, global influence. This view also helps with a neutral evaluation of one of the UN's first and for a long time biggest challenges: dealing with the Middle East, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. It was mainly a Westphalian thinking, focusing on stability and economic interests, based on superiority and disinterest in the local indigenous population, that led to the partitioning of British Mandate Palestine, and its territorial design, which made war between Israel and the local Palestinians highly likely. It furthermore uncovers the roots of the dangerous implicitness with which – until today – the Palestinians were subdivided and categorized,²⁷⁹ with far-reaching consequences for their abilities to fight for Palestinian self-determination, to exercise their internationally recognized rights,²⁸⁰ and to legitimately and legally resist their occupier Israel as well as partially undemocratic Palestinian rulers. It is the same implicitness, which today considers it normal that Palestinians should negotiate directly with Israel instead of, if they wish, directly appealing to the UN or the ICC; or with which land swaps entered into the two-state solution discourse; or with which the right

²⁷⁹ Into: *real* Palestinians (because of voting rights in Palestinian national elections) living in the OPT, Arab-Israel citizens of Israel, Palestinian refugees in the OPT, Palestinian refugees in the Middle East outside Israel and the OPT, the diaspora in the rest of the world.

²⁸⁰ Such as the right of return as enshrined in the General Assembly resolution 194 (UN General Assembly (1948, December 11). A/Res/194 (III)). The resolution states: “[The General Assembly] *Resolves* that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible”.

of return is reduced to a symbolic gesture. Western liberal “common” sense defines the acceptable framework in which Palestinian political decision-makers, who are also selectively empowered by the Western dominated MEPP, could politically manoeuvre.

After a short phase of excitedly growing engagement in the peace operation the UN itself had to engage in retrospection, caused by the dramatic failures in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia. During the late 1990s, the UN was choosing a path back to the root principles of neutrality, impartiality and consent. At the same time, North American and European states saw the solution in an even more thorough liberal approach to state-building, culminating in transformational administrations, as in the Balkans,²⁸¹ as well as in peace enforcement involving military force. Thereby the Western states, including Germany, became gradually *accustomed* to selectively chosen – interest-dependent and proximity-related – humanitarian foreign interventions without UNSC authorization.²⁸² This caused a future lack of credibility and impartiality. Korany and Dessouki describe the double standards of the US and European states during the early 1990s from the perspective of the Arab and Muslim worlds, for example the observed “implement[ation] of UN resolutions and human rights safeguards strictly in the Gulf

²⁸¹ Bellamy, Williams & Griffi (2012). *Understanding Peacekeeping*, pp.255-78; UNTAES (UNTA for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, Western Sirmium) p.255, Bosnia and UNMIK (UN Mission In Kosovo) pp.256-7.

²⁸² Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 55. *Accustomed* refers to the above described development of the legitimacy/legality discourse. About the selectiveness and its construction regarding humanitarian foreign interventions Forsythe is writing: “Humanitarian protection is based on social liberalism, which gives primacy to the needs and welfare of the individual, and nation-states tend to operate in international relations according to the tenets of realism, which gives priority to national interests. ... Even states reflecting political liberalism at home tend to be realists in their foreign policies, especially when their existence and vital interests (as they see them) are threatened. Thus even liberal democracies often act on realist principles in international relations, elevating national interests over the human interest when the two clash“ (Forsythe, D. (2001, March). UNHCR's mandate: the politics of being non-political. *New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 33*, p. 9).

war of 1991, but [their] ignoring ... in other cases such as [the first Intifada in] Palestine and Bosnia where Western interests were not at stake".²⁸³

For Germany this time period meant fast and sudden tests for its newly regained sovereignty and the related new FP role, as well as confrontation with the results of its rather pragmatic arms export history.²⁸⁴ The German state had to define new FP goals based on its new freedom, but it was also confronted with then unknown alliance obligations and demands, especially the demands the US made as a putative patron while Germany was still organizing its reunification.²⁸⁵ To prevent military engagement in the Gulf War of 1990/91, Germany kept using the tool of cash-diplomacy and contributed more than one third of its annual defense budget to the Desert Storm operation.²⁸⁶ The Gulf War represented several challenges. German FP was based on reliability, forcing it to contribute in some way. But the German Basic Law prohibited the use of the military abroad, especially outside NATO territory. Ignoring this would have been a serious challenge to Germany's identity on the domestic level, while not financially contributing would have caused a lack of trust on the international level. Furthermore, Israel was under the threat of being hit by Iraqi Scud missiles, which potentially could carry chemical weapons, previously provided to Iraq by Germany, and which already had been involved in the gassing of the Iraqi Kurds in Halabja. For this reason Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher flew to Tel Aviv

²⁸³ Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, pp. 52-3.

²⁸⁴ Von Bredow (2008). *Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany*, p. 200.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 203. Chancellor Schröder, on 25 April 2002: "after the attainment of full sovereignty, we have to rise to obligations today, which have been self-evident to our partners in Europe and in the world" (Parliament Report 14/233, 23117A).

²⁸⁶ Berenskoetter & Giegerich (2010). *From NATO to ESDP*, p. 431.

during the war to offer German reconstruction aid and to stabilize the weakened Israeli-German relations.²⁸⁷

The Balkan wars of the 1990s confronted Germany with more challenges of this type. Still testing out the boundaries of its new freedom regarding the responses from its allied and neighboring states, Germany, in a “hasty” way, unilaterally recognized the independence of Slovenia as well as of Croatia.²⁸⁸ The German state based this decision on its identification with Slovenia and Croatia’s aim for self-determination and sovereignty.²⁸⁹ But this caused dissatisfaction and distrust among other European states and the US who were trying to prevent a break up of Yugoslavia. Germany learned from this experience, and subsequently saw its otherwise multilateral approach even more confirmed. Experiencing conflicts in such close proximity in addition to such repeated international demands for military contributions, led German policymakers to ask the Constitutional Court of Germany about the possibility of using the *Bundeswehr* abroad. In a pathbreaking decision the Court stated that the *Bundeswehr* could be used for missions abroad, if they are serving the defense of the security of Germany and its allies. Related to these developments, the awareness started growing in German political decision-making circles, that its international partners might increasingly challenge its special role as Civilian Power.²⁹⁰ In addition, German FP makers started thinking about what a “normal” FP role for Germany would look like. The related debate would intensify over time.

²⁸⁷ Kloke, M. (2005, July 7). 40 years of German-Israeli relations [40 Jahre deutsch-israelische Beziehungen].

²⁸⁸ Amin, S. (2004, November). U.S. Imperialism, Europe and the Middle East, *Monthly Reviewn-An Independent socialist magazine*, 11/2004, 56 (6), p. 18.

²⁸⁹ Von Bredow (2008). Foreign Politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, p. 217.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 203.

The first time that German troops would be sent into a foreign military mission was 1999 in Kosovo. Despite the Constitutional Court decision from 1994 and the legitimacy-instead-of-legality discourse of NATO and the UN, the German government was severely challenged domestically. Representing Germany's domestic identity component well, the government consisted of a coalition between the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the till then mostly pacifist Green Party. Then-Foreign Minister and Green Party leader Joseph Fischer addressed his party by referring to Germany's Holocaust responsibility, which he translated into a general German responsibility to prevent genocide. To convince his highly critical party colleagues he described a German duty to prevent another Auschwitz within Europe. Interestingly, then-Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in a 2012 interview expressed his understanding for Fischer's move to appeal to the moral conscience of anti-military politicians, but at the same time he criticized the questioning of the singularity of the terrible Jewish Holocaust.²⁹¹ This statement shows the character of German commitment to Israel as it introduces the idea of differently bad genocide types, which underlines the flaw in Germany's approach to supposedly universal values.

Also happening during the end of the Cold War and the early 1990s was the First Intifada in the OPT. Its worldwide broadcasted symbolic images of occupation-resisting, stone-throwing Palestinian being confronted by heavily armed Israeli occupation forces brought the Israeli injustice back into the conscience of the world community.²⁹² The secretly executed Oslo Process and the concluding 1993 Accords further consolidated the institutional MEPP. It offered Yasser Arafat, who was not

²⁹¹ Schröder, G. (2013, April 1). Germany Can Only Lead Europe the Way Porcupines Mate. *Spiegel online*.

²⁹² Cohen, S. (2001). *States of Denial*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p. xii.

responsible for the grassroots-like organized Palestinian uprising, an otherwise impossible re-entry into Palestinian politics from his exile in Tunis. For Israel the Oslo Accords were able to stop its international legitimacy-threatening uprising of the Palestinian population, which it had already occupied for more than 35 years.

For Western states like Germany it meant a potential end of the need to acknowledge the injustice perpetrated by Israel on the Palestinians. Through the lens of Western liberalism, which increasingly perceived the developing world as a collection of weak states in need of state-building, Germany and the EU in particular began investing in Palestinian institution building. The goal was to prepare the Palestinian Authority on the road to the day it would receive its own Palestinian state based on the two-state solution. As in the Balkans the focus of the international community was on the building of modern bureaucratic state structures and security infrastructure, which could ensure the future state's monopoly over the use of force. Within this framework, Germany became one of the largest continuous aid donors as well as a provider of customs and police training capacities. Parallel to its support for the Palestinians, Germany increasingly closed weapons and arms deals with Israel. Representing Germany's aim for reliability and consistency, these deals had already been prepared by previous German governments since the 1970s.²⁹³ Most significant are the unconditional deliveries and partial subsidizations of six submarines over the course of approximately 20 years. These submarines were armed with nuclear weapons retroactively by Israel, based on German technological preparations.²⁹⁴

The years after Oslo meant a continuation of Israel's occupation marked by an increase of settlement activities unseen in its intensity until then. This happened under

²⁹³ Kloke (2005, July 7). 40 years of German-Israeli relations.

²⁹⁴ Borck, T. (2014, November 20). Germany and Israel: A 'Special Relationship'. *RUSI*.

the Israeli left-wing government under the leadership of Yitzhak Rabin, further showing the superficiality of the distinction between liberal and right-wing Zionism.

Furthermore, Israel started significantly decreasing its reliance on Palestinians from the OPT for labor in Israel, causing a worsening instead of improving Palestinian everyday situation.

With a resulting stagnation of the implementation of the Oslo Roadmap the problems between Israel and the Palestinians started increasing again. The latter became increasingly frustrated and desperate, eventually resorting to occupation resistance activities, which would dramatically intensify in their level of violence, which became increasingly marked by Palestinian suicide bombings in Israeli cities. After the assassination of Rabin the Israeli government came to be led by the right-wing Zionist Benjamin Netanyahu who eventually stopped following the Oslo Roadmap. To deal with the increasing and deadlier Palestinian resistance Israel started expanding and further developing a discourse that portrayed Palestinian resistance as a terrorist movement. This discourse was combined with orientalist and islamophobic elements, describing the Palestinians as Arab Islamic-fundamentalist terrorists, who are attacking Western values. In the late 1990s this development might have met with suspicion or even rejection from the Western community due to the repeatedly assessed illegality of Israel's activities, such as torture, targeted killing and its increasingly onerous occupation system in the OPT. But as typical for the MEPP, Israel did not really have to fear consequences for its actions.

The perception of Israel's portrayed occupation-independent terror problem changed dramatically with 9/11 terror attacks by Al-Qaeda in the US. From this time on, and strengthened with every subsequent terror attack in Europe or on Western

targets abroad, Western states including Germany started increasingly identifying with Israel's terrorism discourse.²⁹⁵ Its islamophobic elements were hitting nerves in Western societies, which increasingly became aware of the failures of their own integration policies,²⁹⁶ and resulting or perceived problems with its Muslim communities comprised of Turkish guest workers and Middle Eastern war refugees in Germany or Algerians in France and Pakistanis in Great Britain. For example, in September 2004, the German Interior Minister Otto Schily defended the construction of the wall between Israel and the OPT saying Israel is the country "affected the hardest and longest by terror".²⁹⁷

Conservative German newspapers described the wall as "Anti-Terrorism Protection

²⁹⁵ The word "terror..." was only mentioned twice in the analyzed 2000 debate regarding the Second Intifada (one being a quote of Shimon Peres). In the 2002 debate, which also concerns itself with the Second Intifada, the word "terror..." is mentioned several times on 25 percent of the 200-page long debate transcript.

²⁹⁶ Chancellor Schröder, in debate on 25 April 2002, described Germany's own stake in ME conflict ("because we are affected ourselves"), stating that integration of own minorities and the prevention of "parallel societies" is part of providing domestic security in Germany (Parliament Report 14/233, 23116C).

²⁹⁷ FAZ (2004, September 13). Israel: Schily defends border fence - Netanyahu suggests referendum [Israel: Schily verteidigt Grenzzaun - Netanjahu schlägt Referendum vor]. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. The power of the (global war on) terror discourse can be better grasped considering the context regarding the timing of his statement as well as regarding Schily's own history. He made the comment only weeks after the ICJ's Advisory Opinion on 9 August 2004 which stated "that the construction of the wall and its associated regime are contrary to international law (Momtaz, D. (2005, December). Israel and the Fourth Geneva Convention: On the ICJ Advisory Opinion concerning the Separation Barrier. *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law*, 8, p. 354). Also, Schily is a lawyer himself and in this capacity had been defending the German left-wing terrorist group Red Army Faction (RAF) members Horst Mahler and Gudrun Ensslin. The latter two were known for having received military training in a Fatah camp in Jordan in 1970 (State Office for the Protection of the Constitution Baden Württemberg [Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz Baden-Württemberg]. (2011, July 19). Red Army Faction (RAF) [Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF)]; and (Baader Meinhof PLO Training Camp, Jordan: Basic Military Training of RAF. (2007, July 2). *youtube (Ben Lewis)*). "Back then, Schily several times harshly (verbally) attacked the security services. Later he repeatedly had to defend himself against allegations saying he had identified himself with the goals of the RAF" (Isermann, R. (2012, July 20). Vom RAF Anwalt zum 'eisernen Otto'. *RP online*.), which, since the cooperation with Fatah, focused more on the Palestinian cause in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Wunschik, T. (2007, August 31). Baader-Meinhof international? [Baader-Meinhof international?]. *Federal Center for political education [Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung]*).

Wall”.²⁹⁸ Besides islamophobia there is also growing realization of having minorities who are potential representatives of both sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict within own Western societies. In this regard Chloé Benoist describes increasing French xenophobia and fear of domestic violence parallel to the 2014 Gaza war and the resulting attempt to keep the Israeli-Palestinian conflict debate outside the domestic area. Benoist quotes Pascal Boniface, the director of the Institute of International and Strategic Relations, who summarizes: “Fear of dividing the public, of heightening tensions, of adding fuel to the fire, means that far too often we don’t tackle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict frankly”.²⁹⁹

Additionally Israel became more frequently portrayed as a member of the Western *Wertegemeinschaft* (community of values),³⁰⁰ which NATO had already emphasized as a binding component of the alliance. The parallel occurrence of the 9/11 events and the Second Intifada, which was marked by suicide bombings, represents a further critical juncture regarding Germany’s relations to Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It represents a critical fusion of the GLP with the global war on terror (GWOT).

The GWOT as announced by the Bush administration after the 9/11 attacks was also based on sudden unexpected feelings of fear, insecurity and vulnerability that transformed into the American pursuit of revenge and putative justice through the fight

²⁹⁸ Stein, H. (2004, July 24). Antiterrorist Protection Wall [Antiterroristischer Schutzwall]. *Die Welt*.

²⁹⁹ Benoist, C. (2014, July 22). Gaza conflict exposes France’s own struggles with xenophobia. *Al Akhbar*.

³⁰⁰ Steinmeier, F. (2014, September 15). German FM Steinmeier: 'There is no place for anti-Semitism in Germany!'. *World Jewish Congress*.

against terrorism.³⁰¹ The latter aspect resonated with the other Western states striving for more robust security. Furthermore, due the dependence of Western states on the US, many if not all of them felt obligated to join in the GWOT independent other their own doubts regarding its execution, which has often been characterized as illegal and illegitimate.³⁰² The US began copying the military and legal tactics of Israel's war against terror and integrated them into its own system.³⁰³

For Germany the critical juncture was also represented in its following of the US invasion of Afghanistan in the fight against the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. As NATO had invoked the defense case and as the government under Chancellor Schröder had pledged its solidarity after 9/11, a refusal to participate in the UN-authorized ISAF operation would have challenged Germany's FP principles.³⁰⁴ But for the German government to secure domestic as well as parliamentary legitimacy it was necessary to portray the Afghanistan mission as another state building and development mission with

³⁰¹ Korany & Dessouki (2008). *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, p. 10, describing a US "trauma".

³⁰² Richard Falk speaks of "the general pattern of practices associated with the conduct of the War Against Global Terror", which provides – besides the 2003 Iraq War – "the most notorious instance of illegal and illegitimate" (Falk, R. (2005, December). *Legality and Legitimacy: The Quest for Principled Flexibility and Restraint. Review of International Studies*, 31 (Force and Legitimacy in World Politics), p.49).

³⁰³ Hajjar, L. (n.d.). *Lawfare and Armed Conflict: Comparing Israeli and US Targeted Killing Policies and Challenges Against Them*, p. 9f, describes how illegal actions became legitimate/legal because of long enough practice and repetition and because of 9/11 with its impact of the US psyche.

³⁰⁴ "...contributing assistance ... [to the US is] driven not so much by intrinsic concern for Afghanistan as by a desire to consolidate ... own relations with the United States. In addition, by committing support to Afghanistan, states friendly with the US can insulate themselves from pressure to contribute to ongoing Coalition operations in Iraq, which are no less perilous than those in Afghanistan and likely to be more contentious domestically" (Maley, W. (2006). *Rescueing Afghanistan*. London: Hurst & Company, pp. 101-2). Independently from whether out of convenience (perception of the good hegemon US, band waggoning) or out of realistic acceptance of the existing global power distribution (US is the hegemon) many German politicians were fully accepting the US leadership role. Stoiber said on 25 April 2002 regarding the US role in the Arab-Israeli conflict: "The key for the solution of the conflict is ultimately with the USA" (Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23119C).

the aim of helping a people in need. Chancellor Schröder admitted the need to emphasize the promotion and protection of women's rights, exemplified by the construction of girls' schools, to convince the German public, which was preponderantly opposed to German military involvement in Afghanistan.³⁰⁵ Shahnaz Khan's analysis of colonial feminism, including its orientalist elements, based on the example of how the US society perceived, portrayed and dealt with the publicized case of 18-year-old Afghan woman Bibi Aisha shows significant parallels to Chancellor Schröder's justification attempt, situating it in a wider context, typical for the GWOT.³⁰⁶ Khan explains where the motivation – or in the German case the acceptance – for Western involvement and intervention originates and what narratives are created. She describes how the related discourse gives legitimacy to Western political and military strategies, which actually have different motives and aims than publicized.³⁰⁷ Khan's research proves an "imperialist and political agenda" by analyzing Wikileaks CIA documents, which furthermore is confirmed by retrospective statements made by Chancellor Schröder in 2013.³⁰⁸ Khan quotes the CIA:

"Afghan women could serve as ideal messengers in humanizing the ISAF role in combating the Taliban because of women's ability to speak personally and credibly about their experiences under the Taliban, their aspirations for the future, and their fears of a Taliban victory. Outreach initiatives that create media opportunities for Afghan women to share their stories with French, German, and other European women could help to overcome pervasive scepticism among women in Western Europe toward the ISAF mission."³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ Augstein, J. (2014, February 3). Deutschlands Rolle in der Welt: Das Gerede vom Krieg [Germany's role in the world: The talk about war]. *Spiegel online*.

³⁰⁶ Khan, S. (2013). Two faces of Afghan women: Opressend and exotic. *Women's Studies International Forum*.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 2.

³⁰⁸ Schröder (2013, April 1). Germany Can Only Lead Europe the Way Porcupines Mate.

³⁰⁹ Khan (2013). Two faces of Afghan women, p. 5.

Asked about his reference to girls schools and whether German society “need[s] a moral component ... to justify war because reasons related to realpolitik aren't enough”³¹⁰ Schröder answered:

Well, merely invoking the NATO Treaty would have been too abstract. We had to argue that the goal was to stop the activities of terrorists and oppressors. It isn't a bad thing for the German population to demand a moral explanation for a military intervention. I'm happy that the days are gone when Germans went to war with enthusiasm, as was the case in 1914.³¹¹

In the end despite the appeal to moral values and German international responsibility, Schröder still felt the obligation to link the vote on the Afghanistan mission with a vote of confidence. Due to the unwritten law of deciding *Bundeswehr* deployments with large majorities across party lines, Schröder had to fear to get more votes from the opposition than from his coalition where he did have to worry, especially about the votes of the Greens.³¹²

Chancellor Schröder's described need to convince the German public took place while German FP-makers were further thinking about the normalization of German FP and its meaning for the German military. In this regard Szabo describes a “commercial-realist” view: “Given the centrality of economic interests, especially trade, the military's primary role is to protect German access to raw material, and to secure sea lines of communication and other key trading routes”.³¹³ In 2010, surprisingly, this view was officially – and immediately criticized – expressed by the German president Horst Köhler.³¹⁴ In the 2006 White Book “on German Security and the Future of the

³¹⁰ Schröder (2013, April 1). Germany Can Only Lead Europe the Way Porcupines Mate.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² DW (2005, May 23). Schröder Pins Hopes on Vote of Confidence. *DW.de*.

³¹³ Szabo (2014). Germany's Commercial Realism and the Russia Problem, p. 119.

³¹⁴ Köhler stated, significantly while being on a plane returning from a troop visit in Afghanistan: “But my estimation is that, on the whole, we are on the way to understanding, even broadly in society, that a country of our size, with this orientation

Bundeswehr” German security policy is described as “driven by the values set forth in its Basic Law and by the goal of safeguarding the interest of our country”.³¹⁵ It further specifies the values and interests in six points, with the last goal being “to promote free and open world trade as the basis for our prosperity and, by doing so help close the gap between the poor and the wealthy regions of the world”.³¹⁶

Chancellor Schröder’s justification approach regarding German participation in Afghanistan represents characteristics of the fusion of GLP and GWOT. The discourse about the weak state in need of Western-guided state-building was combined with the view of weak states and entities as potential fertile grounds for terrorism. This fusion furthermore entailed the above-described elements of economic interests as well as of prejudice and stereotypes regarding Arab and Muslim communities. Future conflicts involving non-state actors, asymmetric warfare and weak-state characteristics were increasingly seen through this new lens.

This was also apparent with the 2006 Lebanon War and its aftermath. After Hizbullah had kidnapped two and killed eight Israeli soldiers with the aim of forcing the release of Lebanese prisoners, Israel retaliated in a disproportionate way by bombing Lebanon for 34 days, killing around 1200 civilians and destroying large parts of Lebanon’s infrastructure.

toward foreign trade and therefore also dependence on foreign trade, has to be aware that when in doubt in case of an emergency, military deployment is also necessary to protect our interests. For example, free trade routes, for example to prevent instability in a whole region, which certainly have a negative impact on our opportunities via trade, jobs and income. All of that ought to be discussed and I believe that we are not doing too badly” (The Local. (2010, May 27). Köhler under fire for ‘economic war’ remarks. *The Local*).

³¹⁵ Federal Ministry of Defence. (2006). White Paper 2006: on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr, p.6.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

In response the US and Israel called for a UN peace enforcement mission, with troops provided by NATO, with the aim of disarming Hizbullah. The latter was portrayed as a terrorist organization, weakening the Lebanese state and threatening the existence of Israel. Warned by the increasing failures of the GWOT, in turn marked by increasing instability in the Middle East, European states in particular influenced the process of mission formation by toning down the resolution language from chapter VII to chapter VI and by introducing a European military component instead of a NATO one.³¹⁷ Very significant for Germany's identity was the decision to contribute troops to the UNIFIL mission. For the first time since WWII German soldiers would be operating in the Middle East, and notably in a country neighboring Israel. Additionally, Germany, as in the case of Palestine after Oslo, and Afghanistan after 2001, provided training for customs and police.³¹⁸ But critically, the UNIFIL mission did not address the original problem of the tensions between Lebanon/Hizbullah and Israel as well as of the inter-Lebanese problems, which caused the weak state characteristics in the first place. In this regard Muriel Asseburg describes the critical gap between the theoretical goals of state-building projects and an understanding of the situation on the ground. Regarding Germany's investment in customs and police infrastructure she points out that the success of border control projects not only depends on material support but also on local will, and therefore the understanding and acceptance of the local perspective to the problem/conflict.³¹⁹ In this regard she highlights the different understandings of the concepts of national sovereignty and resistance from a German and from a Lebanese

³¹⁷ Makdisi, K. (2011, February). Constructing Security Council Resolution 1701 for Lebanon in the Shadow of the 'War on Terror'. *International Peacekeeping*, 18 (1), pp. 14-5.

³¹⁸ "Germany has been the lead nation where police reform in Afghanistan is concerned" (Maley, W. (2006). *Rescueing Afghanistan*. London: Hurst & Company, p. 75).

³¹⁹ Asseburg, Muriel 2009. European Conflict Management in the Middle East: Toward a more effective approach, *SWP Research Paper*, RP4, February 2004, p. 16.

perspective.³²⁰ An alternative approach addressing Israel's actions and policies towards its neighbors as well as towards the Palestinians would have been needed.

A lack of this awareness as well as the idealistic understanding of state building and a global war on terror (GWOT)-typical reaction were shown in the approach to the Palestinian elections in 2006. The West under the leadership of the US, against Israeli opposition, pushed for them. But when Hamas unexpectedly won, the West denied the recognition of its democratically achieved victory and implemented the "Westbank first" approach. This represented another identification with the Israeli terrorism discourse, which delegitimized Hamas. The new approach focused on helping the PA and which stopped the support to the Gaza strip, which had come under sole Hamas control after a coup.

³²⁰ Research works and reports such as from Makdisi et al. (Makdisi, K., Göksel, T., Hauck, H.B., Reigeluth, S. 2009. UNIFIL II: Emerging and Evolving European Engagement in Lebanon and the Middle East, EuroMeSCo Paper 76, January 2009, pp. 1-40), Asseburg (Steinberg (2009). German Middle East and North Africa Policy, pp. 22-30), and the CIT (CIT, 2006. EU Civil Missions in the Palestinian Territories: Frustrated Reform and Suspended Security, CITpax Middle East Special Report, 1, Summer 2006, pp. 1-40) highlight similar problems, contradictions and failures, including for example the EU border assistance mission (EUBAM) in Rafah, Gaza.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND INTIFADA: THE FRAMING OF THE 2000-2005 PALESTINIAN UPRISING IN THE GERMAN *BUNDESTAG*

A. Introduction

In the previous chapter this thesis explored the construction of German FP, including the development of its foundational values and principles. Special focus was placed on the biased influence of German political elite philo-Zionism on German FP towards Israel and its neighboring states. The chapter concluded by explaining German FP since Germany's regaining of full sovereignty in 1990 to further highlight Germany's identity development in the new post-Cold War environment. The increasing pursuit of Western states and Germany in realizing the global liberal project and since 9/11 the global war on terror, as well as the protracted MEPP, were also marked by the constant influence of biased, pro-Israel FP decision-making.

The following two chapters will focus on two key events that illustrate the manifestation of the pro-Israel bias in German FP-making. Chapter four focuses on the Second Intifada, which occurred from 2000 until 2005, and chapter five on the 2006 Lebanon War. Through a discourse analysis of two debates regarding each event in the German *Bundestag* this thesis will explain German parliamentarians' perception and framing of the respective conflicts. This is critical as the debates are representing the phase of public description of decision options, which is a very significant part of the FP-making process. In the case of the second 2006 Lebanon debate the option choice, in form of a record vote, took place directly after the debate.

The main part of chapter four and chapter five is comprised of debate quotes.

They are chosen based on each parliamentarian's political role and background.³²¹ The quotes are sorted by categories referring to the main aim they are addressing. Within the categories the quotes are organized chronologically. After each quote this thesis will identify the involved bias as well as highlight and explain its justification and the involved motive for it.³²²

B. Analysis of Second Intifada debates

The *Bundestag* debates related to the Second Intifada are from 25 October 2000 and 25 April 2002. They are sorted in following categories: 1) quotes referencing to the bond between Germany and Israel based on history and common values; 2) quotes which show how parliamentarians frame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 3) quotes in which parliamentarians claim they are or have to criticize Israel but they are actually doing it only vaguely or not at all; 4) debate contributions based on a discourse that attributes negative associations with Israel to right-wing Zionism and good associations to liberal Zionism; 5) quotes which represent the uniformity of the presented, supposedly informed opinions; 6) quotes that emphasize that the MEPP, and especially the two-state solution, is the only acceptable and possible approach to a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict; 7) parts of speeches which seek to underline Germany's commitment to impartiality, especially regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict; 8) quotes that represent, also if only partial, acknowledgement of Israeli wrong-doing; and 9) quotes which exemplify the attempts of delegitimizing outspoken critics of Israeli policies and actions.

³²¹ Also see Appendix.

³²² The meaning of applause and spontaneous interjections – both not occurring seldom and officially recorded in the *Bundestag* debate protocols – should not be ignored, but can only be interpreted in a limited way.

1. Bound by history and common values

Germany repeatedly emphasizes that its bond with Israel is based not only on the Holocaust but also on values that both states have in common. This is supposed to show that Germany supports Israel out of more than a feeling of guilt, which could lead to toleration of the illegal behavior of Israel today. This would harm Germany's international reputation (as a "good" state) in addition to threatening the legitimacy of the German government in relation to the German public. Emphasizing that Israel is part of the Western *Wertegemeinschaft* (community of values) – being liberal, civilized, democratic – insulates the German government from such allegations of being guilt-focused. It furthermore gives Israel the powerful benefit of the doubt, which places the burden of proof for international transgressions on the side of Israel's critics and not on Israel or the German government. In addition to the discourse about common history and values, the analysis shows the following:

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000:

We are responsible for Israel. This I am not only saying with the view on our own dark history. Israel is the democracy in the Middle East. Whoever searches for reliable pillars for regional stability, comes to the conclusion Israel is the most important pillar for regional stability. Without a strong democratic Israel the people in the Middle East will have no future.³²³

Weisskirchen's emphasis on Israel being a democracy has the advantage of portraying support of Israel as support for regional ME stability, which is one of Germany's key interests. The view of Israel as the future origin of democracy for the Middle East represents the orientalist and colonialist view of the Arab World from the 19th and 20th century. It is based on perceived superiority of the Western world over

³²³ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093A.

the developing world, as well as on the resulting conviction that the indigenous local Arab population is in the need of Western mentoring about the values of civilized societies. Weisskirchen's statement sounds very similar to the above-mentioned statement from 1860 by the private secretary of Napoleon III, speaking about how the "injection of European civilization" through the settlement of Jews in Palestine could save the "Middle East's decadent civilization".³²⁴

...

Karl Lamers, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

[Not being neutral towards Israel] is demanded not only by responsibility due to our history, but also by our bond with Israel, a state belonging to the Western political civilization. With Israel we are linked by common ideas of democracy and the rule of law.³²⁵

Lamers' reference to Western civilization is a clear expression of the Samuel Huntington worldview. Appealing to the rule of law represents a significant part of the strong Western belief in state- and institution-building, which are seen as strategies for strengthening and stabilizing weak states and entities in the Arab and the developing world in general.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002:

... the Holocaust, caused by the Germans, which connects us irresolvably with Israel ... That is certainly true – and that stays true for all time. But for me it is about making clear that there is something else true as well. We are connected with Israel by an intact and functioning democracy, and indeed a basic consensus about values on which democracy is built. There are – this is important for me to emphasize – in this region not so terribly many functioning democracies. This is, beside the historic responsibility, a most current reason for our close and irresolvable political relation".³²⁶

³²⁴ Sharif (1983). *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 53.

³²⁵ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093D.

³²⁶ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23114C-D.

For Schröder to leave no doubts about Israel's democratic character – which doubts are, despite the Chancellor's statement, more than justified for reasons of the Israeli treatment of the occupied Palestinians as well as the Arab-Israelis – he strengthens the word “democracy” with additional adjectives, just as Merkel will do when speaking of the *true* democracy of Israel.

2. Framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

The framing of the conflict reveals the perception by Germany's political elite of the parties to the conflict, which altogether can be summarized as a “good Israel vs. bad Palestinians” discourse. German parliamentarians frequently emphasize that it is necessary and helpful to put oneself in the situation of the Israelis to be able to understand their actions. This is a way of justifying actions that normally would be considered problematic or illegal by German standards. This in turn, absolves the parliamentary speaker from the need to criticize Israel's action. But the bottom line of such discourse is the introduction of conditionality to supposedly universal liberal values, which is the reason they actually need to be described as Western liberal values, further underlining the importance of the perception of Israel as part of the Western *Wertegemeinschaft*. As a mirror image to that view, Palestinians and Arabs in general are portrayed through an orientalist as well as a GWOT lens. Furthermore, the analysis enables an understanding of the lens through which members of the German parliament look at the conflict, firstly, indicating what conflict outcome they aim for, and secondly, giving insight into their worldviews.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000:

[F]or weeks now, we are seeing these terrible images. Who can avoid them? Young people, filled with hatred and with slingshots in their hands are throwing stones. A

hundred times and more death is the answer. Young life throws itself away, destroys a chance for a successful future. But isn't that what everything should be focusing on: the coexistence in a common region? Jews and Arabs, they cannot live like fire and water. Shimon Peres says: "violence and peace are like fire and water". Sure enough, Ariel Sharon – we have seen it – had fatally provoked. The extremists on both sides have cast aside fetters. The Wild excesses of the Palestinian hatred have flared-up (12091D-2A).³²⁷

Through a rhetorical move Weisskirchen absolves the occupying Israelis from any role in the Intifada. He describes the Palestinians as a group that has no interest in its future and is simply violent. The act of the Israeli killing of Palestinians is rephrased, making the Palestinians appear to be killing themselves. Furthermore he refers to Peres and Sharon, firstly, for underlining the wise and "good" character of Peres and through him liberal Zionism, and secondly, to use Sharon and right-wing Zionism as a scapegoat for Israeli crimes against the Palestinians. Tellingly, even Sharon's "provocation" is relativized by describing Palestinian resistance to it as exemplifying the excessive hatred of the Palestinians as an ethnic group.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000:

Two nationalisms are standing against each other: on one side an Arab, occupied by diffuse violence, hardly controllable, in refugee camps additionally stirred up, mythically charged and soaked in social misery, and on the other side a nationalism in Israel, pragmatically broken, tamed itself by an enlightening civil society, which in internal fights seeks to free itself from religious pressures – and this now also in the face of the periodically, increasingly enemy environment in which Israel operates (12092C).³²⁸

Weisskirchen's view is a black and white framing of the conflict, which is loaded with prejudice and stereotypes towards the Palestinians as well as apologetic reinterpretations of Israeli Zionism. The Palestinian victim – symbolized by the refugee camp – is framed as a threat, while only recognizing its social misery without pointing

³²⁷ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12091D-2A.

³²⁸ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12092-C.

to its cause. This absolves Israel from its responsibility for the misery, as well enabling the portrayal of German aid as something generous and compassionate. The portrayal of Zionism as nationalism represents a partial acknowledgment of Zionism's character, which is very uncomfortable for Germany, which had lived through a decades-long national identity transformation to cast off its nationalistic Nazi past. Weisskirchen's interpretation of Israel's nationalism represents the wishful thinking of Zionism's supporters, who deny the inherent contradiction of liberal Zionism. The perceived incompleteness of Israel's overcoming of nationalism is apologetically justified with the David-against-Goliath image of an overwhelmingly bad Arab neighborhood in which Israel is living. Additionally Weisskirchen is even able to frame the apologetically described characteristics of Israeli society as being similar or identical to Western societies, as it apparently is pragmatic and enlightened. These qualities, in turn, portray Israel as the ideal negotiation partner with whom a Westerner can identify.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU, 25 October 2000: "... hate and frustration exist on both sides, among Israelis and Palestinians – and – I add this – also how much fear on the Israeli side, even though the appearance is a different one" (12093B).³²⁹

Although Karl Lamers presents a much less biased image of the conflict than, for example, Gert Weisskirchen – Lamers explicitly blames both sides for the failure of Camp David³³⁰ – he still seeks to portray the Israelis as the more threatened party to the conflict, despite the daily, decades-long, Israeli humiliations and threats against the Palestinians.

...

³²⁹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093B.

³³⁰ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 12093C.

Christoph Moosbauer, SPD, 25 October 2000: “It has been quarreled over – Jerusalem – thousands of years already. Against this background, to expect a solution for the conflict within a year must appear all too optimistic” (12099A).³³¹

This statement represents a denial of the actual conflict and its history over the last century and the causality of Palestinian suffering. It furthermore legitimizes Israel’s religiously framed claim that all Jews in the world, understood as belonging to one nation, which is represented by Israel, have a historical bond to the land where Palestinians have previously lived, thereby justifying the latter’s expulsion.

...

Christian Schmidt, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

“The Near East is a region where many different truths exist, which emerge from different views and perceptions. We should once more turn our attention to the perceptions of the Israeli citizen, who sees himself confronted with statements from the Arab area, questioning his existence”. Subsequently Schmidt describes how, while travelling in Europe, he was watching an Arabic TV channel showing 15 minutes of anti-Israel propaganda with burning Israeli flags and armed storming fighters etc. (12100A).³³²

Actually, referring to the theoretical approach of (de-)constructivism, supporting the conflict resolution could be helpful for realizing the differences in historic and present narratives. This in turn could enable a synchronization of the narratives, with the final aim for mutual understanding, reconciliation, reparation and/or prosecution. But Schmidt seeks only to invoke one-sided understanding for Israeli fear, thereby denying the daily fear of Palestinians.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002: “The violence in the Near East has reached a for-everyone unbearable level. The terror has to come to an end”

³³¹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12099A.

³³² Parliament Report 14/126, p. 2000) 12100A.

(23116A).³³³

The description of the violence, which should emphasize the original cause of the Intifada being the Israeli occupation, is rather dominated by a GWOT discourse that focuses solely on terror, which is further understood solely as Palestinian terror, but not Israeli state terror.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002:

The images of horribly butchered Israeli victims of terror and of the terrible suffering of the Palestinians are painful, actually unbearable, for everyone. The great tragedy of this region is, that for over a century two claims are clashing, which are facing each other in an almost unsolvable conflict (23117B-C).³³⁴

Stoiber later in the same speech specifies this view of the conflict by saying:

In the land, which is place for many holy sites, for example the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which faithful people relate to symbols of hope and peace, there are terror and war. Two peoples claim a right to the same piece of land. Although, this issue concerns not only conflicting territorial claims. Behind these claims is a deep, religiously motivated conflict, which pinnacles in the dispute over Jerusalem. The city is holy to both. But when both sides appeal to that and unrelentingly insist on their positions, then it almost inevitably leads to a bloody conflict without any willingness for reconciliation (23118B).³³⁵

The first part of statement uses grammar in a way that portrays the Israelis as being actively attacked, which necessarily refers to the Palestinians as attackers. On the other hand, the Palestinians are described as distressed, which possibly negates the existence of a non-Palestinian perpetrator for the cause of the distress. This actually creates the possibility in the mind of the listener for blaming the Palestinians themselves for their pitiful situation, which almost erases the Israeli occupation and Zionism as the main course of the conflict and the suffering. This attempt is underlined by Stoiber's framing of the conflict as a confrontation of two equally legitimate and legal demands

³³³ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 2002) 23116A.

³³⁴ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23117B-C.

³³⁵ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 2002) 23118B.

by two people, which actually credits the Zionist claims within the MEPP with legitimacy they normally do not have.

Stoiber's Zionist view of the conflict becomes very obvious in his framing of it not just as one of two equal parties, but additionally as a religious one. This is significant for three reasons. Firstly it legitimizes Zionist claims of a religiously backed link of all Jewish people to the land of Israel. Secondly, by referring to the Christian roots in the OPT, Stoiber is appealing to the domestic Christian audience, in an attempt to make them identify more with the Israelis. Against the background of the Judeo-Christian discourse this creates the possibility of perceiving Israel as a defender of Christian values and potential claimant to the religious sites, especially in Jerusalem, which Stoiber is highlighting. Thirdly, the reference to Christian values and their juxtaposition with "terror and war", implies a Samuel Huntington-type of oversimplified separation of the conflict into Judeo-Christian vs. Muslim. In doing so, Islam alone is negatively connoted, which further delegitimizes Palestinian rights claims in the conflict.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002:

What the people in this region have to go through at the moment is the worst infestation a civilized society can experience. If Germany would be affected the same way Israel is by terrorist attacks, then the same level of anxiety, fear and shock would paralyze most parts of the public life. It is terrible to imagine that in Germany no one would dare to go to a restaurant. The marketplaces and shopping centers would be empty, because you would have to fear becoming a victim of terror at any moment. That actually is the situation in which Israel finds itself. ... Today Israel lives with less security and less peace. ... Sharon and his promise to create more security for Israel could not change that; unfortunately quite the contrary is the case. The Palestinians with their recidivism to terror and their choice of the means of inhuman suicide attacks have lost much trust of the world (23118D).³³⁶

³³⁶ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23118D.

Stoiber's first reference to "people" implies impartiality. But the following remarks show that he actually speaks only about and identifies only with the Israelis based on the global GWOT discourse. This identification completely ignores the Palestinian sides of the history of the conflict. The framing of the Palestinians as falling back into an old, typical inhuman habit, underlines Stoiber's orientalist views of the Palestinians. This further delegitimizes them in the view of the listener, as Stoiber is implying that the Palestinians in general are, so far, not worthy of being considered a part in the Western civilization.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002:

As long as this conflict is not resolved it will remain fertile ground for worldwide terrorism. It was the background for the Olympic attacks in 1972 in Munich. It was not alone but also the background for the terror war, which was declared on 11 September directly against America and thereby ultimately, indirectly against the whole free world (23119B).³³⁷

The statement shows how the GWOT discourse is used to reframe the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To justify this, Stoiber refers to the Palestinian attacks in 1972 Munich, thereby negating the developments within the Palestinian political community during the 30 years since. Instead of recognizing – which does not mean defending – the reasons for Palestinian terrorism during the Second Intifada, Stoiber takes them out of the Israeli-Palestinian context and places them within the global GWOT one. This is also shown in the definition of the West as the free world, and results in further delegitimization of the Palestinian cause.

3. Uncritical critique of Israel

Repeatedly the issue of criticizing Israel is raised, by stating that Germany of

³³⁷ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23119B.

course expresses critique when necessary and that this is a sign of the character of the Israeli-German friendship, which is based on the common democratic nature. But often the expression of critique is actually limited to that statement. Mostly, German critique of Israel is without consequence for Israel. It rather serves as an alibi for German FP. This also concerns German critique of Israeli settlement policies. Furthermore, contradictory to official German statements, parliamentarians actually acknowledge that they are not, or only in a limited way are, in the position to criticize, which is explained principally by the Holocaust.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000:

“At the beginning there is the ‘original sin’ of Europe: the failed emancipation and integration of the Jews”. ... Doesn’t this also constitute part of our impotence, our knowledge, that we are prisoners of our own history, that Jewish and Arab nationalism are the afterbirth of European entanglements (12092C-D).³³⁸

The beginning of Weisskirchen’s statement is an acknowledgement of the pre-WWII history of Zionism and especially European Antisemitism. But Weisskirchen does not offer a conclusion from this fact in his remaining speech. He also describes the inability to take a stand, to actually criticize, which in turn can be seen as an indirect acknowledgement of the strong critique-worthiness of Israeli politics and Zionism.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

It is right that the EU summit in Berlin clearly has criticized the settlement policies of Israel. Since the Oslo Accord the number of settlers in the West Bank has doubled from around 100,000 to 200,000. Also under the government of Barak this settlement policy has continued. The establishment of new settlements and Israeli-controlled streets means the Palestinian community, for example the city of Ramallah, is almost strangled regarding its future development. We cannot overlook, that the Palestinians perceive this settlement policy as a permanent aggression. On the other hand it cannot be denied that Prime Minister Barak during the negotiations in Camp David as well as

³³⁸ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12092C-D.

in public has been going beyond everything so far offered by the Israeli side (12094A-B).³³⁹

Lamers even acknowledges the increase of settlement activity under liberal Zionist Israeli governments. But he points out neither its illegality nor the resulting infringement on Palestinian rights. Lamers acknowledges only the general critique-worthiness of and expresses some empathy for the Palestinian perception of settlements as aggressive. Furthermore, Lamers seeks to relativize the illegality of the activities of Barak's government by emphasizing Barak's constraints due to the democratic pressure from the Israeli ballot box. The latter two facts mean a weakening and delegitimization of the Palestinian position.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

It needs to be questioned, whether the Israeli approach is really always appropriate. This, the Israelis have to do themselves. I say this with great caution. But I mean it clearly, as I am saying it here, just to have added that. Israel needs to ask itself whether the continuous occupation of the West Bank isn't one reason for many incidents, which can only be described as human rights violations. On the other it also needs to be noticed: Palestinian Intifada leaders, who are sending children and adolescents stone-throwing against military posts, are acting completely irresponsible. It is incomprehensible that they act like that (12094D).³⁴⁰

Instead of assessing the based on facts known illegality of Israel's occupation practices, Lamers merely raises official doubts about it. The high level of his discomfort – due to fear of delegitimization – over raising awareness regarding obvious human rights violations is apparent in his sentence structure and the embedding of his critical statements in between a pre-apology and a delegitimizing re-interpretation of the Intifada. Instead of highlighting that Israeli occupation forces are shooting Palestinian

³³⁹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12094A-B.

³⁴⁰ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12094D.

children and adolescents, Lamers is reframing the Uprising by describing the Intifada as led from above and as led by irresponsible adults with no respect for children's lives.

...

Christoph Moosbauer, SPD, 25 October 2000, referring to Israeli destruction in the OPT:

Of course it also hurts that we have to watch how what he have built over a long time with our help, with lots of engagement and much personal effort, now was torn down with rude hands in such a short time. But now our task must be ... to take a step back from the daily events and to look at what went wrong in the peace process over the last seven years since the Oslo-Accords. ... Mistakes have been made on all sides. I am not arguing for finger pointing. Quite the contrary, in the current confrontation I am particularly warning against it. Despite every sympathy for letting yourself carry away to premature judgments in the light of the TV images – now to blame one or the other side for the crisis is neither just nor expedient (12098D-9A).³⁴¹

This statement of Moosbauer indicates that German aid for the OPT absolves it from potential pro-Palestinian critique – as Moosbauer portrays himself as experiencing Palestinian destruction as his own or Germany's loss. And the non-critique of Israel's responsibility creates the image of Israel maybe having had a justified reason for its actions. Moosbauer explicitly and repeatedly asks for denial of the everyday reality by suggesting to keep distance from the conflict; almost saying 'let's not get influenced by the daily ("rude hands") images of the Israelis, so that we can stay impartial'. His appeal for not blaming is aimed at portraying Germany as wise and "good"-willed, suggesting that searching for the cause of the conflict might only cause more pain, thereby preventing a solution. Again, this approach could have its root in Germany's being forced to deal with its own history of German displacement.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2000:

³⁴¹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12098D-9A.

But as Israel's friend we also have the right and duty to raise our voice openly and occasionally also publicly. Without an all-encompassing political solution, which has to include the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, there will be no lasting security for Israel and the region. Already ... Rabin had recognized: Israel, already for its own security, cannot close itself off permanently from the thought of evacuating illegally built settlements in the Palestinian territories (23115A).³⁴²

Schröder considering the critique only to remind Israel that the settlements are a problem to the peace process. But, against the background of a Sharon government, it appears weak – and typical for the good liberal Zionism vs. bad right-wing Zionism discourse – to only refer to the deceased liberal Zionist Rabin, whose position does not enjoy a majority or even significant minority in Israeli society. This weakness is amplified by Schröder admitting that Rabin actually spoke only about conscientiously allowing the idea of settlement evacuation to arise. The emphasis on the illegality of the settlements represents the focus of German critique on one of the obvious and undeniable facts of Israeli settler colonialism.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002: “[W]e appeal to the Israeli government to comply with all resolutions of the UN Security Council” (23116B).³⁴³

The reference to *all* UNSCRs could be a very powerful and very impartial German government statement. But within the context of Schröder's entire speech, it has almost no meaning, as it implies no consequences whatsoever for Israeli non-compliance with UNSCRs.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU: “We appeal to the Israeli government to support the UN investigation into the events in Jenin so that the

³⁴² Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23115A

³⁴³ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23116B.

serious accusations can be invalidated” (23119A).³⁴⁴

Stoiber’s wording indirectly expresses how he gives Israel the benefit of the doubt despite reports about Israeli crimes in Jenin, such as from his Bundestag colleague Roland Claus, PDS.³⁴⁵ Most likely he knows that there will not be consequences for Israel based on the outcome and dealings with former investigations into crimes. In this regard, Stanley Cohen describes “interpretive denial” with its “room for legitimate controversy” that is inherent in the claim and counter-claim discourse of such investigations, of which politicians and state representatives are well aware.³⁴⁶

4. *Good liberal Zionists vs. bad right-wing Zionists*

This discourse allows for German support of Zionism without being confronted with Zionism’s negative aspects, as those can be attributed to right-wing Zionism. As this approach is limited due to liberal Zionism’s own flaws, German politicians resort to various forms of justifications for liberal Zionist actions, which normally would be critique-worthy, as well.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000, referring to Camp David:

Was it not so, that Ehud Barak accommodated the will of Arafat with incredible bravery? ... Arafat could have answered this incredible bravery with incredible bravery himself. He did not do it. However, he did not himself stand in the way of flaring-up Arab extremism caused by Sharon’s provocation (12092B-C).³⁴⁷

Despite the flaw of considering Arafat as representing the larger Palestinian will, the negotiations between Barak and Arafat were negotiations between occupier and occupied. However, Weisskirchen frames Barak as the weaker party, which only

³⁴⁴ Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23119A

³⁴⁵ See analysed statement from Roland Claus (Parliament Report 14/233, p. 23130A)

³⁴⁶ Cohen, S. (2001). *States of Denial*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 105-8.

³⁴⁷ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12092B-C.

through almost self-endangering risk-taking seeks to appease the powerful and over-demanding Arafat, who in reality insisted only upon the Palestinians' international rights. Through this rhetorical move Weisskirchen is even able to transfer the blame for the start of the Second Intifada from Sharon, who triggered it, onto Arafat, who merely reacted to it.

...

Christoph Moosbauer, SPD, 25 October 2000:

When almost three years ago thousands of young Israelis were demonstrating in Tel Aviv against Netanyahu's politics, they were holding up signs with the words "Yitzhak Rabin's way will triumph". It will, it has to, and to realize that it will come to that, is also our task (12099D).³⁴⁸

Moosbauer makes clear that Rabin's liberal Zionist approach would have meant an end to the conflict, opposed to Netanyahu's right-wing policies. Furthermore Moosbauer's statement represents the often-repeated technique to distract from the fact that the majority of Israelis actually had voted for the respective right-wing Zionist government. Nevertheless, this analysis avoids portraying all Israelis as right-wing Zionists, rather, Moosbauer's depiction ignores the Israeli political reality.

...

Christoph Moosbauer, SPD, 25 April 2002, emphasizing the need to criticize

Israel:

To say something very clear: Whoever supported the politics of Yitzhak Rabin, can not support the politics of Ariel Sharon. ... I am in solidarity [with Israel's peace movements and] with the part of the labor party that represents an alternative to the recent politics. I will do everything so that the original Zionist dream can be realized: a homestead for the Jews in secure and recognized borders, in peace with its neighbors and the world (23132B).³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12099D.

³⁴⁹ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23132B.

Moosbauer articulates his identification with liberal Zionism by offering a definition of Zionism, which is in conformity with the two-state solution framework.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU, 25 April 2002, referring to Sharon's politics:

It is the lack of any concept of a political solution, which also would be acceptable for the other side. This fight – and this is my concern – can not be won. It is a fight against external enemies and at the same time the own morals, against the ideals of Zionism (23133B).³⁵⁰

Lamers seeks to frame Sharon's right-wing Zionist politics as non- and even anti-Zionist, to be able to save the "good" goals and the "good" image of liberal Zionism. He furthermore denies a strategy behind Sharon's politics, which is a denial of the expansionist and nationalist characteristics of Zionism.

5. Political elite conformity

The phenomenon of philo-Zionism among the German political elite is represented by repeated appeals to the unity of the political elite, often also described as the Germany party. The constant emphasis of this discourse, combined with linkages of critique with Antisemitism allegations, prevents almost all critique against Israel. PDS members are almost alone in transparently criticizing Israel, which can be explained by the absence of a fear deterrent as a result the unlikelihood of their forming part of a coalition in the future.³⁵¹

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000: "When it comes to Israel's security, Germany is one party" (applause from all five parties) (12093B).³⁵²

³⁵⁰ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23133B:

³⁵¹ Only since the federal elections in 2013 the SPD and the Greens are cautiously indicating that a future cooperation with the PDS is not categorically ruled out any more.

³⁵² Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093B.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU, 25 October 2000:

It is clear for us: If it comes to Israel's right of existence – colleague Weisskirchen, concerning this we in this house [*Bundestag*] share the same opinion, thank god – then there can be no neutrality for us Germans (Applause from SPD, the Greens, CDU, FDP and one [out of 36] representatives of PDS, Ilja Seifert) (12093D).³⁵³

As “expected” by the political elite pressure representatives of all parties applaud Lamers’ statement. That there is only one from the PDS could be due to Lamers’ linkage of Israel’s right of existence with a neutral stance of Germany. The meaning of neutrality is a debated topic among the five parties.³⁵⁴

...

Wolfgang Gehrcke, PDS, 25 October 2000: “... only ... if Oslo is secured, and becomes a baseline again, will further considerations be at all possible and implementable”.³⁵⁵

Gehrcke, as one of the few outspoken critiques of Israeli injustice against the Palestinians, is represents the unified and uniform German political elite support for the MEPP with its two-state solution and philo-Zionist attitude in general.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002: “Standing up for the right of existence and security of Israel in recognized borders was and remains the inalienable foundation of German foreign policy. That has always been the consensus of all parties in this house.” (23114C).³⁵⁶

³⁵³ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093D (CDU, Lamers)

³⁵⁴ As is further shown in the 2006 Lebanon War debates.

³⁵⁵ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12098B (PDS, Gehrcke)

³⁵⁶ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23114C (SPD, Schröder)

The remark about the recognized borders is, possibly intentionally, misleading, as Israel, based on Zionist ideology, is the state that either does not recognize parts of the borders with its neighboring states or prevents the demarcation of border sections which in turn is caused by its occupying Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territory.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002:

[As a consequence of the historical responsibility and the commonly shared values] we will decide no embargo or boycott measures against Israel, nor will we join such measures, and let alone imposing such ourselves (applause from all parties except CDU) (23114D).³⁵⁷

Judging by the applause, the left-wing parties the Greens and PDS, despite some possible dissenters, rejects the option of exerting significant political pressure on Israel.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002:

We stand – here we share indeed one opinion due to our entire historical experience – without reservations for the right of existence of Israel in peace and in secure borders. This also includes being able to live without fear of terror (23119A).³⁵⁸

Stoiber describes a feature of identity across party lines, making it a German identity. His redefinition of security expresses the conflict-history-negating support of the GWOT discourse.

6. *Justifying the MEPP*

The importance of the MEPP has been described above, is based on the mutual benefit of all involved parties, including the internal political elite of the Palestinian

³⁵⁷ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23114D (SPD, Schröder). The CDU is only not applauding, as shown expressed in the debate, because it considered Schröder's anti-embargo stance too weak till this very speech.

³⁵⁸ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23119A (CSU, Stoiber)

Authority (PA). As the MEPP has not led to any improvement of the Palestinian situation in any regard whatsoever, the German political elite as a supporter and investor of the MEPP has to use the stark rhetoric tool of describing it as being without alternative. This concerns the process of direct negotiations as well as the framework of the two-state solution.

...

Karl Lamers, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

But by now also the ones who constantly have supported the peace process are shocked and are asking themselves, whether they were running after an illusion. ... it takes a lot of time to find the way out of this atmosphere of enmity back to the necessary, without-alternative peace negotiations and to the spirit of compromise (12093D).³⁵⁹

This statement of Lamers', who considers himself a committed supporter of the MEPP, exemplifies the undoubting and firm belief in it despite the unavoidable confrontation with the so-called illusory character of the MEPP.

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 October 2000: "we have to hold onto the Oslo-Process, for which I see no alternative" (12102B).³⁶⁰

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 April 2002: "A flaw of the Oslo negotiations was, as we have noticed, that democratic state-building, meaning the establishment of democratic institutions, did not have the level of priority in the Palestinian territories as should have been the case" (23123A).³⁶¹

Instead of checking the state-building approach itself for flaws, Fischer assumes only that there should have been more of it. This is a typical view in the GLP

³⁵⁹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12093D (CDU, Lamers)

³⁶⁰ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12102B (the Greens, Fischer)

³⁶¹ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23123A (the Greens, Fischer)

and GWOT discourse, as also reflected by the Transitional Administrations applied by the UN during the very same time, including in Kosovo where Germany was involved, too.

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 April 2002: “It is absurd that we know how the result will be and has to be – two states – but we don’t know how we get there; because of that many people are now dying” (23124A).³⁶²

The belief in the two-state solution, due to its fundamental necessity for keeping the illusion of liberal Zionism intact, appears ineluctable.

7. German “impartiality”

Most German parties underline their intentional non-neutrality towards Israel. Furthermore all parties show the perception of Germany’s ideal role in the MEPP as impartial, with most parties also considering the actual German performance in the MEPP as such. This understanding is a significant source of the German view of being a “good” state.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 October 2000: “In Oslo and Camp David the aim was to find commonalities in a difficult region: the common concern about water, food and work”.³⁶³

These might have been practical issues of concern but at its core the negotiations should have been about a recognition and subsequent solution of the core, historical problems of the conflict, which are the negation of Palestinian rights by Israel

³⁶² Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23124A (the Greens, Fischer)

³⁶³ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12091-C (SPD, Weisskirchen)

since 1948. This shows the Western approach to the conflict, which is disconnected from history. This view is much in Israel's interest as it prevents Israel's need to face its committed historical crimes.

...

Christian Sterzing, the Greens, 25 October 2000:

If we [in the *Bundestag*]... are talking about perspectives for the region, then surely we are not doing this as a know-it-all from the outside, as if we would have the solution prepared, but out of concern and solidarity, which connects us with the Israeli state, and out of responsibility, which we all want to assume for the existence of this state (12095D).³⁶⁴

Sterzing describes the role of Germany, comprised by the decision-making of the political elite in the MEPP as an observational, impartial one, which is based on "good" intention and will. This is denying the pressure put on the Palestinians to prevent them from taking a path to the realization of Palestinian self-determination and to fore them to remain at the MEPP negotiation table. At the same time it shows the denial of the reality of the occupation, which is founded on official reporting. Furthermore his "know-it-all from the outside" remark suggests Israeli critique of the small German critique that is raised, especially regarding the settlements.

...

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, SPD, 25 April 2002: "I want to say very unmistakably: Israel gets what it needs for the maintenance of its security, and it gets it when it needs it" (23114C-D).³⁶⁵

To preserve impartiality in the conflict Germany would have to apply a definition for Israel's security, which is strictly defensive and supported by international law and international agreements. This is not the case, as Germany, also under Gerhard

³⁶⁴ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12095D (the Greens, Sterzing)

³⁶⁵ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23114C-D (SPD, Schröder)

Schröder, has for example provided Israel with submarines knowing that Israel would arm them with nuclear warheads,³⁶⁶ despite the fact the Israel never signed the 1968 non-proliferation treaty.³⁶⁷

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 25 April 2002:

Please bear in mind: At the end of the negotiation rounds in Oslo the Palestinian side all of a sudden was raising the demand that at the end of the negotiation process the right of return of the 1948 refugees would have to be integrated. Mr. [Stoiber], you also mentioned the issue of the displaced. Why shouldn't it be possible to talk with the Arab side about how to find a common concept ..., so the displaced are not always and always again used as an instrument to endanger the peace process? Don't we actually have to contribute to this process and offer our experience, which we made in Europe and in Germany, which shows, that this topic must not be used in political debates? (23128B).³⁶⁸

Weisskirchen does not see the possibility that the right of return is not just a political tool but actually at the heart of the problem and that its resolution is crucial for a positive development of a Palestinian identity. Contrary to that, Weisskirchen, by considering only bad-will on the Arab side, is demanding the prohibition of making the right of return, which is enshrined in General Assembly resolution 194 from 1948,³⁶⁹ a part of the negotiations. Besides that this would even cause contradictions with

³⁶⁶ Spiegel Online. (2012, June 3). Secret Cooperation: Israel Deploys Nuclear Weapons on German-Built Submarines.

³⁶⁷ Borger mentions Germany's (as well as France's, the US', Britain's and Norway's) role in enabling Israel in obtaining nuclear warheads and comments: "Israel, unlike Iran, never signed up to the 1968 NPT so could not violate it. But it almost certainly broke a treaty banning nuclear tests, as well as countless national and international laws restricting the traffic in nuclear materials and technology" (Borger, 2014). An op-ed in the Jerusalem Post is offering an explanation for Germany's generosity. It is mostly focusing on Germany's trans-generational feeling of guilt and the resulting responsibility for Israel in relation to military aid, and particularly the submarines. The op-ed states: "While their grandparents' generation perpetrated the Holocaust, and the previous generation paid for the Holocaust with reparations to its victims, the current generation is helping prevent a second Holocaust by providing the [Israel Defense Forces] with some of the most important defensive weapons systems in its arsenal. As far as corrective steps go, that's a huge one". (Jerusalem Post. (2006, August 24). Germany's transformation. *Jerusalem Post*)

³⁶⁸ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23128B (SPD, Weisskirchen)

³⁶⁹ UN General Assembly (1948, December 11). A/Res/194 (III).

Weisskirchen's own worldview, as he most likely supports the so-called Jewish right of "return" to Israel. His statement also reflects his deep distrust of the Arab negotiators, assuming a general will to make the peace process fail. Significantly, Weisskirchen is trying to translate German experience with German displacement after WWII into the Arab-Israeli context. This is problematic in many regards, especially because the Palestinians had not started a world war which could justify – based on a victor's justice discourse – loss of their rights to their lands. Furthermore, if Germany seriously considers itself responsible for the Holocaust and the formation of Israel, then it is Germany that actually is responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine since 1947.

...

Hans-Ulrich Klose, SPD, 25 April 2002: "It is unreasonable to demand the full right of return for all people expelled from Palestine as well as their children and grandchildren. This would be – everyone knows that, also the Arab side – the end of the Jewish State" (23138C).³⁷⁰

This statement shows, how the Zionist goal of having a *Jewish* State of Israel, is trumping Palestinian rights. It does not even allow a debate about an Israeli state based on a conception that is in conformity with the Palestinian right of return.

8. (Partial) acknowledgment

Acknowledgement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including its history and its regional implications, occurs during the parliamentary debates, although seldom. However, appears mostly in a partial or relativizing way. Acknowledgement is not limited to specific parts of the German political spectrum, but the debate contributions of the PDS stand out regarding their factual quantity and quality.

³⁷⁰ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23138C (SPD, Klose)

...

Former Foreign Minister (1992-8) Klaus Kinkel, FDP, 25 October 2000:

It is ... clearly a regional conflict and a regional conflict needs a regional solution approach, one in which all problems are laid out on the table and in which everyone who has interests in the region and who is willed and able to help with an all-encompassing peace solution is sitting at the table (12096D).³⁷¹

Although the understanding of “peace solution” is most-likely understood as the solution envisaged in the MEPP framework, thereby limiting the circle of actors eligible by Kinkel’s standards, his statement is an acknowledgement of the far-reaching impact Israeli policies and Zionist goals in general have had and are still having in the whole MENA region. This position is responsible for the differences between Israel and the US on one hand and the Europeans with Germany on the other, regarding the categorization of and approach for dealing with groups like Hamas. This also explains Germany’s repeated role in Arab-Israeli prisoners exchanges as well as the later European influence on the limited categorization of Hizbullah’s military wing as a terrorist organization. The type of Kinkel’s limitation on the eligibility of actors became a source of legitimacy for the “West Bank first” approach, which was applied by the ME Quartet after Hamas’s democratic victory in the Palestinian elections in 2006, eventually leading to the civil war in the OPT and the takeover of the West Bank by the PLO and of the Gaza Strip by Hamas.

...

Wolfgang Gehrcke, PDS, 25 October 2000:

The Plenum of the German *Bundestag*, if I am not mistaken, has not a single time in the last ten years within a special agenda item dealt with the situation in the, by-Israel, occupied territories. ... This shows: We are struggling with the topic of Israel and Palestine (12097D).³⁷²

³⁷¹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12096D (FDP, Kinkel)

³⁷² Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12097D (PDS, Gehrcke)

Gehrcke points to the active institutional, official denial practiced by the *Bundestag*.

...

Wolfgang Gehrcke, PDS, 25 October 2000:

I combine my critique of the policies of Israel regarding the Palestinians with a *Kampfansage* [challenge or declaration of ‘war’] against anti-Semitism and right-wing violence in my own country. I criticize the politics of Israel, because I believe that it doesn’t create peace. The opposite is the case: Unfortunately it will bear new violence and, as I am afraid, also new wars (12097D-8A).³⁷³

To pre-empt delegitimization threats with the Antisemitism against him, Gehrcke introduces his critique by firstly expressing a very strong stance against Antisemitism. This is not to say, that he does not mean it. Stanley Cohen describes this strategy regarding human rights organizations operating in Israel, as well as globally.³⁷⁴

...

Wolfgang Gehrcke, PDS, 25 October 2000, describing the character of the Second Intifada:

It is an uprising of despair, an uprising against deprivation of rights, deep social misery, an uprising against the theft of land, dignity, human rights. The desperation about the fact that there is only talking about peace, but that it actually isn’t coming, is so big, that even children are grabbing stones – and this is awful. This time also the Arab and Palestinian citizens of Israel are rising up; this is also new (12098A).³⁷⁵

This is one of the few clear acknowledgements of the Palestinian situation and the character of the Intifada. The children remark is most likely an attempt to correct the distortion of reality by Weisskirchen and Lamers.

...

Roland Claus, PDS, 25 April 2002, speaking about his party chairwoman, and very likely responding to Stoiber’s Jenin remarks:

³⁷³ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12097D-8A (PDS, Gehrcke)

³⁷⁴ Cohen (2001). States of Denial.

³⁷⁵ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12098A (PDS, Gehrcke)

[She] has been to Israel and the refugee camp in Jenin this week. She saw the conditions and spoke about it. You repeatedly have described Israel as an intact and functioning democracy. What can be seen in Jenin is not the result of an intact and functioning democracy; that needs to be said quite clearly. That is no fighting of terrorism by democrats but state sanctioned violence against people who with a great majority abhor terror (23130A).³⁷⁶

Claus's statement is one of the attempts at fighting against the denial of others, also by underlining that Palestinians have the same human rights as every other person, including Israelis and Germans.

...

Wolfgang Gehrcke, PDS, 25 April 2002:

... [T]here cannot be a double meaning regarding human rights. I think the German government should try not to be ambiguous in this regard. The human rights violations of Israel must be condemned just like the violence and suicide attacks. Because of this, the behavior of the German government, which blocks the respective critical discussion with Israel at the UN human rights commission, is not logical or compelling, but demands questions (23137B).³⁷⁷

Gehrcke describes how the German government not only looks away regarding Israeli human rights violations, but how it is actually fully aware of them as it consciously shields Israel from consequences. The denial can be seen as symbolically represented by the fact that government members in the Bundestag are not listening to the speech of PDS members.³⁷⁸

9. Delegitimization of the critics

An important feature of official denial, as explained by Stanley Cohen regarding the acknowledgement of atrocities, is the delegitimization of opponents who

³⁷⁶ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23130A (PDS, Claus)

³⁷⁷ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23137B (PDS, Gehrcke)

³⁷⁸ This is not an official rule and not always the case, but it is very common. When Gehrcke is pointing this out in his speech ("When the PDS speaks, the Chancellor and the Foreign Minister vanish" (Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23137D (PDS, Gehrcke)) a leading member of the CDU/CSU replies in a spontaneous interjection „This will also remain in the future!“

are or who might highlight injustice or contradictions in a dominating discourse.³⁷⁹

...

Former Foreign Minister (from 1992-8) Klaus Kinkel, FDP, 25 October 2000, demands: “a bold intervention of the persons in charge on both sides against the extremist enemies of peace in their own camps” (12096D).³⁸⁰

Although this statement of Klaus Kinkel retains some validity, it also indirectly delegitimizes everyone who represents a position outside the MEPP framework, for example Palestinian politicians aiming for unilateral Palestinian steps towards self-determination, such as the application for statehood at the UN or membership at the ICC.

...

Responding with a spontaneous interjection to Gehrcke’s (PDS) remark that Israel always had an answer in confrontations with its Arab neighbors, which was “often a military one, which [Gehrcke] often considered wrong”, Dirk Niebel (FDP) shouts: “Mostly they have been attacked” (12098A).³⁸¹

Firstly, this comment is factually wrong, for regarding 1947/48 as well as since and including the 1967 war, Israel has in most instances attacked its neighboring states, including the controversial attack on an Iraqi nuclear reactor.³⁸² Secondly, the clear acknowledgement and description of Israel’s offensive military actions is too hard to

³⁷⁹ Cohen (2001). *States of Denial*.

³⁸⁰ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12096D (FDP, Kinkel)

³⁸¹ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12098A (spontaneous interjection by Dirk Niebel, FDP, to speech of Gehrcke (PDS))

³⁸² Norman Finkelstein comments the attack: “[T]he Iraqi reactor wasn’t making nuclear weapons; it was probably the Israeli bombing that induced Saddam to embark on a nuclear weapons program” (Finkelstein, N. G. (2005). *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 41-2).

deny and very uncommon in the Bundestag. For Gehrcke, whose speaking time as member of the smallest party faction is the shortest, it is hard to defend himself against such an interjection without shortening his speech and his description of Israeli policies.

...

Christian Schmidt, CDU/CSU, 25 October 2000:

...[We should] not get into platitudes, as described by a young [Green] party colleague of the Foreign Minister [today in the German newspaper *Die Welt*] ..., appealing to the [German] government ... to strongly condemn Israeli military strikes, and in case of their continuation, to threaten with military intervention by the international community. This is complete nonsense, which is articulated here. The purpose here is to build trust and to make clear that responsibility rests especially with the Palestinian side. Maybe the situation on the Palestinian side is linked with the fact that democracy unfortunately has not been realized yet in the Autonomous Palestinian Territories” (12100D-1A).³⁸³

Schmidt harshly attacks the legitimate suggestions to threaten Israel with military consequences, especially considering the developing discourse about the responsibility to protect.³⁸⁴ That his critique is less related to the type of threat towards Israel than to the threat per se is shown by his immediately diverting attention towards, and blaming, the Palestinians. To make the PA’s lack of democratic structures responsible for the conflict is flawed as, firstly, the OPT are occupied and therefore under the responsibility of Israel, and secondly, because the MEPP may actually sustain undemocratic PA structures due to the increasing aid dependency.

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 October 2000: “Let me appeal to both sides It’s no use to practice summations and accusations. The only thing helpful is to renounce violence and to return to the negotiation table.” (12102C).³⁸⁵

³⁸³ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12100D-1A (CDU/CSU, Schmidt)

³⁸⁴ Bellamy, Williams & Griffi (2012). *Understanding Peacekeeping*, pp.36-9.

³⁸⁵ Parliament Report 14/126, p. 12102C (the Greens, Fischer)

The explicit address of both conflict parties seeks to portray impartiality, although it actually places Israeli Zionists' internationally illegal demands on the same level of the Palestinian demands for the stop and reversal of the infringement on their internationally legal and acknowledged rights. Additionally, seen in the context of the anti-terrorism discourse, the appeal to renounce violence is one-sidedly directed at the Palestinians, leaving the Israelis appear innocent, while the occupied victims appear guilty.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002: "... I believe that our general public is in need of information about the causes and difficulties of the conflict, which is created during the political debate, so that a biased consciousness does not even occur" (23119B).³⁸⁶

Rather than considering the German public capable of making its own just and fair judgments and exposing himself to them, Stoiber suggests (re-)educating the public so that it becomes aware of and involved in the same pressure – "difficulties" – which the German political elite is exposed to. This shows not only denial but also self-deception. Furthermore it shows the awareness of the gap between the German political elite discourse regarding the conflict and the German public discourse. But instead of examining himself for potential bias, Stoiber considers the public as biased and suggests changing it.

...

Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, CDU/CSU, 25 April 2002:

Critique of Israeli politics is a self-evident right in a democracy. But we decisively confront all who, under the cloak of protest against Israeli politics, are rehashing very

³⁸⁶ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23119B (CSU, Stoiber)

old anti-Semitic clichés, for the purpose of gaining shabby capital from the suffering of the Near East (23120C).³⁸⁷

Such statements, which are repeatedly made, are responsible for the climate of pressure and fear of delegitimization. Especially in Germany, being publicly seen as anti-Semitic, independently from the validity of the allegation, means almost-certain delegitimization within the political elite.

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 April 2002:

I know the power of the images. But I warn against trusting only the images. You will not understand the conflict, if you do one-sided blaming because then you will be at least half-wrong. This at least is my experience (23121D).³⁸⁸

Fischer's statement shows the awareness of the un-deniability of facts shown on the widely circulating media images of the Second Intifada. As described by Cohen, in such a situation one of the remaining options of delegitimization is interpretive denial.³⁸⁹ Fischer, who was a fairly popular government member with the German public, uses his personal credibility for relativizing the power of images. Fischer's having been in Israel during the occurrence of a Palestinian suicide attack had an effect on this outlook,³⁹⁰ which could explain his reference to a "more than 50%" change in his view of the conflict. But obviously an assessment of the conflict without consideration of its historical roots, but especially without inclusion of the Palestinian living conditions under occupation is problematic and results in bias. Fischer aims for a delegitimization of public critique that is based on media reports and images. Instead,

³⁸⁷ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23120C (CSU, Stoiber)

³⁸⁸ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23121D (the Greens, Fischer)

³⁸⁹ Cohen (2001). States of Denial.

³⁹⁰ Kraske, M. (2001, June 5). Fischer's "mission " [Fischers "Mission Zufall" in Nahost: Von der Bremse zum Beschleuniger?]. *Spiegel Online*.

similar to Stoiber's remark, he might indirectly suggest that the public should look at the conflict through the lens provided by its political elite.

...

Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer, the Greens, 25 April 2002: "The only effect that EU sanctions would have, would be the definite ruining of the relations between the European Union and Israel" (23123D).³⁹¹

Fischer leaves open the question, what good relations would do, if Israel's illegal discriminatory policies towards the Palestinians would even increase and worsen. On the other hand this statement suggests that more German interests depend upon good relations with Israel, than the common history and the perceived common values.

...

Kerstin Müller, the Greens, 25 April 2002:

Whoever thinks, he is able, without further ado, to normalize [our historical relationship with Israel] in the course of this awful and tragic conflict, is ignoring history and acts irresponsibly. This is not an option. Especially for us the recognition of Israel's right of existence in recognized borders is beyond any debate (23134C).³⁹²

This might represent the acknowledgement that a non-biased and impartial critique would be a normal critique, based on the understanding of *normal* as being enlightened, liberal and appealing to universal values. The statement further contains a delegitimization threat as it links critique with a questioning of Israel's right of existence. This, in turn, significantly demonstrates the knowledge of Müller that normal critique of Israel's policies would result in consequences, which would demand a change in the definition of what exactly constitutes the Israeli state.

³⁹¹ Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23123D (the Greens, Fischer)

³⁹² Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23134C (the Greens, Müller)

C. Conclusion

The chosen quotes of the two debates show the pro-Israel bias involved in the parliamentarians' assessment of the respective conflict situations between Israel and the Palestinians, as well as in the related conclusions concerning future decisions. The selection of the quotes, furthermore, highlights the importance of the in chapter two identified FP values, principles, interests, obligations and their influence on the assessments and conclusions. The analyses of the quotes shows that justification of bias occurs in many different ways: consciously and subconsciously, directly and indirectly, as well as intentionally and unintentionally. Especially the quotes of the last subsection exemplify the potentially seriousness of attempts to delegitimize individual critique as well as to attack the critics themselves.

CHAPTER V

LEBANON: THE FRAMING OF THE 2006 LEBANON WAR IN THE GERMAN *BUNDESTAG*

A. Introduction

Chapter four is based on two *Bundestag* debates that happened after the 2006 Lebanon War. On 6 September 2006 the Bundestag was occupied the first time with a special session regarding the war. On 20 September 2006 parliamentarians were debating and deciding the German participation in UNIFIL based on UNSCR 1701, which also included assessments of the conflict situation. The structure of chapter five is almost identical to the one of chapter four.

B. Analysis of Lebanon War debates

In comparison to the Second Intifada debates there has been a switch within the German political elite discourse from the emphasis of Israel's right of existence in recognized borders towards the right of existence in secure borders. With exceptions almost no parliamentarian is questioning the general characteristic of the global liberal approach of educating others about the right way of forming and leading a state. The predominant debate discourse is based on a belief in a Westphalian state-system in the Arab World that ensures the control over non-state actors and in particular the state monopoly over the use of force. The oversimplifying GWOT discourse offers seemingly logic and promising solutions, which is only possible due the combination of a lack of real understanding of the ME region and a righteous feeling of superiority over the ME populations. The consideration of the victims of Israel's settler colonialist

politics as well as the illegality of Israel's actions seems to have moved further to the background, as the focus is on international security and domestic Western security.

1. Framing of the Israel-Hizbullah conflict

The parliamentary speeches describe the 2006 Lebanon War as part and as result of global, Islamist terrorism, instead of recognizing and acknowledging it as an outcome from the Arab-Israeli conflict and Israel's politics in particular. Thereby Hizbullah is portrayed as one of many agents of the perceived global terrorism that is also threatening Germany domestically. This view of the speakers offers an important foundation for the justification of Israel's actions and for the consideration of state building as solution to the problem. Hizbullah is conveniently seen as having started the war and being fully responsible for it, while Israel is merely defending itself against an existentially threatening irrational terrorism. While the framing of Israel as being threatened at least partially is based on denial of reality, the support of the global liberal project (GLP) is founded in a strong belief in Western liberal values as well as an aim to secure German and European interests. The debate contributions reflect the fusion of the GLP and the global war on terror (GWOT), clearly shown by the emphasis on state building as the solution for all political and civic problems, which if not dealt with will result in a strengthening of the international, Islamist terrorism threat.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, 6 September 2006:

“9 November 1989 was a [day that changed the world]: the wall fall and the Cold War was over. 11 September 2001 ... was such a day, too. It shocked the world and also changed it. ... True is that with [9/11] we met a completely new form of threat – an asymmetric threat ... – a threat during which we cannot really grasp the opponent, because he is prepared to risk his life. He is also not recognizable as a state, although states are supporting such terroristic attacks. ... [But] the motive, the reason for our foreign and security policy acting has not changed [after these two **days**]. Because since the inception of the [FRG] it is clear: We have a responsibility before history ..., a history of hundreds of years of fighting, ... of inheritance disputes, wars, political failure and nationalism. [This is why we invest in the EU.] ... This is why we have

made decisions: in Kosovo and ... in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There had been long debates in this [*Bundestag*] about that we cannot simply stand by and watch ... [when we are confronted with refugees and raped women] and when we were asked: How do you combine this with your values, if you only stand by and watch? [We decided that we have to contribute to the solving of conflicts.] So we decided after [9/11] ... to participate in Afghanistan and to share responsibility so that a people can develop better and at the same time that we can better guarantee for our security. ... We know that not everything is going as it should [in Afghanistan]. But the alternative, of leaving behind a vacuum and to give terrorists free training grounds is no alternative for me. ... We get involved in Africa. ... In Congo we take on responsibility beyond the political-humanitarian within the scope of development aid, with a military component. ... Africa is the neighbor continent of Europe. ... [E]very day hundreds of refugees arrive [from there]. ... We have to contribute to the solution of the problems. ... With [the P5] we made Iran an offer [so that it could get out of the spiral of nuclear activities]. ... We have seen how questions regarding Iran are linked with the situation in the Near East. We have seen a situation this summer, in which suddenly terrible, violent confrontations appeared ... and where the international community was faced with the question of how to reach a ceasefire and stability in the region. Resolution 1701 resulted from this. ... If it is part of Germany's reason of state to secure Israel's right of existence, then we cannot just say: If in this region Israel's right of existence is in danger – and this it is – then we remain on the sidelines. ... With a robust mandate we have the goal to end the smuggling of weapons. ... For us it is important that the mandate is wanted [by Lebanon and within the whole region]. ... Regarding the resolutions 1559 and 1680 concerning whether the Lebanese Army is regaining the control over its entire territory, we [the international community] did not take care of it well enough. ... This is why no one should think the problem is solved with the deployment of UNIFIL forces. We have to secure Israel's right of existence and we have to achieve a two-state solution, which includes a Palestinian state. ... It is important to include all actors in the region so that we can see what we could contribute to launch a peace process. Even if it appears the most difficult: There is no alternative.” (4479B-81C).³⁹³

One of Merkel's main aims of her historical contextualization of the German FP decision to contribute troops to UNIFIL is the emphasis of the consistency, predictability and appropriateness of Germany's FP against the background of critical and newly challenging world events as well as novel German FP decisions. Pointing out the critical moments of the German reunification, the Bosnia massacre, the NATO intervention in Kosovo and 9/11 with the following Afghanistan mission as well as the respective German responses is supposed to show that Germany is making its decisions responsibly and always based on its consistent values, of which multilateralism and moral/liberal values are the foundation. It also makes obvious that the 2006 Lebanon

³⁹³ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4479B-81C.

War due to Germany's troop stationing in the ME is representing another such critical moment. Merkel is not describing these moments as critical junctures, although they actually always have represented novel and significant FP changes.

Merkel's contextualization emphasizes the aim for German and European security from terrorism and uncontrollable migration as well as the obligation to defend liberal values as the main motives behind Germany's FP actions, leaving out economic motives. Considering Chancellor Schröder's emphasis of alliance obligations as motive for the Afghanistan mission participation shows, that values alone are not motivation enough for German participation in international interventions. This justifies a challenging of Merkel's expressed development motives for Afghanistan and in general of the universal character of the appealed liberal values. Rather it is likely that in Afghanistan the US focus on combating terrorists is the primary concern of the GWOT mission there. Also Merkel's intentional remark about the rape of women and the obligation to prevent such crimes is in contradiction with Germany's lack of critique and even silence about Israeli torture practices, for example as part of its military court system in the West Bank and Gaza.³⁹⁴

Significantly, the mentioning of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the subtle implication of Iran's potential nuclear weapons ambitions as well as the direct linkage of Iran with the 2006 Lebanon War allows the placing of the Islamic right in the global war on terror (GWOT) framework. By doing this Merkel is able to blank out the locally explainable reasons for Hizbullah's attack and for Israel's responding war, thereby almost completely ignoring the decades long Arab-Israeli conflict as root cause for the

³⁹⁴ Hajjar, L. (2005). *Courting Conflict: The Israeli Military Court System in the West Bank and Gaz*. Berkeley: University of California Press, e.g. pp. 192-9. Also: B'Tselem. (2007, May). *Torture and abuse under interrogation: "Special" interrogation methods*.

2006 War. Furthermore this enables Merkel to use German responsibility for the Holocaust only as responsibility for Israel and not as responsibility for the region. As typical for the fusion of the GLP with the GWOT around 9/11, Merkel defines development aid in combination with military components as the solution. Rather different from the US GWOT approach and based on European multilateralism Merkel is underlining the regional character and implications of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thereby safeguarding the MEPP as an institution. Due to the GWOT contextualization the need to support Israel's security has gained even more importance at the expense of support for Palestinian rights and self-determination. This focus also explains the narrowing view on the Lebanese situation, which is reduced to the failure of disarming Hizbullah. The latter is seen as weakening the Lebanese state by challenging its sovereignty despite the fact that Hizbullah actually is participating in the Lebanese political system.

...

Peter Struck, SPD, 6 September 2006:

“Five years later the decision [to participate in the Afghanistan mission] has turned out as right ... because we did not want to watch how Afghanistan would remain a breeding ground for international terrorism. This decision was also necessary for securing the building of civic and democratic structures An end of the mission is impossible to predict.” Minutes later Struck refers to Lebanon: “A refusal [to contribute to UNIFIL forces] would isolate us in the fight against international terrorism in the international community. If we would say No, then Germany would be isolated and it would not play a responsible role in Europe.”³⁹⁵

Struck refers to the GWOT discourse to justify the badly developing Afghanistan mission and the aimed-for extension of it, which needs authorization from parliament. As also retrospectively emphasized by Chancellor Schröder, alliance obligations will have had a bigger influence on Germany's decision-making. Struck

³⁹⁵ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4491B-C.

himself articulates that clearly regarding the UNIFIL participation, thereby placing it in the same GWOT framework as the Afghanistan mission. Struck's motivation is less Lebanon's well-doing and more Germany's geopolitical standing.

...

Werner Hoyer, FDP, 6 September 2006, concluding his speech: "Export of democracy through elections and export of market economy through a free market without a functioning legal system cannot work out on the long run. This is why it is important to agree on basic values" (4527D).³⁹⁶

Hoyer represents the classic understanding of the GLP. In case of failures or flaws he does not doubt the basic idea of exporting liberal free market democracy to other regions. Instead he considers the establishment of the rule of law – based on Western-influenced basic values – as necessary precondition of successful state building, thus further expanding the concept of state building.

...

Andreas Schockenhoff, CDU/CSU, 6 September 2006:

"Clearly it is not in our interests and also not in the interest of most states in the region, that the Iranian President is gaining in popularity in the Arab World due to his appearance as a leader who can defy the West. It is in our interest that based on better governance and stable institutions a foundation is built, on which pluralism, democracy, rule of law, human rights and prosperity can emerge and grow. ... Because when people make the experience that the state is able to provide them with security, welfare and the rule of law, then they also will orient themselves to state politics and not to confessional organizations such as Hizbullah, Hamas and the Muslim Brothers. Furthermore, with weak states there can be no reliable economic and political partnerships; even less you can build regional security structures with them. ... In particular it is a matter of clear strengthening of state structures, meaning the support of the police and the army through training and equipment aid, so that they quickly become assertive and improve the rule of law" (4529A-B).³⁹⁷

³⁹⁶ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4527D.

³⁹⁷ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4529A-B.

Schockenhoff's "clear" statement appears like a sectarian understanding of the conflicts in the ME, which is mostly based on the perception of a Shia-Sunni divide and a resulting Arab Cold War. As a solution Schockenhoff appeals to state building based on a Westphalian view. Such view considers a strong state necessary for the weakening of powerful political non-state actors who can be agents of terrorism supporting states such as Iran, which is causing instability in the region. Schockenhoff is seeing the existing "organizations" not as a result of local conditions but as a cause of them. Typical for the Western and German state building discourse he suggests as a first step the concentrated strengthening of state power enforcing capacities such as the police. At first, he describes the prosperity of the people as a motive for state building. But it seems that the well-doing is merely a means to the end of creating new markets. As a result of Schockenhoff's situating of the of the Lebanon-Israel conflict within the GWOT framework, he absolves himself from the need to analyze it and in particular from analyzing Israel's destabilizing role in it.

...

Niels Annen, SPD, 6 September 2006: "I want to say clearly: The German foreign policy, dear colleagues from the Left party, is peace policy. In my opinion the German Foreign Minister has impressively proven that during the 32 days of combat operations [in the Lebanon War]" (4541C).³⁹⁸

Such statements represent denial of the reality, which is combined with the righteous German perception of being inherently *good*.

...

Wolfgang Gerhardt, FDP, 20 September 2006, about the Middle East:

³⁹⁸ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4541C.

“Despite a common Arabic culture in the whole region the ability to cooperate is underdeveloped. We experience this in the Barcelona Process, which we indeed are offering to the countries of the Mediterranean area and the Near East. The ability to modernize of many elites and societies there is rather poor. In some cases cultural authenticity is used as a pretext for avoiding serious discussions about human rights in their own societies” (4824B).³⁹⁹

Gerhardt, instead of politically analyzing why such cooperation is not happening, chooses an oversimplifying and Orientalist explanation, by referring to underdevelopment and lack of modernization abilities based on the characteristics of an Arab culture. This is one of the roots for the GLP approach, which considers the need to develop other regions and peoples. Furthermore, regarding the Barcelona Process, Gerhardt should be aware of the dynamics and difficulties of interaction between authoritarian regimes, as well as he should know that many Arab actors are disliking the Process due to the forced interaction with Israel.

...

Rolf Mützenich, SPD, 20 September 2006:

“UN peace forces can be meaningful, if they stop the killing, if they built the frame for stability and hence if they facility dialogue between the conflict parties. Also the Left party has to confront such basic questions in the future. Constructive pacifism does not exhaust itself in anti-militarism” (4823D).⁴⁰⁰

Mützenich is attacking the Left party’s anti-militarist position, which is popular with the German public. He invents the term “constructive pacifism” to further morally justify the involvement of the *Bundeswehr* and to portray it as a *good* force.

...

Wolfgang Gerhardt, FDP, 20 September 2006: “The right of self-defense of Israel against terrorist attacks is out of question” (4824D).⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁹ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4824B

⁴⁰⁰ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4823D

⁴⁰¹ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4824D

As no political actor is questioning Israel's or any other state's right of self-defense against terrorism, Gerhardt's statement is showing, that it is a conscious effort to frame Hizbullah's actions as terrorism. This is especially problematic because of the initiating incident of the 2006 Lebanon War. Gerhardt's statement is typical for the re-framing of Israel's formerly perceived right to live in security into the right to practice so called self-defense.

...

Eckart von Klaeden, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006, about the idea of an ME conference:

“For example who is supposed to sit behind the sign of Palestine? Isn't it important, firstly, to support a process in these states, which ensures the re-establishment of the state monopoly on the use of force, that the governments commit to the principles of international law and also are able to implement them?” (4828A).⁴⁰²

This view is typical for the GLP understanding of state building and also shows similarities to past British and French colonial approaches which saw the need for *guidance* of their mandated peoples until they eventually would be ready for self-determination and independence. It is based on the assumption that as the first step there has to be institution building and the establishment of the rule of law. This in turn should be supervised by the international community, which is actually dominated by Western states, reflecting the above-described Transitional Administration approach by the UN. Only thereafter it is worth beginning negotiations about state claims and national rights. Especially in the case of the Palestinians this thinking is hypocritical as the Western community is preventing referendums among *all* Palestinians, and as it decides as a *higher* authority over the recognition of democratic election results, as

⁴⁰² Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4828A

shown in the non-recognition of Hamas' victory in the January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections.

...

Chancellor Angela Merkel, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006: "In spite of all increased significance of Europe: Without the USA little or nothing happens in the [ME] region" (4832C).⁴⁰³

Merkel acknowledges a perceived dependence on the US, which in turn limits the potential influence of European and German decision-making. But this is only partly true, as Germany is actively supporting US positions, which are in contradiction to European ones such as the blockade of Israel-critical UNSCRs or the prevention/hindrance of trade limitations regarding Israeli produce from illegal West Bank settlements. Therefore it is likely that Germany is also hiding behind the US, to reduce its share of alliance obligations but also to have less confrontation with critique-worthy actions of Israel.

...

Chancellor Angela Merkel, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006:

"The Near East conflict is happening in the immediate European neighborhood. From the confrontation in this region the global Islamist terror, which is threatening us for years, is gaining parts – not more and not less – of its justification. Hence, political progress in the Near East is also an important step in removing a part of the foundation of Islamist terrorism." (4832D).⁴⁰⁴

Merkel's statement exemplifies the fusion of the GLP with the GWOT. It shows partial critique of the US' black and white thinking. Furthermore it reflects the understanding of terrorism not as a result of historically grown social conditions and as an expression of local resistance. Instead terrorism is considered as a consequence of

⁴⁰³ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4832C

⁴⁰⁴ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4832D

weak states, which are providing fertile ground for a kind of indiscriminate, unpredictable and, foremost, irrational violent thinking and ideology. This again represents Orientalist conceptions of the Arab World in which Arab and Muslim culture is associated with uncivilized characteristics; hence the emphasis of the “Islamist” character of the region’s terrorism. As a consequence of this GLP-GWOT hybrid discourse state building is seen as the tool to remove the failed structures, which are causing terrorism.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 20 September 2006:

“We have to strengthen the Lebanon. [We know] ... how fragile this state is, this construction, this conglomeration of groups, clans, who are quarreled among themselves. But if the Lebanon requests a UN mission for the strengthening of its own sovereignty, then can we actually evade that?” (4834D).⁴⁰⁵

Weisskirchen ignores the involvement of UNSCR 1701, which was mostly a European softening response to the US-Israeli demand for a NATO style chapter VII UNSCR.⁴⁰⁶ Lebanon supported the UNSCR1701 more likely to prevent a foreign mission that would forcefully disarm Hizbullah, which could have caused domestic turmoil. Furthermore Lebanese UNIFIL consent enabled the important suspension of Israel’s sea and naval blockade. Besides that Weisskirchen most likely knew that himself, his view represents the GLP lens through which Western states want to see the Middle East.

...

Christian Ruck, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006:

“In the Arab World ... there are grave development deficits, huge unemployment, to some extent grinding poverty, a low education level, and also a low economic competitiveness. That, together with a high population growth and an overwhelmingly

⁴⁰⁵ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4834D

⁴⁰⁶ Makdisi (2011, February). Constructing Security Council Resolution 1701, pp. 14-5.

high youth unemployment results in an explosive mix, especially not only because of a missing development but also because of missing development perspectives. Because of this it is right and important that we provide development aid and emergency aid as well as support for ensuring basic needs in Lebanon and Palestine; especially this task should not be left to the radical Islamists now and in the future. ... We can do this in various fields: with support of economic reforms, the building of an efficient bureaucracy, and with the implementation of political reforms in the Arab World. With the development towards a modern state and a modern economy in this region, we are connecting the hope, that also the societies there will modernize so that it will deprive the fertile ground for fanaticism and radicalism.” (4842C-D).⁴⁰⁷

Ruck’s statement represents a blueprint for the GLP approach due to his emphasis on liberal institution building and modernization based on aid provision as solution for the problems of the region. It lacks an analysis of the reasons for the missing structures and institutions, and lack of understanding for the specificities of the various, different, unique communities. Instead Ruck oversimplifies and considers Islamism as natural result of the local conditions, which he understands as Arab conditions, exemplified by his reference to Lebanon and Palestine. In this regard he misses Israel’s influence on the latter two.

...

Sascha Raabe, SPD, 20 September 2006:

“We have been opposed to [the Iraq] war. But especially if you want, that not the [US] is determining how the global security policy has to look like, but that the United States of this world, the [UN], are determining the security and peace policy, then you also have to participate in missions, which are based on the legitimate will of the peoples of this world” (4844A-B).⁴⁰⁸

Raabe articulates especially European continental critique the US approach to the war on terror, as well as an aim of emancipation from the US. His statement expresses the perception of the UN values as being universal values as well as the critique of unilateral FP making based on power relations. Such view is enables the perception of the GLP is inherently *good*. In relation to the UNIFIL mission, which his

⁴⁰⁷ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4842C-D

⁴⁰⁸ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4844A-B

speech is generally referring to, this also means that it is not only based on an aim for the best outcome of the Lebanese-Israeli conflict, but also on an aim for limiting US and Israel influence on the character of the GWOT.

2. German interests

The articulation of German interests is shown by three examples across party lines, including a statement from the Left party. Against the background of the previous subchapter they are highlighting the righteousness of the GLP approach and its sole appeal to security and the promotion of liberal values. Furthermore, the statements show that despite raised critique against specific GWOT approaches there is a political consensus about the significance of German economic interests, as they are representing the foundation of Germany's wealth and welfare system. Depending on the party this is more or less clearly and directly formulated.

...

Chancellor Angela Merkel, CDU/CSU, 6 September 2006: "We have the aim, that over the next ten years Germany is becoming one of the leading three [countries] regarding growth, employment and innovation" (4485B).⁴⁰⁹

Merkel describes the economic goals of Germany at the very end of her speech, disconnected from FP issues. She formulates an aim for relative instead of just absolute gains.

...

Oskar Lafontaine, the Left, 6 September 2006, criticizing the government performance: "The exports are growing only weakly. Under consideration of the

⁴⁰⁹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4485B.

previous quarter [the growth] is only 0,7 percent” (4488B).⁴¹⁰

Even the Left party is focusing on Germany’s export strength, as the related job market is a foundation of Germany’s welfare system. Job creation is one of the key topics of the party.

...

Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, 6 September 2006:

“Peace and prosperity in Germany increasingly depend on how the rest of the world is doing. Terrorist attacks somewhere in the world can affect the whole world economy. ... Also the federal budget can due to events, such as the crisis in the Near East, suddenly turn into spoilage. Looking at the latest incidents in Germany [Steinmeier refers to attempted bombings of trains by Lebanese students in July 2006]⁴¹¹ I say, that we cannot rule out the dangers in ... trains. Another example are civil wars in Africa. They cause streams of refugees, which are reaching Europe and us. This makes clear: There are no more distant world regions. With us in Germany are living people from all regions and nations. Thereby we are directly affected by events in the home countries of these people. We as an export nation do trade with almost every country in the world. This is why we have a very special interest in stabile, peaceful conditions everywhere in the world” (4522B-C). Later Steinmeier states: “I am pleased that our [diplomats] in the world are increasingly becoming door openers for the interests of our economy. I am also pleased that the Foreign Office is involved in the development of concepts for the long-term resource and energy security of Europe” (4525B).⁴¹²

The Foreign Minister is framing the potential impacts of various types of negative events and developments in the world as influencing Germany’s interests such as the maintenance of its prosperity. He describes Germany’s dependence on the globalized world due to its wealth, which is based on international trade and exports. The emphasized involvement of the Foreign Office allows the conclusion that such interests are also influencing Germany’s GLP state building goals, for example in the form of choosing investment-worthy countries.

⁴¹⁰ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4488B.

⁴¹¹ Rach, C. (2006, August 21). Terror Threat in Germany 'Never Greater', Government Says. *Bloomberg*. And: DPA. (2007, April 18). Beirut trial over German train bomb delayed. *Expatica.com*.

⁴¹² Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4522B-C, 4525B.

Significant is also the highlighting of having representatives of all potential conflicts among the German population of German, which indirectly means, that German statements about conflicts can have immediate impacts on the domestic situation. Especially regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict this is becoming increasingly relevant, due to an increasing Arab and Muslim German population as well as due to an increasing Jewish community.

3. Uncritical critique of Israel

Uncritical critique is mostly represented by justifications of Israel's disproportionate use of force against Lebanon, with the reference to Israel's right of self-defense against terrorism.

...

Peter Struck, SPD, 6 September 2006, regarding the negative responses⁴¹³ to Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Wieczorek-Zeul's critique of Israel's use of cluster bombs in Lebanon:

“[She] was criticized by the Central Council of Jews [in Germany]. In the name of my [parliamentary SPD] faction I reject this critique. An investigation can be of use for all sides in the crisis region. ... Ehud Olmert highlighted the great friendship between our two countries ... Friends also have to deal truthfully with each other.” (4492A-B).⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ Wieczorek-Zeul stated publicly on German TV: “I pointed out – and all the aid organizations and even the UN also point out – that there are carpet bombs in southern Lebanon” (DW (2006, August 31). Merkel Soothes Jewish Ire After Minister's Cluster Bomb Remark. *DW.de*). DW reported about the critique against the Minister: “The Central Council of Jews has accused Wieczorek-Zeul of stirring up anti-Jewish sentiment in Germany. [Central Council President] Knobloch has also attacked the development minister for visiting Beirut last week as part of Germany's pledge to help rebuild Lebanon following the devastating 34-day-long Israeli offensive to rout Hezbollah militia. ‘The least she could have done was to visit Israel first. She should have reached out first to the attacked, not the attackers,’ said the council president. The council's vice president, Salomon Korn, [stated:] ‘The call for a UN probe was another knee-jerk reaction from the minister towards Israel.’ If Wieczorek-Zeul wanted a UN probe this should also take into account the fact that Israeli citizens have for years come under rocket fire from Lebanese soil, he added.”

⁴¹⁴ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4492A-B.

German politicians often emphasize the friendship between Israel and Germany when they are criticizing Israel to emphasize that they are meaning it only well with Israel. This is also represented in his sentence about the helpfulness of the investigation, which indirectly shows the often-expressed German benefit of the doubt towards Israel. Struck's statement also shows the moral authority and influence of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, as shown by Merkel's personal meeting with the President Knobloch after the latter's critique.⁴¹⁵

...

Werner Hoyer, FDP, 6 September 2006, asking the parliament:

“[I am wondering] whether we are not working with the wrong methods in the fight against international terrorism. Maybe, if we proceed as some are proceeding, we are alienating exactly those in the concerned countries and organizations who are or would be good-willing and who we urgently need to induce a peace process in the Near East. I am not entitled to cheaply criticize a country, which is fighting for its survival and towards which we have a very special responsibility. But it just worries me, that our Israeli friends almost have no one left in the region with whom they could have a trustful dialogue. A little while ago this was different” (4527A).⁴¹⁶

Hoyer seeks to express his critique about Israel's approach in the GWOT. In particular he is rightly criticizing the oversimplifications and lack of differentiation in the perception of the conflict parties who are opposed to Israel. Hoyer explicitly speaks of non-state actors – likely referring to Hizbullah and Hamas –, which expresses his belief in the ability and necessity to pragmatically approach negotiations without discrimination based on prejudice. But he either does not seem to know Israel's standing in the region in terms of its hard power or he does not publicly acknowledge it out of concern that his critique would not be heard or even out of fear of delegitimization from stronger Israel supporters. He portrays Israel as the weak victim fighting for survival, and thereby unfortunately isolating itself in the region.

⁴¹⁵ DW (2006, August 31). Merkel Soothes Jewish Ire After Minister's Cluster Bomb Remark.

⁴¹⁶ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4527A.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 6 September 2006:

“[By taking a look] into ... *Ha'aretz* ... I see three articles, which are critical of the developments of the 33 day long war. ... They attempt to explain that the unilateral approach has been wrong and that, now, there is a good and new chance for really developing an international concept ... so that the key problem of Israel finally can be addressed: The citizens of Israel need to be able to live in guaranteed, internationally secured and recognized borders.” (4534C).⁴¹⁷

Weisskirchen uses liberal Zionist opinions to highlight Israel's ability to learn from its mistakes, which in turn are excused as Israel is portrayed as a weak state fighting for its survival. Weisskirchen expects the parties to the conflict to still believe in the ability of a peace process platform to solve all problems, which in his view actually are only Israel's security problems.

...

Niels Annen, SPD, 6 September 2006:

“The in my opinion in most parts disproportionate military strikes of the last weeks can only be understood – I am convinced of that – when you realize that from the Israeli perspective this war was not about a dispute in an occupied territory, but about the existence of the state of Israel.” (4542C).⁴¹⁸

Annen expresses his knowledge of the situation, which is different from the Israeli description of it. But instead of criticizing this, he is offering a way to justify it. He basically is openly asking for denial, and offers a technique for it.

...

Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, SPD, 6 September 2006: “We have to do everything so that cluster bombs will be prohibited world wide” (4576A).⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁷ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4534C

⁴¹⁸ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4542C.

⁴¹⁹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4576A.

From a German perspective Wieczorek-Zeul was taking an unusually strong stand for which Israel-critiques applauded her. As an individual politician she might have done what was in her power. But when looking at her remark as one of an official administration member then her critique is less powerful, due to Germany's own dealings with cluster ammunition. The parliamentarian Hellmut Königshaus (FDP) highlighted the inherent double standard clearly in a response to Wieczorek-Zeul:

“Why are you only accusing others? Maybe the Israelis just did, what the [German] coalition parties just demanded on 28 June [2006] ... for the Bundeswehr: to use cluster ammunition, but only then, ‘when suitable alternative ammunition is unavailable’?⁴²⁰ Maybe the Israelis also did not have something else that was suitable, at their disposal. Anyhow, this is unacceptable You have yet to draw conclusions. [...] (interjection from the SPD: This is completely absurd, what you are saying!” (4577A-B).⁴²¹

...

Sascha Raabe, SPD, 20 September 2006: “I think, despite our good, friendly relation with the state of Israel it was right that our Minister had chosen clear words and had emphasized, that the use of cluster bombs was wrong” (4844B).⁴²²

Raabe's statement shows that for many parliamentarians and representatives of the German Jewish community the Israeli-German friendship is understood as an obligation to show understanding for Israeli use of cluster bombs or at least to not criticize it publicly. For that reason critiques repeatedly highlight that critique among friends is legitimate.

⁴²⁰ German Bundestag (2006, June 28). Proposal of the factions of CDU/CSU and SPD: prohibition of dangerous cluster ammunition - further development of international humanitarian law [Antrag der Fraktionen der CDU/CSU und SPD: Gefährliche Streumunition verbieten – Das humanitäre Völkerrecht weiterentwickeln]. 16/1995, Berlin.

⁴²¹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4577A-B.

⁴²² Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4844B

4. Political elite conformity

Also in the debate regarding the 2006 Lebanon War the conformity among the political elite towards Israel was shown. Due to the focus on the GWOT parliamentarians were talking less about Palestinian rights and more about Israel's right for security and self-defense against terror. Also the Left party repeatedly expressed the German responsibility for Israel, although it criticized it more as a part of the GWOT which it mostly opposes due to its anti-militarism stance. As the conformity is reflected generally in the speeches this subchapter contains only one typical statement.

Later Foreign Minister (2009-2013) Guido Westerwelle, FDP, 6 September 2006:

“The reason of state is unchanged for the entire parliament. It includes the right of existence of Israel and the right of Israeli citizens to live in secure borders, as well as the right of self-determination of the Palestinians. No one in this parliament will even only to a small degree have doubts that suicide and rocket attacks on Israel are a crime and that the international community has to speak out clearly against it and has to act.” (4506A).⁴²³

Besides the repetition of the emphasis of Germany's reason of state and its inclusion of Israel's right of existence, there is a tendency to speak of the secure borders instead of recognized borders, which must be due to the Lebanese context, which is different from the issue of the determination of the disputed Israeli-Palestinian border demarcation.

In general it is typical in the debate especially for small opposition parties to emphasize their conformity with the inclusion of Israel's right of existence in Germany's reason of state. Such statements are an important source of political credibility and legitimacy, which is critical, as usually in German government coalitions always the small party is providing the Foreign Minister – Westerwelle himself being an

⁴²³ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4506A.

example. The bias in Westerwelle's remark is obvious in the lack of emphasis of the right of Lebanese and Palestinians to be safe from Israeli attacks, for example in the form of extra-judicial killings and bombardments of civilian infrastructure.⁴²⁴

5. *Justifying the MEPP*

As during the analyzed debates in the year 2000 and 2002, parliamentarians describe the MEPP, included its end goal being the two-state solution, as the only approach to a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006:

“Of course the ceasefire has to lead over to an approach for a comprehensive political peace process. ... Of course we need again an active role of the ME Quartet. ... In this context we are welcoming the aim of the Palestinians to build a government of national unity. ... Of course it is necessary to reach the two-state solution to guarantee the right of existence of Israel and to give the people in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories a reasonable future” (4832B).⁴²⁵

Such statements reflect the German government's awareness of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict being the root cause for the different conflicts in the Middle East. But it also shows how tightly the solution framework is linked with the MEPP and especially with the two-state solution. The comparison of the Israeli and the Palestinian situation once more represents the portrayal of Israel as being existentially threatened while Palestine is merely worrying about a “reasonable future”, which actually is an upside-down framing of the reality and weakening of Palestinian claims.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, SPD, 20 September 2006, speaking about Israel's violence using opponents:

⁴²⁴ UN Security Council. (2006, July 21). S/2006/560 - Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (For the period from 21 January to 18 July 2006).

⁴²⁵ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4832B

“ Hamas has to convince Abbas, that it not just only wants to recognize Israel but also ... that it wants to renounce the use of violence, so that the Jewish State of Israel will become for the region the point of origin for peace and security where all ... will have a chance to conquer their freedom and to work for a chance of peace in this region.” (4835B).⁴²⁶

Weisskirchen’s statement is exemplary for the Western view that the natural violence of Israel’s dangerous neighbors is preventing the spread of Western values from Israel into the whole ME region. This Orientalist and colonialism-style view ignores the reasons for the violence, which in turn leads to the GLP discourse conclusion that (only) Western state building and the assumed resulting prosperity will give the people of the region a peace dividend based on which they will start adhering to Western liberal values. The reference to the Jewish State ignores the inherent need for the completion of the ethnic cleansing of Israel-controlled territory or the alternative need to establish an Israeli apartheid state. The dictation of conditions for the acceptance of Hamas, and thus, of his democratically achieved election victory is another example for the righteous paternalism underlying the Western influence and domination of the MEPP.

6. German “impartiality”

Statements about German impartiality are characterized by ambiguity – intended and unintended – about the differences between neutrality and impartiality. Diverting from German political elite conformity the topic of German impartiality is controversial. Although generally all parliamentarians consider German impartiality as based on German FP values, some speakers see German impartiality either limited by moral obligations towards Israel or as challenging Germany’s domestic identity.

Rolf Mützenich, SPD, 20 September 2006:

⁴²⁶ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4835B

“Israel has explicitly asked for the participation of the *Bundeswehr*. Moreover, it is willing to hand its northern security over to a UN mandated and led force. Both occurrences are impressive and unique. This is why the UNIFIL mandate is about the security of Israel. But the force is not acting instead of Israel. The Bundeswehr is part of a UN peace force. It is neither party nor arbitrator” (4822D-3A).⁴²⁷

Mützenich, naively or in denial, is not critically questioning Israel’s motive for supporting UNIFIL and Germany’s participation in it. Israel very likely is not handing over its Northern security but has gained another buffer zone as well as, with UNIFIL, a potential scapegoat, in case of future attacks from Lebanon. Another Israeli motive could be exactly to make Germany a party to the conflict so that it would start taking a harder stance against Hizbullah. His statement about UNIFIL not being an arbitrator shows the reoccurring ambiguity about the meaning of the UN’s core principles such as neutrality and impartiality. Being member of the impartial UNIFIL force includes the role of an arbitrator who judges based on the rules of engagement, which are articulated based on UNSCR 1701.

...

Lothar Bisky, the Left, 20 September 2006:

“We have to stand up for an Israel, where you can live within secured borders and free from violence. But it is also right, that timely and simultaneously we have to stand up for the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. This double categorical imperative results from our history” (4829A).⁴²⁸

Also the Left party is constantly repeating the discourse, which portrays Israel as threatened while Palestinians merely aim for *legitimate* rights. This discourse induces more sympathy for Israel by appealing to fear as well as it ignores Israel’s role in creating the causes for the attacks on its territory. Furthermore, the emphasis of legitimate instead of legal Palestinian rights appeals less to international law and more

⁴²⁷ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4822D-3A

⁴²⁸ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4829A

to moral reasoning, which is inherent of the notion that the (Palestinian) rights claimer has to earn his rights through acknowledgment-worthy moral and *good* deeds.

...

Chancellor Angela Merkel, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006:

“[Israeli Prime Minister Olmert’s request] cannot be overstated in its meaning as a sign of trust in Germany, in the state in which name 73 years ago the extermination of the Jews and shortly after the Second World War had been started. Such a sign of trust we have to take very serious. At hardly any other place in the world the unique responsibility of Germany, the unique responsibility of the [German] government and of the German Bundestag for the lessons from German history, is as clear as here. ... I say it very clearly: Yes, we are not neutral and we also do not want to be neutral. German foreign and security policy since 1949 has never been neutral. It was and stays value-based. Adherence to values is the opposite of neutrality. This is why we have been committing ourselves for decades to the European Union. This is why we commit ourselves to NATO. This is why we want a strong UN. This is why we commit ourselves to a worldwide implementation of international rights, for peace, for the protection of human dignity and for participation ... [, and for] sovereignty ... especially in the Near East region” (4831D-2A).⁴²⁹

Merkel’s statement reflects the view of Israel as one of the only actors who can judge Germany’s transformation to a *good* nation. She links this view with her understanding of German responsibility based on Germany’s history, thereby making the support of German UNIFIL participation an expression of responsible decision-making. Merkel’s definition of neutrality is, in comparison to other definitions of parliamentarians, correct and offers a summary of German FP values and principles. The linkage with the adherence to values describes the standards against which Germany, as an impartial arbitrator, judges actions of other political actors. But, significantly, the context in which she is placing the neutrality definition allows an extensive and probably intended reinterpretation of Germany’s impartiality towards Israel. The value base of Germany, especially within the GLP and GWOT discourse, is one that is shared with other Western states including Israel, but not with the yet-to-be-

⁴²⁹ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4831D-2A

developed and yet-to-be-civilized Arab states. This raises significant doubts about German impartiality by universal or even UN standards.

...

Later Foreign Minister (2009-2013) Guido Westerwelle, FDP, 20 September 2006:

“[To be non-neutral towards Israel] is a consequence from our history. Neutrality is more than adherence to values. We are not and we are not allowed to be neutral and also do not want to be neutral towards Israel. Exactly this neutrality of not taking sides in case of a conflict is expected from German soldiers while they are participating in this mission as part of the United Nations” (4833B).⁴³⁰

Westerwelle’s statement critically mixes up the meanings of neutrality and impartiality. In comparison to Merkel’s neutrality definition Westerwelle does not even want to judge Israel by own and shared standards, which actually would mean the real definition of neutrality and his support for it. On the other hand, he understands that Merkel’s neutrality understanding actually is referring to impartiality, which he excludes as a FP option regarding Israel.

...

Later Foreign Minister (2009-2013) Guido Westerwelle, FDP, 20 September 2006, regarding UNSCR 1701:

“But who is disarming Hizbullah? ... Lebanese authorities ... I hope that so much good faith can stand the reality check. The disarming of Hizbullah[, as stated in 1701,] explicitly should not be carried out by the UN, but by the government of Lebanon. My confidence is not very distinctive, that a Lebanese central government, which for years should have disarmed Hizbullah but is not doing it, now should be able to do it. My confidence also isn’t very strong when considering that a Lebanese government, which includes Hizbullah ministers, will uncompromisingly achieve such disarming. If Lebanon after all is not doing it and the UN is not doing it, then is it really ruled out that Israel takes care of it itself? Such a breach of the ceasefire the United Nations and hence German soldiers would have to prevent. If Israel would conduct an operation to free its abducted soldiers via the sea, would we have to prevent that? Even more

⁴³⁰ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4833B

importantly: Do we want to prevent that? ... Israel, justifiably, expects that we take sides in case of doubt” (4833D-4A).⁴³¹

Westerwelle expresses his distrust into the Lebanese government, which in relation to the UNSCR 1701 means, that he does not give meaning to international agreements, which the Lebanese state is committing to. This might reflect a general distrust in Lebanese or Arab culture. Furthermore his statement is representative for the biased understanding of the conflict in general, which considers Hizbullah and even Lebanon as guilty of a crime and Israel as the victim of it. This reflects the ignorance of the cause of Hizbullah’s initial attack and its detachment of the all-over history of the Lebanese-Israeli and ME conflict in general. Additionally Westerwelle offers a justification for Israeli breaches of UNSCRs and the inherent rules of engagement. It is very likely that the German government in 2006 shared this view, which would be highly problematic for the safeguarding of German sailors impartiality, because Westerwelle three years later became Merkel’s Foreign Minister. It is very likely, too, as expressed by Westerwelle, that Israel for this reason has requested a German contribution to UNIFIL and even explicitly the stationing of German soldiers at its land border.

...

Gert Weisskirchen, 20 September 2006:

“The recognition of the right of existence of the Jewish State of Israel has been the basic constant of the Chancellors Adenauer, Kiesinger, Brandt and Schröder. This is also true for Mrs. Merkel. This basic constant persists. It must never and in no way be damaged. This means, that we, when Israel is requesting it, will support resolution 1701 with the limited military instrument, which we will employ.” (4834D).⁴³²

Based on Germany’s focus on consistency and predictability Weisskirchen is drawing the uncompromising conclusion that Germany will never divert from its pro-

⁴³¹ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4833D-4A

⁴³² Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4834D.

Zionism (e.g. Jewish State emphasis) supportive stance towards Israel. For him this includes the acceptance of Israeli requests such as the one for German UNIFIL participation. This way of describing the decision regarding German UNIFIL participation, allows Weisskirchen to say nothing about the real, and impartiality-demanding, intentions of Israel's request for the *Bundeswehr*.

...

Six members of the Greens, SPD, 20 September 2006:⁴³³

“In case of a new escalation of the conflict ... Israeli attacks on targets in Lebanon from the sea are not unlikely. ... Then the [German] Navy ... actually would have to ‘prevent all hostile activities’. Combat operations against the Israeli military would be expected, but would not be realizable from the German perspective. ... For the success of the UN peace mission strict neutrality of the involved soldiers would be the absolute precondition. But against the background of the German history and the special responsibility for Israel, German soldiers cannot be neutral” (4882C).

Once again the terms neutrality and impartiality are mixed up. Besides that, the concerned parliamentarians see the ability of German impartiality in the UNIFIL mission negated by Germany's historical responsibility.

7. (Partial) acknowledgment

The parliamentarians acknowledge conflicts between Israeli actions and German values only in form of general critique of selected unilateral and disproportionate GWOT approaches. In doing they evade the need to criticize Israel directly. Furthermore this seems to absolve the parliamentarians from critically analyzing the state-building approaches as part of the GLP. This speech behavior is similar to the use of right-wing Zionism as a scapegoat for general contradictions within Zionism, including liberal Zionism. This means, that even the critiques are significantly

⁴³³ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4882C. This is issued as a written statement (as also issued by other parliamentarians, although with different content) regarding their No-vote on the German UNIFIL participation. Such written statements are officially attached to the records of the parliamentary debate.

influenced by the GLP and the WOT discourse. One reason is the already-mentioned general German support for liberal state building. The chosen critical quotes include notes: about the lack of a clear definition of terror; about the negative effect of increasing terrorism due to the GWOT approaches; about the delay of the ceasefire; as well as notes about the influence of Germany's arms exports in the region.

...

Oskar Lafontaine, the Left, 6 September 2006, by referring to a statement of the Minister of the Interior of Bavaria, is saying:

“... that our participation in the Lebanon War is increasing the danger of terroristic attacks in Germany. ... You won't be surprised, that over the last years also the security services repeatedly have warned, that our military engagement at the Hindukush and wherever else is not suitable to reduce the danger of terrorist attacks in Germany” (4485D).⁴³⁴

Based on credible German state sources Lafontaine points out not only the ineffectiveness of the military components of the GWOT but actually their counter productivity.

...

Oskar Lafontaine, the Left, 6 September 2006:

“[I]sn't it necessary, Mrs. Chancellor, that you, if you want to fight terrorism, that you say once, what you understand under terrorism. You are not able to do that That this is difficult was explained by the former President of the Federal Constitutional Court [referring to a planned law for an anti-terror database] ... , I quote: 'The draft shows how difficult it is to determine persons sufficiently clear, who are moving in a terroristic context: if it for example mentions persons "who use violence illegally as a means to enforce internationally oriented political or religious interests or who support, advocate, or cause – deliberately through their activities – such use of violence"'. ... What can't you all understand under "internationally oriented political or religious interests"? Doesn't it also include a war with the aim to depose a dictator?' ... Terrorism ... is the killing of persons with the aim of achieving political goals. ... Against this background not only the attacks on the World Trade Centre and suicide attacks ... are terrorism, but also the conduct of war in the Near East, which

⁴³⁴ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4485D

kills thousands of innocent people. ... You cannot fight terrorism with terrorism. To do this is the grave error of American policy” (4486A-B).⁴³⁵

Lafontaine emphasizes one of the basic weaknesses of the GWOT, which is its application of double standards. This highlights the non-universal character of the liberal values promoted by the GLP. His clear expression of critique of US GWOT tactics is rather seldom in the Bundestag and mostly confined to the Left party. Lafontaine seeks to gain legitimacy for his statements by quoting a former President of the Federal Constitutional Court, as every politician is respecting it, as it is representing one of the main pillars of Germany’s post-WWII identity.

...

Fritz Kuhn, the Greens, 6 September 2006:

“... the [German government] has to break the perception pattern, which prevails among Bush and even stronger among his Defense Minister – meaning that every problem in the world somehow is related to the hunt of al-Qaida terrorists. You won’t do justice to the reality in Palestine and between Palestinians and Israelis if you only understand them in relation to international terrorism. You also won’t do justice to the Hizbullah conflict in Lebanon, if you only see it in relation to the fight against al-Qaida. A political solution means that you constructively approach the conflicts between Syria and Israel as well as between Syria and Lebanon step by step. You have to ensure that it really results in a two-state solution” (4495A).⁴³⁶

Kuhn criticizes the oversimplification of the US GWOT approach. But, although he represents an opposition party, he does not criticize the fight against terrorism in general as the repeated use of the word “only” indicates. By doing this he actually still is implying the possibility of links between al-Qaida activities and the Palestinian or Hizbullah resistance, which is problematic.

...

Monika Knoche, the Left, 6 September 2006:

⁴³⁵ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4486A-B

⁴³⁶ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4495A.

“Neither [the Chancellor] nor [the Foreign Minister] have used their positions to unconditionally support a ceasefire. [They] neither did it at the EU, nor at the level of the UN. Rather they stood behind the US and Israel and not behind the Secretary-General Kofi Annan, until it was clear that Israel could not achieve its war aim as expected. ... I say it very consciously: Without the fascist crimes, without the Holocaust the core conflict Israel/Palestine would not exist.” (4531B-C).⁴³⁷

Knoche speaks out about Germany’s passive support of the protraction of the ceasefire negotiations and of the UNSCR 1701 drafting, highlighting Germany’s pro-Israel bias and the inherent grave denial of its responsibility for the destruction and killing in Lebanon. She furthermore acknowledges Germany’s responsibility for the Arab-Israeli conflict in general and thus also for the 2006 Lebanon War. Both remarks highlight essential flaws in German FP. A serious acceptance of the responsibility for the Holocaust would demand support for the Palestinians as well.

...

Niels Annen, SPD, 6 September 2006:

“[Quoting Brent Scowcroft:] ‘The origin of the problem is not the Hizbullah. It is only an offshoot of the cause, which is the tragic conflict over Palestine.’ ... We have to include the problems about the occupied Golan and about the Sheba’a Farms, and we finally have to consider the statehood of Palestine. For me it is clear: The solution of the Palestinian question is in the center of our efforts.” (4542A).⁴³⁸

Besides highlighting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the root of the region’s problems Annen is also pointing to Hizbullah’s concrete strategic aims related to occupied land. By including the occupation of the Golan Heights Annen is emphasizing Israel’s expansionist politics. Also Annen considers the two-state solution as the final goal of the MEPP.

...

Josip Juratovic, SPD, 6 September 2006, referring to own experience with peace operations on the Balkan:

⁴³⁷ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4531B-C.

⁴³⁸ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4542A.

“[N]eeded people ... became victims of socio-political experiments. For example: It is unacceptable, that we in Europe are talking about the ‘social model of Europe’, while representatives of the business associations are talking about ‘pure market economy’ in the crises zones, and are presenting us the results as alleged success models.” (4547C).⁴³⁹

Juratovic’s critique represents one of the few and clearest statements that criticize the export character of the GLP and he is almost the only one critically highlighting the neo-liberal values which are often taken as a foundation for state building induced by Western states. Expanding such critique and debate could lead to the necessary self-reflection and introspection about the righteous and opportunistic features within the GLP.

...

Heike Hänsel, the Left, 6 September 2006:

“The Near East is one of mostly armed regions in the world. But only few are talking about the origin of these weapons. Numerous German companies are delivering weapons, with permissions from the [German] government, into this conflict region, namely to all sides. ... Many of these weapons exports went for example to Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Photos showed Palestinian Hamas fighters with German submachine guns and G-3-assault rifles. It is interesting that Kauder out of all,⁴⁴⁰ always has been a lobbyist of Heckler & Koch, the producer of the G-3-rifles, because he constantly supported the preservation of German jobs in this company. ... But this also concerns the other side, in this case Israel. There are shipments of submarines to Israel and of German technology for Israeli tanks and fighter jets. These weapons have been used in the war against Lebanon and they are used in the occupied Palestinian territories, for example in Gaza. In numerous cases civil infrastructure has been bombarded; as well as the civilian population has been bombarded. It is very clear, that also we share responsibility. ... we build development projects with EU-funding – meaning also German tax money – and subsequently they get bombed and destroyed. It is absurd that this is partially happening with German weapons. What kind of politics is this? ... I consider the silence of the [German] government over the last weeks, regarding the call for an immediate ceasefire and images of Merkel and Bush having a BBQ the day the war against the Lebanon is starting, as unbearable. ... With our committee we have been on a trip to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. ... With common sense you can understand, that the situation of oppression is causing permanent hatred and thus propensity to use violence. Because of this ... it

⁴³⁹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4547C.

⁴⁴⁰ Volker Kauder is parliamentary faction leader of the CDU/CSU and one of the closest colleagues of Chancellor Merkel (Schwennicke, C. (2008, June 24). Union faction leader Kauder: Mommy's most loyal soldier [Unionsfraktionschef Kauder: Muttis treuester Soldat]. *Spiegel Online*).

is long overdue to start a new, all-encompassing peace process in the region, at which end there have to be two viable states in secure borders.” (4581A-2A).⁴⁴¹

Hänsel is one of few parliamentarians who clearly name the involved German double standards due to pro-Israel bias and due to economic interests, which are basically motivated by the aim to secure German employment. The issue of German arms exports into the region is reflecting the double standards applied in the GWOT. The example of Volker Kauder shows how close personal political and economic interests are and how potentially problematical they can merge. The factory of Heckler & Koch is located in Kauder’s electoral district Rotweil-Tutlingen.⁴⁴² The very generous weapons deals and their decades-long history with Israel are a further example for Germany’s pro-Israel bias.

Hänsel also names Israel’s intentional destruction of Lebanese and Palestinian infrastructure as well as the intentional targeting and killing of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians. Her speech furthermore highlights Germany’s cash diplomacy in regards to development aid. Her reference to the “absurdity” highlights the contradiction in Germany’s FP,⁴⁴³ and the denial of the reality that Israel is not respecting Western state building efforts in Palestine. More likely it shows that Israel actually is against the building of a foundation of a Palestinian state. This dynamic explains Israel’s interest in

⁴⁴¹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4581A-2A

⁴⁴² Egizzi, D., & Binsack, C. (Directors). (2013). *Deadly Deals [Tödliche Deals]* [investigative documentary].

⁴⁴³ Sari Hanafi also describes German contradictions in its support for the Palestinians, as well as the link to 9/11: “Since 11 September 2001, the boundaries are very blurred and the grey zone becomes very thick. We are now used to seeing the official German position against the publication or the dissemination of the EU Jerusalem report or the lack of support of EU members towards the International Court of Justice’s advisory opinion regarding the wall, while simultaneously giving the Palestinian NGOs valuable funding to promote Palestinian NGO activities in Jerusalem and to advocate against the Israeli apartheid wall” (Hanafi, S. (2007, January 31). Why did the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation withdraw refugee conference funding at the last minute. *Electronic Intifada*).

the “infinity” of the MEPP, which is fuelled by Western and German unrealistic hope based on a belief in liberal Zionism, as well as by Israel’s aim to gain time. During that time Israel is able to create more facts on the ground in form of settlements in the West Bank, while it is “lawn-mowing” the Gaza Strip.⁴⁴⁴

Her acknowledgement of the reality in the OPT is based on personal impressions, showing her active aim for knowledge about the situation. Her call for a new MEPP with the old aim for a two-state solution represents German political elite philo-Zionism. Across party lines such partial acknowledgment based on active observation of the Palestinian reality can be observed, as for example shown by

⁴⁴⁴ Rami Khouri described lawn-mowing after the 2014 Gaza War: “After every Israeli war and invasion that kills hundreds of Palestinians and destroys key elements of their civilian infrastructure, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other resistance groups regroup, replenish their military supplies, increase their technical capabilities and prepare for the next round of fighting with Israel. This reflects accurately the Israeli policy in Gaza of “mowing the lawn,” meaning Israel has to attack Gaza regularly to maintain the status quo, like a homeowner mowing the lawn every few weeks” (Khouri, R. G. (2014, July 19). Israel’s chronic use of force is failing. *The Daily Star*).

statements of Norbert Blüm (CDU),⁴⁴⁵ and Sigmar Gabriel (SPD, Vice-Chancellor since 2013).⁴⁴⁶

...

Lothar Bisky, the Left, 20 September 2006:

“It would have been better, if based on commitment from the international community a ceasefire would have been reached not only after 33 horrible days and nights. To say it diplomatically: In this case the [German] government did not play a praiseworthy role. The hostage taking and the rocket attacks by Hizbullah were illegal by international law and have to be condemned. But to take them as a reason for a large-scale aerial war and for a ground offensive against Lebanon, has been just as little in accordance with international law.” (4828B-C).⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁵ Norbert Blüm (CDU, 1982-1998 Minister for Labour and Social Affairs) has travel several times to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Based on his experiences he became an outspoken Israel-critic, stating: “In the actions of the Israeli military I cannot recognize a defensive fight against terrorism, but only extermination. Who kills children, by not allowing a mother with her child that is life-threateningly sick to a hospital, this I call extermination”. Calling for a change in Germany’s handling of Israel Blüm demanded “provocative critique, otherwise you never get out of the vicious circle of suicide attacks, which I abhor, and the boundless vengeance of Israel, in which the death of children is accepted” (Spiegel Online (2002, June 18). Near East crisis: Blüm attacks Israeli course of action [Nahost-Krise: Blüm attackiert israelisches Vorgehen]. *Spiegel Online*). Blüm (as well as the German ME correspondent Ulrich Kienzle, and the former director of the German Orient-Institute (from 1976-2006) Udo Steinbach) had a famous outburst over Israel’s occupation practices in the German political talk show “*Hart aber Fair*”, which debated the question how much Israel critique is okay in Germany (Hard but Fair [Hart aber Fair]. (2009, January 21). Israel and Palestine: Norbert Blüm (CDU) about the Near East conflict between Israel and Palestine [Israel und Palästina: Norbert Blüm (CDU) über den Nahostkonflikt zwischen Israel und Palästina]. *youtube channel "Politik & Talk"*).

⁴⁴⁶ Sigmar Gabriel (SPD, Vice-Chancellor since 2013) travelled more than 20 times to Israel and the OPT. After a Hebron visit he stated: “I was just in Hebron. There’s a legal vacuum there for Palestinians. This is an apartheid regime, for which there is no justification”. Drawing the same conclusion as Blüm regarding necessary critique of Israel he said: “I think [Israel’s] current settlement policy is wrong and I consider the conditions [in Hebron] undignified ... We are not doing any favors to us or our friends in Israel if we continue veiling our criticism in diplomatic flowers of speech”. Despite such acknowledgement Gabriel expresses the typical German political elite support for the two-state solution: “‘‘ Hamas is a factor in this conflict. And you can’t solve a conflict if one factor is being ignored,’ Gabriel told reporters in Jerusalem. He also said that he fully supports the Palestinians’ efforts to have Palestine accepted as a member state of the United Nations, ‘because there is no counterargument to that’” (Ahren, R. (2012, March 14). Israel running 'apartheid regime' in Hebron, says man who could be next leader of Germany. *The Times of Israel*).

⁴⁴⁷ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4828B-C

Bisky emphasizes the length of the war and the German government's responsibility for that duration. He furthermore brings Hizbullah's and Israel's action into perspective without excusing Hizbullah's attack but by highlighting the disproportionality of Israel's response.

...

Lothar Bisky, the Left, 20 September 2006:

"... you shouldn't make, on the quiet, UNSCR 1701 a resolution which is almost solely concerned with the disarmament of Hizbullah, if the future peace of the Near East is supposed to be settled. No, it is about the permanent protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon. And in that regard it is allowed to remind of the fact that part of the country had been occupied by Israel for 18 years. The proposal of the [German] government is formulated with a bias against the Palestinian people. Its right for security, peace and an independent state is not mentioned" (4829A).⁴⁴⁸

Bisky is clearly addressing the partiality of Germany's government in its interpretation of UNSCR 1701. On the other hand, his statement also shows the general support of the GLP discourse with its emphasis on a Westphalian understanding of state sovereignty across German party lines.

...

Oskar Lafontaine, the Left, 20 September 2006:

"We have to be neutral regarding our adherence to values. To make the consequences of this clear I want to quote the leader of the Christian opposition in Lebanon, General Aoun ... who said [figuratively]: 'We don't understand that the [UN] condemns the abduction of two Israeli soldiers as terrorist act, while they don't condemn the bombardment of our country, whereby more than 1.000 civilians were killed, as terrorist act.' ... We won't get any further with the way we are conducting politics in the Near East so far, because these politics are leading to the humiliation of the Arab World. ... You can only enforce international law if you respect it yourself. [In this regard] ... I want to remind that we are still involved in the Iraq War, which, referring to the Federal Administrative Court, is illegal by international law. It does not make sense ... to ignore this ... because it is inconvenient. This war is illegal and we are involved by allowing the use of our airports, our airspace and other support to one of the war parties. The Federal Administrative Court is right. The majority of [the *Bundestag*] is completely wrong if it ignores such a severe argument." (4836A-D).⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4829A

⁴⁴⁹ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4836A-D

Also Lafontaine contributes to the confusion about the terms neutrality and impartiality. But besides that he highlights the fact that the Western appeal to liberal values in reality is only an appeal to Western values, which damages the impartiality of German (and other Western) troops in the UNIFIL mission. Most likely intentionally Lafontaine is quoting Aoun while emphasizing his Christian religion. This allows him to highlight the hypocritical and flawed Orientalist view of the conflict between Lebanon and Israel. By doing this, and by referencing the Federal Administrative Court, Lafontaine gives more legitimacy to his claim, which might weaken delegitimization attempts by other parties. His reference to the Iraq War importantly acknowledges German indirect involvement and the contradiction with Germany's own values. It also gives credibility to his raised, and highly criticized, concern that Germany's involvement in illegal GWOT missions is increasing the risk of responding terrorist attacks in Germany.

...

Florian Pronold, SPD, 20 September 2006:

“Basic condition for the military participation in a UN mission is ... the absolute neutrality towards the conflict parties. ... The special responsibility of Germany for the right of existence of Israel will not allow a complete neutral stance in an emergency. Also the expectations as formulated by the Israeli side suggest this interpretation. ... Germany is unable to survive an ... [armed confrontation with Israel] neither regarding foreign nor domestic politics. What difficulties could arise was already shown in the public debate about the rightly expressed remark by ... Wiczorek-Zeul about the use of cluster bombs during the conflict.” (4890C-D).⁴⁵⁰

Also Pronold mixes up the terms of neutrality and impartiality and is actually referring to Germany's inability to be impartial. He clearly acknowledges Israel's indirectly expressed expectation of support from Germany within UNIFIL, as well as the potential for too big discussions domestically in Germany. The latter fact can be

⁴⁵⁰ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4890C-D.

explained with the significant gap between German public opinion and German political elite opinion regarding Israel. In recognition of this reality Pronold voted against German participation in UNIFIL.

8. *Delegitimization of the critics*

The critique of the critique from opponents to the GWOT and to Israeli politics shows the pressure that is exerted on individual parliament members who share very dissenting political views and who are actively addressing misinformation and denial about the reality. The response to expressed critique aims for delegitimization and to attack the credibility, trustworthiness and sense of responsibility of politicians. Often these attacks are based on righteousness. It appears that the bigger a delegitimization attack is the more it is emphasizing moral instead of factual reasons.

...

Peter Struck, SPD, 6 September 2006:

“Mr. Lafontaine, you have given a speech, which was a disgrace for this parliament. ... Who represents such foreign policy positions ... must never obtain responsibility in the Federal Republic of Germany. Never! What counts, Mr. Lafontaine, is not whether the foreign and security policy of [Germany] is benefitting [Germany]. What really counts is the question whether ... [it] is benefitting the world. This it does without a doubt. Just go to Afghanistan! You talk about Afghanistan but have never been there. Just ask the girls in Afghanistan, who are finally going to school and are allowed to study, who they should thank for that! This they have to thank us for, the international community, but not people like you who are just yapping slogans” (4490B-C). “I find it unbearable that the PDS is claiming – also Mr. Lafontaine just did this again – that with our commitment in Afghanistan we are bringing the terror to Germany. These populists should take a look at what responsible work our soldiers are doing there.” (4491B).⁴⁵¹

Struck aims to delegitimize Lafontaine as a responsible political decision maker by directly shaming him. To do this he strongly refers to moral values, in a very righteous way. His statement is a further example for how important the reference to

⁴⁵¹ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4490B-C, 4491B.

moral values have been for the German government in securing critical support for the participation in the Afghanistan mission. The reference to German soldiers is another powerful form of delegitimization as there can be not much more disrespectful – especially for a parliament member – then the non-recognition of soldiers’ contribution of their own life for the welfare of their country. Although, obviously, this was not what Lafontaine was saying or implying.

...

Rainer Arnold, SPD, 6 September 2006: “The Left [party] is right: The *Bundeswehr* is an intervention army. It intervenes for peace in the world and not to take away something from someone. For 50 years the *Bundeswehr* is an army for peace and freedom.” (4559C).⁴⁵²

Arnold is describing the *Bundeswehr* as *good* force as it intervenes solely for *good* reasons.

...

Marieluise Beck, the Greens, 6 September 2006:

“Everyone concerning herself with this matter must know – also you [referring to Heike Hänsel] as a parliamentarian should know that – that Hizbullah over years in the South of Lebanon, when a political vacuum was occurring after the withdrawal of Israeli troops, had been stationing rockets, with which it constantly over a long period of time had been carrying out attacks on the North of Israel. It was then the abduction of two Israeli soldiers on Israeli soil and the killing of eight soldiers, which led to Israel starting to defend itself. This I want to clarify in this German parliament. It was not about a war against Lebanon. We know that the Lebanese government had to live with the difficult situation of not having the sovereignty over the whole country anymore. That is the situation (Applause from the Greens, CDU/CSU, SPD and FDP)” (4582C-D).

Heike Hänsel (the Left) responds:

“Mrs. Beck, this I see totally different. The people in Lebanon, who were bombarded for almost four weeks, probably see this different as well. In my view this has been an offensive war against the entire population of Lebanon. Has this war in any way eliminated Hizbullah? No. Hizbullah still exists. It was a targeted war against civilian

⁴⁵² Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4559C.

infrastructure – Amnesty International is saying that –, and namely with the acceptance of more than 1,000 dead people in the region. This cannot be described as a war against Hizbullah. No matter what international voice you take, it was a war against the entire Lebanese population. ([Interjection by] Georg Schirmbeck (CDU/CSU): It is horrible, that such one is sitting in the German *Bundestag!*)”⁴⁵³

Beck is directly attacking the legitimacy of Hänsel as a responsible member of the parliament and the political elite. Beck is describing Israel’s warfare in the Lebanon war as purely defensive. Thereby she ignores or denies the context in which Hizbullah’s abduction of the Israeli soldiers happened. The way Beck is framing the situation leading up to the war gives the impression that Israel’s 2000 withdrawal actually had been a mistake and that Israeli occupation of foreign territory could be justified for Israeli security purposes. Beck describes details selectively with a pro-Israel bias, for example by leaving out that the 8 soldiers died while their tank was hitting a fixed, pre-installed Hizbullah anti-tank mine. This is not to justify the use of mines, but the argument is less valid when considering Israel’s extensive mining of South Lebanese territory during its 2000 withdrawal as well as Israel’s repeated use of cluster bombs, which high rate of unexploded mini bombs are remaining in South Lebanon with the same deadly effects as land mines have. Beck furthermore describes, typically for the GWOT discourse with its distinction between *weakened* states and *weakening* non-state actors, how the Lebanese state was suffering a sovereignty loss. This description either ignores how embedded Hizbullah was in the Lebanese political system, or it is an example for how selectively the Western states perceived the March 14 faction as the democratic force representing Lebanon, while the March 8 faction was seen as an undemocratic extension of Hizbullah. Schirmbeck’s interjection is a further example for the pressure on individual political elite members due to strong delegitimization threats.

⁴⁵³ Parliament Report 16/46, p. 4582C-D.

...

Rolf Mützenich, SPD, 20 September 2006, expressing what some parliamentarians think who are opposed to German UNIFIL participation: “Could a No [vote] entice a dull minority in our country to understand the No as directed against Israel?” (4822C).⁴⁵⁴

The fear is probably more caused by political elite pressure of being portrayed as anti-Semitic, in case real anti-Semites would applaud such a No vote.

...

Eckart von Klaeden, CDU/CSU, 20 September 2006:

“But if we are talking about historical responsibility then I am also hoping for some contributions from the Left party about the historical responsibility, which it brought into the [German] reunification, as former state party of the GDR, and thus has become our all-German responsibility. This for example includes the role of Abu Nidal, the mastermind of attacks in more than 20 countries, which killed hundreds of people during the 70s and 80s, and who cooperated with the Ministry of State Security [the “*Stasi*”]. Worth noting is also the cooperation of RAF [Red Army Faction] members, their training in terror camps in Jordan and their later accommodation in the former GDR, as well as the fact, that the mastermind of the attack in Munich 1972, Abu Daoud, the commander of the so called Black September, had been nursed back to health after an attack in 1981 in the GDR, where he enjoyed VIP status. The cooperation of Arab terrorists and the state and party leadership of the GDR could have been mentioned by you; because it is part of the responsibility of our country; especially of the responsibility you have to commit to.” (4826D).⁴⁵⁵

The acknowledgement of the GDR’s role and involvement in the ME conflict is in general a helpful and necessary process for a correct comprehension of Germany’s past and, as a result, for German identity formation. But Klaeden only intends to delegitimize raised critique from the Left party, which is exemplifying a general German political elite thinking: Who has done wrong in the past (or who is representing the heritage of someone who had done wrong) has lost the right to criticize in the present. Klaeden goes so far to blame the Left party for having brought its history into

⁴⁵⁴ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4822C

⁴⁵⁵ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4826D

the German identity. Klaeden's selection and description of details of GDR-Palestinian relations in combination with GWOT vocabulary seeks to discredit the present Palestinian cause and aims to situate the Left party close to global terrorism actors.

...

Kerstin Müller, the Greens, 20 September 2006, addressing opponents of German participation in UNIFIL:

“How can you appeal to German responsibility for Israel, when the Israeli government as well as the Israeli peace movement – this wish is widely anchored in the [Israeli] society – and the Central Council of Jews in Germany explicitly wish for German UNIFIL participation?” (4829D).⁴⁵⁶

Müller's statement shows the great influence of the responsibility discourse in determining German FP decisions. It furthermore represents the widely shared view that (only) Israel, as representative of the Holocaust victims, can tell Germany, what responsible politics are.

C. Conclusion

As in chapter four, the chosen quotes of the two debates show the prevalent pro-Israel bias in parliamentarians' debate contributions, as well as various rationales and forms of its justification. Furthermore, the selection of quotes emphasizes how the GWOT discourse is dominating the framing of the conflict, at the expense of an analysis of the roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict in general. Although parliamentarians assess the failure of the MEPP so far, they are still not questioning its approach and main goals, such as the two-state solution. The speech quotes exemplify the limitation of critique of the Western approach in the GWOT on specific tactics as well as the lack of a general critique of the GLP and its state-building approach. The incorrect use of the concepts of neutrality and impartiality might happen mostly unintentionally, but contributes to the

⁴⁵⁶ Parliament Report 16/50, p. 4829D

ambiguity around the assessment of Germany's stance towards Israel and therefore can have a damaging effect on the UNIFIL mission.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS: RATIONALES AND MECHANISMS FOR BIAS JUSTIFICATION

This thesis has argued that the discourse parliamentary debates reflects the German FP values and interests, and their respective historical development as described in chapter 2. The assumption of a path dependent character of this development, as explained by historical sociology and historical institutionalist theory is shown in two interdependent ways. One is the parliamentarians' emphasis of the historical formation of a FP that is consistent, predictable and appropriate. This aim reflects the norm-consistency as described in chapter 1. The second indicator is recognizable by the rather sudden and significant changes in German FP, which occurred despite the aim for consistency. These critical junctures have been identified in chapter 2, and are directly and indirectly referred to by the parliamentarians.

The analysis of the parliamentary debates has illuminated the existence and the construction of pro-Israel bias in German FP decision-making, as well as its conscious and subconscious justification. The speeches of the parliamentarians as well as related responses in and outside of the Bundestag illustrate three main rationales for such justification. One is the responsibility for Israel that translates into philo-Zionism among a German political elite, across party lines. A second motive results from international obligations due to Germany's predominant multilateral approach in FP making. The third motive is based on pragmatic and sometimes opportunistic interests of Germany and its political decision-makers.

The discourse analysis also highlights that the occurring pro-Israel bias is not only in conflict with the long-term German interests, but also with Germany's national identity and in particular with the values that parliamentarians are referencing as foundation of their political positions. In summary, four mechanisms can be identified that enable the conscious but also the subconscious justification of pro-Israel bias. They are based on: misperceptions of and prejudice against the people of the ME; on denial of the crimes Israel has been committing against the Palestinians and neighboring states since the time leading to its inception until the present; on the policy makers' belief, which is inherent in Western liberalism, that the own FP is "good", and thus right; as well as on the fear and threat of delegitimization, which is generated by the uniformity of the German political elite regarding the support for liberal Zionism as well as Western liberalism.

A. German foreign policy values and interests

German FP values and principles as well as interests are influencing Germany's identity in a constant two-way process. German FP and German identity are shaped by and are shaping the values and interests. This is shown by the continuous repetition of FP principles by German parliamentarians and government members, which is causing a self-reinforcement of German FP. At some point the FP, and especially its foundation of values and norms, is considered right or *good*, just because it always has been like that and not because it is right or *good* in the very moment of decision-making. This is shown by the references to Europe's post-WWII and post-Cold War development.

The described post-WWII aim for regaining German sovereignty created the necessity of portraying German FP as consistent, predictable and appropriate. The end

of WWII, which the parliamentarians often refer to, represents a critical juncture. It made German political decision makers believe in the need to break with Germany's past of aspiring nationalistic and expansionist goals, and instead to appeal to multilateralism and autonomy sharing. Due to the described self-reinforcement, the belief in the need of portraying such behavior transformed into the belief in the actual rightness and benefit of this behavior. The result was, as also often referenced in the debates, a transformation of German identity towards the support and championing of anti-militarism, institutionalism, constitutionalism and multilateralism. Significant for Germany's Middle East FP, and constantly referred to by the parliamentarians, is the post-WWII acceptance of the responsibility for the Holocaust and its important translation into the responsibility for Israel.

The 1967 War represents a critical juncture for Germany's ME FP. The obvious violation of international law by Israel and Europe's perceived need for taking a united own stand regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict led to the European, and thus German, support of the MEPP as well as the significant definition of its final goal as being the two-state solution. Furthermore, the 1967 War, with its highlighting of different approaches within Zionism, offered Western states and Germany right-wing Zionism as a scapegoat for critique against Zionism. This is shown especially in the Second Intifada debates.

The next critical juncture was the end of the Cold War and German reunification, which were perceived as rewards for and confirmation of the rightness of the promoted FP and its basic values. This facilitated the transformation of multilateralism into universalism, which became an important motive for the global liberal project (GLP) and its inherent state building approach that unfolded in the 1990s.

This is shown by the sometimes very righteous remarks of the parliamentarians in defense of the GLP. Other signs for appealing to universalism are parliamentarians' general strong support of the UN as well as the raised critique of the unilateral and non-universal value-based approaches by the US and Israel in the global war on terrorism (GWOT). Significant for Germany was the appearance of international military obligations linked to the newly regained sovereignty, as reflected by the 1994 Federal Institutional Court legal authorization of foreign *Bundeswehr* deployment and its practical use in Kosovo in 1999 even without a UNSC mandate.

The time around September 11, 2001 represents another critical juncture. This is reflected in the debates, as for example stated by Chancellor Schröder in April 2002.⁴⁵⁷ Critically, the foundation for the GWOT was laid by Israel decades before, as it already since the 1970s was framing Palestinian resistance as terrorism. Specific to this era, the critical juncture is the identification of the Western states with the GWOT discourse. The word "terror" is only used twice in the 2000 debate while it is constantly referred to in the 2002 speeches. Then, German parliamentarians are portraying the Arab-Israeli conflict through the GWOT lens.

Germany's interests are mostly based on the underlying common concern, as articulated more or less by all parliamentary parties, for Germany's prosperity. Since the end of WWII, this translates into a focus on safeguarding Germany's economic development. Trade-related issues such as the safety of trade routes, international market creation and access, as well as energy and resource security have become the guiding interests for German FP due to the economy's strong dependence on exports.

⁴⁵⁷ Schröder: "September 11 – that is definitely true – has changed the world. Also for Germany not least on that day a stage of the German post-war period ended. In a till then unknown way we had to confront our international responsibility in a new way" (Parliament Report 14/223, p. 23113D).

Furthermore, with globalization since the 1990s and the fear of international terrorism since 9/11, Germany focuses on the prevention of uncontrolled immigration and the fight against terrorism.

B. Rationales for bias justification

The different rationales can appear separately as well as in an interlinked way.

The institutionalized support for Zionism among the German political elite as a response to and responsibility for the Holocaust has become a part of German FP identity. Critically, it is in conflict with other components of German identity such as the championing of universalism and liberal values. This conflict is similar to the one inherent in liberal Zionism. The urge to create a stable sense of Self and to protect the stability of the own identity can result in different portrayals and views of the ME situation. As a result, and as shown in the parliamentary debates, members of the German political elite, whether consciously or not, seek to absolve themselves from the conflict by different methods of justification. The unified philo-Zionism discourse of the otherwise diverse political elite is a result of the domestic and international influence on political legitimacy, and of the significant, negative meaning of German pre-1945 identity. The latter is responsible for the threat potential of the anti-Semitism label domestically despite the majority of German public opinion being critical towards Israel. Internationally, also due to the UN support for the two-state solution, the support for Zionism is not just an additional source of legitimacy. Moreover, an anti-Zionist stance can become a critical threat to the political legitimacy. This influence on individual policy-making behavior creates the group dynamic responsible for the German political elite philo-Zionism. It is a main motive for the justification of pro-Israel bias.

Also related to the international aspect of identity formation are international obligations of Germany, which are another important motive for the justification of pro-Israel bias. As shown in the analysis, the German military participation in the Afghanistan mission was at least significantly if not fully motivated by the perceived obligation among wide parts of the political elite to show solidarity and to actively support the US. The obligational character results from the dependence on the US that is part of Germany's identity and is based on the aim for security and hard power provision during the Cold War, during the 1990s and in the GWOT. This can also explain Germany's support of the US pro-Israel role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Parliamentarians repeatedly emphasized that there is no alternative to US leadership in the MEPP. Furthermore, the portrayal of dependence on the US can function as scapegoat for otherwise necessary critique of Israel's policies. This is shown in the 2006 debates, where Germany – depending on the political party more or less – identifies with the GWOT framework for the Lebanon war, as provided by the US and Israel. The GWOT discourse provides German parliamentarians with an excuse for otherwise critique-worthy Israeli policies and actions.

Furthermore, Germany has pragmatic interests in the region and especially with Israel. Even though Germany is only importing a small share of its energy from the ME, especially in comparison with other European states, it is like the EU in general interested in a wider diversification of its energy supply regarding the countries of origin.⁴⁵⁸ Israel might play an increasing role for that purpose as it has discovered natural gas fields in the Mediterranean Sea because it would present a more predictable and stable supply due to the close relationship between the two countries.

⁴⁵⁸ Kausch (2015, January). Enabling or evading? Germany in the Middle East, p. 2.

Another significant role is German interests in weapons exports as well as military cooperation with Israel. Germany supplies Israel with weapons and both countries are cooperating in the fields of weapons technology development and military training.⁴⁵⁹ Under Chancellor Schröder and Chancellor Merkel, Germany has so far delivered three out of six promised submarines for the Israeli navy, subsidized in no small part by Germany. Germany does this in full awareness that Israel is modifying the vessels to carry nuclear missiles.⁴⁶⁰ Furthermore, there is growing German and European support of Israeli research activities, including in the fields of security and defense.⁴⁶¹ “[A]ccording to Israeli Foreign Office ... Israel joined the EU’s Research and Development program and has gained more access to political and defense policy committees.”⁴⁶² This is a rather grave example for Germany’s pro-Israel bias, also because Israel is promoting its developed security technology as “field-tested” due to its use in the OPT.⁴⁶³ Groth concludes: “there is therefore an economic incentive to abuse human rights in order to test the latest innovations”.⁴⁶⁴ Germany and the EU keep increasing their cooperation with Israel in the military and defense sector, and Germany enjoys critique-worthy synergy effects from that.⁴⁶⁵ For example, during the 2014 Gaza

⁴⁵⁹ Jungholt, T. (2014, August 10). Bundeswehr will learn tunnel warfare in Israel [Bundeswehr soll in Israel den Tunnelkampf lernen]. *Welt online*.

⁴⁶⁰ Spiegel Online (2012, June 3). Secret Cooperation.

⁴⁶¹ Groth (2012, May 25). German aid to Israel's war machine.

⁴⁶² Hershco, T. (2014). Israel-EU Security and Defense Relations in the Context of the “Arab Spring”. *Bulletin du Centre de recherche français à Jérusalem* (25), p. 9.

⁴⁶³ The Guardian. (2014, July 18). The arms trade and Israel's attack on Gaza. *The Guardian*.

⁴⁶⁴ Groth (2012, May 25). German aid to Israel's war machine.

⁴⁶⁵ Hershco: „Israel and EU member states regularly implement numerous arms deals despite the controversy that such deals occasionally stir up in the EU public opinion. For instance, France, Germany and other EU states have purchased drones from Israel since the 1990’s, as Israeli drones have won a world-wide reputation for their advanced technology. ... many of the EU states have reached the decision that buying Israeli drones would be less costly and would provide a more promising outcome than developing them. Additional attractive factors of Israeli drones relate to Israel’s

War, the German press reported that the two countries agreed to the training of 250 *Bundeswehr* soldiers in Israel in urban and tunnel warfare.⁴⁶⁶ Additionally, for Germany the weapons exports to Israel and other ME states means the securing of domestic jobs and a boosted German influence in the defense industry.⁴⁶⁷

C. Mechanisms of bias justification

Like the rationales, also the mechanisms of bias justification are functioning in an interlinked way. Some are more obvious, such as the whitewashing of Israeli policies. Often in such case the democratic and liberal features of Israel's society are emphasized to deliberately conceal its negative and inconvenient aspects. One example is the repeated statement that Israel is the only true democracy in the Middle East. Such claims seek to divert from the institutionalized discrimination of Palestinian Israelis or from the non-representation of the Palestinian population, which is occupied by Israel and subjugated to its military court system. Another example is the debates' selectiveness when describing Israel by focusing on its security at the expense of knowledge sharing and acknowledgment of the situation of the Palestinians.

Another apparent justification cause are Orientalist misperceptions about the Arab and Muslim societies in the MENA region. The debates show the inherent distrust against individuals, non-state actors as well as governments from the region. One reason is fear, which is a main driver of the GWOT. It also stems from a lack of knowledge and the related simplified conclusions about MENA societies and cultures. Much of that fear is partly shared or stirred up by Israeli discourse that is mainly emphasizing Israel's

practical field experience while operating drones as an effective weapon in the asymmetric battle against terrorists" (Hershco, (2014). *Israel-EU Security and Defense Relations*, pp. 9-10).

⁴⁶⁶ Jungholt (2014, August 10). *Bundeswehr will learn tunnel warfare in Israel*.

⁴⁶⁷ Egizzi & Binsack (Directors). (2013). *Deadly Deals*.

alleged role as a weak and existentially threatened victim in a dangerous Middle Eastern environment. As shown in the debate analysis, the fear is also increasingly prevalent in Western states in the form of concerns about a potential occurrence of the Arab-Israeli conflict problem within the own societies. This is partly based on the perception of the conflict as being a predominantly religious one. This view is critical as it is – contrary to the general judgment of Israeli politics – also shared by the domestic Western populations who are partly identifying with islamophobic stereotypes.

A lack of knowledge can only partly explain the bias justification, however. A more significant reason is denial, reflected in the discourse analysis of parliamentary debates. The pro-Israel bias might be also based on denial among individuals, but mostly it represents what Stanley Cohen describes as “discourse of official denial”.⁴⁶⁸ Generally explaining the process of denial, Cohen is differentiating between *knowledge* and *acknowledgment*.⁴⁶⁹ Denial is the *active* non-acknowledgment of existing knowledge. *Active* refers to the necessity that “energetic action must be taken to maintain the disavowal [*Verleugnung*]” while the original perception persists.⁴⁷⁰

Regarding Germany’s FP identity concerning Israel the question is how state acknowledgment works. Cohen, explaining historical denial by states, writes: “Private knowledge, though, has to be officially confirmed and enter into the public discourse, if it is to be acknowledged. Truth Commissions proved an arena for the symbolic recognition of what is already known but was officially denied.”⁴⁷¹ This thesis paper

⁴⁶⁸ Cohen (2001). *States of Denial*, pp. 101-16. Despite that Cohen’s analysis is concerned with atrocity-perpetrating states it can also help understand German political elite denial of Israel’s crimes. The statements in the German debates show many parallels to his descriptions.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 13.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid, p. 13.

assumes that parliamentary debates could fulfill the function of the mentioned truth commissions. The debates reflect the German FP identity, which is the result of the two-level discourse between the government and, on the international level, other foreign governments as well as, on the domestic level, the German public. The German public opinion is comprised of individual opinions. Regarding Israel there is a gap between the public and the political elite opinion. The analogy with Cohen's statement about historical denial acknowledgement can explain how the group denial of the German political elite can prevail despite individual⁴⁷² acknowledgment of Israeli politics.

The active denial of individual parliamentarians could be explained with a drastic example given by Cohen, when explaining denial by German *Reichsbahn* booking clerks and train drivers of their involvement in the Holocaust:

“They must have eventually slipped into a state of dulled routinization – as if this was more or less business as usual. ‘You can get used to anything.’ This slippage may have come from an unconscious emotional defence, but just as easily from a conscious, knowing pretence, a decision to proceed as if everything were normal. There is no need to defend or neutralize *without the internal conviction that something wrong is happening* or *without anyone present to challenge you*. Or else – a devastating possibility – the ‘*language system*’ indeed prevented the equation with ‘their old’, “normal” knowledge of murder and lies’.” (Emphasis added.)⁴⁷³

When transferring Cohen's example into the parliament context, the emphasized remarks in the quote could be explained by: the observed righteousness of parliamentarians; the lack of critique among the German political elite; and the GWOT discourse, respectively.

Regarding official state denial, Cohen speaks of “three forms of government response: the classic discourse of official denial, the conversion of a defensive position

⁴⁷² Individual acknowledgement refers to German citizens but also to individual German political elite members when acting outside parliament, as partly shown by the examples of Heike Hänsel, Norbert Blüm and Sigmar Gabriel.

⁴⁷³ Cohen (2001). *States of Denial*, p. 82.

into an attack on the critic, and the partial acknowledgment of criticism”.⁴⁷⁴ The classic discourse can contain literal, interpretive and implicatory denial. All these forms were represented in the parliamentary debates. Cohen also states, that “literal denial is more credible to foreign audiences: the sources of information are unknown; patron states are willing to look the other way; things are too complicated to understand”.⁴⁷⁵

Parliamentarians denied the illegality of Israeli practices, for example with the emphasis of Israel’s truly democratic character, or described Israel’s enemies as not trustworthy. Parliamentarians reinterpreted events, for example by describing Israel’s offensive actions as defensive. Parliamentarians justified Israel’s politics, mostly by appealing to a constant threat of Israel’s existence. Parliamentarians “counter”-attacked Israel critique by trying to delegitimize their opponents. And, parliamentarians were partially acknowledging some of Israel’s violations against international law such as the illegality of the West Bank settlements.

Another observed mechanism of bias justification is the view of the own FP as being *good*. Almost all parliamentarians are appealing to liberalism and its export to weak states for state building. They are motivated by a belief in the effectiveness and efficiency of modern, technocratic bureaucracies and institutions that they perceive as not exercising power. The underlying liberal assumption is that through utilitarian, rational and solely fact-based approaches political problems can be de-politicized and thus solved in a fair, correct, right and good way. Zehfuss is criticizing this by stating: “Utilitarian calculation as depicted by an instrumental notion of rationality becomes

⁴⁷⁴ Cohen (2001). *States of Denial*, p. 102.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 105.

possible only after an actor has already taken an attitude towards a situation”.⁴⁷⁶ Such pre-existing attitudes can be based on the above-describe misperceptions and prejudice.

Adding moral weight to the discourse, the *good* and institutionalized way of working towards solutions is seen as responsible decision-making because it creates the perception among politicians of having fairly evaluated all options. Maja Zehfuss, by referring to Jacques Derrida, describes how most political decision-makers, however, actually seek to “feel good” about their decisions and that this is the reason why they are looking for options that have no alternative.⁴⁷⁷ By proving that there is no alternative that allows the decision-maker to absolve himself from responsibility in case his decision leads to failure. Such behavior is shown in the debates regarding the assessments about the Afghanistan mission, which is praised despite its failures. Also the unrelenting support and promotion of the MEPP can be explained by this way of understanding of decision-making.

The liberal institutionalist approach to problem solving is flawed for two more reasons. Firstly, the values promoted for the ME region by Western politicians are not as universal as they are portrayed. They are mostly based on the Western perception of reality and lack knowledge about the ME reality, for example regarding history and socio-political relations. Secondly, even when assuming that Western values should be aspired by the world, there is still the problem of their selective implementation. Western and German FP apply double standards and hypocritical political decisions. Often the discourse becomes at least partially morality-based when rational arguments are not sufficient due to these double standards. Emphasizing moral arguments further enables denial and ignorance of the real reasons for conflict situations, and it can

⁴⁷⁶ Zehfuss (2002). *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.16.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 258.

significantly delegitimize different better-suited or truth-based reality descriptions and solution suggestions during political discourse, as shown in the parliamentary debates.

The last observed influential mechanism for bias justification is self-censorship. It is caused by a threat of delegitimization and can work in two ways. It can limit the debate due to fear of delegitimization among decision-makers. In turn, the threat can be used as a tool to limit or prevent an open and wide debate, which could critically challenge the main discourse or uncover the bias involved in it. Jamie Gaskarth describes this phenomenon regarding British FP decision-making. He explains the effect of a prevailing bipartisan discourse that “suppress[es] democratic dissent and individual accountability and marginalizes discussion on the (contestable) ethical basis of policy making and policy behavior”.⁴⁷⁸ Although in a limited way, this effect can help explain the delegitimization threat among German *Bundestag* members. It has become an unwritten law in the *Bundestag* that foreign missions involving the *Bundeswehr* are authorized above party lines. Since 1961, German governments have always been coalition governments. During that time until 2005, with two small exceptions, these coalitions always consisted of one of the two big *Volksparteien* (peoples parties) – CDU and SPD – and one of the two small parties – FDP and the Greens. Due to the unwritten law this led to the effect that no matter who is governing, there would not be any significant opposition during parliamentary debates about foreign missions. The only exceptions to this kind of bipartisan behavior are the debate contributions of the Left party, which represent only a small share of the debates. Such “bipartisan” effect is even stronger in debates related to Israel, including a decrease in critique from the Left. The debates show how personal and strong attacks on

⁴⁷⁸ Gaskarth, J. (2006). Discourse and Ethics: The Social Construction of British Foreign Policy. *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2), p. 325.

parliamentarians' legitimacy can be. They deliberately raise doubts about parliamentarians' political professionalism and their ability to exercise a political mandate responsibly. Especially regarding German FP decision-making the aim is to discredit parliamentarians and to portray them as a threat to Germany's tediously established *good* and internationally accepted FP identity.

Another reason for subconscious self-censorship can be caused by practices and institutions that are related to Germany's socialized historical memory. The neuro-psychiatrist Martin Grossmann explains the German expression *Betroffenheit* (consternation/dismay/concernment) and its psychological meaning for German politicians. "*Betroffenheit* was the mental state every decent German was supposed to adopt and maintain in light of the atrocities of Nazi terror in general, and the Holocaust in particular". He further states:

„It is still implicit, yet very concrete for any German politician visiting Israel today. He or she has to visit Yad Vashem. There is no avoiding it without serious implications. We act as if not visiting Yad Vashem implies the denial of the Holocaust—which it doesn't. But we act as if going to Israel and not visiting Yad Vashem is, thus, inappropriate. And going to Yad Vashem, and being in a good mood, feeling good about yourself at the same time, seems even more inappropriate, especially as a German. The best you can do is to demonstrate your *betroffen*-ness. ... What I did not realize for a very long time is the fact that a state of *Betroffenheit* may actually lead to some kind of mental paralysis. If you are too *betroffen*, you are too overwhelmed to think and act. But if you are not *betroffen*, I learned, then there is something wrong with you“.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁹ Grossmann, M. (2014, October 02). Memento Auschwitz: Growing Up in Post-War Germany. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry: A Topical Journal for Mental Health Professionals*, 34 (7), p. 665.

CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the way German foreign policy (FP) is constructed and in particular how the German pro-Israel bias is manifesting itself during that process. The implications of this bias for German FP values and the resulting German identity were explained. The negative results could be highlighted. Firstly, the actual German FP in the Middle East (ME) is in contradiction with Germany's long-term interests in the region, which are mostly aiming for long-term stability and eventually prosperity. These aims are motivated German interests, which are at least partially of domestic origin. Germany is an export country and therefore is interested in growing, predictable markets. Furthermore, like the whole European Union, Germany seeks to eliminate the causes for uncontrolled migration and international terrorism, which both are real or perceived increasingly originating from the ME region. But, Germany's chosen state-building approach for the stabilization of supposedly weak states and entities such as Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories only superficially influence the root causes of the ME conflicts. As shown by the high level of denial, which is involved in the parliamentary debates regarding the situation in Lebanon after the 2006 War and in the OPT during the Second Intifada, Germany's support for Israel is firstly preventing a German recognition of the negative influences of Israeli Zionist policies on the ME and secondly is supporting the denial of existing knowledge about the fact.

Facilitating the denial is Germany's support of a supposedly liberal form of Zionism, which at the same time uses right-wing Zionism as a scapegoat for unavoidable critique of Israel. The involved pro-Israel bias is significantly based on a perception of Israel as being a part of the Western community of values. This is problematic as the colonial character of the Western state-building approach, and the

global war on terror strategies, as well as the Israeli policies against the Palestinians and other neighbors is gravely violating these very Western and supposedly universal values. The original assumption assumed an unintentional Summarizing question and answer.

In particular this thesis identified three main rationales enabling pro-Israel bias. They are based on a pursuit of short-term, opportunistic realpolitik interests, on international alliance obligations as well as on political elite pressure. The rationales work together with different mechanisms, which are based on: a lack of knowledge about the ME region, the denial of existing knowledge about the region and the Arab-Israeli conflict, an uncritical perception of German/Western liberalism as universal and “good” liberalism as well as self-censorship due to a fear of delegitimization.

Based on the theoretical framework and the observed high extend of denial of existing knowledge about Israeli policies, several additional questions emerge. For example: how big of a gap between public opinion and the official German FP discourse regarding Israel can the German identity withstand until the legitimacy of political elite is significantly influence? What other strategies can help in making acknowledgement of existing knowledge more unavoidable? And, what are the reasons for the inability of the German FP-making system to distinguish during its analysis of the ME between observations of problems and the actual causes of these problems.

As the last Gaza War in the summer of 2014 has shown, Germany is continuing its uncritical support of Israel. It even cooperates closer with Israel in the areas of military and security, thereby directly profiteering from Israel’s occupation. The contradictions within Germany’s promoted form of liberalism become more obvious, highlighted by the double standards which are applied in conflict situations.

For example, the German government stayed silent when Israeli bombs killed a Palestinian-German family during the Gaza War. At the same time the German government kept emphasizing and repeating Israel's right to defend itself from terrorism.

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Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main, Institut for Comparative Politics and International Relations, Frankfurt am Main.

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APPENDIX

Cited parliamentarians and their political roles

Annen, Niels, SPD:

- 2005-2009, Member of the FP Committee of the *Bundestag*; focusing on German involvement in Afghanistan and the ME
- nielsannen.de/berlin/

Arnold, Rainer, SPD:

- since 2002, defence policy-spokesman of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/A/arnold_rainer/258138

Beck, Marieluise, the Greens:

- since 2005, Member of the FP Committee of the *Bundestag*
- Member of the German-Israeli Society
- Member of the “Advisory Board Fundraising” of the Foundation of the German Holocaust Museum
- marieluisebeck.de/lebenslauf

Bisky, Lothar, the Left:

- 1993-2000 and 2003-2010, Federal Chairman of the Left party

Claus, Roland, PDS:

- 2000-2002, Chairman of the PDS Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- linksfraktion.de/abgeordnete/roland-claus/profil/

Fischer, Joseph, the Greens:

- 1998-2005, Foreign Minister

Gehrcke, Wolfgang, PDS:

- 1998-2002, Vice-Chairman of the PDS Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 1998-2002, FP spokesman of the PDS Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- Post-Zionist; wrote the book “*The German Left, Zionism and the Near East Conflict*” [“*Die deutsche Linke, der Zionismus und der Nahost-Konflikt: Eine notwendige Debatte*”]
- waehlt-gehrcke.de
- katja-kipping.de/de/article/64.ein-modernisierter-antiimperialismus.html

Gerhardt, Wolfgang, FDP:

- 1998-2006(May), Chairman of the FPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005-2006(May), Opposition leader in the *Bundestag*
- freiheit.org/webcom/show_article.php/_c-54/_nr-210/i.html
- bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2013/45640220_wege_aus_politik_gerhardt/213040

Hänsel, Heike, the Left:

- since 2005, Development policies-spokeswoman of the Left party Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- Hänsel, Groth, and one more Left member had invited Max Blumenthal for a talk on 9 November 2014, which was cancelled by the Left party
- linksfraktion.de/abgeordnete/heike-haensel/mitgliedschaften/

Hoyer, Werner, FDP:

- 1994-1998 and 2009-2011, State Minister in the Federal Foreign Office
- 2002-2009, Vice-Chairman of the FPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- economist, specialized in European matters
- wernerhoyer.de/

Juratovic, Josip, SPD:

- since 2005, Member of the FP Committee of the *Bundestag*, focusing in civil conflict prevention, human rights, development, humanitarian aid and migration
- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/J/juratovic_josip/258550
- josip-juratovic.de/portrait

Kinkel, Klaus, FDP:

- 1992-1998, Foreign Minister

Klose, Hans-Ulrich, SPD:

- 1998-2002, Chairman of the FP Committee of the *Bundestag*
- born 1937 in Silesia, became a displaced German after WWII
- hans-ulrich-klose.de/

Knoche, Monika, the Left:

- 2005-2009, Vice-Chairwoman of the Left party Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005-2009, Chairman of the working group International Politics of the Left party Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- She had left the Green Party in 2005 because of its government policies

Kuhn, Fritz, the Greens

- 2005-2009, Chairman of the Allianz 90/the Greens Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- fritz-kuhn.de/de/zur-person/index.shtml?navid=1

Lafontaine, Oskar, the Left:

- 2005-2009, Chairman of the Left party Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- Candidate for Chancellery in 1990 for SPD
- 1998(Sep)-1999(March), Minister of Finance, SPD
- left the SPD in 2005
- oskar-lafontaine.de/oskar-lafontaine/zur-person/

Lamers, Karl, CDU:

- 1990-2002, FP spokesman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- webarchiv.bundestag.de/archive/2007/0206/mdb/mdb14/bio/L/lamerka1.html
- spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/nahostkonflikt-unionspolitiker-streiten-ueber-israel-sanktionen-a-190037.html

Merkel, Angela, CDU:

- 2005-now, Chancellor

Moosbauer, Christoph, SPD:

- ME expert
- 1998-2002, one of three Vice-Presidents of German-Arab Society; left the group after controversy over President Möllemann's anti-Israel remarks; he was criticized within the society for being pro-Israel
- webarchiv.bundestag.de/archive/2007/0206/mdb/mdb14/bio/M/moosbch0.html
- spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/deutsch-arabische-gesellschaft-moellemanns-one-man-show-a-198674.html

Müller, Kerstin, the Greens:

- 1998-2002, Chairman of the Alliance 90/the Greens Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2002(Oct)-2005, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office
- 2005-2013, FP spokeswoman of the Alliance 90/the Greens Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- ME expert; supporting labeling of settlement export products (criticized by Jewish Council)
- since 2013, Director of the Tel Aviv office of the Heinrich-Böll Foundation
- mitglieder-des-bundestags.de/gruene/mueller-kerstin.html
- deutschlandfunk.de/gruenen-politikerin-siedlungspolitik-widerspricht.694.de.html?dram:article_id=67927
- jpost.com/LandedPages/PrintArticle.aspx?id=318973

Mützenich, Rolf, SPD:

- 2005-2009, Chairman of the German-Iranian Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005-2009, Spokesman of the SPD Parliamentary Discussion Group “Near and Middle East”
- 2009-2013, FP spokesman of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/M/muetzenich_rolf/258766
- rolfmuetzenich.de
- rolfmuetzenich.de/texte_und_reden/interviews/index_2010.php?oid=2776

Niebel, Dirk, FDP:

- 2009-2013, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development
- 2005-2009, Secretary General of the FDP
- Insisted to visit sewage treatment plant in Gaza in June 2010 despite earlier Israeli refusal to grant him Gaza entrance permit
- spiegel.de/politik/ausland/dirk-niebels-nahost-eklat-der-moechtegern-blockadebrecher-a-701777.html

Pronold, Florian, SPD:

- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/P/pronold_florian/258832

Raabe, Sascha, SPD:

- since 2005, Spokesman of the Working Group for economic cooperation and development matters of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/R/raabe_sascha/258910

Ruck, Christian, CSU:

- 2002-2013, Chairman of working group on Economic Cooperation and Development of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2009-2013, Vice-Chairman for environment and development policy of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- csu-landesgruppe.de/abgeordnete/christian-ruck

Schmidt, Christian, CSU:

- 1991-2002, chairman of working group on foreign, security and European policy of the CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 1994-1998, chairman of the German-Israeli Parliamentarians’ Group in the *Bundestag*
- Since 2014, Minister for Food and Agriculture
- Member of society for Christian-Jewish cooperation
- Member of advisory board of American-Jewish Committee
- christian-schmidt.de/index.php

Schockenhoff, Andreas, CDU/CSU:

- 1998-2005, Vice-FP spokesman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005-2014, Vice-Chairman for foreign, defense and European matters of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/biografien/S/schockenhoff_andreas/259006

Schröder, Gerhard, SPD:

- 1998-2005, Chancellor

Steinmeier, Frank-Walter, SPD:

- 2005-2009 and 2013-now, Foreign Minister

Sterzing, Christian, the Greens:

- 2004-2009, Director of the Ramallah office of the Heinrich-Böll Foundation

Stoiber, Edmund, CSU:

- 1993-2007, Prime Minister of Bavaria
- 1999-2007, Chairman of the CSU
- Candidate for Chancellery in September 2002 election

Struck, Peter, SPD:

- 1998-2002(July), Chairman of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005(Nov)-2009(Sept), Chairman of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2002-2005, Minister of Defense

von Klaeden, Eckart, CDU:

- 2005-2009, FP spokesman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2005-2009, Chief whip (*Parlamentarischer Geschäftsführer*) of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 2009-2013, State Minister
- bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Biographien/von-klaeden-eckart-lebenslauf.html

Weisskirchen, Gert, SPD:

- 1999-2009, FP spokesman of the SPD Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag*
- 1990-2009, Member of the FP Committee of the *Bundestag*
- He has published several articles regarding Israel and Antisemitism.
- gert-weisskirchen.de/index.htm
- arendt-art.de/deutsch/palestina/Honestly-concerned/weisskirchen_gert_aussenpolitischer_sprecher_spd_osze.htm

Westerwelle, Guido, FDP:

- 2009-2013, Foreign Minister
- 2006-2009, Chairman of the FDP Parliamentary Group in the *Bundestag* and leader of the parliamentary opposition
- 2001-2001, Federal Chairman of FDP
- 1994-2001, Secretary General of FDP

Wieczorek-Zeul, Heidemarie, SPD:

- 1998-2009, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development