

GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

WORLD POWERS AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Series Editor

Amnon Cohen



**The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the
Advancement of Peace**

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Stiftung**

Germany and the Middle East

Past, Present, and Future

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CONTENTS

AMNON COHEN	Preface	vii
JOHANNES GERSTER	Foreword	ix
HAIM GOREN	Introduction: Exploited or Unexploited Potential? Germany and the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future	xi

PART ONE

GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST UNTIL WORLD WAR I

MICHAEL STÜRMER	From Moltke to Gallipoli: Strategies and Agonies in the Eastern Mediterranean	3
LARS HÄNSEL	Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Prussian Interests in the Middle East	15
THORSTEN NEUBERT-PREINE	The Founding of German Protestant Institutions in Jerusalem during the Reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II	27
HAIM GOREN	The Scholar Precedes the Diplomat: German Science in the Service of Political Involvement in Egypt and Palestine until 1870	41
ISALAH FRIEDMAN	Germany and Zionism, 1897–1918	61

PART TWO

GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER WORLD WAR I

HELMUT MEICHER	Hitler's Route to Baghdad? Some Aspects of German Oil Policy and Political Thinking on the Middle East in the 1930s and Early 1940s	71
UDO STEINBACH	German Foreign Policy and the Middle East: In Quest of a Concept	85

FRIEDEMANN BUETTNER	Germany's Middle East Policy: The Dilemmas of a "Policy of Even-Handedness" (<i>Politik der Ausgewogenheit</i>)	115
VOLKER PERTHES	Germany, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East: Approaching the Region through Europe	161
GABRIEL WARBURG	Views on the Sudan after Independence Based on Reports of the German Democratic Republic's Embassy in Khartoum	171

PART THREE

GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMY

DIETRICH DENECKE	German Motivation, Concepts, and Activity in the Exploration and Development of the Cultural Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Palestine	185
RUTH KARK AND NAFTALI THALMANN	Technological Innovation in Palestine: The Role of the German Templers	201
WALTER ROTHSCHILD	Meissner Pasha: German Railway Construction in the Ottoman Empire	225

PART FOUR

GERMANY AND ISRAEL: TWENTIETH-CENTURY DIPLOMACY

ANGELIKA TIMM	The Middle East Policy of East Germany	245
DOMINIQUE TRIMBUR	American Influence on the Federal Republic of Germany's Israel Policy, 1951–1956	263
YESHAYAHU A. JELINEK	Like a Ball in the Field: Israel between the Two Germanies, 1949–1965	291
SHLOMO SHPIRO	Communicating Interests across History: German–Israeli Security Cooperation	305
List of Contributors		331
General Index		333
Index of Persons		340
Index of Places		346

PREFACE

This book marks both a beginning and an end. It is the first in a series of academic symposia devised and organized by the Truman Institute that aims to review the interrelations between the Middle East and the major powers. It is easy to focus on the European powers (historically the most active) but we do not restrict ourselves here, as clearly other powers have grown over time, eclipsing those of Europe in importance.

It is also an end, as it sums up a conference that took place two years ago in Jerusalem – **Germany and the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future**. The choice of Germany as the first focus point of the series should not be interpreted as carrying any substantive meaning; each year now we explore the Middle East through the perspective of and relationship with a different state or region.

In between the convening of our two-day conference in March 2000 and the culmination of the book, several events of import, in Europe and in the world, took place which had a clear and resounding effect on both Germany and the Middle East. Their importance may call for an update, or another conference, on the same topic. This only goes to say how limited our talents of speculating about the future are: even the past is sometimes still evasive and hard to fully understand. (It is worth noting here, however, that the researcher's task today is greatly facilitated by access to archives; numerous of the articles presented here are enhanced by newly available archival material.)

The present volume offers a selection of the spectrum of presentations made and papers read at the Germany and the Middle East conference. Our aim here is to encourage the further research of these and other students of history – and those of the present – so that it may lead to a better understanding of the past and perhaps even to a better world in the future.

It gives me great pleasure to offer our thanks to the Konrad Adenauer Foundation for its ongoing support of the Truman Institute in this and many other of our academic endeavors. We are indebted, too, to the Rebecca Meyerhoff Foundation for making this series of conferences possible.

Special thanks are due to Dr. Haim Goren, who painstakingly saw this book through all the stages of publication. The Hebrew University Magnes Press, and its director, Dan Benovici, deserve all praise for the production of this volume. And last, but not least, I would like to personally thank the entire team of The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, which was most helpful in turning our initial idea into a reality.

Jerusalem, October 2002

Professor Amnon Cohen
Conference Organizer and Director
The Harry S. Truman Institute

FOREWORD

Germany never pursued objectives related to colonialism and power politics in the Middle East. From the early nineteenth century, however, German organizations developed political interests, economic relations, and social involvement in this region. This vast field is, to a great extent, rather unknown and has not been the subject of research to date. It is thanks to the Harry S. Truman Institute, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, that a portal was opened on this interesting field of research in the year 2000 and that an extensive scientific colloquium was made possible. Now, with the publication of the papers presented at this conference, its results will be made available to a much wider audience.

We convey our thanks to the Truman Institute, its director, Professor Amnon Cohen, and the editor of this volume, Dr. Haim Goren, for their long-standing, friendly, and successful cooperation.

Germany has a historical record in the Middle East. Due to its historical involvement, Germany assumes responsibility towards Israel and its neighbors in the region. This book today can contribute to building a better future through the study of the past.

**Jerusalem, 2002
Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Jerusalem**

Dr. h.c. Johannes Gerster

INTRODUCTION

Exploited or Unexploited Potential? Germany and the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future

The medieval castle Wartburg controls the mountainous Thuringian Forest landscape just outside the city of Eisenach. This outstanding monument of the feudal period, also known as the place of exile of Martin Luther where he translated the New Testament into German, is connected with the life of St. Elisabeth of Hungary, also of Thuringia, who in 1221 married the Landgrave of Thuringia, Ludwig IV "the Saint." One of the frescoes, painted in the "Elisabethgalerie," depicts Elisabeth escorting her husband on the way to join Friedrich II Hohenstaufen on the planned Crusade of 1227. Ludwig, as commander of the Emperor's battalions, started sailing south, but due to the Emperor's illness returned only three days later with his troops to the southern Italian harbor of Otranto, where he died shortly afterwards.

One of the smaller rooms, the "Elisabethkemenate" (Elisabeth's fireplace room), was decorated at the beginning of the twentieth century with various colorful mosaics, most of them showing scenes from the Saint's life. Only one mosaic is slightly different: it depicts the Emperor Friedrich II leading his troops on the way to the Holy Land. According to an inscription at the base of the picture, it was donated in 1903 by Emperor Wilhelm II to commemorate his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in late 1898.

This mosaic demonstrates the strong and deep connection felt by German nineteenth-century rulers to their ancestors' deeds in the East, mainly during the Crusader period. It is but one example of this phenomenon. The term "crusade" continued to be used throughout the centuries, referring mostly to joint Christian efforts to free the sacred sites, by various ways and means, from the hold of the "infidels."

The "German connection" to the countries bordering the eastern shores of the Mediterranean and reaching the Arabian (Persian) Gulf traces back even to the last years of the eighth century. It was Charlemagne, then still King of the Franks and soon to become emperor of the Holy Roman Empire,

who in 797 sent an embassy to the Abbasid Caliph at Baghdad, Harun al-Rashid. This was the beginning of a long-lasting connection. Charlemagne turned out to be, to mention but one point, ninth-century Jerusalem's most prolific builder, initiating and supporting the erection of several monasteries, a hospice, and a market.

Intensive German involvement in the Crusades, including rulers such as Konrad III, Friedrich I "Barbarossa," and Friedrich II, as well as many noblemen, and the establishment of the German Order in Acre, was followed by impressive German presence in the name lists of the pilgrims who visited the region – certainly not the Holy Land solely – in the following centuries. The lists are long, but pilgrims such as Felix Faber and Bernhard von Breidenbach, who both visited the area in the 1480s, are worthy of mention as examples of those who left us exceptionally detailed, authentic, and dependable descriptions, with unquestionable value to modern research.

The exploration of different aspects of these deep-rooted, long-standing, and very complex relations and connections in the more modern era was the main idea behind the initiative to organize an international conference entitled "Germany and the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future" by The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Jerusalem office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. At this conference, scholars presented their studies, recent as well as older ones, concerning a vast diversity of topics dealing with the connections between Germany and the Middle East, or various parts and countries of that region, during the last two centuries. The term "Middle East" was chosen as geographically encompassing the traditional Levant and Near East, including the northern part of Africa, Egypt, and even the Sudan, as well as all the countries between the eastern Mediterranean shores and the Arabian Gulf, including Turkey. All the presentations dealt with a time-span that begins with Napoleon's invasion of the region in 1798, and ends in the present. As for the term "Germany," it includes – according to the period under discussion – Prussia, Württemberg and Bavaria, the second and third Reichs, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republik (GDR), and of course today's reunited Germany. The same title was also chosen for the book, which contains seventeen selected papers, based on presentations at the conference.

One of the main concepts that runs throughout this volume is that knowledge of this recent past is crucial for an understanding of past and present trends in Germany's perception of the Middle East. Moreover,

Germany – today undoubtedly a leading force in the European Union and a spearhead of the world economy – plays a primary role in the Middle East. Whether this was the situation during the entire two hundred-year period covered in this volume has still to be established. The facts, processes, and conceptions revealed in the papers are also necessary to gain an understanding and evaluation of any future German involvement in the Middle East.

Naturally, the papers comprising this volume cannot present a systematic picture of the development of Germany's relations with the different countries in the Middle East; neither were they intended to give us a methodological state-of-the-art summary. Rather, they present detailed and profound researches into various aspects, periods, and phenomena related to a certain "space" within a specific "time." They include purely historical studies as well as interdisciplinary works which also combine the fields of geography, historical-geography, politics, geo-politics, technology, and economics. Accordingly, the volume was divided into four parts.

The papers dealing with historical, historic-geographical, and political issues of the nineteenth century and up to the First World War were included in Part One. Michael Stürmer opens that section by presenting a wide-perspective historical and geopolitical review. While establishing connections between inter-German and Middle Eastern processes, he delineates the different stages of Prussia's – and from 1871, Germany's – penetration of the region. The title he chose, "From Moltke to Gallipoli," which hints at two events of Prussian/German military aid to the Ottomans, the first ending in an Ottoman defeat and the second with a victory, not only determines the time limits but also points to one of the most important means of German intervention in the East. This general paper is followed by three more specific ones which focus mainly, but not solely, on German activity in Palestine. Lars Hänsel discusses the plans developed by Prussia's King Friedrich Wilhelm IV for Prussian-Protestant involvement in Palestine, their background and relatively limited realization. Naturally, he focuses his discussion on the joint Bishopric, the only plan that led to physical consequences, and its role as a leading force in Prussia's penetration into the Middle East. Thorsten Neubert-Preine scrutinizes the German *Eroberung* of Jerusalem's sky-line following the visit of Wilhelm II. He discusses the establishment of three institutions: the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology, and the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation. Consequently, he agrees with the

claim that this *Eroberung* was coincidental and not planned. In his contribution, the undersigned argues that there were exceptions to the general disinterest shown by the Prussian, Bavarian, and German governments in possible involvement in the Holy Land and its neighboring countries throughout the nineteenth century. Although this region had never been included in Germany's *Lebensraum*, there have been a number of cases of German governmental involvement in scientific endeavors in Palestine, Syria, and Egypt. Isaiah Friedman, who has thoroughly studied the relations between Germany and the early Zionist movement, summarizes in his paper different stages in the German attitude towards the newly established national movement within a period of about twenty years since its inception until the end of the First World War.

Part Two, dealing with the German attitude towards the Middle East from the end of the First World War until the present, is comprised of five papers. Helmut Mejcher asks whether Germany developed a coherent oil policy in the Middle East in the inter-wars period, mainly during the 1930s. For Germany, this was an issue of great importance, almost like a second *Baghdadbahn*. He discusses the central role that two Foreign Office officials took in establishing this policy, which was first and foremost a consequence of their *Weltanschauung*. The next three contributions concentrate on more recent analysis of German policy towards the region. Udo Steinbach describes and examines this policy, its development, directions, and emphases. He deals with several sub-regions, the Israeli-Arab dimension, North Africa, the Persian Gulf, and Turkey, trying to bring his discussions up to the most recent days, and completes his survey with suggested possible tracks of German active political action in the region. Friedemann Buettner's main argument is that the inconsistencies of Germany's Middle East policy are caused by its biggest dilemma: the impracticability, almost impossibility, of establishing a balanced policy towards Israel and the Arab states. The historical background, as well as the Middle Eastern reality, both made it impossible to conduct a consistent "policy of even-handedness." He establishes his claim through a detailed, focused discussion of what he calls "crucial moments," such as the reparations agreements and the crisis of 1964–1965. Volker Perthes deals mostly with the 1990s, examining the establishment of the European Union, the development of its political perceptions and strategies, and the way this affected the German conception of the Middle East and changed its policy towards the region as a whole and its different components. He discusses themes such as multilateral

and bilateral relations, German economic interests, and Germany and the peace process. Germany has no planned Middle Eastern policy, and it is time, he concludes, to develop a genuine EU policy towards the Middle East. The fifth paper in this part, written by Gabriel Warburg, seems to be a bit of a deviation, for it deals with relations of the GDR and the Sudan, a very peripheral country of the region. Concentrating on some case-studies, the author does convince the reader that various connections to events and processes in the more "central" Middle East can easily be detected.

In Part Three we chose to include three papers whose main concern is various cases of German technological – and, as a by-product, also economic – involvement in the region. These papers clearly point to the important role that Germany played in the introduction of western technology into different parts of the Middle East. Dietrich Denecke considers general geographical conceptions as a base for the discussion of the European, mainly German (by individuals, groups, organizations), activity "in the field." From the reconstruction of the Holy Land, through spatial organization and applied regional concepts, he discusses various expressions of this scientific and technological influence. Ruth Kark and Naphtali Thalmann take a more specific case-study: the German Templers, the biggest, most successful, and most influential European group to settle in Palestine in the nineteenth century (not taking into consideration Jewish settlement, which began thirteen years after the Templers). They try to list and demonstrate all the technological innovations of the Templers in Palestine and the way these have penetrated into and affected the existing local population. Walter Rothschild describes the biography and deeds of one person, who might be seen as the most important German contributor to the technological and economical *Hebung* of the Middle East. His discussion of Meissner Pasha is followed by a technical description of the railway system in all its aspects, always pointing to the "German connection," which is one of the finest proofs for the real German interests in the region during the period under discussion and their implementation.

Part Four, which concludes the volume, contains four papers directly concerned with relations between post-Second World War Germany and the state of Israel. Needless to say, these discussions must also contain references to the relationship of Germany and other Middle-Eastern countries, and this quadrangle (Israel, Arab countries, the FRG, and the GDR) until the *Wende* and triangle since then, is an inseparable element in our discussions. Angelika Timm presents a cross-section of the relations

between the GDR and Israel, dividing them into two main periods: from 1949 to 1965, and from that year until 1989. The paper presents a detailed study of the themes, factors, and attitudes behind the calculations and behavior of all the parties, of the transformations undergone by all these throughout the years and as a result of changes in the region and in Germany. All are discussed mainly from the perspective of the official GDR. Dominique Trimbur discusses the changing American influence on the FRG's policy towards Israel. He describes, step by step, the effect made by the development of West Germany's international standing, as well as by American interests and policy, on the changes in the attitude of West German officials towards Israel. The discussion concentrates on two major events – the reparations negotiations and agreements, and the 1956 Suez conflict. Yeshayahu Jelinek tries to put some sense into the delicate system of relationships between Israel and the two Germanies from the establishment of Israel until 1965. He claims that both Germanies employed their “schizophrenic” relations with Israel in order to navigate and advance their relations with the Arab countries. “There is a price-tag for everything” is his somewhat cynical conclusion, which to a certain extent also shakes the so widely-accepted view of the singular part that the very recent past has played in these relations. The final paper, by Shlomo Shpiro, reveals many unknown events in the history of the intensive security (military and intelligence) cooperation between the FRG and Israel. These usually highly confidential connections normally preceded the open diplomatic contacts. Shpiro argues that the military connections were not one-sided, as claimed until now, in which Germany gives and Israel receives. On the contrary, in numerous cases the FRG gained important advantages from this cooperation. The author is also convinced that this cooperation will continue in the future, due to “the threat of Islamic radical terrorism, coupled with the increased international role of Germany.”

Exploited, or unexploited potential? Did the connections and relations between Germany and the Middle Eastern countries achieve important goals in any of the discussed periods? Did they meet the expectations of their developers, or of the participant governments? Could any of the participants have ever reaped the real potential from the connections established? All these questions, as well as many others, may find at least partial answers in this volume. May it be that one may also find here a few hints as to how to lessen today's tensions and move in the direction of solving some of the crucial problems faced by the Middle East region, its countries and inhabitants, and

in what way Germany can actively contribute to such a process.

The editing of this volume has been a lengthy and, at times, frustrating process. The great assistance I received from all connected with its production have helped me bring it to felicitous completion. In addition to the contributors, to whom I am greatly indebted for their cooperation, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the staff of the Truman Institute – especially to Anat Mishali, to the people at Magnes Press, to Tamar Sofer for her professionally executed illustrations, and to Fern Seckbach for her excellent indexing. Special thanks are due to Yohai Goell, whose cooperation was highly professional as well as friendly and encouraging.

Tel-Hai, October 2002

Haim Goren

PART ONE

**GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST
UNTIL WORLD WAR I**

FROM MOLTKE TO GALLIPOLI: STRATEGIES AND AGONIES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

MICHAEL STÜRMER

It is no accident that the two great epics of Western civilization, the Bible and the Homeric tales, are played out in the geostrategic environment that today is known as the Greater Middle East. This is the area from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, from the Caucasus to the valley of the Nile.

The shadows of empires ancient and modern loom large over today's troubled Greater Middle East – Babylon and the kingdoms of Egypt are not forgotten, nor are Alexander and his warring successors. To this present day, the most visible of all those ancient cultures is Roman civilization which was, by far, the most formative experience of the entire region until it fell apart under Constantine, splitting into two: the eastern Greek, and the western Latin halves. While Rome decayed under its military over-extension, the assault of Northern tribes, and the weight of its own success, Byzantium continued to flourish for another millenium. Arab conquerors, driven by the fire of Islam, swept the shores of the Mediterranean until they met resistance from the European heartlands at Tours and Poitiers in the Middle Ages and, once again, from the Crusaders who came from Europe. After the fall of Byzantium in 1453, the Ottoman Turks carried on the conquering mission, fighting the navies and fortresses of the Serenissima and the emperor until they reached the Adriatic Sea, the Carpathian Mountains, and the gates of Vienna. It was only in 1698, more than 300 years ago, that the Peace of Karlowitz established the earliest model of a European balance of power: Austria and the emperor were no longer under constant siege from the Turkish armies, Britain and the Netherlands were in a continental alliance with Austria, and France's *Roi Soleil* was on the losing side.

Since then the major European powers were divided over who would inherit the Ottoman lands and the power that went with them. Poland and Ukraine had dropped out of the race in the mid-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, respectively, while the Muscovite Czars were aiming to gain control of both the Imperium Maris Baltici in the north and the key to the Dardanelles to the south. The quest for control of the eastern Mediterranean was to be a *leitmotiv* of European power politics ever since.

Every European dream of empire sooner or later had to comprise – long before oil became a strategic resource – those strategic lands between the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, the Red Sea, and the island of Crete. When Napoleon concluded the peace treaty of Tilsit with Czar Alexander on a raft in the middle of the Njemen river in 1807, both rulers pursued the dream of unhinging the British Empire and taking its most precious possessions in the East. Napoleon had not forgotten how, ten years earlier, he had fought the battle of the pyramids only to lose the coveted prize of an Egyptian Empire in the naval engagement with the Royal Navy at Abuquir, and how he had been humiliated by having to sneak through British defenses back to France and to his imperial destiny. Meanwhile, Czar Alexander understood that in order to fulfil the dream of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, his predecessors, and to open the gates to the Mediterranean for Russia, he had to aim for a wider strategy. Nothing came of that because the czar and the emperor soon parted ways, Napoleon marching his armies to Moscow and defeat, Alexander marching his armies to Paris and victory. But the lure of the East was never forgotten, not in Paris and not in St. Petersburg – and most certainly not in London. The rulers of the British Empire were keenly aware of the permanent geostrategic threat, on land or by sea, to the lifelines of the Empire and to the passageway to India.

In the 1830s, between Greek independence and the loss of Egypt, the rulers of the Ottoman empire began to look to Europe for help. After one-and-a-half centuries of decline and being reduced to a mere object of European power politics, it was high time to prepare for ultimate survival. Little did the rulers at Istanbul understand that after the French Revolution and the rise of revolutionary nationalism, the days of multinational conglomerates like their ancient empire were numbered. It was forever beyond them to transform their vast land into a more modern system, centrally run and with a strong organizing principle. The chief reason for the empire's continued existence was that it had always been there and

that for the time being none of the great powers had the will or the liberty to overthrow it and take the best pieces. In fact, the Ottoman empire continued to exist largely thanks to the rules, written and unwritten, of the European concert and the balance of power.

The sultan, when looking for advice, could not possibly turn to Russia, as the Russians made no secret of their imperial appetites; nor could he turn to France, since French interests were all too obvious, directed towards inheriting British imperial power. The Austrians had been the victors throughout the eighteenth century; the British were not a disinterested party, and the Turks – as their arrogance was easily topped by British superiority – found the British difficult to deal with.

That is where the Prussians came in. Helmut von Moltke, a young general-staff captain who was to become one of the great strategists of the nineteenth century, impressed the sultan and was engaged for three years as an advisor to improve the Ottoman Empire's defenses and the army's training and organization. This was the beginning of Turkey's German connection, long before united Germany was created and rose to be a player on the world scene at the turn of the century. An exchange of officers and cadets took place, first between Turkey and Prussia, and later on also with the Austrian general staff. As Russia was the new common enemy, the Austrians were forgiven the fact that many of their military monuments showed Austrian generals on horseback and Turkish prisoners on their knees.

Captain von Moltke saw at once that the Turkish empire lived in a pre-modern time-zone, its armies no match for European troops, its equipment ripe for a museum, its strategic communications not much improved since the time of the siege of Vienna. The whole structure was cancerous through vast iniquities, the heterogeneous character of the empire and its constituent parts, the brutal treatment of soldiers, and corruption in high places – in short, the very opposite of what, under the shock of utter defeat, the Prussian military reformers had effected at the time of Napoleon, and against him. Moltke immediately recognized that without a system of strategic railways the vast country was doomed both in economic and military terms: it was too vast, too heterogeneous, and too badly run.

He also realized that there was an avenue of expansion for German settlements serving, in a strategic alliance, both the cause of the future Germany and the survival of the sultan's rule. His obsession with strategic railways proved to be the secret of success in the two wars Moltke had to

conduct, first against Austria in 1866 and then against France in 1870. Nothing, of course, came of those early ideas of a strategic alliance. Most Germans, when thinking about the Ottoman Empire, would let things rest with the famous lines that Goethe gave to the *petitbourgeois intellectual* who dreamed of a beautiful day embellished by rumors of war: “wenn hinten fern in der Türkei die Völker aufeinander schlagen” (“when far away in Turkish lands the nations rise in conflict”). Moltke’s advice notwithstanding, German popular emigration did not turn to Mesopotamia but continued to stream massively across the Atlantic Ocean to North America and nowhere else. A few Christian and Jewish fundamentalists, however, went to Palestine not for temporary power but in pursuit of their respective religious preoccupations. In 1848, in the German national parliament, the Paulskirche in Frankfurt, when the definition of the future Germany was on the agenda, some hotheads spoke of the *Reich* between the four seas, referring to the North, the Baltic, the Adriatic, and the Black Sea. All of this had no consequence, except as a dream of finally catching up with the more powerful nations of Europe: Britain, France, and Russia, but also the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.

However, the Crimean War in the 1850s, fought largely over control of the eastern Mediterranean, greatly helped the cause of German unification through Prussia. The powers who dominated the Vienna system – Russia, Britain, and France – fought each other at Balaclava and Sebastopol. Russia was in need of an ally and found one in Prussia – but only halfway, into neutrality, while Austria, notwithstanding the help the Habsburgs had received from Russian troops in 1849, was clearly in the Western camp reflecting the words of Count Schwarzenberg: “The world will marvel at our lack of gratitude.” The two decades after Sebastopol opened a window of opportunity for Prussia and for Bismarck to take up the German cause and lead Prussian conservatism and German nationalism into a forced marriage. Thus, Germany became, indirectly, the chief beneficiary of the power struggle that had engaged Russia, France, and the British Empire in the eastern Mediterranean.

At the time of the “Iron Chancellor,” Germany’s was far from a steely foreign policy. Bismarck was out to forge an alliance system, above all with the key powers of Europe – Britain and Russia. On both counts he was only modestly successful. Meanwhile, he hoped that the Turkish inheritance could, for a long time to come, provide enough material for conflict among the other powers, but also for compensation and thus help

to secure Greater Prussia a peaceful existence and take away from united Germany the perennial "*cauchemar des coalitions*" inherited from time immemorial.

When, however, in the mid-1870s Britain threatened war on Russia unless the Russians would relinquish their recent Turkish conquests, it was Bismarck who saw the sudden danger of a major European conflict, with Germany inevitably drawn in. Therefore he convened the Congress of Berlin in 1878, trying to be the "honest broker" after Russia had already conceded most British demands. He did not heed the advice of Gerson Bleichröder, his banker, that there is no such thing as an honest broker. The result was a fundamental and, as it turned out, a lasting alienation of Russia and the rise of the Franco-Russian alliance, with not much gratitude coming Bismarck's way. Bismarck was keenly aware of the fact that in the Balkans an ambiguous alliance with the Habsburg Empire and with Russia was intended to keep both those bulldogs from eating each other and to give Germany a pause in time of war. His often-quoted dictum that the whole of the Balkans was not worth the healthy bones of a Pommeranian grenadier was nothing but a warning to both St. Petersburg and Vienna that in case of war they would do well not to count on Germany.

The Franco-Russian alliance of the early 1890s and the progressive decline of the Danube monarchy forced Germany into a more active role in the Balkans and vis-à-vis the Turkish Empire. This also appealed to the aspirations of the young Kaiser Wilhelm II, who had inherited from Bismarck the conflict with France, and had all but given up on Russia. This grandson of Queen Victoria entertained a very personal love-hate relationship with Great Britain that led him to build the German battle fleet. At the same time he embarked on an official visit to the Holy Land, going ashore in Haifa, riding into Jerusalem and claiming – a bit too much for Turkish taste – a German protectorate over the Christians.

In today's Lebanon, at the glorious temple of Bacchus in Baalbec in the middle of the strategic Beka'a Valley, one can still see the plaque which the sultan and the Kaiser affixed to the wall to commemorate their joint visit. With much support from the emperor, German industry and banks secured vast orders for the railway lines that, six decades earlier, Captain von Moltke had prescribed as a strategic remedy for the ailing Ottoman structure. The "Baghdad-Bahn," as it was called, was to open much of the Balkans and the whole of the Ottoman dominions to German commerce, but also to link the strategic interests of both countries. In addition, the

Germans were welcomed in order to raise the rotten Turkish armies to modern standards in equipment and training – but this was largely beyond the capacity of even the most devoted and dutiful Prussian officers, of whom there were *some* before the war and *many* after Turkey joined the Central Powers in November 1914.

Why was Turkey unable to stay out of the war? Almost through a conditioned reflex, a war with Russia on one side and Germany on the other was bound to activate all the collective memories and every trauma of Turkish officers and diplomats. They pointed to the mortal danger to Turkey's overextended dominions should the Entente prevail. If, however, the Turks had taken the long view, they would probably have recognized that, come what may and despite vast promises made to the Czar, Britain would not let the Dardanelles slip into Russian hands – much as the United States under President Truman preferred in 1947 to break with Stalin rather than allow the Soviets control over the Turkish straits and a dominant role in the eastern Mediterranean.

By November 1914, the efforts of the Central Powers, notably Germany, had succeeded in bringing Turkey into the war alliance. The British immediately reacted by landing an invasion force in Basra to secure oil supplies. With Turkey on the side of the Central Powers, the Balkan countries – though not under formal German control – came under pressure to conform. In addition, there was a Turkish army of 20,000 men ready to threaten the Suez Canal, a situation which in turn forced the British to station an army on the other side. Moreover, given the importance of petroleum, Turkey was doubly important for the Central Powers, both with regard to Romanian oil and Caspian resources, as well as the supplies from Mesopotamia. The problem, however, was transport in both directions: troops to the southeast and oil to the northwest. This was never solved despite the vast efforts made by the German side. The Germans may not have believed in Turkish efficiency, but they certainly knew the key value of a railway.

The war in Asia Minor was not central – neither to the Germans nor to the Entente. In the official German records of the war, where every major battle on the eastern or the western fronts is described in detail, this theater is barely mentioned, reflecting the disdain German army leaders had for dare-devil operations in far-away countries. Even the much-discussed revolutionary missions of some diplomats and explorers like Maximilian von Oppenheim, Wilhelm Wassmuss, or Werner Otto von Hentig, sent to

ignite the fire of *jihad*, were taken much more seriously by the British than by the Germans themselves. Once again it was, even in the fiercest of wars, a matter of "hinten fern in der Türkei."

The war in the Mediterranean was asymmetrical, though in essence it held a promise of strategic breakthrough for both sides. But there were weaknesses, too. For the British there was the exposed position of the Suez Canal, with most of the oil having to go through a narrow waterway. The German side, for its part, had to cope with the backwardness and inefficiency of the Turkish army, poor in strategy and logistics but also overextended and not well-motivated. It is strange that the German high command did not immediately recognize the British Empire's Achilles heel, within easy reach of Turkish artillery. And it is equally strange that the British Navy, once it had chosen to attack the heart of the Turkish Empire, did not have the nerve to persevere. Strategic mistakes come in pairs and very often almost in symmetry, as if the generals followed – by hidden command – the same textbooks. While the Germans sent a detachment led by Major Kress von Kressenstein to the Canal, the Turkish troops, by their slow advance, lost the surprise factor and were beaten back by British forces, who recognized the vast consequences if indeed the Canal should be captured. The German Supreme Command was so preoccupied with the western front and the stakes in Poland that they thought of the campaign in the Middle East as no more than a sideshow. There was no one on General Erich von Falkenhayn's staff who fully understood the strategic geography of the Greater Middle East and the decisive results it offered to a determined and well-oiled attack.

It should be noted in passing that, twenty-seven years later, General Erwin Rommel's rapid advance in 1942 with an armored corps from Tunisia to Libya and to El Alamein showed a much clearer understanding of the overriding importance of the Suez Canal. But, again, supplies did not follow the rapid advance. The British put up a formidable fight, and Rommel's small corps faced defeat. It should also be noted that in 1942 the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht issued road maps to the Southern Army Group advancing through the Ukraine to the Caucasus, showing Beirut and Damascus, reminiscent of the strategic pincer movement that Alexander and Napoleon had once planned, all this in order to destroy the British position in the Middle East and beyond.

The Churchillian strategy of opening the Dardanelles to cut Turkey in two, take her out of the enemy alliance, and supply Russia with arms and

receive food from the Ukraine, was a *grand design* indeed. The Germans believed that the Russians had suggested the idea, and they suspected that Greece and Bulgaria would immediately join the fray. Moreover, as Turkey had no direct supply lines to Germany and munitions were scarce, it looked like a calculated and limited risk. If successful, it would have knocked out Turkey and would have taken important oil assets from Germany and Austria. But, as it turned out, it was a disaster, with the long-term political repercussions for the British Empire being even worse than its immediate military fall-out.

Germans may not have seen Turkey as the most important theater of war, and they may have grossly underestimated the strategic breakthrough possible at the Suez Canal. But once the Entente's navies showed up at the Dardanelles, Germany understood that Turkey's very existence was threatened and that Russia was promised an outlet, and so it lost no time and spared no effort. The Turks, in turn, needed no explaining that the attack on the Dardanelles and the subsequent landing at Gallipoli were a life-or-death struggle. It was only through German insistence that, in a last minute effort, the fortifications were put into good repair.

On 19 February 1915, British and French ships finally staged the show of force demanded by the Russians. They began to hammer the Turkish fortifications guarding the Dardanelles. One month later British and French forces attempted a breakthrough but ran into mines. The commanders decided to break off the offensive. The next step was the landing executed on both the European and the Asia Minor sides of the straits by five divisions of British, French, Australian, and New Zealand troops. On the barren rock of the coastal strip the Fifth Turkish army corps, led by German General Liman von Sanders and reinforced by 500 German specialists both in the front line and on the staff, defended the high ground and, in spite of its technical disadvantage and shortage of ammunition, did not give way. The invading forces were unable to gain sufficient ground or to expand into enough of a bridgehead. The German chancellor and the *Auswärtiges Amt* insisted more than ever before that now or never the Germans had to secure the supply lines through the Balkans. But owing to the treaty with Italy, Austria could not move in the Balkans and the Austrian general staff – probably correctly – considered a decision on the Russian front to be the overriding priority. Serbia and Romania were in the way, while Bulgaria was caught in precarious neutrality.

While the Gallipoli landing threatened the center of Turkey, the Germans

and the Austrians were unable, in military and diplomatic terms, to overcome Turkey's geographic isolation. In June 1915 it was evident that unless new ammunition would arrive, the Turks could not hold out. Turkey had to be saved through an offensive on Serbia – as the *Auswärtiges Amt* insisted, or through victories on the eastern front that would persuade Romania to open its railways – as General Falkenhayn expected.

Meanwhile, the Russians prepared a division in Odessa as part of the future occupation force in Turkey. On 6 September, while the Entente was still sending reinforcements into Gallipoli, Bulgaria signed a military convention with Vienna and Berlin, thus opening the way towards decisive action against Serbia, while securing no small number of promises for compensation after victory. Turkey had indeed ceded territory in Thrace to the Bulgarians. By late summer 1915, Colmar von der Goltz-Pascha assured Berlin that Turkey could hold out. By that time the Turks had sent more than half of their total fighting force into battle.

While the Entente's Gallipoli campaign refused to yield any military gains, it was through diplomacy, vast promises, and a lot of cash that the Entente secured Italy's entry into the war. Although the Italians failed to make headway on their northern front in the next three-and-a-half years, this was an important step in forming the great alliance that would, in the end, outgun and outnumber the Central Powers. In the early autumn of 1915 German, Austrian, and Bulgarian divisions launched the offensive against Serbia. The Entente reacted by landing troops at Saloniki – uninvited and in breach of Greek neutrality – on 5 October 1915. This was to the detriment of the precarious operation in the Dardanelles. In late December 1915 and early January 1916, the allies gave up the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In the Gallipoli campaign nothing had been gained except the resolve of the Central Powers to establish a direct railway and supply link with Turkey and to take Serbia out of the war. In Salonica, meanwhile, the effort remained half-hearted: 200,000 men were immobilized, the action not helping the beleaguered Serbs. Altogether, the strategic losses were on the Entente's side and the strategic gains were made by the Central Powers. Gallipoli was a disaster not only in military terms, but also in the diplomatic dimension. Far from improving the overall allied position in the Balkans, the failure at Gallipoli forced the Central Powers to establish that firm link with Turkey that had been lacking until then. Bulgaria joined the Central Powers, and Serbia was defeated. On the Entente side almost half a million troops – mostly British, Commonwealth, and French – were engaged, and

more than 50,000 lost their lives. Turkey's dead may have numbered, according to German sources, as many as 160,000, with the total number of casualties nearing 300,000.

In the end Turkey had survived in one piece, the Balkan front had been consolidated, and half a million Entente soldiers were kept away from the western front. For Turkey, Gallipoli was a strategic victory. It certainly gave the military elite, the backbone of the modern Turkish state, a boost of self-confidence and helped the leaders to forge modern secular Turkey out of the turmoil following the breakdown of the Central Powers in 1918. The Turkish nation-state managed to survive the fall of the Ottoman Empire – though one might ask whether the allies succeeded in putting a better order in its place. For modern Turkey, Gallipoli was a cruel virility test, proving that the sick man on the Bosphorus had enough substance and resilience to define his own role – notably against the final dictate from the Entente.

Meanwhile, it should not be forgotten that Gallipoli, like Waterloo, was a close run thing and Fieldmarshal von der Goltz might well have echoed Wellington's words: "The closest run thing I ever saw in my life." History is not about "what if." But it is worth pondering whether the strategic rationale behind the campaign was merely a light-hearted wager or the tragic failure of a grand strategy. If the allies had indeed broken through Turkish defenses, Russia would probably have stumbled on, and avoided the Bolshevik Revolution. Austria would have soon been forced out of the war, leaving Germany no choice but to conclude a peace halfway between victory and defeat. The United States would not have entered the European war. In short, the Great War would have ended sometime in early 1916, with Europe deeply shaken and changed, but not yet down the infernal groove to total war, crushing defeat, revolution, and counter-revolution. Taking the long view, it is impossible to say who won and who lost.

Many of today's troubles in and around the Greater Middle East can be put down to the bitterness and destruction that the First World War left behind. Given the horrors that were to follow from Sarajevo to Basra and back to Sarajevo, Ottoman rule was – much as Habsburg rule in Central Europe – the last way of life which tribes and nations could share who otherwise had nothing but hatred for each other. Nothing is in sight that could once again bring a measure of peace to the troubled lands of the Greater Middle East. Today's Turkey is, after the gross simplifications of the Cold War came to an end, once again at the cross-roads of history and

geography, a land torn between competing and almost incompatible traditions from inside and exposed to almost irreconcilable pressures from outside.

At Gallipoli the question was who would control Turkey and her future. That question was decided, at horrendous cost, in favor of Turkey. Today's question is how the Turks define themselves and where their country belongs: in the West or the East; in Asia or Europe; to a secular order or to a religious destiny. In this, once again, the stakes are high and the outcome open. There is no end in sight to both strategies and agonies in the Greater Middle East.

FRIEDRICH WILHELM IV AND PRUSSIAN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

LARS HÄNSEL

European interests in the Middle East should be considered on two levels: a) the official policies of the European governments; b) the non-governmental interests of various social elements, whether individual or institutional.¹ For methodological reasons, I would like to make this distinction, even though both are interrelated in many ways. The following exposition will deal with the interests of official representatives of governments, focusing on Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Prussian interests in the Middle East.

Aspects of the Historical Background

The crisis engendered by Muhammad 'Ali in the early decades of the nineteenth century was of the utmost importance for the growing political interest of the European powers in the Middle East at the time.² Muhammad 'Ali, who had fought alongside the Ottoman troops against Napoleon, conquered Cairo in 1805 and was appointed pasha. He was later promised Syria as a reward for participation in the Ottoman force that fought to thwart Greek independence, but the sultan did not keep his promise. Using this as an excuse, Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Muhammad

¹ A. Schölsch, "Europa und Palästina 1838–1917," H. Mejer and A. Schölsch (eds.), *Die Palästina-Frage 1917–1948*, Paderborn 1961, pp. 11–46, esp. 13 (henceforth: Schölsch, Europa).

² Other contributors to this volume dealing with the Ottoman period have gone into the details. I shall, therefore, dwell only upon some of the important elements that served as the background for Prussian decision-making in the middle of the nineteenth century. Cf. A. R. Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palästina 1841–1898: Aktivitäten religiöser Institutionen, wirtschaftliche und politische Einflüsse*, Berlin 1982, esp. pp. 1–15.

'Ali, invaded Syria in 1831 and established an Egyptian administration in Palestine.

What is significant in the context of our discussion was the tolerant attitude exhibited by the Egyptian administration towards the religious communities. England, for example, had been trying to establish a missionary station in Palestine since the beginning of the nineteenth century, but was only successful in gaining a foothold there during the period of Egyptian rule in Palestine.³

In 1839 the Ottoman capital came under threat of conquest by Ibrahim Pasha, endangering the sultan and the entire Ottoman Empire. In this situation the European powers – England, Austria, Prussia, and Russia as well – decided, for different reasons, not to allow the dissolution of the Empire. First, they stopped his advance on Istanbul; then the Treaty of London, signed by these four powers, posed an ultimatum to Muhammad 'Ali demanding that the Egyptians retreat from Palestine (as well as the other parts of Syria), and also guaranteed the Ottoman government their protection. Six and a half centuries after the crusaders had lost their last foothold in the Holy Land, the flags of the Christian powers, Austria and England, once more flew on the walls of Acre.⁴

After Ibrahim Pasha was forced out of Palestine in 1840 with the help of the European powers, the Ottoman administration could not simply revert to its policy of intolerance, mainly due to European pressure.⁵ It was clear to the political decision makers in Europe that, given the condition of the Ottoman Empire, something should be done to take advantage of the situation,⁶ the only question being what to make of it. With the end of the Egyptian occupation the European powers competed for influence under the new conditions.

³ M. Lückhoff, *Anglikaner und Protestanten im Heiligen Land*, Wiesbaden 1998, pp. 23–31 (henceforth: Lückhoff, *Anglikaner*). Other examples of changed conditions for Christians at this time: arbitrary taxes to be paid by every pilgrim were abolished, the repair and building of churches was permitted, leading to increased construction, and most important – restrictions on missionary activities were eased. Cf. Y. Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the 19th Century: The Old City*, Jerusalem 1984, p. 109 (henceforth: Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem*).

⁴ Friedrich Wilhelm IV regretted not having participated in the military action due to the lack of naval power!

⁵ Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem*, p. 112.

⁶ K. Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit: Die Gründung des Bistums Jerusalem im Jahre 1841*, Berlin 1965, p. 97 (henceforth: Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit*).

Politically, the most important step in the context of Palestine was the establishment of six European consulates in Jerusalem during the next decade,⁷ beginning with the British consulate as early as 1838 and ending with that of Austria in 1849.⁸ A Prussian consulate was opened in 1842.

The Unsuccessful Scheme: An International Protectorate

It was only from this time on that Prussia played an active role in the Eastern crisis and developed concrete plans for direct engagement in Middle Eastern affairs. With the ascension to the throne of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, Prussian interest in the region was significantly heightened.⁹ His first formal foreign act after accession to the throne in 1840 was to join the Treaty of London which protected the weak Ottoman regime in Palestine. "The King... saw in the fall of the Ottoman Empire the hand of God. The King reasoned that this [challenge] could not go unanswered by man. Rather, it compelled one to work towards an active transformation of conditions in the Holy Land."¹⁰ Various proposals were raised within the political establishment as to how to react to the situation, among them by Helmut von Moltke, Heinrich von Bülow and others.¹¹

⁷ Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem*, pp. 184–189. Though the British vice-consul was appointed in 1838, he took up residence in Jerusalem only at the end of March 1839, M. Eliav, *Britain and the Holy Land, 1838–1914: Selected Documents from the British Consulate in Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 15–16, 30, 122–123.

⁸ M. Eliav, "The Austrian Consulate in Jerusalem: Activities and Achievements," M. Wrba (ed.), *Austrian Presence in the Holy Land in the 19th and 20th Century*, Tel Aviv 1996, pp. 41–51.

⁹ His father, Friedrich III, had rejected serious consideration of a proposal to establish a Christian state in Jerusalem because he considered it to be no more than a good idea having no chance of implementation.

¹⁰ Lückhoff, *Anglikaner*, p. 301.

¹¹ In 1841, Prussian Major (later Fieldmarshal [Generalfeldmarschall]) Helmut von Moltke wrote in the *Augsburger Allgemeinen Zeitung* that it would be appropriate to appoint at the head of Palestine an "unumschränkten Herrscher deutscher Nation und echt toleranten Sinnes," an absolute ruler of German nationality and a truly tolerant mind, because a neutral German administration would be able to bring about and maintain order. The quotation is from Ch. Schütz, *Preußen in Jerusalem (1800–1861): Karl Friedrich Schinkels Entwurf der Grabeskirche und die Jerusalempläne Friedrich Wilhelms IV*, Berlin 1988, p. 42 (henceforth: Schütz, *Preußen*). A note drawn up by the Prussian envoy Heinrich von Bülow and Minister for Cultural Affairs Johann Albrecht Friedrich Eichhorn was sent to Vienna in August 1840. This memorandum, which dealt with the possibility and necessity of freedom of prayer and religious services for Christians at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, was never answered.

Most influential, however, was a "Denkschrift," a memorandum by Joseph Maria von Radowitz – general, diplomat, and close friend of Friedrich Wilhelm IV. His memorandum called for immunity for Christians at the holy sites and self-jurisdiction for Christian residents in the Holy Land. It also proposed that the property of the holy places be entrusted to the European powers by the Ottoman Empire and be protected by a garrison on Mount Zion, also suggesting consideration of a proposal to reserve Mount Zion for the Protestant church alone. Radowitz's memorandum gave rise to an initiative by the Prussian king, who suggested to the other European powers two main points: protection of Christians in the Ottoman Empire and internationalization of Jerusalem.¹² It is interesting to note that already at this early stage in the modern history of Jerusalem the idea of its internationalization was broached.

For various reasons, the other European powers rejected these proposals, mainly because they believed they endangered their own privileges. Russia did not want to play down its claim to be the exclusive protector of the Orthodox Christians. England's objective was to gain supremacy in the Middle East in order to protect the passage to India and was rather interested in countering Russian influence. Catholic Austria rejected the proposals for confessional reasons: Protestants should not have more influence on the same rights to the holy places.

Friedrich Wilhelm IV, then, did not succeed in implementing this plan for an international protectorate, but he was not prepared to give up his initiative. He was still enthralled by the idea of a Prussian Protestant presence in Jerusalem and therefore concentrated on a more limited project: the establishment of a joint bishopric with the Anglican Church.

The envoys of the Prussian king in the Ottoman Empire soon realized that all Protestant efforts and missionary endeavors had no chance of success unless the Protestant church would be granted official recognition and the status of a religious community by the Sublime Porte.¹³ But the king did

¹² "Jerusalem zu einer Art von gemeinchristlichen Protektorat zu erheben, welches das Zentrum der ökumenischen Bewegung der christlichen Kirche, das Zentrum der theologischen Studien und zugleich das Zentrum der christlichen Juden- und Heidenmission werden sollte," Schültz, *Preußen*, p. 138. For similar ideas in England see Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit*, p. 89.

¹³ E. Roth, *Preussens Gloria im Heiligen Land: Die Deutschen und Jerusalem*, München 1973, p. 54. Muslims in the Ottoman Empire were forbidden to convert under the threat of the death penalty. Non-Muslim subjects, however, were free to convert their religion and choose from among the officially recognized churches and religions. Thus, a Christian could one day decide to

not feel strong enough to push through such official recognition and to secure it militarily once it would be achieved. Strategically, the natural partner in such an effort was the British Empire, with its Anglican Church and naval power.

The More Successful Project: An Anglican–Prussian Bishopric

One man played a most important role in Prussia's efforts for greater international recognition: Karl Christian Josias Freiherr von Bunsen.¹⁴ A diplomat with a wide range of scholarly interests, Bunsen became one of the most intimate friends of the king,¹⁵ and also enjoyed excellent relations with English society due to his marriage to an English lady of a well-known family.

Before discussing Bunsen and his role in the establishment of the bishopric, a short outline of the relevant ideas of Friedrich Wilhelm IV is in order. One scholar has written: "For Frederick William IV the application of Christian beliefs and values to the world of human affairs was the cornerstone upon which he built his entire ideological edifice. His concepts of monarchy, the state, social organization, Germany and German nationalism, and international relations were all derived from his particular interpretation of Christian doctrine."¹⁶ How was the establishment of the bishopric in Jerusalem related to Friedrich Wilhelm IV's religious beliefs?

One of the central issues in the king's thinking was the relationship

become a Roman Catholic, and on the next day follow the rites of the Armenian, Coptic, or Greek Orthodox churches. But if a Christian or a Jew holding Ottoman citizenship wanted to become a Protestant, he would lose all his rights to such citizenship, for the Protestant church was not officially recognized, which meant that to be a Protestant was criminal.

¹⁴ E. Geldbach (ed.), *Der Gelehrte Diplomat: Zum Wirken Christian Carl Josias Bunsens*, Leiden 1980; idem, "Bunsen," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, VII, Berlin 1980, pp. 415ff.

¹⁵ We know much about Bunsen's close friendship with the king from their frequent exchange of letters, see *Aus dem Briefwechsel Friedrich Wilhelms IV mit Bunsen*, ed. L. v. Ranke, Leipzig 1874² (henceforth: Ranke, *Aus dem Briefwechsel*).

¹⁶ D. E. Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy, 1840–1861*, Oxford 1995, p. 85 (henceforth: Barclay, *Frederick William IV*). Cf. G. Besier, *Preussische Kirchenpolitik in der Bismarckära*, Berlin 1980, pp. 25–27 (henceforth: Besier, *Preussische Kirchenpolitik*); idem, *Religion, Nation, Kultur: Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen in den gesellschaftlichen Umbrüchen des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Neukirchen 1992, pp. 32–35 (henceforth: Besier, *Religion, Nation, Kultur*).

between church and state. Since the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia to put an end to the religious wars of the seventeenth century, the ruler of a state could choose the religion of his people: *cuius regio eius religio*. In the Protestant areas, this led to the concept of the king as *summus episcopus* (or Landesherrliches Kirchenregiment), meaning that he was not only the supreme political figure in the kingdom, but also held supreme religious authority. It was especially in Prussia that this concept led to a state-controlled church with limited autonomy.

Under Friedrich Wilhelm III (1797–1840), the ties between church and state were made even tighter, as the established governing boards of the Lutheran and Reform Churches were replaced and the Prussian Department of Religious Affairs (Kultusministerium) was given administrative responsibility for the church. Friedrich Wilhelm IV was troubled by this concept of the king as *summus episcopus*. Though undoubtedly consistent with the law and with accepted practice, his role as supreme Bishop was a burden upon his conscience, and he did not feel qualified to fill it. What lay behind his attitude was a personal interest to revive and restore the apostolic church to its primeval state.¹⁷ The king did not recognize any royal power relating to internal church matters on the local level. The local churches, he believed, should be organized as they had been in the apostolic church. The only role of the king and the other secular authorities was – in the opinion of the king – to organize the relations between the churches above the local level. Thus, the king, as a crowned member of the church, would be its patron and protector, but would not fill its supreme office. He therefore sought to return church supremacy to a dignified representative of the church – to place it in the “right hands.”¹⁸ However, he was opposed to any presbyterial concept, because it contained democratic elements and was anti-hierarchical.¹⁹ His ideal was the Anglican Church with its effective organization and a clear-cut hierarchy, headed by an archbishop. In a letter to Bunsen, Friedrich Wilhelm IV described this concept as a “mid-summer night’s dream.”²⁰

It is widely maintained that Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s desire to establish the joint Bishopric did not flow from a wish to realize his plans for church

¹⁷ Barclay, *Frederick William IV*, p. 87.

¹⁸ H. J. Schoeps, *Preußen: Geschichte eines Staates*, Frankfurt a.M. 1981, p. 193.

¹⁹ Besier, *Religion, Nation, Kultur*, p. 34; Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit*, pp. 278ff. and 343ff.; Beiser, *Preussische Kirchenpolitik*, pp. 25ff. (and the literature cited there); Barclay, *Frederick William IV*, pp. 84ff.

²⁰ Ranke, *Aus dem Briefwechsel*, pp. 47ff.

reform – which he was unable to put into effect in Prussia – in Jerusalem. But it is obvious that the Bishopric did not contradict his plans and ideas for reform. The least one can say is, that religious interests and political motives were combined and intertwined in the king's thought, but the emphasis was more on the political and pragmatic objective of gaining protection for German Protestants and furthering independent Prussian activities in Palestine, including an independent church, a hospital for pilgrims, research, and a school. Thus, even though he was attracted by the Anglican Church, the goal of his involvement in the Middle East was not to effect a unification of the Protestant churches. England was only a natural partner for a more pragmatic goal whose realization called for cooperation and association with that power.²¹

The king, therefore, sent Bunsen on a special diplomatic mission to London to conduct negotiations about the prospects of a joint project of the Church of England and the Prussian Protestants. Bunsen began the negotiations with British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston in June 1841. He also met with representatives of the Church of England. During his negotiations, Bunsen added an important element to the ideas broached by the king. He did share the king's concept as outlined in the "mid-summer night's dream," and was also strongly attracted by the Anglican Church as an ideal model. But for Bunsen England was not only an ally: a joint Bishopric with the Anglican Church could be the first step towards a universal Protestant church. Thus, Bunsen's interests went far beyond the rather pragmatic ones of the king, and he used his monarch's intentions to further his own interests. The Bishopric, he believed, should be the beginning of a worldwide Protestant union of national churches in analogy to and, of course, in competition with, the universalist claims of the Catholic Church.²² This does not mean that Bunsen did not also have political interests and objectives. "Bunsen's encounter with the English Parliament

²¹ Lückhoff, *Anglikaner*, p. 102. For the (rather astonishing) broader sympathy of Prussian conservatives for England see H. J. Schoeps, *Das andere Preussen: Konservative Gestalten und Probleme im Zeitalter Friedrich Wilhelms IV.*, Berlin 1974, p. 137.

²² This reflected the general atmosphere of the nineteenth century as one of the expansion of Christianity. Geldbach writes: "The Protestant churches finally began to realize that the 'church' is more than an organization within the boundaries of a small territory; it is an apostolic church – that is, it has a mission to fulfill." See E. Geldbach, "The German Protestant Network in the Holy Land," M. Davis and Y. Ben-Arieh (eds.), *With Eyes Toward Zion III: Western Societies and the Holy Land*, New York, Westport and London 1991, p. 150 (henceforth: Geldbach, German Protestant Network).

and with leaders of various political factions led him to believe that the natural political ally of Prussia was not czarist Russia, as the Holy Alliance suggested, but democratic England. His policy was to align Prussia with England and, by doing so, to strike a blow at his anti-liberal, conservative enemies.”²³ Due to the ambitions of Bunsen, Friedrich Wilhelm IV had to intervene in the negotiations and demand of Bunsen that he adhere to the original plan and goal: diplomatic and religious equality for Protestants, and official recognition of Protestantism in the Ottoman Empire.

Bunsen did finally come to an agreement with his English counterparts.²⁴ In December 1841, the Archbishop of Canterbury summarized the main points agreed upon by both sides in a “Statement of Proceedings” concerning a joint bishopric in Jerusalem. The main points in the Statement were: The bishops were to be appointed alternately from among English and Prussian clergymen, but the Archbishop of Canterbury would have the right of veto; the bishops would be ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury; all non-Anglican pastors wishing to be associated with and under the protection of the Bishopric would have to be re-ordained into the Anglican rite.

Obviously, the Bishopric was dominated by the Anglicans. Real equality existed only on one point: both sides were to pay one-half of the annual salary of the bishop, set at £1200. At any rate, the Prussian monarch was aware of his status vis-à-vis England and of his own limitations. Despite harsh criticism in Prussia, he accepted the Statement of Proceedings, bearing in mind the unique opportunity to gain a foothold in the Holy Land and even beyond it, for the jurisdiction of the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric included Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Chaldaea, and Abyssinia.

This initiative to exploit conditions in the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric in Jerusalem in 1841 posed a challenge for the European Catholic powers, Austria and France, as well as for Russia. They were spurred to increase their activities in the Holy Land, particularly in Jerusalem. The reestablishment of the Latin Patriarchate by Pius IX in 1847, which had been vacant since the Crusaders

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

²⁴ I completely omit any discussion of the interests of the English side to the negotiations. For the general outlines of English policy towards the region see E. Kedourie, *England and the Middle East*, London 1956, pp. 9–28; for the religious aspects cf. Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit*.

left Acre in the late thirteenth century, was one of the direct reactions to the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric.²⁵

The first bishop, Michael Salomon Alexander, was chosen by the English and proved to be an ideal appointment. He combined many elements that were constitutional for the Bishopric: he had been born in Prussia, had converted from Judaism to Protestantism, and was serving in the Church of England. It was not difficult for the Prussians to concur in this choice. But he was to serve only four years in office, and died on a journey to Egypt.

The most important and influential figure in the history of the Bishopric was Samuel Gobat, the second bishop and the first Prussian appointee. During his thirty-three years in office (from 1846 to 1879) Protestant efforts in the Holy Land flourished. What Erich Geldbach has called a "German Protestant network,"²⁶ consisting of schools, hospitals, and other social institutions, was established during his tenure. In many respects, Friedrich Wilhelm IV closely followed the development of the Bishopric – especially its schools and orphanages – but he never visited Jerusalem personally. The king died in 1861, his last act being to honor his life-long friend Bunsen by raising him to the nobility.

The last of the three bishops, this time appointed by the English in accordance with the policy of rotation, was Joseph Barclay, who died after only two years in office. It was now the turn of the Prussians to name the next bishop. Negotiations were delayed and finally failed, mainly because Bismarck demanded a change of two main points in the agreement. First of all, re-ordination of non-Anglican candidates for bishop into the Church of England should no longer be necessary. Secondly, the Archbishop of Canterbury should no longer hold the power of veto. Both the re-ordination and the veto were incompatible with the enhanced power of Germany and the German Emperor in the 1880s, and finally led to the dissolution of the agreement.²⁷

In 1886 Wilhelm I abrogated the agreement with the Church of England and stopped payments. From this time onwards, the Bishopric continued

²⁵ J. Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1995, pp. 71, 85. See also F. Heyer, *Kirchengeschichte des Heiligen Landes*, Stuttgart 1984, pp. 186–187. For French and Russian reactions to the joint British-Prussian challenge see also Schölsch, *Europa* (above, n. 1), pp. 18–25.

²⁶ Geldbach, *German Protestant Network*, pp. 150–169.

²⁷ M. Raheb, *Das reformatorische Erbe unter den Palästinensern*, Gütersloh 1990, pp. 99–105.

to function as one of the Anglican Church alone, headed by Anglican bishops. Simultaneously, the German parish was now grounded on a new foundation. German Minister for Cultural Affairs Gustav von Gossler proposed, in a letter to Bismarck in 1887, the establishment of a new Stiftung (foundation) for the constitution and maintenance of the German Protestant community in the Holy Land, as well as of the institutions run by the church. The foundation should be administered by a board of trustees directly responsible to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whereas a clergyman should hold responsibility for leadership of the parish and representation of the Protestant church in the Middle East, bearing the title of "bishop." All of Gossler's proposals were accepted with the exception of the title of "bishop." Thus, the spiritual mentors of the German communities in the Holy Land were pastors, there being no apostolic tradition in the Protestant church.²⁸ Only in 1898 were pastors promoted to a rank called "Propst." This designation was not always understood in the local ecumenical milieu of Jerusalem with its traditional religious offices such as bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, metropolitans, etc., and is not even understood by most Protestants, those unfamiliar with Prussian church history.

Moreover, in 1979 the constantly growing Arab sector of the Protestant Church of the Redeemer appointed a Protestant Arab-Lutheran "bishop," Daud Haddad. This was in order to have a stronger voice in Jerusalem religious circles, and also to gain political recognition. Yet, the Arab bishop is in many ways dependent upon the German Propst. The appointment of an Arab bishop led to a situation in which he formally fills a higher office than that of the Propst, on whom he is dependent. Furthermore, the bishop is regarded as the leader of the Protestant Church. In the case of official ceremonies, for example, it is the Arab bishop who is invited to attend.

But – and this should be emphasized – the Propst's status rests upon the tradition of the bishop of the joint Anglo-Prussian Bishopric. He is *in fact* the bishop, he is only Propst *in name*. Therefore, there is a lively discussion as to whether the German Propst should not be nominally transformed into what he is in fact: a bishop. This could strengthen his status and the independent position of the German Protestant church in the current ecumenical and political situation.

²⁸ Lückhoff, *Anglikaner*, pp. 285–293; H. W. Hertzberg and J. Friedrich, *Jerusalem: Geschichte einer Gemeinde*, Kassel 1965, pp. 19ff.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind the initial pragmatic ideas of the Prussian king to establish independent Protestant religious and social activities, from the German viewpoint the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric was, on the whole, a success. In 1850 the Sultan recognized the Protestants as a legitimate community (*millet*). Though the joint Bishopric came to an end in 1886, the efforts which had developed under its auspices continued. Established at the initiative of representatives of governments, the Bishopric failed as a "governmental project." But the Bishopric became the midwife and "umbrella" for German Protestant non-governmental penetration of the Middle East. I believe that the importance of the Bishopric, despite its formal failure, can hardly be overestimated. The Protestants, in particular the German Protestants, who were powerless and in simple fact lacked representation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, became a very active and influential force in the Middle East during that century.²⁹ Thus, the Bishopric initiated by Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Bunsen marks the beginning of German religious, economic, and social penetration of the Middle East.

²⁹ Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem* (above, n. 3), p. 400.

THE FOUNDING OF GERMAN PROTESTANT INSTITUTIONS IN JERUSALEM DURING THE REIGN OF KAISER WILHELM II

THORSTEN NEUBERT-PREINE

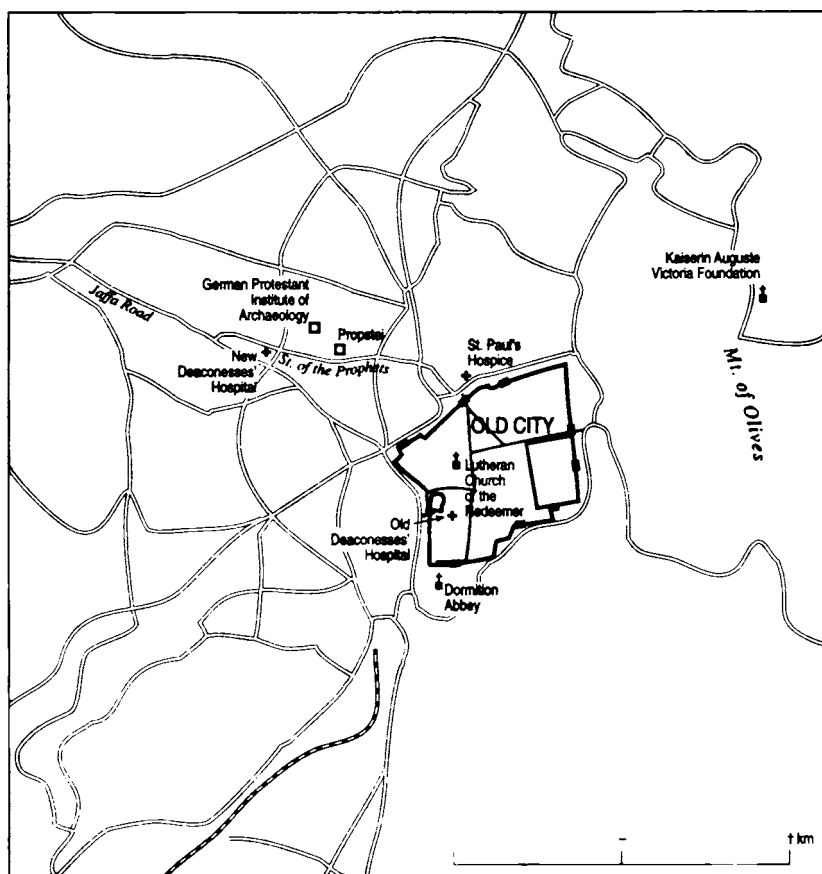
Introduction

Anyone marking all German institutions on a map of Jerusalem will immediately notice that they are spread out all over the city, in contrast to those of other nations, such as the Russian Compound, the English concentration inside Jaffa Gate, and the French buildings outside the New Gate. Focusing on buildings and institutions founded during the reign of Wilhelm II (1859–1941; ruled from 1888 to 1918), one can even gain the impression that their locations were not chosen by chance:

- * In the middle of the Old City, very near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, one of the most significant of all Christian shrines, rises the most important building erected by Wilhelm II in Jerusalem, the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. Its imposing tower is visible for miles around.
- * To the north of the Old City is the Catholic St. Paul's Hospice (Schmidt's Girls College), once supported by Wilhelm II. It is situated opposite Jerusalem's most impressive city gate – Damascus Gate.
- * Just south of the Old City wall, on the exposed Mount of Zion, is the Catholic Dormition Church and Abbey, built with the support of the Kaiser.
- * The German Protestant Institute of Archaeology was originally located west of the Old City, in present-day Ethiopia Street.
- * To the east, on the ridge of the Mount of Olives, towers the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation with the Church of the Ascension, a formidable building that can be seen from afar.

Thus, there is a circle of German buildings around Old Jerusalem, with the Protestant Church at its center. This religious edifice was, and remains, very important for German activity in the city and is even at times regarded as its focus of attention. Yet, as the history of these institutions will show, there was of course no programmatic choice of the sites. Each location can be explained in terms of historical circumstances, or as pure chance.

Wilhelm II took a major interest in the Protestant buildings and institutions in Jerusalem. The first two are the Church of the Redeemer and the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation. The third relevant institution in this context, whose activities have given it a good reputation, is the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology. The main object of this article is to examine the period of foundation and the special inter-connection of these three Protestant institutions. The imperial couple's journey to the Holy Land in 1898, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Church of the Redeemer, is of fundamental significance in the history of each of them, and at the same time the reason for



German Protestant institutions in Jerusalem during the reign of Wilhelm II

the numerous connections between them. In addition to these three, the Kaiser and his wife took an interest in other Jerusalem institutions, to which they gave partial support. For two reasons these buildings, such as the Deaconesses' Hospital, founded in 1851 by Theodor Fliedner, or the Propstei of the German Protestant congregation (now the ORT School on the Street of the Prophets), for example, will not be considered here: they either belonged to the above-mentioned institutions, or were founded before them.

The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

Unquestionably, the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer was the most important project of Kaiser Wilhelm II in Jerusalem. The brother of his grandfather, Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795–1861), hit upon the idea to build this house of God shortly after the establishment of the so-called Anglo-Prussian Bishopric in 1841. It was given impetus by the king's religious motivation and by the growing differences of opinion, since 1843, within the joint bishopric between the Anglicans and the German Protestants.



The Church of the Redeemer, with the Crusader ruins, partly used for the annex, ca. 1902 (Collection of Thorsten Neubert-Preine)

At first, it was not important for the persons involved where the congregational buildings should be erected in Jerusalem.¹ The Muristan was not considered as a possible site until 1851, when Theodor Fliedner (1800–1864) drew the king's attention to this large area, right by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.² Another eighteen years would pass until Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (1831–1888) would ceremonially be given possession of the site on behalf of his father Wilhelm I (1797–1888; King of Prussia, 1861–1871; German Kaiser, 1871–1888).

Despite the troubled times of the German–French War (1870–1871), preliminary work on the Muristan went on since 1870. It took architect Friedrich Adler (1827–1908) more than three years “to work out...the surveying and the reconstruction project for the rebuilding of the Church of the Order of Saint John...”³ until he could officially present the plans for the church in March 1875.⁴ Kaiser Wilhelm I approved the designs in April 1876 but, due mainly to political considerations, the project did not make any serious progress.⁵

Only when Wilhelm II ascended to the throne in 1888 did more and more people express an opinion such as that of the pastor of the German congregation in Jerusalem, Carl Schlicht. He wrote in his annual report that “the commencement of the church building [is] now [an] urgent need.”⁶ But, as a result of the dissolution in 1886 of the joint Jerusalem bishopric,

¹ German Foreign Minister Heinrich von Bülow to the German ambassador in London, Josias Bunsen, 25 May 1845, Israel State Archives (ISA), RG 67, no. 322, 439/P; basically, fairly good cooperation between both sectors of the community existed only during Bishop Gobat's period in office.

² T. Neubert-Preine, “‘Seine Majestät wünschen selbst zu kaufen...’: Preußen und der Streit um den Muristan in Jerusalem,” K.- H. Ronecker, J. Nieper, and T. Neubert-Preine (eds.), *Dem Erlöser der Welt zur Ehre: Festschrift zum einhundertjährigen Jubiläum der Einweihung der evangelischen Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem*, Leipzig 1998, pp. 56–57 (henceforth: Ronecker, Nieper, and Neubert-Preine, *Dem Erlöser der Welt*).

³ Letter from Friedrich Adler to the director of the Bauakademie Grund, 28 August 1871: “...um dort die Aufnahme und das Reconstructionsprojekt zum Wiederaufbau der Johanniterkirche...auszuarbeiten,” quoted by P. Lemburg, “Leben und Werk des gelehrten Berliner Architekten Friedrich Adler (1827–1908),” Ph.D dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 1989, p. 176 (henceforth: Lemburg, Friedrich Adler).

⁴ Adler to German Reichskanzler Otto von Bismarck, 5 March 1875, Bundesarchiv Berlin (BAB), R 901/39582, p. 93. Adler made fifty sketches for the new church establishment. To this day, copies of only three of them have turned up.

⁵ “Pro Memoria betreffend den Bau einer deutschen evangelischen Kirche zu Jerusalem,” 12 January 1881, BAB, R 901/39585, Bl. 3f.; Friedrich Adler, *Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem*, Berlin 1898, p. 3.

⁶ Pastor Carl Schlicht's annual report for the year 1888, January 1889, BAB, R 901/39588, pp. 116–133.



The Church of the Redeemer. The view from the Jerusalem Citadel obviously shows to what extent the complex of towers rises above the Old City of Jerusalem (Photo: Thorsten Neubert-Preine)

the Kaiser first had to reorganize the German Parish. To this end, Wilhelm II founded the Protestant Jerusalem-Stiftung (Jerusalem Fund) in June of 1889. The representatives of this foundation persistently brought the church building plans that had been laid aside to his notice,⁷ but the Kaiser was unwilling to adopt the old plans of his grandfather without giving them further thought. Adler was asked to work over only the draft plans for the church, because the parish center included in the original plans seemed to be a project that could not be realized. A church tower with gothic forms was exactly not what the Kaiser had in mind, because he had “a distinctive preference for the Romanesque style.”⁸ At the end of March 1893 the revised plans were presented to Wilhelm II for approval, but he was not in complete agreement with the designs. At the beginning of July 1893 the Kaiser presented his own draft for the construction of the tower. It is obvious that “the erection of a monumental tower as a symbol of German Protestant presence at the holy places of Jerusalem” was intended. A few days later

⁷ See, e.g., a letter from the trustees of the Jerusalem Fund to Wilhelm II, 24 August 1891, BAB, R 901/ 39590, pp. 63–70.

⁸ P. Seidel (ed.), *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*, Berlin 1907, p. 78.

Wilhelm II decided that the cornerstone laying ceremony should take place on Reformation Day of 1893.⁹

During the preparations for laying the cornerstone, a strongly-built stone wall came to light in the planned location of the main apse. Mistakenly, it was considered to be part of Jerusalem's second city wall. This wall, on which the cornerstone was placed finally, served as evidence – like a relic – of the correct location of the site of the Hill of Golgotha and of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ.¹⁰ Therefore, it cannot be surprising that in May 1894 Wilhelm II chose the name "Lutheran Church of the Redeemer."¹¹ Probably, the plan to consecrate this church personally is one that predated that event by several years. First rumors about the Kaiser traveling to Palestine were already published at the end of 1896.¹²

Friedrich Wilhelm IV's plans to erect a parish center were made primarily for religious reasons. Obviously, his successor – Wilhelm I – essentially pursued the matter out of a sense of duty or respect, to fulfil the wish of his brother.¹³ Probably, the principal motive of Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (later Kaiser Friedrich III) was one of historical interest: to gain the Muristan, the cradle of the Order of Saint John, for Prussia.

Much more complex were the decisive motives for Wilhelm II's commitment. The journey to the Holy Land for the inauguration ceremony of the Church of the Redeemer indicates that Wilhelm II was motivated, on the one hand, by a mixture of the already-noted religious and historical reasons, as well as by the wish to end the work his ancestors had begun, and, on the other hand, by the often overestimated political aims connected with his involvement in the Near East.¹⁴ In addition, there was his urge to

⁹ Lemberg, Friedrich Adler, p. 74; see notice of Evangelische Oberkirchenrat Friedrich Wilhelm Barkhausen, 8 July 1893, BAB, R 901/39591, p. 47.

¹⁰ J. Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1995, p. 94.

¹¹ Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs Robert Boße to the trustees of the Jerusalem Fund, Minister for Royal Affairs Wedel, and Foreign Minister Caprivi, 23 May 1894, BAB, R 901/39591, p. 118.

¹² See reports of the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, nos. 609 and 612, 30 and 31 December 1896.

¹³ A. Carmel, "Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land: Realität und Legende," Ronecker, Nieper, and Neubert-Preine, *Dem Erlöser der Welt*, p. 119; Ch. Schütz, *Preußen in Jerusalem (1800–1861): Karl Friedrich Schinkels Entwurf der Grabeskirche und die Jerusalempläne Friedrich Wilhelms IV*, Berlin 1988, pp. 127–128; A. Carmel and E. J. Eisler, *Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land*, Stuttgart 1999.

¹⁴ Frank Foerster, *Mission im Heiligen Land: Der Jerusalems-Verein zu Berlin 1852–1945*, Gütersloh 1991, p. 102.

gain notice for himself through the building of the Church of the Redeemer. Unquestionably, he succeeded in his wish to have this effort connected with his name for posterity.

One day after the cornerstone laying ceremony in 1893, Wilhelm II transferred the Muristan area to the Protestant Jerusalem-Stiftung for its permanent use. Though that institution was now responsible for the site in all matters relating to planning laws and building regulations, these inherited grounds remained officially in the Kaiser's personal possession up to 1921.¹⁵

The German Protestant Institute of Archaeology

The plan to found an institute to further Protestant Christian archaeology ("Pflege evangelisch-christlicher Altertumswissenschaft") in Jerusalem is said to have been laid by the "representatives of the German Protestant Churches on their journey" to the inauguration of the Church of the Redeemer. That, at least, is how the president of the Bavarian Oberkonsistorium, Alexander von Schneider, presented it in his address to the official representatives of the Protestant Churches, delivered in the Muristan chapel shortly after the festive service on 31 October 1898.¹⁶

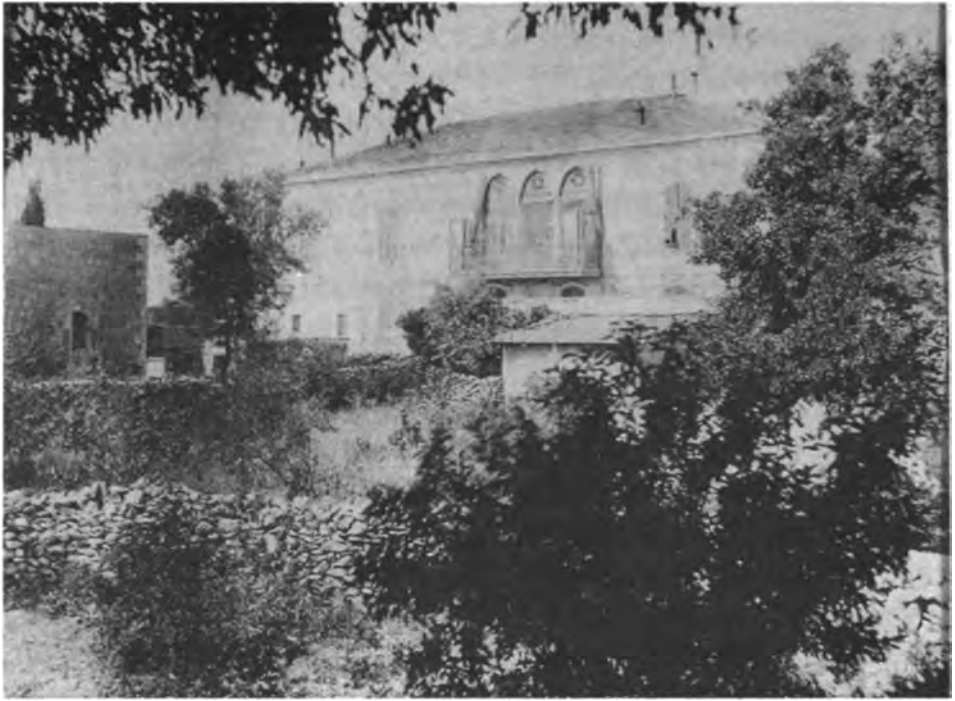
The inter-denominational German Society for Palestine Exploration,¹⁷ the so-called Palästinaverein founded in September 1877, took upon itself to explore the "archaeological conditions" (archäologischen Verhältnisse) of the Holy Land. However, it could carry out its plans only to a very restricted extent, because of the Society's widespread spheres of activity and its modest financial resources.

In February 1899, Protestant Oberkirchenrat Friedrich Wilhelm Barkhausen (1831–1903) explained the intention and possible structure of a Protestant Institute of Palestinian Archaeology ("für palästinische Altertumswissenschaft") to the Kaiser. On that occasion he pointed out,

¹⁵ Declaration of Wilhelm II, 6 August 1921, Evangelisches Zentralarchiv Berlin (EZA), 56/82, p. 58.

¹⁶ *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar im Heiligen Lande im Herbst 1898: Mit Allerhöchster Ermächtigung des Kaisers und Königs bearbeitet nach authentischen Berichten und Akten*, Berlin 1899, p. 252.

¹⁷ "Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas" or "Deutscher Palästinaverein." See A. Strobel, "Deutsche evangelische Einrichtungen im Heiligen Land vor dem 1. Weltkrieg," (henceforth: Strobel, *Deutsche evangelische Einrichtungen*), M. Trenskey (ed.), *Evangelische Himmelfahrtskirche und Hospiz der Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Stiftung auf dem Ölberg in Jerusalem*, Hannover 1990, p. 86 (henceforth: Trenskey, *Evangelische Himmelfahrtskirche*).



The first domicile of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in new Jerusalem, ca. 1904 (Gustaf-Dalman-Institute, Greifswald)

on the one hand, the inadequate work being done by the Palästinaverein and, on the other hand, the active “archaeological work of the Catholic Church” that was dominated by the French Dominican order and was said to be of Catholic tendentiousness. Therefore, he concluded, the Protestant point of view was not given due attention.¹⁸ All this notwithstanding, Barkhausen did intend that there would be some connection between the planned institute and the Palästinaverein, though with its direction to be exclusively in Protestant hands and the chairman appointed by the Kaiser. This national confessional orientation of the planned institute sat very well with the Kaiser’s own opinions. He expressed his agreement to Barkhausen’s further explanations and authorized him to “continue preparing the matter...”.¹⁹ The Oberkirchenrat initiated an opinion forming process that continued until the 24th conference of the German Protestant churches in Eisenach on 19 June 1900. On that occasion the document relating to the foundation of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology

¹⁸ Circular of the “Präsidium des Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrats,” 21 February 1899, EZA 5/2035, p. 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 2: “die Angelegenheit...weiter vorzubereiten.”

in the Holy Land was drawn up, to be officially approved by the Kaiser on 23 December 1901.²⁰ The executive foundation committee, constituted on 22 May 1902, appointed Professor Gustaf Dalman (1855–1941) of Leipzig as the first head of the Institute. This was soon confirmed by the Kaiser on 28 June 1902.²¹ At first, Dalman rented a building for the Institute and provided literature for a basic library collection.²² On 15 November 1903 he officially opened the Institute, an event that aroused great public interest.²³ Already during the planning stage it had been stressed that the Institute should only temporarily be “accommodated in rented premises” and that “the necessary rooms for the institution” should be put aside in the planned hospice, that later became the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Stiftung.²⁴ During his term in office Dalman tried very energetically to do all in his power to assure that the Institute should have a building of its own. Over and over again he indicated sites in Jerusalem which were for sale; what is more, he had designs drawn up for a new building. One of the proposed sites was “5 to 6,000 square meters” large, and was situated “900 m away from Jaffa Gate on the way to the Monastery of the Cross on the top of the mountain ridge, for the air to west, south, and east never can get stale, almost 800 m high (the Mount of Olives is only 12 m higher). It is also claimed that a German building on this site would add significantly to the row of monuments crowning the mountain ridge west of Jerusalem.”²⁵ Despite such attractive site offerings, that complied very well with the wishes of the German representatives and with the fact that the important family Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach from Essen and others did hold out

²⁰ Printed version of the foundation document with statutes and particulars of the Institute in EZA, Dietrich Bonhoeffer-Haus (DBH) 55, Handakten (HA) Dalman, vol. 1.

²¹ Strobel, *Deutsche evangelische Einrichtungen*, p. 87; § 8 of the statutes. The main source for Dalman and the institute is J. Männchen, *Gustaf Dalman as Palästinawissenschaftler in Jerusalem und Greifswald 1902–1941* (Abhandlung des DPV, 9, II), Wiesbaden 1993.

²² Dalman approached the Palestine Exploration Fund in London for support and already in April 1903 was provided with a consignment of publications; see EZA (DBH) 55/HA Dalman, vol. 2.

²³ See invitation and program for the opening ceremony and newspaper articles describing it in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, 27 November 1903, ISA RG 67, no. 304, 437/P.

²⁴ See above, n. 18 (EZA 5/2035, p. 2).

²⁵ Dalman to the executive committee of the fund for the Deutsches Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des heiligen Landes, 21 May 1910: “900 m vom Jaffator am Wege zum Kreuzkloster auf der Höhe des Bergrückens, so dass nach West, Süd und Ost die Luft niemals verbaugt werden kann, fast 800 m hoch (der Ölberg ist nur 12 m höher). Damit ist auch gegeben, dass ein deutscher Bau an dieser Stelle sich in die Reihe der die Bergkette westlich von Jerusalem krönenden Gebäude bedeutsam einfügen würde,” EZA (DBH) 55/HA, Dalman, vol. 2.



The first director, Gustaf Dalman, in the reception room of the Institute, December 1909 (Gustaf-Dalman-Institute, Greifswald)

the prospect of considerable donations for this purpose, Dalman was unable to bring this project to realization.²⁶

Much later, late in 1981, the Institute did receive the former gardener's house of the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation for its own building, exactly within the compound which the original plans of 1899 designated as its premises.²⁷

The Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation, with the Church of the Ascension

The Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation, too, owes its existence to the imperial couple's journey to the Holy Land. At an audience conducted in the imperial tent camp (in the present-day Street of the Prophets, where the Propstei was to be erected, later becoming the ORT School) on 2 November 1898, a delegation of the German congregations in Palestine

²⁶ Dalman's correspondence with the executive committee of the fund (1904–1912), EZA (DBH) 55/HA Dalman, vols. 1–2.

²⁷ T. Neubert-Preine, *100 Jahre evangelisch-lutherische Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1998, p. 97.

expressed the desire that the Kaiser may "help building a rest house on the hills near Jerusalem to provide repose and recovery for the exhausted and the many weakened through disease, especially malaria."²⁸

A suitable plot of land for the hospice was found only in November 1903 on the Mount of Olives, an area of 81,000 sq. m.²⁹ Since January 1904, the Auguste Victoria-Pfingsthaus-Stiftung, founded in 1896, was supported by the Protestant Kirchenbau-Verein in organizing and financing the project. As part of its own efforts, the Pfingsthaus-Stiftung founded the "Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Stiftung auf dem Oelberge" (Auguste Victoria Foundation on the Mount of Olives).³⁰ The Kaiserin (1858–1921) herself devoted much effort to raising the necessary funds for the planned buildings.³¹

The use made of this ambitious project had been questioned over and over again. Many years later, the complex of buildings was described as being erected partly for mere outward show, not to mention speculations as to its use by the military.³² An early critic was the director of the Institute of Archaeology, Gustaf Dalman, who explained in a report dated March 1904: "What we Palestinians miss, is in every season,...the possibility of a real recreation.... What most of us need is not a Mount of Olives-, Carmel- or Lebanon-hospice, but now and then refreshment in the German homeland, that must not occur only just when you lost the resistance to this climate, as well as to another."³³

When acquisition of the site and its planning had been finished, first work began in the late autumn of 1906.³⁴ In the castle of Berlin, on 27

²⁸ Trensky, *Evangelische Himmelfahrtskirche*, p. 11: "...auf den Bergen bei Jerusalem ein Erholungshaus bauen zu helfen, um den Müden und den vielen von Krankheit und besonders von Malaria Ermatteten Ruhe und Erholung zu verschaffen."

²⁹ See colored map with accompanying correspondence until October 1903, ISA, RG 67, no. 224, 429/P.

³⁰ *Die Deutschen Festtage im April 1910 in Jerusalem*, Potsdam 1911, pp. 119–120. (henceforth: *Festtage*).

³¹ Y. Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the 19th Century: Emergence of the New City*, Jerusalem 1986, p. 346; *Festtage*, p. 1.

³² See Sh. Elan, *Deutsche in Jerusalem von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum 1. Weltkrieg*, Wertheim a.M. 1984, pp. 68, 72 (henceforth: Elan, *Deutsche in Jerusalem*).

³³ Dalman's private notes for the correspondence with the executive committee, 1904, EZA (DBH) 55/HA Dalman, vol. 2: "Was uns Palästinensern fehlt, ist zu allen Jahreszeiten...die Möglichkeit einer wirklichen Recreation.... Was die meisten von uns nötig haben, ist nicht ein Ölberg-, Karmel- oder Libanonheim, sondern öftere Erfrischung in der deutschen Heimat, die nicht erst dann eintreten darf, wenn man die Widerstandskraft ebenso sehr für dieses Klima als für das andere verloren hat."

³⁴ *Festtage*, p. 1.

January 1907 – the birthday of Wilhelm II – the imperial couple signed the foundation document for the cornerstone laying ceremony, which was soon to be performed on Easter Sunday, 31 March.³⁵ The Kaiser also directly influenced this project. At Wilhelm II's request, the architect Robert Leibnitz designed a complex building in Romanesque style reminiscent of the times of the Crusaders. Within about three and a half years a massive building, that might be compared with a Crusader castle, was erected. In fact, it contained many elements reminiscent of the Crusaders, including depictions of the imperial couple in medieval garb. The building totally lived up to Wilhelm II's expectations.³⁶

Completion of construction work at the Catholic Dormition Abbey and St. Paul's Hospice was expected at the end of 1908, so that their inauguration should "take place with great aura on 3 October 1909."³⁷ That caused the Mount of Olives Foundation to start negotiations with the Deutscher Verein vom heiligen Lande with the aim of bringing about a simultaneous inauguration of the Catholic and Protestant buildings, "to arrange a common German national festival in Jerusalem." The Kaiser, persuaded to adopt



The Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Stiftung on a contemporary postcard, 1910

³⁵ B. Neubert, "Die Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Stiftung," T. Neubert-Preine (ed.), *100 Jahre evangelisch-lutherische Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1998, p. 81 (henceforth: Neubert, *Die Kaiserin*); *Festtage*, pp. 119–120.

³⁶ *Festtage*, pp. 92, 120; Elan, *Deutsche in Jerusalem*, p. 68.

³⁷ Report of Propst Ehme Wilhelm Bußmann for the year 1908, EZA 5/1993.

this idea, decided in February 1909 that the inauguration should take place in April 1910, and that his son Eitel Friedrich (1883–1942) and his consort Sophie Charlotte (von Oldenburg; b. 1879) should stand in for the imperial couple. The plan was carried out even though construction work on the Mount of Olives had not been finished up to that time.³⁸ It was important for the ecclesiastical representatives that when the Mount of Olives Foundation, together with the Church of the Ascension, was inaugurated, “by the participation of Propst Jeremias at the consecration...the association of the congregation of Jerusalem and the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation was entered upon.”³⁹

In the spring of 1911, strong storms caused such extreme damage that huge constructional alterations became necessary, this even before the work could be completed.⁴⁰ After the 4th of November, the Church of the Ascension could be used regularly for services, as the interior works had been finished,⁴¹ but it was not until June 1914, a short while before the outbreak of the First World War, that construction finally came to an end.

The Germans have not had good fortune with their foundation. Each time they came to an agreement about its utilization, armed conflicts prevented its realization. Only after the Second World War could a hospital of the Lutheran World Federation begin its extensive and sensible work in the buildings. The church has retained its Wilhelmine character to this very day and is used regularly for services and cultural events.⁴²

Conclusion

This description of the history of the origin, or to be precise – of the period of foundation – of these three Protestant institutions clearly shows that the choice of their sites followed no program, but was often the result of historical or accidental causes. Without any doubt, efforts were made to place the buildings in locations as significant or attractive as possible. That was achieved for the Redeemer Church and the Auguste Victoria Stiftung,

³⁸ *Festtage*, pp. 1–2.: “zu einem gemeinsamen deutsch-nationalen Feste in Jerusalem auszugestalten.”

³⁹ Report of Oberkonsistorialrat Friedrich Lahusen’s journey, 18 July 1910, EZA 5/1993.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. XV, 85–88, picture 195.

⁴¹ Report of Propst Dr. Friedrich Jeremias for the year 1911, EZA 5/1993.

⁴² Neubert, *Die Kaiserin*, pp. 82–83.

but remained unsuccessful in the case of the Institute of Archaeology.⁴³ The national-confessional character of the institutions has been clearly manifested through the efforts of the imperial couple to ensure that their name will live on.

Besides the Kaiser's journey to Palestine as an associating element, various personal connections existed, and continue in part to exist to this very day, among the three institutions. From the very beginning, the Propst was responsible for the work at the Church of the Ascension. In addition to his role as first director of the Institute of Archaeology, Gustaf Dalman was also a clergyman at the Church of the Redeemer.⁴⁴ Participants in the *Lehrkurs*, like Friedrich Jeremias (1868–1945), were later appointed Propst at the Church of the Redeemer. Albrecht Alt (1883–1956) filled the post of the director as well as that of the Propst.

This tradition of unity still connects the three institutions today.

⁴³ See letter of Gustaf Dalman (above, n. 25).

⁴⁴ D. Voigts, chairman of the fund, to Gustaf Dalman, 21 October 1908, EZA (DBH) 55/HA Dalman, vol. 1

THE SCHOLAR PRECEDES THE DIPLOMAT: GERMAN SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT IN EGYPT AND PALESTINE UNTIL 1870

HAIM GOREN

Numerous studies have been published concerning the role played by scholars, mainly geographers in the broader sense of the term, in European imperialistic expansion. Michael Heffernan is not alone in the somewhat extreme conclusion that "European geography was European imperialism, albeit dressed up in a slightly more academic and scholarly guise."¹ The validity of this statement for nineteenth-century Palestine, and even for some of its neighboring countries, is, at best, questionable. The present article examines its accuracy with regard to one of the powers involved, namely Germany, during the period that came to an end with the unification of that country and the establishment of the Second Reich.

Modern scientific research of the countries located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean began in the late eighteenth century, reaching its peak during the nineteenth century. In Palestine, which differed from the other countries mainly because of its religious associations, research developed into one of the weapons in the struggle amongst the European powers, which, employing various means, were competing to achieve maximal presence and influence in the Holy Land.²

Scientific study did not differ much from the other methods used in this contest. Although it was usually initiated and performed by private

¹ M. J. Heffernan, "The Science of Empire: The French Geographical Movement and the Forms of French Imperialism, 1870–1920," A. Godlewska and N. Smith (eds.), *Geography and Empire*, Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. 1994, p. 93.

² F. J. Bliss, *The Development of Palestine Exploration, Being the Ely Lectures for 1903*, New York 1907; Y. Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century*, Jerusalem and Detroit 1979; H. Goren, "Go View the Land": *German Study of Palestine in the Nineteenth Century* (Heb.), Jerusalem 1999 (henceforth: Goren, *Go View the Land*); a German version of this study is forthcoming.

individuals or organizations, some countries quite early recruited scientists to serve their political, cultural, economic, and even strategic interests in the eastern Mediterranean lands. In Egypt, this struggle also had another aim: it was part of the effort, begun in the eighteenth century, to locate ancient monuments and artifacts in order to transfer them – legally or illegally – to the developing Egyptology collections in Europe.³

France was the first power to send government-organized and -financed scientific expeditions to the region, beginning with that led by Napoleon.⁴ In fact, Napoleon's plans forced England to initiate marine expeditions to measure and map the coasts of Arabia and the Red Sea, a pioneering endeavor in itself.⁵

In the course of the nineteenth century, French scholarship became closely associated with the state. The major factors in this development were the establishment in 1834 of the *Comité des Travaux Historiques*, which offered government funds to French scholars planning to undertake historical and archaeological fieldwork in France and abroad, and in 1842 of the *Service des Missions* – the government research council that subsequently became the major source of funds for French fieldwork and research overseas, together with the vast number of academic – mainly geographical – societies.⁶

The nineteenth century saw French scientific delegations following in the wake of military interventions in Greece, Algeria, Mexico, and Lebanon, organized and financed with the help of the Ministry of Public Instruction.⁷

³ B. M. Fagan, *The Rape of the Nile: Tomb Robbers, Tourists, and Archaeologists in Egypt*, New York 1975; P. France, *The Rape of Egypt: How the Europeans Stripped Egypt of its Heritage*, London 1991 (henceforth: France, *Rape of Egypt*).

⁴ A. Godlewski, *The Napoleonic Survey of Egypt: A Masterpiece of Cartographic Compilation and Early Nineteenth-Century Fieldwork* (Cartographica 25, Monograph 38–39), Toronto 1988; idem, "Napoleon's Geographers (1797–1815): Imperialists and Soldiers of Modernity," A. Godlewski and N. Smith (eds.), *Geography and Empire*, Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. 1994, pp. 34–53. For Napoleon's expedition see: H. Laurens, *L'expédition d'Égypte*, Paris 1989. For a general study of French science in the Napoleonic era see: D. Outram, "Politics and Vocation: French Science, 1793–1830," *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 13 (1980), pp. 27–43.

⁵ T. E. Marston, *Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area 1800–1878*, Hamden, Conn. 1961, pp. 32–37.

⁶ M. J. Heffernan, "A State Scholarship: The Political Geography of French International Science during the Nineteenth Century," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, n.s. 19, no. 1 (1994), pp. 21–45.

⁷ M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774–1923: A Study in International Relations*, London, Melbourne, Toronto, and New York 1966, pp. 156–159; G. S. Dunbar, "The Compass

It is no coincidence that three scientific expeditions to Syria and Palestine were conducted during the first half of the 1860s, following the French military intervention in Lebanon: Ernest Renan's (1823–1892) "Mission de Phénicie" (1860–61), the second research excursion to Palestine (1862–1863) of Louis Félicien de Saulcy (1807–1880), and the group of scholars led by Honoré Théodoric Paul Joseph d'Albert, Duc de Luynes (1802–1867) to study the Dead Sea and the surrounding area (1864).⁸ The latter also visited Egypt, and was involved in purchasing collections of Egyptian antiquities.⁹

The English followed with extensive projects conducted by surveyors of the Royal Navy and the Royal Engineers. The first of these, in 1840–41, was performed as part of the military intervention in Syria; the second, in 1860–62, was part of a large project of the Admiralty Hydrographical Service to measure and chart the shores of the Mediterranean.¹⁰ Their organized activity reached its peak with the extensive projects undertaken by the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) which, although a private society, involved army officers, the War Office and many other government authorities in all its endeavors.¹¹ Moreover, a recent study of the history of the PEF claims that this connection with various sectors of the armed forces

Follows the Flag': The French Scientific Mission to Mexico, 1864–1867," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 78, no. 1 (1988), pp. 229–240. Cf. É. Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance de l'archéologie moderne 1798–1945*, Paris 1998 (henceforth: Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance*).

⁸ E. Renan, *Mission de Phénicie*, I–II, Paris 1871; F. de Saulcy, *Voyage en Terre Sainte*, Paris 1865; A. duc de Luynes, *Voyage d'exploration à la Mer Morte, à Petra et sur la rive gauche du Jourdain...*, ed. C. J. M. de Vogüé, I–III + Atlas, Paris 1871–1876. Cf. Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance*, pp. 190–196.

⁹ W. R. Dawson and E. P. Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, 3rd ed. by M. L. Bierbrier, London 1995, p. 8 (henceforth: Dawson and Uphill).

¹⁰ G. Williams, *The Holy City: Historical, Topographical, and Antiquarian Notices of Jerusalem*, vol. 1, London 1849, Supplement: *Historical and Descriptive Memoir*, pp. 3–13; A. L. Mansell, "Coastal Survey of Palestine," *The Nautical Magazine* (1862), pp. 505–508; Y. Jones, "British Military Surveys: Palestine and Syria 1840–1841," *The Cartographic Journal*, 10 (1973), pp. 29–41; B. Rosen, "Survey of the Coast of Palestine by the Royal Navy" (Heb.), *Cathedra*, 64 (July 1992), pp. 59–78.

¹¹ C. M. Watson, *Palestine Exploration Fund – Fifty Years' Work in the Holy Land: A Record and a Summary 1865–1915*, London 1915; H. Goren, "Scientific Organizations as Agents of Change: The Palestine Exploration Fund, the *Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas* and Nineteenth-Century Palestine," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 27 (2001), pp. 153–165 (henceforth: Goren, *Scientific Organizations*); idem, "Sacred, But Not Surveyed: Nineteenth-Century Surveys of Palestine," *Imago Mundi*, 54 (2002), pp. 87–110.

helped the Fund during some critical periods, and actually saved it from collapsing due to financial problems.¹²

The present study aims to establish the role of government authorities in German research from the 1840s to the 1870s. "German" is used here as a general term, encompassing "Bavarian," "Prussian," "Württembergian," etc.; the different states are treated specifically when necessary.

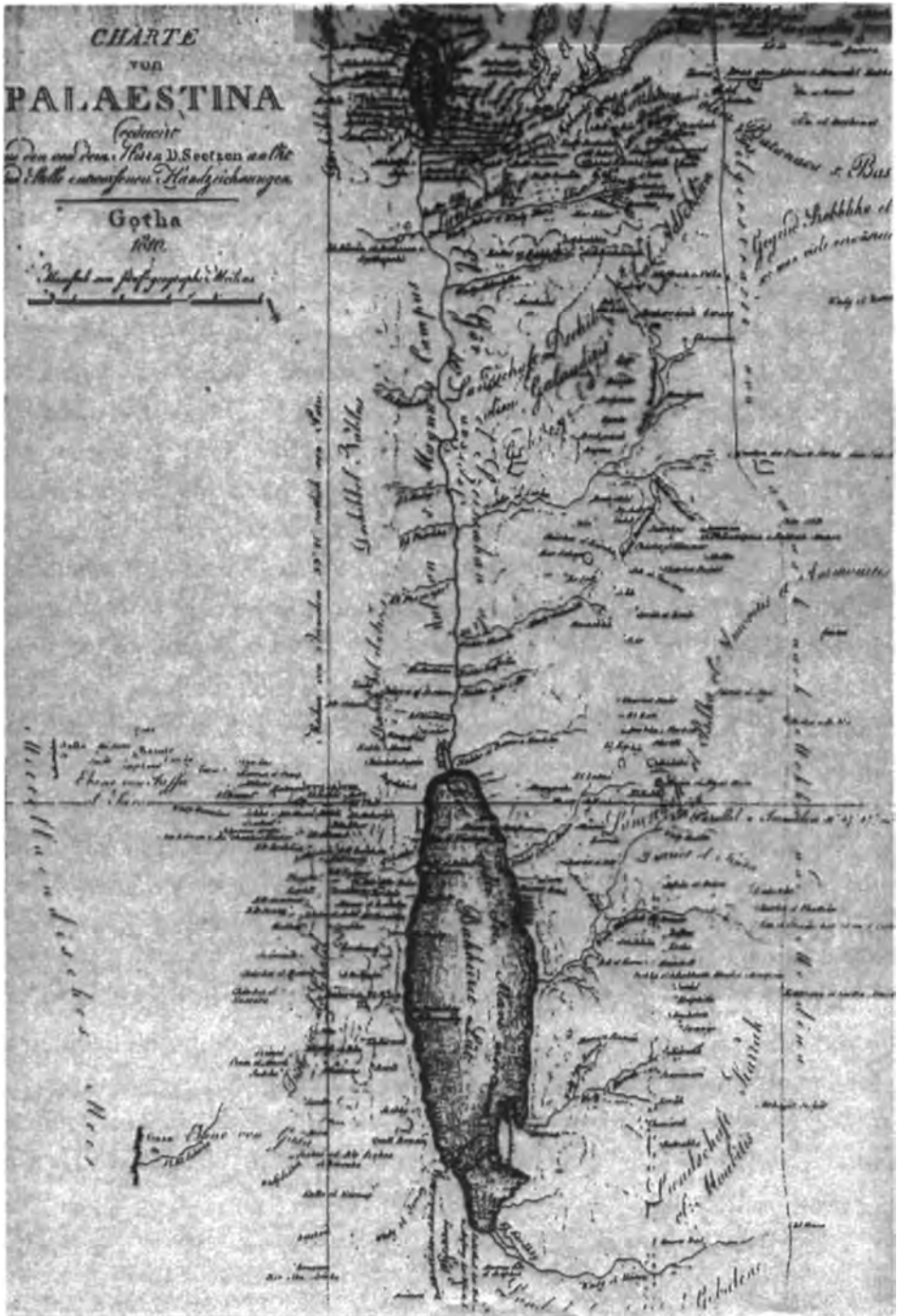
For the most part, studies of the history of German activity in Palestine during the nineteenth century have failed to consider *science* as one of the means of this intervention. They are usually based on the premise that German research, even up to the time of the visit of Wilhelm II, was largely a private undertaking, only rarely having any connection with government interests or financing. This may be related to the general German political attitude towards the East, which was centered around Bismarck's relative disinterest in that part of the world (the theory of the bones of the "Pommeranian grenadier").¹³ In the 1870s, this approach was re-appraised. Developments such as the presence of a relatively large number of German citizens in that area, various geopolitical processes, and the region's growing strategic importance – coupled with its historical religious significance, which became a weapon in the struggle among the powers during the nineteenth century – all forced the Prussian, and later the German, governments to take sides and intervene.¹⁴

It is argued here that the German authorities applied science before some of the other means to promote their political and economic interests in the Orient. Moreover, in this respect the Germans preceded their English and French rivals. There were several cases in which German rulers used scientists in order to advance their non-scientific interests in Syria, Palestine,

¹² J. J. Moscrop, *Measuring Jerusalem: The Palestine Exploration Fund and British Interests in the Holy Land*, London and New York 2000, pp. 63–128.

¹³ "Der Orient ist [für Deutschland] nicht die Knochen eines pommerischen Grenadiers wert" ([For Germany], the Orient is not worth the bones of one Pommeranian grenadier). See, e.g., A.-R. Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palästina 1841–1948: Aktivitäten religiöser Institutionen, wirtschaftliche und politische Einflüsse*, Berlin 1982, pp. 278–279 (henceforth: Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen*), and the studies cited in n. 14, below.

¹⁴ A. Carmel, "The Political Significance of German Settlement in Palestine 1868–1918," J. L. Wallach (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East 1835–1939: International Symposium, April 1975*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 45–71; idem, "Die Deutsche Palästina-Politik 1871–1914," *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte*, 4 (1975), pp. 205–255; J. L. Wallach, "Bismarck and the 'Eastern Question': A Re-assessment," idem (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East 1835–1939: International Symposium, April 1975*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 23–30; Y. P. Hirschfeld, "Tendenzen der preussisch-deutschen Nahostpolitik von Friedrich Wilhelm III. bis Bismarck," *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte*, 10 (1981), pp. 221–241.



Section of Seetzen's Map of Palestine
 (Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung
 der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde, 22 [1810])

and Egypt. Some of these cases will be examined and referred to within a re-evaluation of the argument that science was not used in the first stages of German government involvement in Palestine, as well as in other countries in the area.

The roots of this German involvement lie in an earlier period, when "Oriental" museums were being established in Europe. Various rulers in Germany were actively engaged in scientific enterprises aimed at establishing, enriching, and strengthening the status of "their" museums. The best example might be the involvement of Emil-Leopold August, Duke of Sachsen-Gotha and Altenburg, in the pioneer exploration conducted by Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) between 1802 and 1811. Seetzen presented his plan to Franz Xaver von Zach (1754–1832), an astronomer and geographer managing the observatory at Gotha, who also established and edited the pioneering journal *Monatlicher Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, requesting guidance and instruments. Von Zach approached the duke, who agreed to finance the requested instruments, and asked in return that Seetzen acquire natural history artifacts, works of art pieces, coins, manuscripts, and other collections for the museum that he planned to establish.¹⁵ Of course, in this case they were only following in the footsteps of the English and the French.

The first time that the Prussian government was involved in such research was probably in the 1820–1821 delegation led by General Heinrich von Minutoli (1846–1772). After being wounded in action, Minutoli became a trainer in the aristocratic cadet corps, and pursued his main interest – the history of archaeology. Friedrich Wilhelm III appointed him to tutor his son, Carl. Having finished this task, at the age of 48 Minutoli decided to realize his old dream of travel to the East. The king did everything in his power to support this undertaking, and "gave Minutoli explicit instructions to investigate the economically ever more interesting Near East." He was

¹⁵ U. J. Seetzen, *Verzeichniss der für die orientalische Sammlung in Gotha zu Damask, Jerusalem u.s.w. angekauften orientalischen Manuskripte und gedruckte Werke, Kunst- und Naturprodukte u.s.w.*, ed. H. F. K. Rosenmüller, Leipzig 1810. Cf.: Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 29–39; U. Wallenstein, " 'Ich habe mehr gefunden, als ich erwartete...': Seetzen und die Ägyptensammlung Gotha," H. Stein (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811): Leben und Werk; die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im Napoleonischen Zeitalter* (Veröffentlichungen der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, 33), Gotha 1995, pp. 65–73; J. Schienerl, *Der Weg in den Orient: Der Forscher Ulrich Jasper Seetzen – Von Jever in den Jemen (1802–1811)*, Oldenburg 2000.

also commissioned to collect antiquities in order to enrich Prussia's collection. Minutoli's book, published in 1824, was dedicated to the king.¹⁶

Although Minutoli originally planned a private trip, it quickly turned into a properly organized scientific expedition. The Prussian Academy of Sciences sent two natural historians, Wilhelm F. Hemprich (1796–1825) and Christian G. Ehrenberg (1795–1876), the king nominated an architect, Liman, and Johann M. A. Scholz (1794–1852), a philologist from Bonn, offered his services. The expedition proved unsuccessful, and it dispersed after a short while, but some of its participants, including the baron himself, stayed in the East and produced valuable scientific researches. Hemprich and Ehrenberg traveled in the region for the next six years, mainly studying the coastal zones of Egypt, Arabia, and Sinai, identifying a huge number of new coral species, and collecting tens of thousands of artifacts from the various fields of natural history, which were sent to Berlin.¹⁷ Scholz traveled for four months, mainly in Palestine and Syria, and published a book which included much new geographic data, mainly concerning the sacred places.¹⁸

Minutoli stayed in the East for about eleven months, which were spent mostly in traveling through different parts of Egypt. Following the orders of his king, he was engaged in the competition to purchase collections of Egyptian antiquities, and in a fact laid the foundations for Berlin's Egyptology holdings. His excursion, so wrote the editor of his book, "became so important due to the purchase of invaluable works of art and scrolls of papyrus."¹⁹

The most important outcome was Minutoli's strong influence on the two Prussian monarchs, Friedrich Wilhelm III (1770–1840) and the crown prince, later King Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795–1861). It was this influence

¹⁶ H. Freiherrn von Minutoli, *Reise zum Tempel des Jupiter Ammon in der Libyschen Wüste und nach Ober-Aegypten in den Jahren 1820 und 1821*, ed. E. H. Toelken, Berlin 1824 (henceforth: Minutoli, *Reise*); J. S. Karig, "A Prussian Expedition to Egypt in 1820: Heinrich von Minutoli," P. Starkey and J. Starkey (eds.), *Travellers in Egypt*, London and New York 1998, pp. 70–74 (henceforth: Karig, *Prussian Expedition*); Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 50–52.

¹⁷ A. von Humboldt et al., "Bericht über die naturhistorischen Reisen der Herren Ehrenberg und Hemprich," *Hertha*, 9 (1827), pp. 73–92; E. Stresemann, "Hemprich und Ehrenberg: Reisen zweier Naturforschender im Orient, geschildert in ihren Briefen aus den Jahren 1819–1826," *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Klasse für Mathematik und allgemeine Naturwissenschaften*, 1 (1954), pp. 1–177; Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 50–52.

¹⁸ J. M. A. Scholz, *Reise in die Gegend zwische Alexandrien und Paratonium, die lybische Wüste, Siwa, Egypten, Palästina und Syrien, in die Jahren 1820 und 1821*, Leipzig and Sorau 1822; Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 52–53.

¹⁹ Minutoli, *Reise*, p. xiii; Karig, *Prussian Expedition*, pp. 73–74; see: France, *Rape of Egypt*, p. 74, for his offer to purchase the collection of Henry Salt.

that led to inauguration of Germany's first chair in Egyptology, at Berlin University. In addition, the Prussian crown sponsored and financed the next delegation, headed by Lepsius, which is discussed below.

Another example of such political involvement in the Near East, although not precisely in the Holy Land, is the case of the Prussian consultants to the Ottoman army between 1835 and 1839. The officers, Helmuth von Moltke, Karl von Vincke-Olbendorf, and Friedrich Leopold Fischer, who were students of leading geographer Carl Ritter at the military academy in Berlin, also engaged in much cartographic work while stationed in Asia Minor and Syria. As a consequence, after performing a complementary survey, cartographer Heinrich Kiepert (1818–1899) published a number of maps of that region with them.²⁰ In 1841, Moltke published his famous plan for a Christian principality governed by a German ruler in the Holy Land, which would serve as a buffer state between Egypt and Syria. A united European armed force that would be stationed there to guard the Holy Places, would eventually lead to peace in Europe.²¹

This plan coincided with the beginning of deeper German political involvement in the region, one of whose major landmarks was the establishment of the English–Prussian Bishopric. The story of this major development, and the role played in it by King Friedrich Wilhelm IV and his consultant and friend, the diplomat Karl Christian Josias von Bunsen (1791–1860), has been the subject of many studies.²² Nevertheless, it is

²⁰ H. Kiepert (ed.), *Memoir über die Construction der Karte von Kleinasien und Türkisch Armenien in 6 Bl. von v. Vincke, Fischer, v. Moltke und Kiepert*, Berlin 1854. Cf.: W. Andreas (ed.), *Moltkes Briefe*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1922, pp. 69–233, 412–420; F. Herre, "Ein Preuße in der Türkei: Helmut von Moltkes Mission im osmanischen Reich," *Damals*, 19/2 (1987), pp. 131–155; J. L. Wallach, *Anatomie einer Militärrhilfe: Die preußisch-deutschen Militärmission in der Türkei 1835–1919* (Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte, Universität Tel Aviv, 1), Düsseldorf 1976, pp. 15ff.; L. Zögner (ed.), *Carl Ritter in seiner Zeit 1779–1859: Ausstellung der Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin 1. November 1979 bis 12. Januar 1980*, Berlin 1979, pp. 59–61; U. Freitag, "Heinrich Kiepersts kartographische Leistung," L. Zögner (ed.), *Antike Welten, Neue Regionen: Heinrich Kiepert 1818–1899*, Berlin 1999, p. 24.

²¹ H. von Moltke, *Gesammelte Schriften und Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 2: *Vermischte Schriften*, Berlin 1892, pp. 279–288. Cf. A. Schölch, "Europa und Palästina 1838–1917," H. Mejer and A. Schölch (eds.), *Die Palästina-Frage 1917–1948*, Paderborn 1981, pp. 17–18. See also the article by Lars Hänsel in this volume.

²² W. H. Hechler, *The Jerusalem Bishopric: Documents with Translations*, London 1883; K. Schmidt-Clausen, *Vorweggenommene Einheit: Die Gründung des Bistums Jerusalem im Jahre 1841*, Berlin 1965; idem, "Der Beitrag Bunsens zur Gründung des Bistums Jerusalems," E. Geldbach (ed.), *Der gelehrte Diplomat: Zum Wirken Christian Carl Josias Bunsen*, Leiden 1980, pp. 45–63 (henceforth: Geldbach [ed.], *Der gelehrte Diplomat*); M. Lückhoff, "Bunsen und Jerusalem," H.-R. Ruppel, F. Foerster, and H. Becker (eds.), *Universeller Geist und guter*



Vincke, Fischer, Moltke, and Kiepert: Map of Asia Minor, Berlin 1844
(title and section)

(Lothar Zögner (ed.), *Antike Welten Neue Regionen: Heinrich Kiepert 1818–1899*
[Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz,
Ausstellungskataloge, N. F., 33], Berlin 1999, p. 14)

important here to emphasize that Bunsen was not only a diplomat and a devoted Protestant, but also an important scholar, who had a major influence on some of the following ensuing processes.²³

Karl Richard Lepsius (1810–1884), one of Germany's leading Egyptologists, studied in German universities and in Paris. His main interests focused on the philology of ancient languages, their development and inter-relationships, and on the artistic and humanistic tradition of the historical periods. It was Bunsen who undertook to cultivate Lepsius as successor to Jean François Champollion (1790–1832). Lepsius concentrated his work on studying the ancient Egyptian language and script and became a bitter critic of the Frenchman and his work. In 1836 he reached Rome, where he joined Bunsen, who then served as the Prussian ambassador to the Vatican and who nominated him as secretary of the German archaeological institute in the city. Here Lepsius developed his new conception of the cuneiform script, and began studying the Egyptian pantheon and the chronology of the Egyptian dynasties. It was through this work that he gained his lasting reputation as a leading Egyptologist.²⁴

In 1841 they both moved to London, where Bunsen was occupied with establishing the Bishopric. Lepsius was nominated for the chair of Egyptology at Berlin, but attained this position only some years later. Bunsen and Alexander von Humboldt convinced Friedrich Wilhelm IV to organize and finance a Prussian expedition for the study of Egypt, and to put Lepsius at its head. The 1842–1845 Prussian expedition to Egypt and Nubia "was the best-equipped expedition that had ever gone there,"²⁵ and

Europäer – Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen 1791–1860: Beiträge zu Leben und Werk des "gelehrten Diplomaten," Korbach 1991, pp. 155–166; E. Geldbach, "The German Protestant Network in the Holy Land," M. Davis and Y. Ben-Arieh (eds.), *Western Societies and the Holy Land* (With Eyes toward Zion, 3), New York, Westport, and London 1991, pp. 154–158. See also the article by T. Neubert-Preine in this volume.

²³ H. Bobzin, "Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen und sein Beitrag zum Studium orientalischer Sprachen," Ruppel, et al. (eds.), *Universeller Geist*, pp. 81–102; F. Foerster, "Christ – Gelehrter – Staatsmann: Christian Carl Josias Bunsen als theologischer Schriftsteller," *ibid.*, pp. 167–188; U. Kaplony-Heckel, "Bunsen – der erste deutsche Herold der Ägyptologie," Geldbach (ed.), *Der gelehrte Diplomat*, pp. 64–83.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 79–83; F. Hinze and G. Rühlmann, "Karl Richard Lepsius: Begründer der Deutschsprachigen Ägyptologie," E. Freier and W. F. Reineke (eds.), *Karl Richard Lepsius (1810–1884): Akten der Tagung anlässlich seines 100. Todestages, 10–12.7.1984 in Halle* (Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients, 20), Berlin 1988, pp. 17–28; J. Leclant, "Champollion, Bunsen, Lepsius," *ibid.*, pp. 53–59. Cf. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 51 (1906), pp. 659–670; H. Scuria (ed.), *Reisen im Orient: Carsten Niebuhr, Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, Richard Lepsius, Heinrich Brugsch*, Berlin 1962.

²⁵ Dawson and Uphill (above, n. 9), p. 249.

definitely made a German contribution to the developing studies of ancient Egypt.²⁶

The scientific achievements were of great importance to the development of Egyptology, and Lepsius listed each and every one of them in his report.²⁷ Through this delegation, Berlin's collections were enriched by "15,000 Egyptian antiquities and plaster casts," and Lepsius's career skyrocketed. His Egyptology bibliography lists 142 works, including the twelve volumes of the official report of the expedition.²⁸

As in the case of Minutoli, Lepsius became involved in the "troublesome but important affair" of "the transportation of several sepulchral chambers" as well as other "blocks of stone" and "other monuments" from Egypt and Ethiopia to Berlin. Many of them, so he claimed, were given as presents by Muhammad 'Ali to the Prussian king.²⁹

Lepsius' party included mainly experts, painters, and architects. They were also joined by Heinrich Johann Wilhelm Rudolf Abeken (1809–1872), a diplomat, theologian, and archaeologist who, following his studies in Berlin, moved to Rome where he dwelled in Bunsen's house and served as chaplain of the Evangelical church founded there by Bunsen. In 1838, he accompanied Bunsen back to Berlin, and three years later followed him to London, helped in the negotiations that led to the founding of the joint bishopric, and remained as chaplain of the embassy church. One of the biographies dedicated to him was later entitled *Bismarck's Pen* due to his role as Bismarck's speechwriter.³⁰

The expedition was followed by a visit in the Holy Land made by Lepsius and Abeken. Lepsius was personally acquainted with the Prussian consul in Jerusalem, Ernst Gustav Schultz (1811–1851), an Orientalist from

²⁶ E. Freier, "Die Expedition von Karl Richard Lepsius in den Jahren 1842–1845 nach den Akten des Zentralen Staatsarchivs, Dienststelle Merseburg," E. Freier and W. F. Reineke (eds.), *Karl Richard Lepsius (1810–1884): Akten der Tagung anlässlich seines 100. Todestages, 10–12.7.1984 in Halle* (Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients, 20), Berlin 1988, pp. 97–115.

²⁷ R. Lepsius, *Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Peninsula of Sinai*, trans. L. and J. B. Horner, London 1853, pp. 12–32 (henceforth: Lepsius, *Letters*); Dawson and Uphill, pp. 249–250.

²⁸ Ibid.; R. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, 6 pts. in 12 vols., Berlin 1849–1859.

²⁹ Lepsius, *Letters*, p. 23

³⁰ H. Abeken (ed.), *Bismarck's Pen: The Life of Heinrich Abeken*, trans. C. E. Barrett-Lennard and M. W. Hoper, London 1911; H. Abeken, *Ein schlichtes Leben in bewegter Zeit, aus Briefen zusammengestellt*, Berlin 1904 (henceforth: Abeken, *Ein schlichtes Leben*).

Königsberg. They had first met in Paris, then the “Mecca of the orientalists,” where both had studied under Sylvestre de Sacy, the “high priest” of Orientalism in the first half of the nineteenth century, and other prominent French scholars.³¹ Abeken was asked by Bunsen and the king to examine the situation in the newly established Jerusalem Bishopric, whose first bishop, Michael Solomon Alexander (1799–1845) was appointed by the English. This was the reason for Abeken’s prolonged stay in Jerusalem. He met with Lepsius again only about a month later in Baalbec.³²

There was also another aspect of Prussian state involvement in the scientific study of the Orient, which began at approximately the same time. Almost all the Prussian consuls in Jerusalem, Beirut, and Damascus until the beginning of the 1870s were active orientalists who exchanged their scientific practice for diplomatic duties. They were usually students of the first generation of leading German orientalists, and some of them also spent time in Paris, studying with de Sacy.³³

The heads of the Prussian Foreign Office in Berlin considered the nomination of orientalists as diplomatic representatives the best way to advance their interests in the region, which were then concentrated in economic – mainly commercial – ties. As early as 1841, the Graf von Königsmarck, the first Prussian envoy in Istanbul, initiated the appointment of German scholars with adequate knowledge of languages as representatives in the major centers in the Orient.³⁴ Their consular duties forced them to stay in the Orient for a relatively long period, which all of them also used for the purpose of intensified scientific activity.

The first to be nominated in this manner were a consul in Beirut and a vice-consul in Jerusalem. Count Anton Albert Heinrich Louis von Wildenbruch (1803–1874), an army officer of a noble Berlin family who was well acquainted with the king and Bunsen, arrived in Beirut at the beginning of 1843 and served there until 1848. His important scientific work included geographic and topographic articles, and collections of climatological data.³⁵ Ernst Gustav Schultz, the young orientalist from

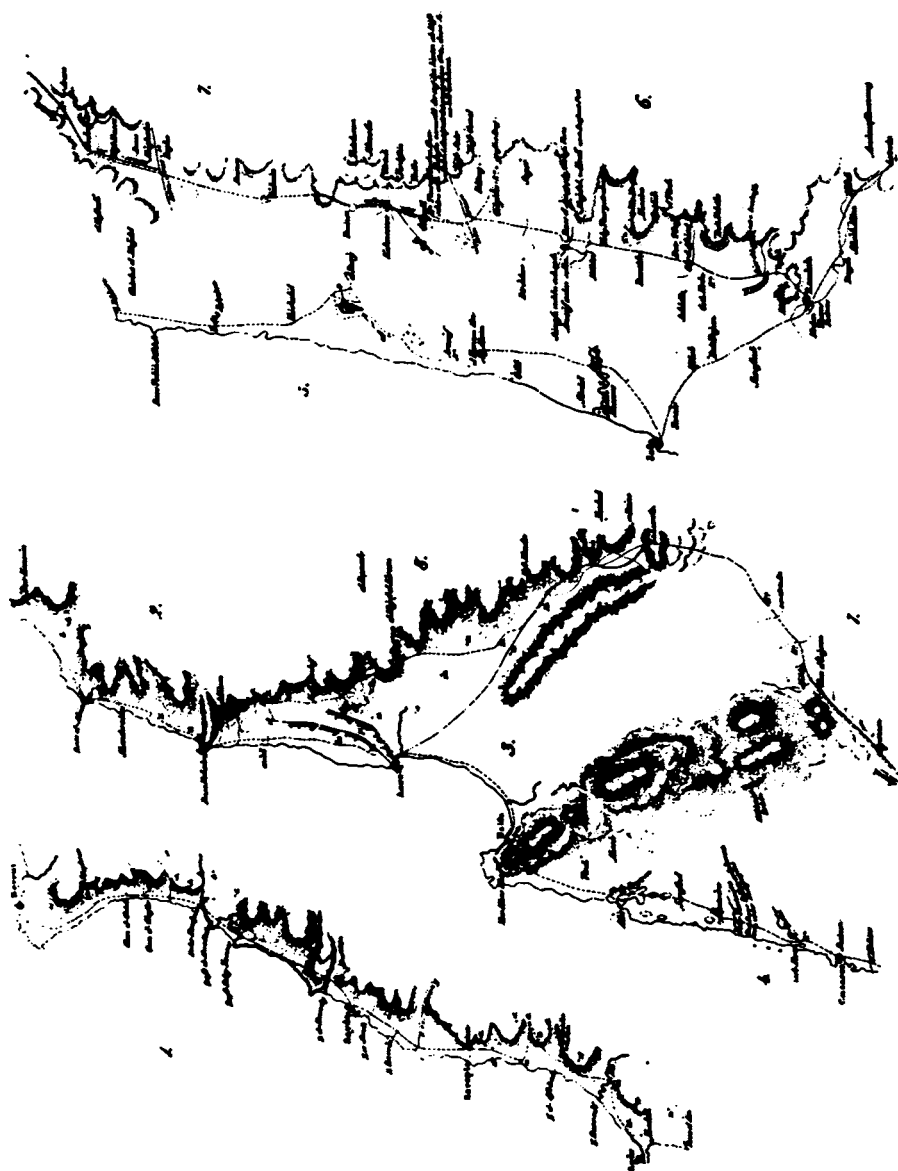
³¹ Lepsius, *Letters*, pp. 332–336.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 333–334, 346; Abeken, *Ein schlichtes Leben*, pp. 119–124 (his letters from Jerusalem).

³³ Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 144–189. Cf. E. W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1979, pp. 2–19; Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance* (above, n. 7), pp. 64–82.

³⁴ Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen* (above, n. 13), pp. 239–240.

³⁵ K. von Priesdorff (ed.), *Soldatisches Führertum*, Hamburg 1937–1942, vol. 6, pp. 456–457; Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 155–158, including his scientific endeavors and publications.



Louis von Wildenbruch, Routes in Palestine, 1843

(G. Parthey, "Herrn Rittm. V. Wildenbruch's Reiserouten in Syrien [Beirut, 24. Dezember 1843];"
Monatsberichte über die Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin, 1 [1844])

Königsberg, worked in London while studying in Paris, where he became acquainted with Bunsen. This led to his recommendation for the post in Jerusalem. He arrived there at the end of 1842, and served – later as consul – until his death. He was intensively involved in topographic-historical studies and also in the early endeavors of German colonization, writing one of the first thorough reports dealing with the possibility of establishing European settlements in the country.³⁶

Schultz was replaced in Jerusalem by Georg Rosen (1820–1891), who had studied in Leipzig and Berlin and specialized in oriental languages. As results of the studies he conducted during more than fourteen years in Jerusalem, Rosen published a topographical-historical study of the Temple Mount and numerous articles, also in the fields of archaeology and ethnology.³⁷ He was replaced by Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801–1876), who arrived in Jerusalem at the beginning of 1868 already a famous orientalist, who had carried out a lengthy voyage of exploration in the East which yielded a two-volume study of great scientific value.³⁸

Probably the most important Prussian scientist-diplomat in the Near East was Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905), who served as consul in Damascus between 1849 and 1861. Wetzstein originated from a noble family and studied in Leipzig under Heinrich Lebrecht Fleischer (1801–1888), the leading German Oriental philologist. His work, and mainly the excursions in Syria and its vicinity, resulted in a number of important contributions to the study of the Orient.³⁹

The presence of these scientist-diplomats was also utilized, when needed, by the authorities. Wilhelm I asked Wetzstein, his consul in Damascus, to conduct a detailed exploration of the regions along the eastern bank of the Jordan, and sent Richard Doergens, a young surveyor, to help him with the

³⁶ Ph. Wolff, *Jerusalem: Nach eigener Anschauung und den neuesten Forschungen*, Leipzig 1857, pp. 204–217; E. G. Schultz, *Jerusalem – Eine Vorlesung*, Berlin 1845. For his report see: A. Carmel, *Christen als Pioniere im Heiligen Land: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Pilgermission und der Wiederaufbaus Palästinas im 19. Jahrhundert*, Basel 1981, pp. 50–53. Cf. Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 165–172.

³⁷ G. Rosen, *Das Haram von Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz des Moria*, Gotha 1866. Cf. Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 173–178.

³⁸ H. Petermann, *Reisen im Orient*, vols. 1–2, Leipzig 1865. Cf. Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 179–182.

³⁹ I. Huhn, *Der Orientalist Johann Gottfried Wetzstein als preussischer Konsul in Damascus (1849–1861)* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 136), Berlin 1989 (henceforth: Huhn, *Der Orientalist*). For bibliography see: H.-J. Zobel, "Johann Gottfried Wetzsteins Schrifttum," *ZDPV*, 82 (1966), pp. 233–238. Cf. Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 158–164.

cartographic work.⁴⁰ In 1870 Wetzstein and one of his colleagues were sent by Bismarck on an espionage mission in North Africa, in order to ascertain real French intentions and plans in that region. Dressed as Derwishes, they traveled from Beirut to Tunis.⁴¹

The Bavarian King Ludwig I developed various plans concerning the Holy Land. However, his only deeds were the establishment of foundations to raise funds for the Catholic institutions, and the participation of his representative in a joint Austrian–Bavarian study expedition. The purpose of the latter was to find a way for both countries to become involved in the developing Christian activity in the Holy Land, in order to safeguard Catholic interests there. Upon Metternich's recommendation, Kaiser Ferdinand nominated Johann Mosetizh, a professor of the Old Testament and Oriental languages from Görz, while Ludwig I appointed the young scholar Johannes Nepomuk Sepp (1816–1909), a theologian and historian, one of the outstanding figures in Joseph von Görres' Catholic intellectual circle in Munich.⁴² Sepp, who continued to be an important (though controversial) figure in the scientific research of Palestine for more than fifty years, later called himself "the Catholic Bunsen." He saw his main task as the initiation of a process that would lead to a result parallel to the establishment of the bishopric by the scientist-diplomat from Berlin.⁴³

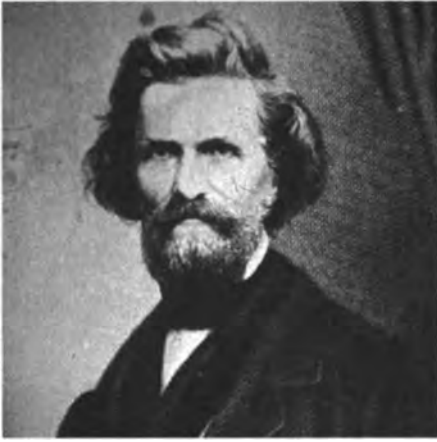
They stayed in Palestine from August 1845 to May 1846, receiving extensive help from Schultz, the first Prussian consul in Jerusalem. They concentrated their main efforts on improving the difficult condition of the Franciscans, and it was this focus that guided their conclusions and recommendations. Due to the obvious lack of German-speaking monks in the Franciscan *Custodia terrae sanctae*, Sepp proposed to Ludwig the establishment of a German Franciscan convent in Baniyas. He also suggested the acquisition of the ruins of the old Hospitaler hospital in the eastern part of Jerusalem's Muristan quarter, in order to build a pilgrim

⁴⁰ R. Doergens, "Consul Wetzstein's und R. Doergens' Reise in das Ost-Jordan-Land," *Zeitschrift für die allgemeine Erdkunde*, n.s. 9 (1860), pp. 402–420; Huhn, *Der Orientalist*, pp. 182–183; Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 161–163.

⁴¹ G. Kühler, "Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, Königlich Preußischer Konsul in Damascus 1848–1862, Orientalist und Freund Alexander von Humboldts," *Jahrbuch für Brandenburgische Landesgeschichte*, 29 (1978), p. 20.

⁴² H. Goren and Y. Ben-Arieh, "Catholic Austria and Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: The Beginnings," M. Wrba (ed.), *Austrian Presence in the Holy Land in the 19th and Early 20th Century: Proceedings of the Symposium in the Austrian Hospice in Jerusalem on March 1–2, 1995*, Tel Aviv 1996, pp. 7–24.

⁴³ See above, nn. 22 and 23; Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 127–142.



Johannes N. Sepp and Franz Pruner
(Author's collection)



Ruins of the Muristan
(J. N. Sepp, *Jerusalem und das heilige Land: Pilgerbuch nach Palästina, Syrien und Aegypten*, Schaffhausen 1863)

hospice and a modern hospital on the premises, and to establish a Bavarian consulate in Jerusalem. Sepp also had the right man to head the hospital and the consulate: the physician, Franz Pruner (1808–1882) of Munich, who had lived and worked for seventeen years in Egypt, managing some hospitals for Muhammad 'Ali and contributing some important studies, mainly in the field of comparative medicine on oriental diseases.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ J. N. Sepp, *Jerusalem und das heilige Land: Pilgerbuch nach Palästina, Syrien und Aegypten*, vol. 1, Schaffhausen 1873, p. xxii; F. Pruner, *Die Krankheiten des Orient's vom Standpunkte der vergleichenden Nosologie*, Erlangen 1847. Cf. A. Schäfer, "Leben und Wirken des Arztes Franz Pruner-Bey," *Janus*, 35 (1931), pp. 249–277, 297–311, 335–343, 360–375; 36 (1932), pp. 59–70, 114–127.

In contrast to Sepp, who saw his future in the study of the Holy Land, Mosetizh chose another career, as a dedicated missionary in the United States. But his detailed report of the voyage, submitted on 24 February 1846, impressed Metternich, and was one of the immediate reasons for the establishment of an Austrian diplomatic representation in Jerusalem.⁴⁵

While visiting Nazareth in 1845, Sepp met "two German scholars," to use his own words, most probably Lepsius and Abeken, who shared with him a rumor they had heard from the local people in Tyre. They claimed that the crown of Friedrich I "Barbarossa" had been revealed during the last earthquake, on 1st January 1837, in the ruins of the cathedral of that city. This accidental meeting led to the next and last case that will be discussed here, which in a way is also the most remarkable of them all. In 1874, the very days of the Kulturkampf, Bismarck supported and financed a delegation led by Sepp to search for the remains of Barbarossa in the ruins of that cathedral. The aim was to bring them for official burial in the cathedral of Cologne that, even while under construction, was seen as a symbol of united Germany, "the fraternity of all Germans."⁴⁶ Strangely enough, Bismarck accepted Sepp's romantic ideas, which fitted in very well with the developing attitude of the Prussian rulers who saw themselves as successors to the German monarchs who had participated in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Crusades.⁴⁷ The delegation, including Sepp, his son Bernard, who was a historian, and – as a counterbalance to Sepp – Hans Prutz, an expert on the Crusader period from Berlin, carried on excavations in Tyre, of course without any results, and concluded its mission in a big discussion between its participants.⁴⁸

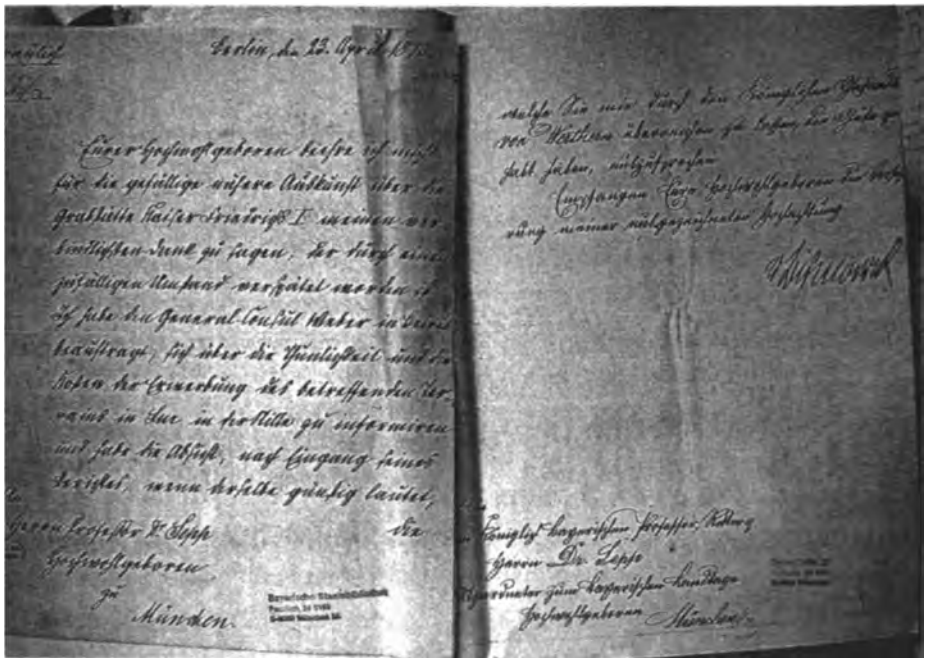
This, however, is a rare example, which was probably a result of the romantic context and Bismarck's domestic Catholic problem. The general

⁴⁵ M. Eliav, *Österreich und das Heilige Land: Ausgewählte Konsulatsdokumente aus Jerusalem, 1849–1917*, Vienna 2000, pp. 45–46, 101–103; R. Agstner, "Österreichs Konsulate im Heiligen Land," B. A. Böhler (ed.), *Mit Szepter und Pilgerstab: Österreichische Präsenz im Heiligen Land seit den Tagen Kaiser Franz Josephs*, Vienna 2000, pp. 29–30.

⁴⁶ A. Erlande-Brandenburg, *The Cathedral: The Social and Architectural Dynamics of Construction*, trans. M. Thom, Cambridge 1994, pp. 4–5.

⁴⁷ C. Klein, "Deutsche Herrscher im heiligen Lande," *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung*, 15.11.1898, pp. 1–4; 16.11.1898, pp. 4–6.

⁴⁸ J. N. Sepp, "Jüngste Palästinafahrt," *Das Ausland*, 48 (1875), pp. 385–388, 428–432, 469–473, 509–513, 550–555, 597–600; idem, *Meerfahrt nach Tyrus zur Ausgrabung der Kathedrale mit Barbarossas Grab*, Leipzig 1879; H. Prutz, *Kaiser Friedrich I. Grabstätte: Eine kritische Studie*, Danzig 1879. Cf. Goren, *Go View the Land*, pp. 136–138; D. Pringle, "The Crusader Cathedral of Tyre," *Levant*, 33 (2001), pp. 165–188.



Excavations in the Cathedral in Tyre in search for the
bones of Friedrich I "Barbarossa" and Bismarck's letter
(J. N. Sepp, *Meerfahrt nach Tyrus zur Ausgrabung der
Kathedrale mit Barbarossas Grab*, Leipzig 1879)

attitude of the authorities of the Second Reich to the scientific study of the Holy Land and its neighboring countries was one of disinterest. This is demonstrated in the following cases:

- The refusal of all government departments to help provide the leading Berlin cartographer, Heinrich Kiepert, with funds for his planned study excursion to the Orient, following his being invited by the French government to the opening of the Suez Canal;⁴⁹
- The relative lack of interest shown by the authorities in the *Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas*, which was established in 1877 and failed to involve various ministries in its projects, as had been done by the English Palestine Exploration Fund, that preceded the Germans by twelve years.⁵⁰

These cases prove that in this context, too, the Near East was treated differently than other regions in which Germany held imperialistic ambitions and where German geographers were intensively active. In other locations, geographical terms were used to legitimize German imperialism, and the geographers played an active role in the propaganda of German colonialism and expansion of *Lebensraum*.⁵¹

The picture that emerges from the historical record is that German science was a regular companion of German activity in Egypt and Palestine in earlier years, mainly in the 1840s, when Prussia, at the beginning of its swift progress, was still struggling to gain footholds in the region. Such cooperation by governments intensified among all European powers in accordance with their imperialistic ambitions in the East. It included post-1871 Germany, but not with regard to the above-mentioned countries, particularly Palestine. German scholars continued to participate in studying the Holy Land, but as individuals or for scientific organizations, usually without any government initiation, financing, or any other form of cooperation.

⁴⁹ H. Goren, "Heinrich Kiepert in the Holy Land, Spring 1870 – Sketches from an Exploration-Tour of an Historical Cartographer," L. Zögner (ed.), *Antike Welten, Neue Regionen: Heinrich Kiepert 1818–1899*, Berlin 1999, pp. 45–61.

⁵⁰ Idem, *Scientific Organizations* (above, n. 11).

⁵¹ G. Sandner and M. Rössler, "Geography and Empire in Germany, 1871–1945," A. Godlewska and N. Smith (eds.), *Geography and Empire*, Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. 1994, pp. 115–127.

GERMANY AND ZIONISM, 1897–1918

ISALAH FRIEDMAN

It was Theodor Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, who first established contact with the German government. The Zionist idea strongly appealed to Kaiser Wilhelm II. On the eve of his departure for the East in the autumn of 1898, it looked for a while as if he intended in earnest to declare his protection of Jewish immigration and colonization in Palestine. Guided by his friend and mentor, Count Philipp zu Eulenburg, the Kaiser arrived at the conclusion that Turkey would benefit economically from Jewish settlement in Palestine, while Germany would gain a firm foothold in the Orient, simultaneously easing the solution of the Jewish problem.¹ Wilhelm's position was made clear in his letter to the Grand Duke of Baden, his uncle and Herzl's friend, dated 29 September 1898, in which he wrote:

The fundamental idea of Zionism has always interested me and even aroused my sympathy. I have come to the conclusion that here we have to deal with a question of the most far-reaching importance.

I am convinced that the settlement of the Holy Land by the wealthy and industrious people of Israel [*Volk Israel*] will bring unexampled prosperity and blessings to the Holy Land, which may do much to revive and develop Asia Minor. Such a settlement would bring millions into the purse of the Turks...and so gradually help to save the "Sick Man" from bankruptcy.... Turkey will recover...and then it would be not so easy to dismember her.

In addition, the energy and the creative powers and abilities of the Tribe of Shem would be directed to more dignified purposes than the

* This article is based on my book, *Germany, Turkey and Zionism, 1897–1918*, Oxford 1977; a second edition, with a new Introduction by the author, was published simultaneously in the USA and the UK in 1998 (henceforth: Friedman, *Germany*). The references below are selective.

¹ Friedman, *Germany*, pp. 56–65.

exploitation of Christians, and many Semites of the Social Democratic Party, who are stirring up opposition, will move eastwards, where more rewarding work will present itself.... I know very well that nine-tenths of all Germans will be deeply shocked when they hear, at a later time, that I sympathize with the Zionists, or even that I place them under my protection.

From the point of view of *Realpolitik* [the Kaiser went on], the question cannot be ignored. In view of the gigantic power (very dangerous in a way) of international Jewish capital, would it not be an immense achievement for Germany, if the world of the Hebrews looked to her with gratitude? Everywhere the hydra of the most awful anti-Semitism raises its terrible and brutal head, and the Jews, full of anxiety, are ready to leave the countries where they are threatened to return to the Holy Land and look for protection and security. I shall intercede with the Sultan.²

Our evidence of Wilhelm II's encounter with Abdul Hamid is circumstantial, but it does not require much imagination to realize why the formula of "German protection of a Jewish chartered company" for colonization could not commend itself to the Sultan. For years, Turkey had been struggling against the system of Capitulations, which provided the European Powers with an instrument for meddling in her internal affairs. The specter of a second Franco-Lebanon in the form of a Judeo-German Palestine was too alarming. Ahmet Tevfik, the Turkish foreign minister, made it clear that "the Sultan would have nothing to do with Zionism and an independent Jewish kingdom." As a result, Wilhelm lost his enthusiasm for Zionism.³

Yet, whatever diplomatic motives compelled Germany to dissociate itself from Zionism, interest in the Jewish settlement in Palestine continued. Like the French, the Germans were quick to realize the importance of the dissemination of their language as an indispensable medium in the process of peaceful economic and cultural penetration, and soon after discovered in the Jews its most suitable carriers. It was, however, not before the year

² Ibid., pp. 65–67, cited from Hermann and Bessie Ellern, *Herzl, Hechler, the Grand Duke of Baden and the German Emperor, 1896–1904*, Tel Aviv 1962, pp. 48–53. Mr. Ellern, an Israeli banker who was born in Karlsruhe, Germany, discovered forty-eight documents in the Grossherzogliches Familienarchiv, Karlsruhe, and in the Deutsches Zentralarchiv, Abt. Merseburg (then East Germany).

³ Friedman, *Germany*, pp. 75–78.

of 1912 that the German Consulate and economists ascertained the latent potentialities for German interests in the Jewish settlement in Palestine. Once this was realized, it was also clear that the driving force behind Jewish colonization was the Zionist ideal.

With the revival of French claims to Syria and Palestine, the matter assumed greater urgency, and when Conrad Freiherr von Wangenheim, the German ambassador to Constantinople, learned that his French opposite number offered Ottoman Jewry French protection, he advised Berlin that it would be economically, culturally, and politically advantageous if Germany did the same.⁴

Rear-Admiral Conrad Trummler, the commander of the German naval unit in the Mediterranean, evaluated the importance of Jews from a different angle. On a reconnaissance mission, he found that the Arab nationalist movement in Syria was on a collision course with Turkey, and that, for this reason, the Palestine Jews – 100,000 strong – deserved “special attention.” He attached particular significance to the Zionists who aspired to the renaissance of the Jewish people in Palestine. He singled out their loyalty to the Turkish government, which had recently become more favorably disposed to them – quite justly – because Turkey would “undoubtedly profit from the Jewish element.” He concluded:

Through the Jewish population in Palestine, Germany has undoubtedly the means to advance her interests, which in total would constitute such an important factor that any French claims to this promising country should not come under discussion at all.⁵

Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, the newly appointed under-secretary for foreign affairs, was impressed with Trummler’s report and subsequently acted upon his recommendations. Within the framework of Germany’s *Ostpolitik*, Zionism became a factor. This might be deduced from the statement made by Ambassador von Wangenheim to Richard Lichtheim, the Zionist representative in Constantinople, in which von Wangenheim reassured Lichtheim of his great sympathy and promised to render his support. He also hinted that the idea of benevolent treatment of the Zionists emanated from Berlin and stated conclusively that, should the Zionists in Turkey be persecuted, he would do his best to protect them. The

⁴ Ibid., pp. 154–156, 161–164.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 165–166, citing report by Trummler to the Kaiser, 31 May 1913, *Auswärtiges Amt Akten* (henceforth: A.A.A.), *Türkei* 177, *Der Libanon* (Syrien), Bd. 9.

ensuing months after the outbreak of the war showed how serious and sincere von Wangenheim was.⁶

On 30 August 1914, following the outbreak of the war, Zimmermann instructed von Wangenheim "to see to it, if necessary, that the Palestine Jews, regardless of nationality, remain unmolested," and on 3 November he added that "it would be very wise if the Turkish Government also tried to win the sympathies of international Jewry, especially in America, by an accommodating treatment of Zionism."⁷

The policy of protection proved invaluable for the preservation of the Jewish community during the war, when the attitude of the Turkish authorities in Palestine suddenly changed. It was Ahmet Jemal Pasha, the commander of the 4th Army, and his subordinates who were responsible for initiating the policy of oppression and banishment. Jemal Pasha, who exercised autocratic powers, branded Zionism a "revolutionary and anti-Turkish movement, which must be eradicated." His system of mass deportation would have brought the whole Jewish settlement to complete ruin had not powerful intercessions by the German and American embassies stopped him.⁸

The Germans were naturally concerned lest they would be held indirectly responsible for the atrocities of their Turkish ally; and, indeed, Entente propaganda tried to make the most of it. Propaganda played an important role in general warfare strategy. The correct behavior of the German Army in occupied Poland, when contrasted with Russia's humiliating treatment of the Jews, as well as Germany's promise to protect the Jews in Palestine, gave a reasonable hope of attracting the sympathy of American Jewry. The Turkish anti-Jewish atrocities, however, acted like a thunderbolt and undermined Germany's credibility. Von Wangenheim repeatedly intervened with the Turkish government and was gratified to learn that Minister of the Interior Tal'at Bey had a complete understanding of the political importance of the problematics of this question, but it appeared that neither Tal'at, nor the grand vizier, were able to curb Jemal Pasha, who exercised supreme, if not wholly independent, power in Syria and Palestine.

The Germans had their difficulties with the Turks and had to be careful not to offend the susceptibilities of their touchy ally. In spite of these

⁶ Ibid., pp. 187-188.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 191, 200, 208; Zimmermann to Wangenheim, 1 and 3 November 1914, A.A.A., Türkei 195.

⁸ Friedman, *Germany*, pp. 211-222, 226-227.

limitations and the strained relationship with the Turks over the Armenian question, however, the German government issued instructions in November 1915 to the consulate in Palestine of far-reaching importance. In this document, which was a top secret, it was stated amongst other things that it was "politically advisable to show a friendly attitude toward Zionism and its aims." The consulate was instructed, in case of need, to help the Palestine Jews by all practical means.⁹

The German government would not have troubled to issue these instructions unless moved by serious political considerations. First, it wished to strengthen the hands of the German Zionist leaders within the Zionist movement and reap maximum propaganda benefit. But the deeper motives related to long-term considerations. After the outbreak of the war, Germany was, for the first time, confronted with a Jewish problem outside her own boundaries. Military conquests brought her directly into contact with the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe. Within a few months, about two million, and by the end of 1915 over five million, of a total of six and a half million Russian Jews came under German domination. The Germans realized that Polish antisemitism made the future of so large a Jewish community very insecure. Moreover, as a result of deliberate maltreatment and cruel expulsions by the Tsarist regime, over one and a half million Jews were completely uprooted from their homes. A very serious refugee problem had thus emerged, and it was feared, both in official and unofficial circles, that many of the refugees would migrate westward. To spare Germany this problem, it was suggested that, if the Central Powers were victorious, the German government should prevail upon her Turkish ally to remove all restrictions on freedom of immigration to Palestine. No forcible transfer was contemplated, but here Zionism offered to meet the need.

This line was argued both in private and publicly. Thus, Dr. Paul Rohrbach, in an address to the Prussian Parliament (3 March 1915), contended that it was the Zionist movement alone that could divert the immigration of Jewish masses from Europe to Asia, because the attraction of a "free national life" in Palestine was the only factor that could outweigh any material inducements elsewhere. A national Jewish entity by no means clashed with Germany's *Weltpolitik*, because, parallel to the development

⁹ Ibid., pp. 264-265; Metternich to Bethmann Hollweg, 22 November 1915. For the full text see Friedman, *Germany*, Appendix B.

of Hebrew civilization, the Jews would be able to propagate German *Kultur* and commerce in the Orient.¹⁰

Dr. Heinrich Borde, the German vice-consul, later consul, in Jerusalem, was more blunt. He asserted that "Zionism would ensure that the millions of Jews for whom things were getting 'too hot' in Russia, would not, as hitherto, flood to the West, but immigrate to Palestine."¹¹

The German press and men of public standing almost unanimously came out in support of Zionism. Thus, the *Reichsbote* (2 May 1917), a Junker weekly, pointed to the strategic importance of Palestine. England, the paper maintained, was using Zionism to entrench herself in this vital area, and the Central Powers should appropriate the same weapon. "The establishment of a Jewish state under Turkish supremacy would constitute an effective antidote." The *Allgemeine Anzeiger* also asserted that the Palestine question had become an integral part of *Weltpolitik*; by meeting Jewish demands, the Central Powers would render the Entente propaganda ineffective. Turkey would benefit economically and Germany would gain "a strong outpost in the Near East."¹²

All these long-term objectives were in sharp contrast to the policy adopted by the Turkish authorities in Palestine. On 27 March 1917, Jemal Pasha ordered a total evacuation of the Jewish population of Jaffa/Tel Aviv. The German consulate suspected that the only objective of this order was to annihilate the Jews. Despite strong protests by the German and Austro-Hungarian consuls, 9,000 Jews were deported. Tel Aviv became a dead city.

Ten days after Jaffa's evacuation, Jemal attempted to make a similar move on Jerusalem. Friedrich Kress von Kressenstein, the chief of staff of the IVth Ottoman Army, thought that Jemal's intention bordered on the insane. The evacuation of Jerusalem, he cabled, would have involved those concerned in terrifying hazards on the Armenian pattern, for which Germany would be blamed. Thereupon, Zimmermann took the matter up with the High Command, who had little use for diplomatic niceties; on their explicit instructions, Enver Pasha, the Ottoman minister of war, ordered Jemal to

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 252–256, 267. Rohrbach's address is quoted in *Die Jüdische Presse – Konservative Wochenschrift*, March 1915 (press cutting in A.A.A., Türkei 195); *Jüdische Rundschau*, 12 March 1915, p. 87.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 256–259; Heinrich Brode, "Memorandum über den Zionismus und Weltkrieg," 26 August 1914, A.A.A., Türkei 195, K 177300–46.

¹² Friedman, *Germany*, pp. 326–327.

cancel the evacuation. The chief credit for this reprieve, however, must go to Zimmermann. Had it not been for his singular determination, nothing would have stopped Jemal Pasha from delivering a crippling blow to the Jewish community.¹³

In November of the same year, however, the situation became critical again. Jemal Pasha accused all the Jews in Palestine of espionage. Their very survival now seemed in question. Fortunately, Jemal was recalled to Constantinople and General Erich von Falkenhayn arrived in Jerusalem to take over the High Command of the Ottoman Army. Before leaving for the East, von Falkenhayn was summoned by the Kaiser and instructed to treat the Jews considerately. Von Falkenhayn discharged his duty admirably. The Zionist leaders duly expressed their deep appreciation of and gratitude for the German government's energetic protection. Particularly moving was Dr. Jacob Thon's acknowledgment:

We would have suffered irreparable harm had the mighty hand of the German government not protected us in the hour of danger.... It was particularly fortunate that in the last critical days the supreme command was in the hands of General Falkenhayn. Had Djemal been responsible, he would, as he had so often threatened, have driven out the population and turned the country into a ruin. We, and the rest of the population...must hold Falkenhayn in deep gratitude for having prevented the projected total evacuation and having thus preserved the civil population from destruction.¹⁴

When the war was over, the German government was no longer inhibited by the need to pay heed to Turkish susceptibilities and could come out in unreserved support of the Zionists. In April 1919, Foreign Minister Count Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau declared himself to be in "fundamental agreement" with the Zionist program that had been presented to the Peace Conference. The program called for "the creation of such political... conditions in Palestine that would secure its development into an autonomous Commonwealth (*Gemeinwesen*)."¹⁵ Germany was however

¹³ Ibid., pp. 347–371.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 371–373; Thon to E. A. C. (Zionist Executive), 15 December 1917, A.A.A., Türkei 195.

¹⁵ Friedman, *Germany*, pp. 414–416; A.A. A., Geschäftsstelle für die Friedensverhandlungen, Judenfrage, 1919, 22 March 1919.

denied a say at the Peace Conference, while Britain emerged as the chief beneficiary.

Germany should nevertheless be given due credit. She was the first European power to assist the Zionists and protect their enterprise in Palestine. Had it not been for her persistent interventions with the Turkish government (as well as those of the United States until April 1917), the Jewish community in Palestine would not have survived. Although the limelight turned on Britain following the Balfour Declaration, the service rendered by Germany was of no less momentous import, for, in a *judenrein* Palestine, the later development of the Jewish National Home would have been very unlikely.

PART TWO

**GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST
AFTER WORLD WAR I**

HITLER'S ROUTE TO BAGHDAD? SOME ASPECTS OF GERMAN OIL POLICY AND POLITICAL THINKING ON THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 1930s AND EARLY 1940s

HELMUT MEJCHER

Introduction

Whereas much research has been conducted on Wilhelmine Germany's policy towards the Middle East, there is as yet no comprehensive in-depth study of what might broadly be called Germany's second Baghdad Railway intermezzo in the Middle East in the 1930s.¹ Michael J. Cohen's and Martin Kolinsky's otherwise valuable volume is a case in point.² Despite numerous references to Nazi Germany's encroachments on the Balkans and towards the Mediterranean and the Middle East, particularly in the late 1930s, the issue of a specific German challenge in the Middle East, one that might have worried the British directly, is not really addressed. Although some British officials seemed on occasion to have been haunted by memories of Gallipoli and Kut al-Amara, Britain's anti-Axis strategy in the Mediterranean obviously hinged on how Mussolini could be restrained or deterred from endangering Britain's route to India. In contrast, seen from London, a German challenge in the Middle East seemed not to have loomed too large.

And yet from the early 1930s onwards, German and British commercial interests involved in the development of petroleum production in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq, were wrestling with each other for strategic positions.³ What is so fascinating about this contest is its striking resemb-

¹ The main title of this paper (without the question mark) is taken from a book that was prepared for the International Research Section of the Fabian Society in London and introduced by its chairman, Leonard Woolf: *Hitler's Route to Bagdad*, London 1939.

² *Britain and the Middle East in the 1930s: Security Problems, 1935–39*, London 1992.

³ See, in more detail, H. Mejer, *Die Politik und das Öl im Nahen Osten*, I: *Der Kampf der*

lance to the Wilhelmine Baghdad Railway issue and its oil and political aspects. However, was there really a Hitlerite spearhead which was aimed at Baghdad and the British-controlled Persian Gulf? Was there an oil monopoly affair in Berlin in the 1930s?⁴ Were the activities of German firms, diplomats, and agents linked together? Do they allow us to speak in terms of certain parameters of a new German policy towards the Middle East? What about the development of the German–Italian relationship in the Middle East, which is said to have rested on an unwritten agreement conceding the Arab sphere largely to the Duce's domain? What repercussions did Nazi Germany's courtship of Arab nationalism – especially since 1940⁵ – have on Berlin's policy towards Palestine? Is it at all possible to speak of a coherent and medium- or long-term German Middle East policy?

Germany's Second Baghdad Railway Intermezzo: An Overview

Germany's renewed oil stake in Iraq in the 1930s serves as a starting point, for three reasons:

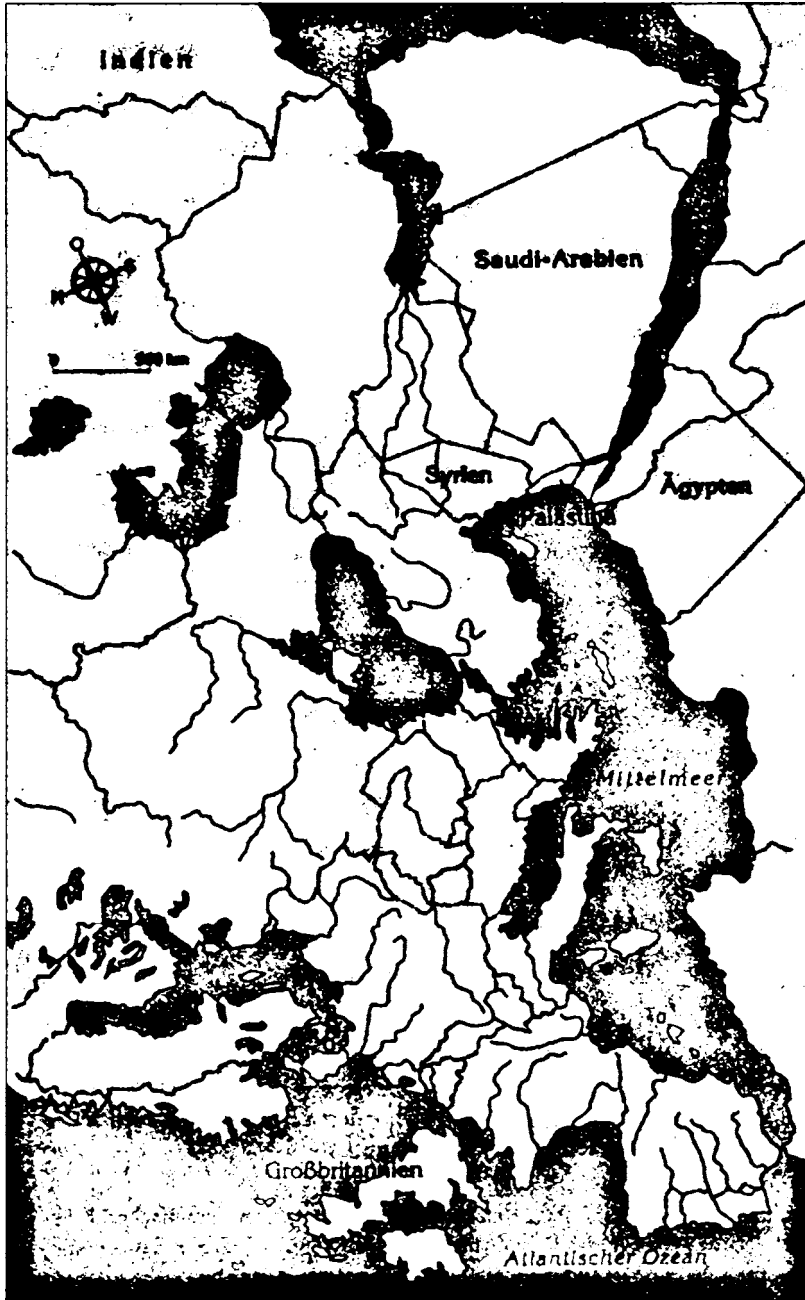
1. Because of its strategic dimensions, any analysis of oil policy is usually the shortest way to an understanding of what happened in the corridors of power;
2. Germany's re-entry into the oil industry in Iraq should be seen both in the context of the world economic depression, and also as a by-product of a revisionist policy against the Versailles Treaty;
3. Germany's oil intermezzo, its rise and demise, provides valuable insights into the early changes in strategic thinking under Nazi rule.

In the wake of the First World War, German oil interests in the Middle

Mächte und Konzerne vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, Stuttgart 1980. See also idem, "The International Petroleum Cartel (1928), Arab and Turkish Oil Aspirations and German Oil Policy towards the Middle East on the Eve of the Second World War," K.- J. Gantzel and H. Mejcher (eds.), *Oil, the Middle East, North Africa and the Industrial States*, Paderborn 1984, pp. 27–59.

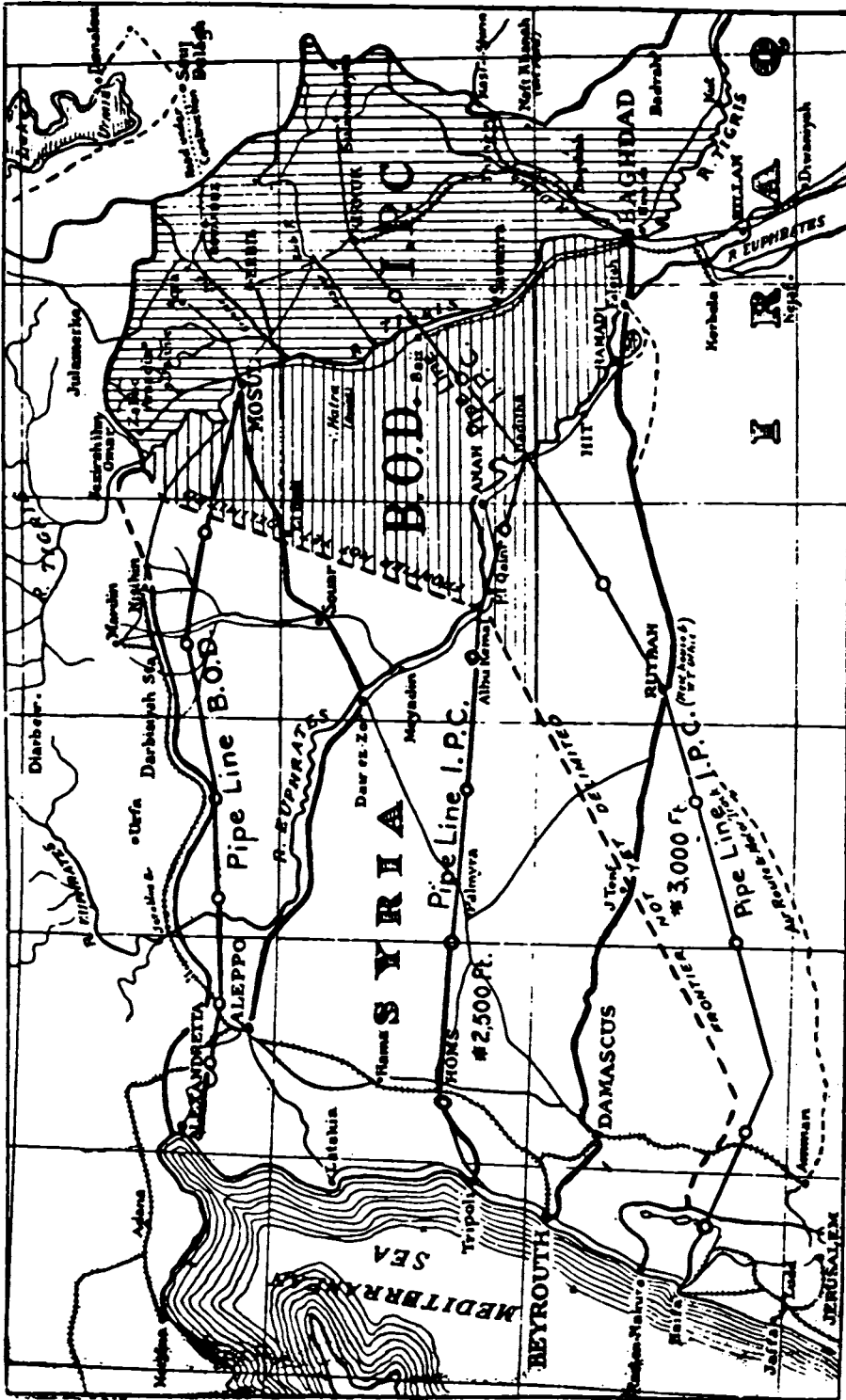
⁴ For more details see H. Mejcher, "Banking and the German Oil Industry, 1890–1939," R. W. Ferrier and A. Fursenko (eds.), *Oil in the World Economy*, London 1989, pp. 94–106.

⁵ The failure of Germany's air battle over Britain rendered the Middle East an important new staging point from where to confront the British Empire. See Map 1.



Map 1: The Middle East from the perspective of the British, after 1940, from a map published in German in *Der Nahe Osten*, 2, no. 6/7 (1941).

(Based on: H. Meijer, *Sinai, 5. Juni 1967: Krisenherd Naher und Mittler Osten*, München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998, p. 273)



Map 2: Iraq's natural resources and the concessions of the British Oil Development Company (BOD) and the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC)

(H. Mejcher, *Die Politik und das Öl im Nahen Osten, I: Der Kampf der Mächte und Konzerne vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1980, p. 31)

East, which had been deprived of their shareholding in the Turkish Petroleum Company, gained stronger support when Germany won a seat on the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission in 1927. When in 1930 Iraq's independence was under debate in Geneva, German and Italian votes could only be bought by an offer of a new oil concession west of the Tigris. This is how the so-called British Oil Development Company (BOD), led by British merchant bankers together with German and Italian financial backing, came into being on the eve of Iraq's independence.⁶ German and Italian interests dovetailed with Iraqi demands to curtail the monopoly concession of the IPC and to have a share of their own in the development of the new enterprise.

Not surprisingly, Berlin's immediate response was a mixed one. The financial means of the later Weimar Republic were strained. There also was a glut on the world oil market. The world-wide credit contraction that accompanied the world economic depression promised no relief from the international capital market. Therefore, the early years of the BOD were a constant struggle for financial support by government and industry. Since the government in Berlin was primarily interested in fostering industrial exports for oil installations, pipelines, and railways – this in order to reduce unemployment figures – it made credit guarantees dependent on substantial commitments by German firms and banks. In late 1932 German oil interest groups, helped by the *Auswärtiges Amt*, did manage to gain more government support, which was sealed by a credit guarantee of 500,000 Reichsmark on the very day when Hitler's government was sworn in, i.e., 30 January 1933. In the second half of the year the German and Italian shareholders were near to achieving a joint majority holding in the BOD. However, to the dismay of the German group, by the end of that year, Berlin suddenly changed course. In their fifth meeting at the Ministry of Economics on 13 February 1934, Foreign Office representative Curt Prüfer made clear that there no longer existed a particular foreign policy interest. The Ministry of Economics categorically opposed the establishment of a German refinery in the Middle East – a step which had been deemed indispensable because of the apparently poor quality of BOD's oil. Obviously, within a few months after coming to power, the Nazi government had begun to embark on a national plan for autarky in strategic raw materials and goods. Hitler is quoted as having personally intervened and ruled that

⁶ See Map 2.

in case of war, an oil supply route via the Mediterranean would not be safe. This was well before the Anglo-German naval agreement of June 1935.

The sudden difficulty faced by the German group in the BOD, which included such prestigious firms as Otto Wolff of Cologne, Ferrostaal of Essen, Mannesmann Röhren Werke, and the Stahlunion-Export GmbH, increased the prospects for an Italian majority holding, as actually happened. As for the British merchant bankers, whose share in the BOD by mid-1934 had amounted to 37% as against 11% for Germany, 47% for Italy, and 5% for France, they too had been denied government support. Whitehall even interfered on the French capital market, to which the British shareholders had turned. As is well known, for state budget reasons Whitehall favored, as usual, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC).

From the German standpoint it is interesting to see that with the Nazis in power, the national interest in the BOD at first continued to be the reduction of unemployment figures and, concomitantly, the increase of German steel and machinery exports to help develop the railway and pipeline links of the BOD concession area with Alexandretta on the Mediterranean. At the same time, a struggle was being conducted in Berlin over whether Germany should have a naval strategy of its own in the Mediterranean, and how an independent oil supply base could be safeguarded there in case of war. Alexandretta seemed to be the best alternative to any other outlet, all the more so since Berlin – because of Iraq's newly won independence – had good reason to expect Syria's imminent independence.

Hitler himself, however, deemed it too risky to expose German oil supply lines in the Mediterranean to the preponderance of the British navy and to possible hostile interference. Therefore – but also as an alternative in its own right – the German navy department suggested that the German interests in the BOD should be expanded in order to offer this asset to the British-controlled Iraq Petroleum Company in exchange for an equivalent, but more secure, position in Central America. The military-strategic premise was American neutrality in a future European war.

Deprived of staunch German government support, the BOD came under Italian control just at the time when Mussolini went to war against Ethiopia. The Italian war machine soon became dependent on British-controlled oil supplies. German coal, that was now being transported across the Alps in greater volume, could not reduce this dependence. Perfidious Albion, on

the other hand, showed no scruples when, in Geneva, it demanded international sanctions against Rome, while simultaneously supplying Italy with oil and secretly supporting the APOC's takeover of the Italian-controlled BOD.

The Coherence of German Middle East Policy: Early Inter-departmental Perceptions and Frictions

Both the German admiralty's efforts to strike a deal with American independent oil and refinery companies active in Central America, and Mussolini's war against Ethiopia accelerated the demise of the BOD, without bringing Germany the strategic gains it had looked for. By 1936 we witness a more ideologically-based new kind of German diplomatic activity – if not offensive – in the Middle East, which was motivated both by an anti-Comintern strategy⁷ and a distinct anti-British sentiment. The latter is of more interest in the present context. Foremost among Germany's diplomatic staff, it was the retinue of the Nationalist Socialist-affiliated rivals of the traditionalists – expert and, more often, would-be expert Orientalists – who began to contact and frequent local minority leaders, revolutionary nationalists, and army officers in order to coax them into embracing Axis propaganda. On the other hand, the fact that a career diplomat like Werner Otto von Hentig, a non-partisan member of Germany's Foreign Office, was by mid-1936 put in charge of the Oriental desk is a clear sign that the National Socialist regime was still faced with manpower shortages in its foreign service. This makes it difficult at times to clearly attribute certain Middle Eastern-related ideas or concepts to National Socialist ideology. Often, Oriental expertise such as was furnished by Fritz Grobba and von Hentig would probably have pleased Germany's last Kaiser more than its new dictator.

All this notwithstanding, for the sake of greater clarification of the ensuing embroilment of German Middle East policy in the late 1930s, it is helpful to consider the dual system that had begun to develop between the traditional Foreign Office and the party-run Foreign Policy Office (Außenpolitisches Amt) headed by Alfred Rosenberg. Caught in between

⁷ Last, but not least, because of the Spanish Civil War and its connection with international socialism, German Nazi agents in German consulates and embassies in the Mediterranean and the Middle East kept a close watch on everything that smelled of communism.

were Orientalists such as Dr. Fritz Grobba, a career diplomat with distinct Wilhelmine leanings who did not hesitate to ride the new wave of Hitlerite expansionism. Grobba's forward campaigns and diplomatic intrigues sought, last but not least, to compensate for his exclusion from membership in the National Socialist Party, which – according to von Hentig – should be put down to his earlier affiliation with Freemasonry,⁸ that was so popular in the Weimar Republic.

The intense personal and professional rivalry between Berlin's two main Oriental experts at the time may by itself, and in more than one way, reveal the character of National Socialist Middle East policy. As we shall see, on the conceptual level of devising a new – or a German-controlled – Middle East, Grobba and von Hentig seem not to have been too far apart. As a matter of fact, both diplomats were revisionists and forward strategists who believed that the Versailles Treaty had unduly deprived Germany of its empire status, with African colonies and spheres of influence in the Middle East.

Apart from their social background, the difference between them was in their approach and temperament. According to von Hentig, Dr. Grobba – besides his party handicap – suffered from the so-called “Dragoman-Complex,”⁹ which meant that Grobba, because of his thorough training in Arabic and Turkish, claimed more competence in comprehending Middle Eastern politics. In addition, ever since 1936 von Hentig had reproached Grobba for his special intelligence activities. He suspected him of harboring naive and ideology-motivated assessments of Arab personalities – whether they would suit the type of undercover agent that he was looking for. Von Hentig's and Grobba's disagreement on Ibn Saud is a case in point.¹⁰ Nonetheless, in the absence of reciprocal intimate comments by Grobba about von Hentig, it remains difficult to fathom the personal conflict between the two men. Most probably, Grobba resented von Hentig's superiority, perceiving it as being a relic of the pre-1918 nobility-based and anti-reformist Prussian school of diplomacy, and interpreted von Hentig's political correctness as mere compensation for his lack of thorough knowledge of Oriental languages.

⁸ Von Hentig Nachlass, ED113, Bd.2 Az. 4095/68, p. 145, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

⁹ Ibid., ED113, Bd.1, Aufzeichnungen... Doctor Fritz Grobba, p. 134.

¹⁰ See Fritz Grobba, *Männer und Mächte im Orient: 25 Jahre diplomatischer Tätigkeit im Orient*, Göttingen 1967, pp. 107–108; Werner Otto v. Hentig, *Mein Leben, eine Dienstreise*, Göttingen 1962, p. 346.

All this notwithstanding, with the ascent of Nazi rule in Germany and in line with its doctrine that diplomacy should henceforth be guided by Nazi ideology, the Middle East became a playground for a mix of Wilhelmine- and Nazi-bent political adventures. The Arab Revolt in Palestine in 1936 and the Jerusalem Mufti's successive sojourn in Lebanon and, in particular, in Iraq were closely assessed by Berlin's Oriental experts. Baghdad, with its insurgent new military elite, attracted men like Grobba and, of course, Hajj Amin al-Hussaini, all the more so when Iraqi emissaries began to flock to the German embassy in Ankara, where von Papen was residing. Once Hitler had invaded Poland, and Great Britain and France had declared war on Germany, Berlin's embassy in Ankara became the nub of German subversive activities in the Middle East. This was the heyday of Dr. Grobba and his assistants. He carefully nurtured the friendship of the Mufti and of his private secretary, Kamel Osman Haddad; he also pointed the way to acquainting Berlin with the so-called "Golden Square" in Baghdad and with the ambitions of the Mufti and Rashid 'Ali al-Kailani. Von Hentig's opportunity came when Saudi Arabia came into the orbit of Grobba's activities. The first contacts had been made via Iraq, when in the 1930s German firms exhibited their products – among them weapons – at Baghdad's industrial fairs. Von Hentig probably concurred in Grobba's belief that Ibn Saud's expanding realm could become attractive for German Middle East policy as an alternative to the British-controlled Hashemite kingdoms in the Fertile Crescent. But since he was less optimistic about Ibn Saud's capacity to extricate himself totally from British control, he discouraged Grobba's flirtations with Ibn Saud and insisted instead on the Arab monarch's commitment to observe *positive neutrality* in case of a general war. Grobba – in addition to promoting Japanese oil interests when Ibn Saud expanded the oil concession area of 1933 – was considering Jidda as a good alternative for his office in Baghdad, should he be ousted therefrom.¹¹

Obviously, Grobba was no longer thinking exclusively as a diplomat. As a matter of fact, since 1936 he was "a changed man" who had begun working as a secret agent, a so-called "X-man," for a special branch of Admiral Canaris' office of military intelligence and counter-espionage. According to von Hentig, it was due to Canaris' protection that in the late

¹¹ For more details see H. Mejcher, "Saudi Arabia's Relationship with Germany under King 'Abd al-'Aziz," *Addarah* (Riyadh), 12, no. 2 (1986), pp. 5–26.

1930s Grobba – without being a party member – had continued as Nazi Germany's envoy to Baghdad.¹² It was at about the same time that Grobba established connections with Rosenberg's Außenpolitisches Amt, and later on with the Büro Ribbentrop in the Auswärtiges Amt, thereby extricating himself from the tight control of his much-hated superior, von Hentig.

Was There a Grand Strategy to Bridge the Gap between German Policy towards Iraq and Palestine?

Although Nazi-Germany's policy towards Palestine will not be dealt with in the present article, on the assumption that the story of the *Ha'avara* (Transfer) Agreement¹³ is well known, the difficult issue of how Nazi Germany thought it could bridge the gap between its divergent policies towards Iraq and Palestine should nevertheless be raised. The crux of the problem seems to me to have been whether Nazi Germany already had any coherent conception of Middle Eastern policy, or rather whether such a conception was still emerging from its growing involvement in Middle Eastern affairs. The dual nature of the formulation and implementation of Nazi Germany's overseas or Middle Eastern policy requires additional study.

All we can collect is bits and pieces of evidence from documents and memoirs, which hardly allow us to put together the many pieces of the puzzle. We might perhaps speak of trends, but they are usually devoid of a long-range character, or else they seem to have mushroomed as Nazi Germany started its predatory wars in Europe and was dragged into the Mediterranean and North Africa by Mussolini's adventures.

Some turning-points in Middle Eastern affairs can be of help to shed light on the trend, if not development, of what Berlin's expert Orientalists thought about a new order for the Middle East. Circumstantial evidence might help to render judgments more plausible.

Until about 1936/1937, Nazi Germany had planted its party network throughout the German communities in the Middle East. Control was

¹² Von Hentig Nachlass, ED113, Bd. 2, p. 146.

¹³ *Ha'avara*: an agreement, during the early years of the Nazi regime, arranging for the transfer of Jewish capital from Germany to Palestine. Though it aroused much controversy in Zionist and other Jewish circles, the agreement was of great help in the absorption of German Jews in Palestine.

tightened by bringing party members into the strategic positions that controlled the press and the other media. In Turkey, in particular, National Socialist party members kept close surveillance over the growing number of German-Jewish exiles. Social contact with them could create problems for German expatriates and diplomats.¹⁴

As for Palestine, Berlin – ever since its proclamation of the anti-Jewish Nürnberg Laws of 15 September 1935 – obviously also tried to use its Transfer Agreement with the Jewish Agency as a means of counteracting the strong Jewish reaction, particularly emanating from the USA, that took the form of a general boycott of German products. A turning point, which forced Berlin to consider its approach towards Palestine more in principle, was the partition proposal of the Peel Commission in 1937. The debate in Berlin's corridors of power as to whether Germany should entertain the likelihood of a kind of Jewish Vatican is well documented. The alternative of a world-wide dispersal of German-Jewish expellees was dismissed as being counterproductive. Their concentration in Palestine was considered preferable, because the so-called German *Abwehr* could be better directed against it.¹⁵

In view of what has been published so far, there is still no real clue or conclusive evidence as to how Berlin intended to reconcile its Palestine policy with its advances towards Arab nationalists and leaders. Again, the crux of the problem seems to be a methodological one: whether the many comments, ideas, and judgments scattered in documents and memoirs point to a pragmatic Middle Eastern policy or to the overriding ideological and racial world view of Nazi Germany. In some cases there was also an urge to legitimize certain acts of diplomacy by referring to ideology and racist ideas. A few examples will suffice in the present article.

When arrangements were being made for the conversation between Hitler and the Mufti in November 1941, in which Hitler vetoed a pro-Arab declaration, it generated comments that were so typical of Nazi racism. When astonishment was expressed at the stubbornness and relentless fighting spirit of the Mufti (regarded as unusual for an Arab), for which no explanation seemed possible, the solution found was his mother's Circassian

¹⁴ Anti-Komintern Material 1936–1944: Spanien, Tunis, Türkei. Varia, IV. MA70/2 microfilm, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

¹⁵ Aufzeichnung über die Besprechung am 29. Juli 1937 betreffend Haavara. Ha-Pol. Wiehl. Palästina 1937–1938, Berlin 3.8.1937, item 467980–83, Politisches Archiv, Auswärtiges Amt Bonn/Berlin.

lineage. Surely, in the case of the Mufti and in view of the politico-military circumstances of the time, Hitler's meeting with someone who by Nazi standards was considered to be racially inferior would not have depended on such a fabrication. Nevertheless, the incident demonstrates the ubiquitous Nazi world view.

When in the mid-1930s Berlin withdrew its support of the German and Italian oil interests in Iraq, it obviously did so because of a new strategic concept: to avoid endangering its supply lines from the Mediterranean in case of war. Berlin nevertheless soon stepped up its undercover activities in Iraq through Grobba's double assignment. The diplomat-turned-agent obviously courted anti-British, insurgent military cliques and Iraqi nationalists. This, however, seems not to have prevented him from continuing and furthering his good contacts with Baghdad's Jews. Grobba's mental map of a new – or old – Middle East, which may have fitted in with Nazi imperial dreams, almost certainly also dated back to the pre-Sykes–Picot years. Perhaps this might also explain his fascination with the anti-Hashemite, Ibn Saud.

However, Grobba's frequent clashes with his superior, von Hentig, seem to have had nothing to do with any real dissent over a "new Middle East," but rather with his double assignment, which von Hentig thought was simply incompatible with his diplomatic standing. Apart from their controversy about Ibn Saud's pro-British orientation, both von Hentig and Grobba strongly believed in the restoration of the pre-Sykes–Picot order in the Middle East, one in which the Arabs should run their own affairs within a Fertile Crescent scheme, as it had been devised by the General Syrian Congress in 1919. It is revealing that von Hentig, when traveling to Syria in May 1941 on behalf of the German–French Armistice Commission, insisted that Germany must tell Italy once and for all, that it must renounce its ambition to gain a foothold in that country and that Syria's national party must be respected.¹⁶ It is in this regional and politically – as well militarily – highly charged context of spring 1941 that I have come across a rare comment by von Hentig on what he (and perhaps, only he) thought should happen to the Jewish community in Palestine. Since he seems to have considered it as belonging to the British domain, he suggested its transfer to Australia. There was no mention of Madagascar. The passage merits a quote:

¹⁶ Von Hentig Nachlass, ED 113, Bd.7, item 351280.

Ohne politische Unzuträglichkeiten und aus siedlungstechnischen und klimatischen Gründen durchführbar erscheint eine Ansiedlung der Juden in Australien. Raum ist dort für sie vorhanden, Arbeitsmöglichkeiten, auch für die sog. Intelligenz gegeben. Wie sie mit dem jüdischen Element fertig werden, ist eine Angelegenheit der Australier, die sich ja auch bisher gegen jede überfremdung zu wehren gewußt haben. Wenn wir uns für eine derartige Lösung einsetzen, wird sie wesentlich zur Erleichterung des Friedensabschlusses beitragen, da das immerhin nicht einflußlose amerikanische Judentum voraussichtlich einer solchen Lösung zuneigt.¹⁷

Apparently even for von Hentig, who is usually credited with anti-Nazi feelings and moderate views on Arab nationalism, there was no place for a Jewish community and state in Palestine.

Deliberations in the context of the German–French Armistice Commission are revealing in more than one respect. As was pointed out elsewhere, the occupation of France had placed significant assets in German hands: Morocco's iron ore, shares in the Suez Canal, stakes in Iraq's oil industry, French military deposits and other facilities in Syria.¹⁸ It remains unclear how much of all this was regarded as bargaining chips for a German-dictated peace in Europe. No less unclear is what official Nazi Germany really thought about the Middle East on the eve of Hitler's onslaught against Russia. Berlin's procrastination in declaring its Arab policy prior to crossing the Caucasus looked ominous, indeed.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid., ED113, Bd. 6, p. 5. A free translation of the passage: "Free of political problems, and for technical settlement reasons as well as those of climate, settling the Jews in Australia seems feasible. There is enough space there for them, and employment possibilities, even for the so-called intelligentsia. How they will deal with the Jewish element is the Australians' problem, who certainly knew how to defend themselves against every 'super-foreignness.' If we opt for such a solution, this should contribute considerably to the peace pact, for influential American Jewry would probably be in favor of such a solution."

¹⁸ For more details see H. Mejcher, "North Africa in the Strategy and Politics of the Axis Powers (1936–1943)," *Cahiers de Tunisie*, 29 (1981), p. 641.

¹⁹ As for the factor of Middle Eastern Oil in the Caucasus campaign, see H. Mejcher, *Die Politik und das Öl im Nahen Osten*, II: *Die Teilung der Welt 1938–1950*, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 38ff.

GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: IN QUEST OF A CONCEPT

UDO STEINBACH

Introduction

The foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany is undergoing a process of extensive redefinition of its position vis-à-vis the international community. The reasons for this are so manifest and diverse, that further explanation seems hardly necessary.¹ Both the reunification of Germany at the beginning of the 1990s and other radical changes during the final decade of the twentieth century have taxed foreign policy with far more demands than could be met by the mere accommodation of foreign policy to whatever policy had been previously pursued. The very categories within which crucial decisions relating to foreign policy have to be made had themselves begun to change. Questions concerning German interests are therefore asked with "greater urgency."²

The Near East and North Africa have also played a part in this process, if one takes into account the variety of the following statements by German politicians:

– The Mediterranean region and the Near East are historically, geographically, politically, economically, and culturally of great significance for Europe (and thus also for Germany);³

* This is a revised and updated version of my "Der Nahe Osten in der deutschen Außenpolitik: Bonn auf der Suche nach einem Konzept," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte: Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament*, B12/98 (13 March 1998), pp. 25–38.

¹ Compare with the results of the research project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik: K. Kaiser et al. (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik*, I–III, München 1994–1996 (henceforth: *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik*).

² Ch. Hacke, "Nationales Interesse als Handlungsmaxime für die Außenpolitik Deutschlands," *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik*, III: *Interessen und Strategien*, pp. 3–13.

³ See the speech of State Minister Helmut Schäfer, "Zur deutschen Außenpolitik und

- Both from the political point of view and the economic point of view, Germany should not concentrate exclusively on Eastern Europe;
- There should be no geographically determined division of tasks, in the sense that Germany and a number of other West-, Central- and North-European countries have an exclusive responsibility concerning Eastern Europe, while the Mediterranean and the Near East are being relinquished to the European Mediterranean countries;⁴
- There is, rather, a common European responsibility for both neighboring regions;
- “Chasses gardées” have ceased to exist.

The policy of intensified engagement and a more exhaustive and conceptual manner of thinking is manifested in a not insignificant number of working papers and programs prepared after 1991 in the political parties, political foundations, and the different ministries (particularly the Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation) on the issue, whether the “role” of Germany should be played out bilaterally or within the context of the European Union.⁵

In reality, however, the status of Germany’s Near East policy appears to be more modest. At times, a contradiction between far-reaching concepts, on the one hand, and hesitation concerning the interests of German policy in the Near East, on the other, cannot be ignored. There are some new signals being put out regarding Israeli–Arab relations – and above all concerning relations with Iran, which have been cultivated despite the considerable resistance of the US and Israel, and which are what remains of the particularly distinct emphasis of such a new German policy in the Near East. A policy directed towards the world of Islam as a whole, which would have had to enhance the position of religion in German foreign policy, did not develop beyond its first steps. It was put on ice by Foreign

Nordafrika,” *Bulletin* (published by the Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung), 40 (1994), pp. 354–356 (henceforth: Schäfer, *Zur deutschen Außenpolitik*).

⁴ An extensive definition of positions of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern policy of the Federal government of Germany can be found in the reply of the Federal government to the parliamentary question posed by Dr. Christoph Zöpel and others, Deutscher Bundestag, 13. Wahlperiode, Document 13/3037, 21 November 1995.

⁵ For the ongoing presentation of the Near East politics of the Federal Republic of Germany (with an eye towards the EU) within the respective periods, see U. Steinbach, “Die Beziehungen Bundesrepublik Deutschland – Nahost,” Th. Koszinowski and H. Mattes (eds.), *Nahost-Jahrbuch*, Opladen 1987 and following years (henceforth, *Nahost-Jahrbuch*).

Minister Klaus Kinkel due to the failure of a proposed spectacular "Islamkonferenz."⁶

Only President Roman Herzog has discreetly continued to pursue this dimension of German foreign policy (and its equivalent in domestic politics and social policy). In comparison to the great themes of foreign policy such as the shaping of Atlantic relations, the formation and expansion of the EU, and NATO's extension towards Eastern Europe, German policy in the Mediterranean and the Near East remains distinctly secondary.

Aspects of a German Policy for the Near East

A Near East policy deserving of its name should consist of more than the sum of individual political decisions, explanations, economic engagements, and visits to the region. Rather, it should be based on a coherent definition of German interests and a conceptual platform, should include the geographical region between North Africa and the Persian Gulf – as well as the Caucasus and Central Asia as a secondary arena, and should take as its starting point the interdependence of political, social, economic, and religious-cultural facts in this extended area. A German foreign policy defined in this manner presents four sub-regional areas of emphasis: North Africa, the area of the Arab–Israeli conflict (that is, the "peace process"), the Persian Gulf region, and Turkey.

It should be the aim and concern of German policy to contribute to the maintenance, or rather creation, of political stability in the region. This involves economic cooperation and the furthering of unavoidable political and social processes of change, as well as aid in solving regional conflicts. The realization of these goals is not only a precondition for the securing of economic interests; it is also a must in terms of security policy. Conflicts, instability, and militancy in the Near East may affect Europe directly, particularly in the following two ways: through imported terrorist violence by foreign organizations and by means of migration movements that disturb the social balance in Europe by producing social and political tensions.

Germany has experienced only the beginnings of both terror and militancy, mostly in connection with the unresolved issue of the Kurds in Turkey and Iran, as well as due to immigration, mostly from Turkey, which

⁶ Cf. *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1995*, Opladen 1996, p. 16 (henceforth: *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1995*).

for many years has been one of the main "hard cores" around which xenophobic activities in Germany are focused.

A German Near East policy has, therefore, to be viewed in the context of several facts and requirements:⁷

The first is that it must pursue parallel tracks: the European as well as the German. Germany cannot avoid becoming involved politically where its own interests are concerned or where joint planning is desirable or suitable. On the other hand, the Mediterranean region and the Near East have to be increasingly fit into the framework of a joint European Union (EU) foreign and security policy.

Second, sub-regional particularities have to be met by different political objectives and strategies, but without losing sight of far-reaching interdependencies within the widely-defined Near East.

Third, emphases have to be set with regard to specific problems. The greatest challenges in the next few years in the Near East will be in regard to Islamic fundamentalism, a possible escalation of tensions and conflicts in connection with the stymied (perhaps doomed) Israeli-Arab peace process, the proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction, and a mass exodus to Europe from areas of crisis in the Near East.

A German Near East policy that will engage itself in the region along these lines will meet with a great measure of acceptance and expectation. The fact that all governments in the Near and Middle East, i.e., Arab, Israeli, and Iranian, have nearly unreservedly supported the reunification of Germany is a sign, as well as a result, of the sympathy that Germany traditionally enjoys throughout the entire region. These expectations are however also connected with political calculations, which should be attentively recorded, but also weighed in a matter-of-fact way. In the Near East, especially among the Arabs, the Federal Republic continues to be viewed as a future major power. Germany's economic – and particularly, its political – potential is for the time being largely overestimated. After its reunification, Germany was seen as a key player by many states in the Near and Middle East trying to realize their interests in and through

⁷ See G. Krämer, "Fremde Nachbarn: Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten," *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik*, II: *Herausforderungen*, pp. 157–173; U. Steinbach, "Interessen und Handlungsmöglichkeiten Deutschlands im Nahen und Mittleren Osten," *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik*, III: *Interessen und Strategien*, pp. 189–194.

Europe. This is particularly true for Germany's role within the EU, by which it is expected to make a special contribution to the solution of the Near East's political problems. Moreover, the Federal Republic of Germany is often viewed as a possible counterweight to what is perceived as being too powerful American predominance in the Near East.

Most governments in the region believe that the fact that the US has become the predominating global power after the East–West conflict came to an end is not in their best interests. They therefore support all possible developments that might lead to the limitation of American power. It is against this background that one can understand why the widespread consent to end the partition of Germany was accompanied by the hope that a reunited Germany would emphasize its independence from the US. It is the same line of thought that underlies the support of most governments in the Near East for making Germany a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

The Israeli–Arab Dimension

With the outset of the Israeli–Arab peace process towards the end of 1991, more specifically with the signing of the Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993, the spheres of activity of German policy with regard to Israeli–Arab relations expanded. This resulted not only in a number of programs that attempted to redefine German foreign policy and German development policy in view of the new situation in the Near East, but even in the creation of new points of emphasis in day-to-day politics. The agreement between Israel and the PLO enabled putting aside the paralyzing concept that had characterized German Near East policy for decades – namely, that every move towards Arab–Palestinian positions would be registered on the debit side of German–Israeli relations, or be rejected in Israel.

Whereas until the talks in Oslo had been made public Germany (West Germany and, later, reunited Germany, but not East Germany)⁸ had – at least officially – followed suit with the Israeli condemnation of the PLO as a terrorist organization and maintained only informal, low profile contacts with the leading personalities of this organization, after the signing of the

⁸ See also the article by Angelika Timm in this volume.

Declaration of Principles there ensued a scramble to meet with Yasir Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Authority. Arafat accepted the invitation of the German foreign minister to be the guest of the Federal Government from 7 to 9 December 1993. His extremely full agenda and the number of talks he conducted with government personalities and representatives of the economy were a clear indication that official Bonn wanted to make up for what it had lost all those years and to upgrade its relations with the PLO.

Already in the subsequent year, the Federal Government revealed that it would implement its long-term intention to act on behalf of the Palestinians, once the framework of a settlement between them and the Israelis had been mapped out. Speaking to the German–Arab Society on 24 June 1994, Foreign Minister Kinkel availed himself of this opportunity to explain the fundamental principles of Germany's Near East policy. He pointed to the network of close and friendly relations that had been established with the Arabs during the past few decades, while also underscoring the fact that Germany's Near East policy was “also European Near East policy.” He emphasized that the peace process should be regarded as a focal point of reference in Germany's policy towards that region, stressing that it would only prove successful if it produced “rapid and tangible improvements.”⁹ And indeed, the minister's words were almost immediately followed by action: the opening of a liaison office in Jericho, with the purpose of coordinating German and international relief measures. The fact that Germany was the first country to take such a step attracted the attention of the Palestinians and the international community.

It was particularly Chancellor Helmuth Kohl's visit to the region in summer 1995 that evoked new signals. The major relief measures since 1992 had provided “additional proof of Germany's elementary interest in the peace process in the Near East,” as the chancellor said while visiting Arafat in Gaza on 7 June.¹⁰ This seemed to imply that the German Federal Government intended its economic aid to be more than the “check book diplomacy” of earlier years. Kohl's visit to neighboring Jordan also had a more pronounced political emphasis. “If peace in this area will not become an option and the terrible scenario imagined by so many people becomes a reality, it will be a very expensive affair for all sides involved, even for the German taxpayer,” he declared at the inauguration of a water project at

⁹ Unpublished manuscript available from the German–Arab Society, Berlin.

¹⁰ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (henceforth: FAZ), 8 June 1995.

al-Baqura, south of Tiberias, on 5 June.¹¹

This more self-confident German attitude was accompanied by some de-emotionalization of German-Israeli relations. During his visit to Israel in December 1994, his first visit abroad after taking office, President Roman Herzog advocated shaping these relations in a less emotional manner and with more orientation towards the future.¹² It was not only xenophobic and anti-Jewish acts of violence in Germany that prompted Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to give public expression to his trust in German democracy.¹³ He also called upon Germany to play a more active role in international politics, even conceding that German soldiers could participate in UN peacekeeping missions in the Near East. Germany's deepening involvement on the Arab side created new dimensions for Germany in its relations with Israel, without however lending the appearance of one-sided support. During his visit in the Near East in June 1995, the chancellor thus appeared markedly as mediator between the EU and Israel. He was willing to support Israel's wish for closer cooperation with the EU, even for privileged relations with Brussels. "Today we are talking about the future, without forgetting the past," was Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's comment about this visit.¹⁴ During its previous summit meeting in Essen in December 1994, the EU had already granted Israel a "privileged status" – due, in no small measure, to pressure from Bonn.¹⁵

With Benjamin Netanyahu's election as prime minister in the middle of 1996 and the subsequent stagnation of the peace process, Germany's Near East policy was considerably dampened and even reactivated old inhibitions. True, the German government repeatedly appealed to the parties in the conflict to continue the peace process, becoming more outspoken about it as the stalemate continued, particularly with regard to the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. These statements became more and more pronounced. However, Bonn's abstention from voting on resolutions criticizing and condemning Israeli settlement activities, like

¹¹ *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1995*, p. 13.

¹² *Monitor Dienst der Deutschen Welle, Naher Osten*, Köln, 7 December 1994.

¹³ *FAZ*, 25 August 1994.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9 June 1995.

¹⁵ See L. Watzal, "Hilfreiche Konkurrenz? Die Nahostpolitik der USA und der EU im Vergleich," *Internationale Politik*, 50, no. 7 (1995), pp. 37–42. The documents can be found in "Schlußfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates der Staats- und Regierungschefs in Essen am 9. und 10. Dezember 1994," *ibid.*, 50, no. 1 (1995), pp. 83–110, esp. pp. 90–91 and 107–109; cf. *FAZ*, 10 June 1995, and *Handelsblatt* (henceforth: *HB*), 7 June 1995.

the “illegal Israeli measures in occupied East-Jerusalem,”¹⁶ at the UN General Assembly in March and April 1997, provoked some irritated reactions. Germany was the only member of the EU which did not support the resolutions. During his visit to Egypt in May 1997, Foreign Minister Kinkel admitted that this had been discussed extensively during his talks.¹⁷ Bonn’s behavior was defended using the same argument which has always justified Bonn’s political abstention from efforts to achieve a political solution of the Israeli–Arab conflict: Germany has a “historical” obligation to support Israel’s security needs.¹⁸ The suspicion that Bonn may have reverted to “check book diplomacy” suggested itself when Bonn spared no pains to point out its obviously considerable relief measures on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.¹⁹ It was obvious that such a lack of political courage was unsuitable for the role that Europe was called upon to play in the peace process. Whereas one might think that the appointment of a joint European special envoy to the Near East was a measure to be welcomed, in terms of its political efficacy it had the result of reducing the understanding between the member states of the EU to the lowest common denominator.

Germany obviously found it difficult to continuously pursue a policy in accordance with its own interests in the Near East. Prime Minister Netanyahu cleverly knew how to intimate to the German government that it had a role to play in the developments in the region. The Christian Democratic Party had succeeded, even before Netanyahu’s election victory, to favorably influence his attitude towards Germany – Netanyahu was the first Likud leader to visit Germany, in October 1995 – and he had been given the opportunity to present his program for the peace process in a lecture to the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, confirming Germany’s worst expectations of the Israeli leader. It is therefore all the more remarkable that Netanyahu visited Bonn only three months after his election, on 26

¹⁶ See Resolution A/RES/51/223 of the UN General Assembly, adopted on 13 March 1997: A. Volle and W. Weidenfeld (eds.), *Frieden im Nahen Osten? Chancen, Gefahren, Perspektiven*, Bonn 1997, pp. 278–279. (henceforth: *Frieden im Nahen Osten?*); Resolution A/RES/ES-10/2 of the UN General Assembly, passed on 25 April 1997: *ibid.*, pp. 285–287.

¹⁷ *Egyptian Gazette*, 8 May 1997.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*; and compare the article by Shlomo Shpiro in this volume.

¹⁹ L. Watzal, “Deutschland und Israel in der Weltpolitik,” *Die Neue Gesellschaft / Frankfurter Hefte*, 43 (1996), pp. 710–714; *idem*, “Geld und Teilautonomie im Nahen Osten,” *Die Neue Ordnung*, 49 (1995), pp. 468–473; Address of German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel to the Helmut Kohl Institute at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on 5 March 1997, *Frieden im Nahen Osten?* pp. 274–278.

September 1997. As for the peace process, his visit contributed as little as did his meeting with Chancellor Kohl on 5 December 1997.

Netanyahu's deliberate refusal to recognize Europe's (and Germany's) vital interest in stability in the Near East (of which an Arab-Israeli agreement is one of the central components), also negatively affected German-Israeli relations in the long run. Aside from numerous indications of the deterioration of these relations,²⁰ an uproar was caused by news of a secret report by the Israeli ambassador in Bonn, Avi Primor, to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, warning his government that Netanyahu's tough policy could endanger Germany's support for Israel.²¹

Actually, the German public increasingly regarded the demand for abstention from political involvement in the Near East and the cautious attitude towards Israel in connection with the German past with less understanding than politicians in Bonn still seemed to assume. On the other hand, Arafat and the Palestinians enjoyed an increasingly positive reputation. In any case the political echelons in Bonn were still afraid to speak about exercising "pressure" on Israel. On the other hand, the state minister at the Foreign Office, Helmut Schäfer, warned, as early as September 1996, that German aid for Israel should be made dependent upon sincere efforts for a continuation of the peace process. He was later to make similar statements concerning Israel's relations with the EU.²² And Jürgen Möllemann, who aside from filling other public functions occupies the post of chairman of the German-Arab Society, flatly called Prime Minister Netanyahu "irresponsible," demanding "appropriate political and economic sanctions."²³

North Africa – Breaking New Ground for German Policy

Limitation of the full possible scope of German policy due to the renewed tension in Arab-Israeli relations can also be applied to Algeria and the

²⁰ *Handelsblatt*, 4 December 1997.

²¹ "I am not yet entirely convinced that the Germans, at least Kohl and Kinkel, are already prepared to give up their singular position and join the European consensus. I do however believe that they would like to do so, because their opinion about the events in the region does not differ from the opinion of other European states." *Pressespiegel der deutschen Botschaft in Tel Aviv*, 18 April 1997; see also *Die Welt*, 19 April 1997.

²² *Monitor Dienst der Deutschen Welle, Naher Osten*, 26 September 1996.

²³ *Focus*, 16 (1997), p. 82.

Maghreb. Here too, after 1991, there was a new tune in the air: Bonn had begun to realize that the crisis in North Africa would also have negative implications for Germany's security. This led, for the first time, to demands for a more active German contribution within the framework of a European Union Mediterranean policy. Besides, one did not want a "division of labor" in the sense that Germany and other EU countries not adjoining the Mediterranean would be responsible for Eastern Europe, while countries adjoining the Mediterranean would accept responsibility for the Mediterranean region and North Africa.²⁴

The objective of both tracks is all-European responsibility. The Federal government welcomed the Bundestag's decision of 11 November 1993 concerning the foundations of German policy vis-à-vis the partner states in the south and eastern Mediterranean, particularly the states in the Maghreb. It correctly placed emphasis on the significance of the region and the necessity for cooperation. In a lecture to the German-Tunisian Society delivered on 26 April 1994, the state minister in the German Foreign Office, Helmut Schäfer, also referred to this. European policy, he argued, should be to strengthen North Africa's political, economic, and social stability. In this case, Germany would be part of a joint European effort characterized, first and foremost, by economic cooperation.²⁵

The struggle conducted by extreme Islamic elements against the Algerian state, which erupted after the cancellation of the second ballot in the parliamentary elections conducted in Algeria in January 1992, has severely limited German policy. Meanwhile, bilateral relations with Morocco and Tunisia have been kept alive with the help of economic cooperation. The aim of German policy – contributing through political dialogue to the democratization of North Africa – has proven to be a chimera. Tunisia, in particular, and also Egypt, fearing that Islamic fundamentalism would spread to their countries, have met that challenge by taking a firmer hold of the domestic reins and have chosen to limit, rather than widen,

²⁴ This is defined very clearly in the parliamentary question of Dr. Christoph Zöpel and others and the parliamentary Social Democratic Party [SPD] – Document 13/1964 – and the reply of the Federal government, Deutscher Bundestag, 13. Wahlperiode, Document 13/3037, 21 November 1995: "German interests also call for an active German Mediterranean policy...." The document contains an abundance of references and reference points for the Mediterranean-Near East policy of the German Federal government as well as those of the SPD opposition. The SPD's conceptions are formulated in: "Europe, the Near and Middle East: Principles of Social Democratic Policy in the Near and Middle East 1997," proposed by Christoph Zöpel et al., September 1997, available from the headquarters of the SPD, Berlin.

²⁵ Schäfer, *Zur deutschen Außenpolitik* (above, n. 3).

opportunities for participation in the political process. Under these circumstances an intensification of intra-regional cooperation with the Union du Maghreb Arabe, founded in 1989, has been inconceivable.

In recent years, intensified German involvement in the Mediterranean region has been a fact on the ground. Apart from close relations with Egypt – a true cornerstone of German Mediterranean and Near East policy in bilateral relations – it has been possible to foster a closely-knit network of economic (mainly with Tunisia) and political relations.²⁶ The growing interest shown in developments in Algeria is significant in this context. The complexity of the crisis in that country, particularly the sensitivity of the Algerian government towards any foreign interest which was conceived as being interference in the internal affairs of Algeria, for a long period of time did not allow for spectacular initiatives, but rather indicated that a process of moderate confidence building measures should be pursued. In this respect, the state minister at the Foreign Office, Werner Hoyer, has particularly distinguished himself. A number of trips to Algeria, some of them in the company of leading personalities in the German economy, underscored Germany's interest in such relations. Hoyer was quick to point out that Algeria's consolidation depended on the rehabilitation of domestic security and the enhancement of democracy, in addition to the improvement of the economy.²⁷

Whether a result of specific German interest in Algeria or part of the European division of labor, it was Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel who, towards the end of 1997, initiated the visit by a European delegation to conduct talks about the crisis and discuss a possible European contribution to its settlement.²⁸ The fact that the visit of the foreign ministers of the UK, Luxembourg, and Austria in January 1998 produced very few tangible results was, in the present situation, almost self-explanatory. Nevertheless the dialogue with Algeria concerning European assistance in the struggle against terrorism represented a "first step to further talks," according to Foreign Minister Kinkel.²⁹

²⁶ For details see *Nahost-Jahrbuch* (above, n. 5).

²⁷ See the speech of State Minister Hoyer in the Bundestag during the debate on Algeria, 30 October 1997, *Internationale Politik*, 53, no. 1 (1998), pp. 104–106. See also the interview with him in *FAZ*, 31 January 1998. Note should also be taken of the Forum Algéro-Allemand des Affaires, whose memorandum was signed by the president of the Near and Middle East Initiative of the German Economy, Michael Pohr, and Algerian Ambassador Mohammed Haneche.

²⁸ *FAZ*, 16 January 1998.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 22 January 1998.

This overall positive development of bilateral relations with the Maghreb states³⁰ is part of a general concept of European–Mediterranean cooperation agreed upon in November 1995, in Barcelona. The focus of this concept is the creation of a free trade zone between the EU and the Mediterranean states (to be created by 2010), but a general proposal for political, security-related, and cultural cooperation or coordination was also planned.³¹ From the very beginning, the German Federal Government has actively participated in and contributed to the preparation and organization of this wide-ranging concept. It is based on the aforementioned premise that the political, economic, and social stabilization of the Mediterranean region is as much in the interest of Germany as is the stabilization of Eastern and Central Europe. The course for the organization of a Mediterranean policy was already set during the EU summit meeting in Essen and is based on a report that was compiled during the German EU presidency. Already during that presidency, negotiations with Israel and Tunisia concerning new association agreements were completed.³²

When all is said and done, a German Mediterranean policy is only just in the making. It is not Germany's fault that there still remained a huge gap between the relatively clear conceptual positions of the different actors in Bonn and the shaping of this policy by political reality. But the geographical and historical dimension should not be overlooked: Germany is not situated along the shores of the Mediterranean, nor does it have a past connected to that region like those European countries bordering on the Mediterranean. One should also not ignore the fact that the Mediterranean countries in the EU jealously keep to themselves control over any initiatives in their own front yard. By launching its previously-mentioned initiative concerning Algeria, Bonn had adopted a pioneer role in European politics, directed at providing moderate measures for settling the internal Algerian conflict. This is probably largely due to the fact that a French political effort in that

³⁰ See the paper "Demands of German and European Politics in relation to the Maghreb," published by the Federal Committee of Experts (Bundesfachausschuß) for Foreign Policy of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) on 18 January 1993.

³¹ Speech by State Minister Hoyer (above, n. 27), p. 105.

³² See BT-document 13/3037 (above, n. 24). For an analysis of the "Barcelona Process" see A. Jünemann, "Die euro-mediterrane Partnerschaft vor der Zerreißprobe? Eine Bilanz der Zweiten Mittelmeerkonferenz von Malta," *Orient*, 3 (1997), pp. 465–476. See also "Schlußfolgerungen der Zweiten Europa-Mittelmeer-Ministerkonferenz am 15. und 16.4.1997 in Malta," *Internationale Politik*, 53, no. 1 (1998), pp. 72–77.

country would be met with even greater suspicion. Against this background it thus seems realistic for the Federal Republic of Germany to firmly integrate its Mediterranean policy into the European context. This would be for the benefit of the German interest for security, stability, and economic development in the region as well as for other feasible German endeavors in this context. This also implies, however, that Bonn should insist that a European policy should be enabled and provided with the necessary financial means to achieve these goals.

Despite Germany's pronounced dual regional orientation – towards Central and Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and the Mediterranean region, on the other – it must admit that it will not be able to recreate in the Mediterranean region the closely knit political, economic, security-related, and cultural network that it has with the Central and Eastern European states. A German attempt to play solo in the Mediterranean region would be condemned to insignificance; this however should not mean that the extension of bilateral relations with the Mediterranean states beyond the EU framework should be accorded minor significance.

The Persian Gulf – Possibilities and Limits of German Politics

The interdependence between developments in the Persian Gulf area and other sub-regions in the Near East, particularly in that directly affected by the Arab–Israeli conflict and the peace process, has repeatedly manifested itself in the past. This applies to the Islamic revolution and its consequences, as well as to the war between Iraq and Iran and the shock-waves of the conflict in the Gulf area that erupted on 2 August 1990 with the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq. Germany's economic interests in the region and the impact of the actors on the entire area made its relations with the Persian Gulf seem to be part of a concept for a Near East policy which should take into account the entire region between Central Asia and North Africa.

However, the scope for German action in the Persian Gulf is limited. This holds particularly true for the Arab Peninsula, where the US is the dominating power. It is true that certain emphases have been set by German politics in Iran; processes of change in that country were supported, thus contributing to the stabilization of the Near East. The "critical dialogue"

which has been generally – and skeptically – discussed since 1992, was at first no more than a pragmatic answer to the question concerning a strategy: How to bring this regime back into the international community, a regime which through its revolutionary Islamic ideology had created its own system of coordinates for domestic and foreign policy. The contribution of German foreign policy to the implementation of the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq (1987–1988) was particularly beneficial in relation to further efforts towards a change of Iranian political behavior through contacts, cooperation, and a dialogue relating to questions and demands that the Western countries believed had to be put to the Iranian leadership.³³

Specifically German concerns are not the topics of this dialogue: observance of human rights (such as abolition of Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa*, that British novelist Salman Rushdie was deserving of death because of his novel, *Satanical Verses*); putting an end to the export of terrorism; the concern that Iran could become a nuclear power and thus pose a threat to the entire region, particularly Israel; and finally, the efforts to remove Iran's opposition to the Israeli–Arab peace process. All these continue to be concerns shared by the entire international community, not by Germany alone. Germany distinguished itself in the development of this dialogue to such an extent that the “critical dialogue” came to be almost identified with it. This is probably due, among other things, to the particular historical quality of the relations and the fact that among its “policies towards the West” the Iranian leadership has accorded special attention to its relations with Germany after its reunification. And finally, the dialogue also attracted a great deal of attention due to the “Mykonos Case,” which was defined as a case of state terrorism due to the involvement of the Iranian secret service in the killing, in Berlin, of four leaders of the Kurdish opposition.

Whether the political assumptions of the “critical dialogue” were realistic was a question hotly discussed when the Superior Court of Justice of Berlin, in dealing with the Mykonos murders, believed towards the end of the trial that there was proof of the direct involvement of the chief of the Iranian secret service and Iranian state leaders such as Prime Minister Hashemi Rafsanjani and the spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. They were held responsible for issuing the order for this political assassination. In the

³³ Concerning the Iranian policy of the German Federal Government see the government's reply to the parliamentary question of delegate Amke Dieter-Scheuer and others and the parliamentary faction Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Deutscher Bundestag, Bonn 1995.

simmering political climate in Germany at the time and in view of the efforts of the Iranian regime to influence the court's decision, the presiding judge was viewed as a downright hero of political correctness.

The domestic dissent corresponded to European–American dissent which found particularly harsh expression in German–American relations. Washington's response to the policy of dialogue was to initiate a policy of sanctions and an embargo, in order to convince Teheran to change its course. The imposition of a total trade embargo in April 1995 by the American government also increased pressure on the Federal Government of Germany to follow US policy.

Bonn has displayed a hitherto unfamiliar obstinacy in its differences of opinion with Washington concerning its policy towards Iran. This became all the more difficult when Israel adopted the American positions and attempted in numerous ways to influence Bonn's policy. The fact that Bonn remained adamant is symptomatic of the de-emotionalization of German–Israeli relations.

Israeli criticism of Bonn's Iranian policy seemed all the less justified, since the Federal Government was also using its contacts for the mediation of Israel's humanitarian interests, indirectly concerning Iran. On 21 July 1996, an exchange of fallen and captured combatants between Israel and the Lebanese Hizbollah took place. With German mediation, Hizbollah transferred the remains of two Israeli soldiers to Israel and released seventeen captured members of Israel's ally, the South Lebanese Army (SLA). In return, Israel ordered the release of forty five prisoners from the SLA prison in al-Khiam in southern Lebanon. In addition, the Israelis transferred the corpses of 123 Lebanese combatants that had been buried in a mass grave in northern Israel.

Without a green light from Teheran, these spectacular exchanges could not have taken place. They came hard upon much friction in Israeli–German relations during the previous year over German policy towards Iran. In 1995, the release of Hermes loans to Iran had caused anger in Jerusalem. The general criticism of German–Iranian relations also included the contacts which Bonn was said to have established between members of the Israeli and Iranian secret services concerning Israeli Air Force navigator Ron Arad, missing in action since 1986 and who, according to earlier reports, is said to be held captive in Iran. According to Ori Orr, chairman of the Knesset's Committee for Foreign Affairs, Bonn had provided "incorrect and irresponsible information concerning Ron Arad, in order to justify its trade

contacts with Iran.”³⁴ The considerable irritation in Bonn concerning these allegations was, however, cleared up during Rabin’s visit to Bonn, scheduled at short notice for 29 March 1995.

Iran’s key position as a link between West Asia on the one hand, and Central, East and Southern Asia, on the other, is becoming increasingly prominent. This fact contributes to the speedy enhancement of Iran’s international standing. The change in political leadership, that is, the rise to power in August 1997 of President Khatami, who took an important step towards the re-integration of Iran into the international community (as symbolized by the remarkable success of the conference of heads of states and governments of the “Organization of the Islamic Conference” held in Teheran in December 1997), seems to indicate that it is only a question of time until Washington too will begin to normalize its relations with Iran. It will thus require a particular German effort to keep up its special relationship with Iran, not least in connection with growing competition among several European states for benefits in their bilateral economic relations with Iran.

In the shaping of German–Iranian relations Bonn has pursued *Realpolitik* – a rare case in German foreign policy altogether. In doing so, the German Federal Government ignored public opinion and the criticism of allies and friends, as well as within the parliament, which attempted to signal its criticism when, on 10 November 1995, it forced Foreign Minister Kinkel to cancel his invitation of Iranian Foreign Minister Velayeti to the spectacular “Islam conference” planned for the 15th and 16th of that month. This caused the German foreign minister to call off the conference altogether in order not to insult Iran. But the future of relations with Iran will indicate that despite the increasing “Europeanization” of policy relating to the Near East, one cannot forgo the strenuous pursuit of a policy that is firmly within the national interest.

Due to the relationship – at times extremely prominent – with Iran, German policy towards other regions in the Persian Gulf area remained relatively feeble. Over and above the “benign neglect” that Germany has traditionally displayed towards this part of the world, relations with the conservative regimes on the Arab peninsula were characterized by the fact that Germany did not actively participate in the Gulf War alliance that brought about Kuwait’s liberation from Iraqi occupation in 1991. Germany

³⁴ FAZ, 24 February 1995.

only slowly recovered from this weakness in political relations, particularly concerning the economic implications thereof.

It may be unjustified to claim that Germany's relations with Iraq – if there is such a thing – have stood in the shadow of its relations with Iraq's neighbor, Iran. The UN policy of sanctions, as well as the vulnerability of the German economy (over the years some German firms have been accused of involvement in the 1980s in helping to establish and build the potential for chemical weapons in Iraq), resulting in increased vigilance by the German legal authorities in observing the sanctions, have forced political and economic elements to exercise extreme caution in engaging in any initiatives with Iraq that could be construed as being a violation of the sanctions.

All this notwithstanding, one also cannot ignore the fact that in view of the opposition to a "critical dialogue" with Iran, Bonn has felt reluctant to open up a second front vis-à-vis the US regarding Iraq. Not only did several European countries, particularly France, officially receive high ranking Iraqi officials (the deputy prime minister, Tarek Aziz, for example, repeatedly visited Paris), but businessmen from various countries (particularly Russia) visited Baghdad in order to set the course for the day on which the sanctions would be lifted or eased. Germany abstained from these kinds of business contacts. Political contacts were also largely avoided – this is true for visits of German delegates to Baghdad as well as the occasional Iraqi visitors to Bonn, to whom the offices of leading politicians remained closed. This also applied to the few, uneasy business contacts. Even when sanctions were eased, after concessions by the UN, to enable the purchase of food products and medicines from a limited amount of the proceeds from oil sales, this had on the whole no positive repercussions on the German economy. Actually this is also due to the fact that Bonn – as opposed to many other states, including the US – did not dare to man its mission in Baghdad. The safeguarding of German diplomatic interests in Iraq is seen to by a diplomat stationed in Amman, who occasionally visits Baghdad.³⁵

Small wonder, then, that Bonn's voice was hardly heard during the crisis between Baghdad and Washington in late 1997 and early 1998. The issue was no less than the justifiability and political meaning of sanctions, which after seven years clearly showed signs of deterioration. The fact that this caused differences between the US (supported in certain respect by the

³⁵ Ibid.

UK) and other members of the Security Council provided Saddam Hussein with the opportunity to challenge the regime of sanctions, beyond the arguments over the composition of the inspection team. This again gave rise to the urgent question as to what extent Europe would have to submit to an American interpretation of the political constellations in the Near East, or whether it should work towards formulating a position and strategy of its own, based on a European point of view and European interests, which however would have to be discussed and coordinated in partnership and fairness with the US.

During the Iraqi-American crisis over the UN inspection teams, the German Federal Government advocated a political solution, without however directly entering the picture. In the event of inevitable military intervention, Chancellor Kohl promised the US "full military cooperation" and the use of their military facilities in Germany. He also hinted that Germany's position towards further developments in Iraq also depended on a consultation within the EU.³⁶ This implied that Germany's Near East policy could oscillate between its interest in strengthening the common foreign and security policy on the one hand and loyalty towards the US on the other.

On the whole, the conclusion that the foregoing seems to elicit is that Bonn's Iraqi policy during the last years neither succeeded in achieving a common European policy vis-à-vis the Near East, nor did it correspond to Germany's interests in a stable Gulf region and future economic relations with a potentially important country which, in the past, had been favorably inclined towards Germany.

Turkey – A Blurred Strategic Attitude

Complex changes in international politics as well as within Turkish society and that country's regional surroundings³⁷ have transformed Turkey into an important factor in the Near Eastern power constellation. It is now

³⁶ FAZ, 9 February 1998.

³⁷ U. Steinbach, *Die Türkei im 20. Jahrhundert: Schwieriger Partner Europas*, Bergisch Gladbach 1996 (henceforth: Steinbach, *Die Türkei im 20. Jahrhundert*); idem, "Außenpolitik am Wendepunkt: Ankara sucht einen Standort im internationalen System," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B11-12/97 (7 March 1997), pp. 24-32; idem, "Die Türkei, der Nahe Osten und das Wasser: Verschiebungen des Kräftegleichgewichts," *Internationale Politik*, 53, no. 1 (1998), pp. 9-16.

virtually impossible to pursue a policy towards Turkey that exclusively takes into account its connection to the West, i.e., its membership in NATO, and its association with the EU. The growth of Islam confronts Europe with questions concerning the feasibility of relations with (self-declared) peaceful and democratic Muslims – questions that are being raised today in North Africa and the entire Near East.³⁸

Turkey's new self-definition as a regional power, that has been developing since 1990 with growing clarity and was institutionalized and brought to the point in the 1996 agreement with Israel on military cooperation, points to the necessity of integrating Turkey into an overall concept of German Near East policy. This leads to the fascinating opportunity to forge a connection – by means of expanding the EU – between Europe's future and the policy towards Turkey, a country which, in many regards, occupies a key position in the Islamic Near and Middle East. A German policy that recognizes these contexts, expressing them creatively in bilateral relations with Turkey and connecting them with that country's standing in the EU, would thus gradually adopt an "Islamic dimension."

This being the background, German policy vis-à-vis Turkey can be said to have lagged far behind its actual possibilities. This is not the place to critically examine the history of German-Turkish relations during the past decade,³⁹ which are characterized by deficient and fragmentary perceptions on both sides, over-reactions, and a lack of foresight. The decision taken by the European Council at its conference held on 12–13 December 1997 in Luxembourg, not to place Turkey on the same level with the other eleven candidates for membership in the EU, was symptomatic. With regard to Germany, which carried particular weight in this decision, the following two perceptions of an assessment of Turkey seem to be particularly salient:

For cultural and historical reasons, Turkey is not, whether admittedly or not, a part of Europe. This argument, used over the years – at times in particular by politicians from the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) – was discussed openly in March 1997 in statements made within the Europäische Volkspartei (EVP) that questioned whether

³⁸ B. Kodmani-Darwish and M. Chartouni-Dubarry, *Les Etats arabes face à la contestation islamiste*, Paris 1997.

³⁹ Steinbach, *Die Türkei im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 411–432; idem, "Alte Freundschaft am Scheideweg? Über die Zukunft der deutsch-türkischen Beziehungen," C. Leggewie and Z. Senocak (eds.), *Deutsche-Türken: Das Ende der Geduld*, Reinbek 1993, pp. 123–130.

Turkey could, on account of its cultural background as a basically Muslim country, become a member of the EU.⁴⁰

The horrifying vision that Turkey's rapprochement with the EU, including full membership in the final stage, will lead to a continuous wave of Turkish laborers seeking work in Germany. This is an irrational argument, which was also used in the 1997 discussion concerning dual citizenship in order to deny Turkish youths these means that would facilitate their integration into German society.

The strategic dimension of Turkey's geo-political situation has repeatedly been referred to in German policy. In view of the conflicts surrounding it in the Near East, the Balkans and the Caucasus ("Turkey's foreign policy is a nightmare of 360 degrees"),⁴¹ Turkey's condition is really inseparably linked to the question whether that country can realize its responsibilities towards stabilization of its environment rather than being drawn itself into these conflicts. In the Balkans, German, Turkish, and European interests are tightly interwoven; in the Caucasus, a moderate Turkish policy could help to bring conflicts under control and advance stability; in Central Asia, Turkey's secular and democratic character represents a model for the transformation of the young Turkic-speaking republics; the relations between Ankara and its Arab neighbors are not only based on the "water problem" (the Euphrates and the Tigris), while its relations with Israel have improved fundamentally from the beginning of the peace process until the signing of the military agreement in 1996.

On the whole, German policy towards Turkey has not moved beyond rhetoric. This also applies to the Kurdish question, as well as to the visible improvement in the sphere of human rights and democracy. A comprehensive concept of German policy towards Turkey was never really developed. Long-term negative effects of the decisions taken at Luxembourg,⁴² in whose phrasing Germany played a dominant role and which were the cause of tremendous disappointment in pro-European circles

⁴⁰ FAZ, 19 March 1997.

⁴¹ *International Herald Tribune* (henceforth: *IHT*), 19 May 1995.

⁴² "Die Türkei verkündet das Ende des politischen Dialogs mit der Europäischen Union," FAZ, 15 December 1997; *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (henceforth: *NZZ*), 16 December 1997. Compare the declaration by the German chancellor at the conclusion of the special summit meeting of the European Council in Luxembourg on 21 November 1997, *Internationale Politik*, 53, no. 1 (1998), pp. 111–113; Conference of the European Council, 12–13 December 1997, in Luxembourg, summing up by the presidency, *ibid.*, pp. 119–121.

in Turkey, have been avoided due to the decision taken at the EU summit meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 to grant Turkey candidate status. Retrospectively, it can be said in summary that the crises in the relations have widened the schism between Europe (and Germany) and Turkey. Paradoxically, this applies particularly to the supply of weapons and other material from the stocks of the National People's Army (National Volksarmee). The repeated suspension of supplies due to the accusation that the weapons were being misused to oppress the Kurds led to anti-German feelings even in highest Turkish circles.

Only if Turkey feels itself as being part of Europe – with the perspective of one day becoming fully integrated into Europe – will it be prepared to contribute to Europe's security in a region in which that continent has considerable vested interests.⁴³ And only if the political leadership in Ankara is convinced that it is on its way to full European membership, will it be prepared to solve domestic Turkish problems on the basis of European political values and thus attempt to play a stabilizing role for European interests within its regional environment. In this context German policy carries a special responsibility: In view of the diverse relations between both countries, Berlin's policy towards Turkey must bring its influence to bear more vigorously than in the past on Ankara's political elite.

Relations between Germany and Turkey also demonstrate that German Near East policy has domestic as well as social aspects. The Turkish–Kurdish conflict will continuously spread to Germany if no political solution can be found within Turkey. But the Kurdish issue also presents a challenge to German Near East policy. Due to the nature of the conflict, police actions and measures relating to the rights of foreigners in Germany are not sufficiently effective. The “Islam issue” is another one that links both internal and external dimensions. A constructive policy towards the Islamic world in general and the Near East in particular is needed in order to cut the ground from under extremist and militant fundamentalism – and thus also to defuse social crises in European states in the long run, before they become acute. The events in France in 1994–1995, marked by terrorist acts carried out by young Muslim extremists, should be understood as a distinct warning. An intensifying confrontation between the secular Turkish state elite, led by the military, and the Islamic fundamentalists, would also lead to tension in Germany among the migrants from Turkey (due to the

⁴³ For Germany's policy on Cyprus see P. Varvaroussis, “Germany and the Cypriot Question: An Example of German Peace Policy?” *Orient*, 2 (1995), pp. 305–316.

considerable presence of fundamentalists among them)⁴⁴ and between some of them and the German state and society.

Germany's Developing Near Policy

Events in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 have demonstrated that Germany's Near East policy has continued to develop in recent years.⁴⁵ The decisiveness with which Chancellor Schröder expressed solidarity, also in military terms, with the US was the outcome of the determination to make a political, economic, and developmental contribution to the future of Afghanistan, as well as to make a continuous effort to help de-escalate violence in Israeli–Palestinian relations and improve conditions for the resumption of the peace process in the Near East. The Berlin government, however, has emphasized that German Near East policy is part of the Near East policy of the European Union. Regarding the discussion concerning a joint European foreign and security policy in general and European interests in the Mediterranean and the Near East in particular, the EU intensified its efforts to play the role of mediator in Israeli–Palestinian relations. In Autumn 1998, the rise to power of a coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen has resulted in far-reaching continuity of German Near East policy in recent years. With respect to its relations with Turkey, the red-green coalition has chosen – together with the other member states of the European Union – a different emphasis. It showed, for example, willingness to grant Turkey the status of candidacy for full membership in the EU.

Even under a red-green government, the *Maghreb* is not considered one of the priorities of German Mediterranean policy. A “shuttle diplomacy” has not exceeded the framework of routine diplomatic relations. The German Federal Government also came to the fore when it organized the Third Meeting of Foreign Ministers on 15–16 April 1999 in Stuttgart, under the aegis of the Euro–Mediterranean Partnership. The Federal Government has made an effort to show its commitment to the Mediterranean. A large number of NGOs were invited to discuss the problems of the Mediterranean from a citizen's perspective.

⁴⁴ Compare the annual reports of the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz.

⁴⁵ V. Perthes (ed.), *Deutsche Nahostpolitik: Interessen und Optionen*, Schwalbach/Ts. 2001.

Regarding the Gulf region, and particularly *Iraq*, German foreign policy has also remained reserved. It was often heard in government circles that the area was considered to be mainly under the influence of the US. In December 1998, only several months after it assumed office, the red-green German federal government was confronted with a challenge in the form of the heavy American–British bombing of Iraq. The different assessments of the situation by the various coalition partners thus became apparent. Chancellor Schröder declared that there could be no doubt about German solidarity with the coalition partners.⁴⁶ Foreign Minister Fischer made an impassioned appeal to the international community of nations to now prove itself, arguing for the lifting of sanctions and advocating that Iran be brought into and integrated within the fold of the international community. But this rhetoric was not followed up by deeds. Germany did not participate in a discussion on the future of the sanctions in the UN Security Council, where the US found itself confronted with France on the one side and Russia and China on the other. Meanwhile, President George W. Bush's declaration that in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September it was imperative to overthrow Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein presented the Berlin government with a dilemma: on the one hand, Chancellor Schröder had promised the American president "unlimited solidarity," which over the course of the following months led, among other things, to a considerable military engagement in the context of the fight against terror. On the other hand, considerable resistance was encountered in large sections of the public and the political sector against supporting Washington in the event of an American attack. During his visit to Berlin in May 2002, the American president promised Schröder to consult his international allies in the event of possible military action against Iraq. While Bush emphasized that the US had kept all options open, the chancellor said that strong political pressure should be exerted upon Iraq to allow international observers into the country. This assessment directly contradicted the chancellor's statement that there were no differences between the positions held by the American and German governments regarding this issue.

Relations with *Iran* continued to be given high priority in the Near East policy of the red-green government in Germany. President Mohammad Khatami's visit in July 2000 represented the most recent highlight of these relations. Due to the visitor's particular interests, the visit had a strong

⁴⁶ *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1998*, p. 14.

cultural component. Khatami inaugurated a monument in Weimar recalling the poetic dialogue between Hafis and Goethe and participated, together with President Johannes Rau among others, in a "Dialogue of Cultures." However, an incident a few weeks earlier again demonstrated the fragility of German–Iranian relations. At the beginning of April the Heinrich Böll Foundation had organized a symposium on the current situation in Iran. It was extensively disrupted by opposition Iranians-in-exile and, according to the government of Iran, "obscene events" occurred. Iranian TV aired a twenty-minute footage of the riot. The seventeen Iranian participants were arrested after their return to Iran and accused by a revolutionary court of having "brought shame to Iran in the presence of counter revolutionaries."⁴⁷

On a European level, relations with Iran have also been intensified. On the occasion of the visit of Foreign Minister Kharrazi to Brussels on 10 September 2001, both sides agreed to hold negotiations concerning a trade and cooperation agreement in the very near future.⁴⁸ A corresponding mandate was presented to the EU commission by the EU council. There was also the finalization of an agreement on trade and cooperation, begun in June 2002 after the German government had relinquished its demand to include political conditions in a corresponding document.

With the formation of the coalition of the SPD and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen in the Autumn of 1998, new emphasis was placed upon relations with *Turkey*. This was made possible on the one hand by changes in the law of citizenship, which now foresees a limited, dual-citizenship for Turks living and working in Germany. According to the plans of the German Federal Government, this has been particularly intended to facilitate the integration of young Turks into German society. This measure, however, produced mixed reactions in Germany and Turkey, but Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit warmly welcomed this legislative change. On the other hand, the issue of Turkey's relationship with the EU has again been placed on the political agenda. Whereas leading politicians of the SPD and the Grüne had already criticized – while still in the opposition – the decision of the EU summit in Luxembourg (12–14 December 1997) not to grant Turkey the same status of candidate for full membership in the EU as had been the case for the other eleven states, Chancellor Schröder and Foreign Minister Fischer have re-addressed the candidacy debate. They were helped

⁴⁷ FAZ, 20 and 29 April 2000.

⁴⁸ *Financial Times*, 11 September 2001.

by a letter from Prime Minister Ecevit to Chancellor Schröder in which Turkey agreed to comply with the criteria for joining, formulated in Copenhagen in 1993, and agreed to the obligations imposed by the Amsterdam treaty before negotiations about joining the EU could begin. At the EU summit in Cologne on 6 June 1999 the German attempt to include Turkey failed due to the resistance of a number of governments, which alleged that Turkey had not yet fulfilled the minimum preconditions concerning democracy and human rights – thus not justifying a change in the decision taken at Luxembourg. Only consistent pressure from Berlin led to the revision of the Luxembourg ruling during the EU summit in Helsinki on 10 December 1999. Turkey was then accepted as a candidate for future full membership in the EU. Leading European politicians, however, strongly emphasized that the decision to grant Turkey the status of candidacy should be understood as the beginning of a profound process of renewal in Turkey and not as an automatic mechanism for granting membership in the EU.⁴⁹

The public discussion about the possible supply of 1,000 German “Leopard” tanks to Turkey within the next ten years again highlighted the sensitivity of relations between Germany and Turkey. Controversy that centered around this topic, which also rose with the governing parties in Germany and the Federal Security Council, was settled finally by no less than the votes of the German chancellor, the minister of defense, and the minister of finance – against the vote of the foreign minister. A solution that would have been worthy of King Solomon was eventually found: initially, a German prototype would be developed, which would then be tested against competing offers by the Turkish side.⁵⁰ The decision regarding the actual supply of the tanks would be made only once the German side had obtained the contract.

Regarding *Israeli–Arab relations*, the emphasis of the red-green German Federal government was slightly different insofar as Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in particular sought to play a more prominent role than his predecessor in mediating between Israelis and Palestinians. During Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s term in office, however, German–Israeli relations did not proceed entirely smoothly. Fischer’s first visit to Israel as foreign minister, as well as president of the EU Council, on 2 February

⁴⁹ *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1999*, p. 15

⁵⁰ *FAZ*, 29 September 1999.

1999 was beset by diplomatic discord. Government circles in Israel made no secret of their view of the EU being pro-Palestinian.⁵¹ Shortly afterwards, a new hump appeared in the diplomatic road. The Israeli government reacted with annoyance on 3 March 1999 when a declaration supporting the establishment of a Palestinian state was passed during the Berlin summit.⁵² The declaration, which was part of a European attempt to convince Arafat to abstain from the proclamation of a Palestinian state planned for 4 May of that year read as follows: "The EU emphasizes the permanent and unlimited right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the option of a state, and expectantly awaits the speedy realization of this right."⁵³ While Benjamin Netanyahu's government viewed this as a danger to Israel's national security, the declaration also said that the creation of a democratic, viable, and peaceful Palestinian state constituted the best guarantee for Israel's security. The EU, it made clear, would be prepared to consider the recognition of such a state "in due time."⁵⁴

Chancellor Schröder's trip to the Near East at the end of October 2000 was already marked by the acts of violence that had erupted between Israel and the Palestinians on 28 September ("Intifada al-Aqsa"). Before returning to Germany, the chancellor declared that a "return to the negotiating table" was now more important than ever.⁵⁵ The trip provided the opportunity to thoroughly reflect upon the role of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Near East. The chancellor emphasized that there would be no independent German Near East policy, but only a German contribution to a European Near East policy. Meanwhile, during his visits to Israel, to the Palestinian Authority, and to Egypt in February 2001, President Johannes Rau stated that the special character of Germany's relations with Israel would remain unchanged. Rau declared Israel his "second home,"⁵⁶ and became the first German head of state to deliver an address in the Knesset: "In the presence of the people of Israel I bow in humility before those who were murdered, who have no graves at which I could ask them for forgiveness. I ask forgiveness for the harm Germans have caused."⁵⁷

⁵¹ *HB*, 13 February 1999.

⁵² *FAZ*, 27 March 1999.

⁵³ *Nahost-Jahrbuch 1999*, p. 15.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *FAZ*, 26 October 2000.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 22 February 2001.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 17 February 2001.

In view of the escalating conflict between Israel and the Palestinians during the period 2001–2002, Foreign Minister Fischer distinguished himself in a way that none of his predecessors had done in his efforts to bring about an end to the violence. Fischer was able to put to good use the fact that Germany is respected by both sides to this conflict. During his visit to the troubled region at the beginning of June 2001, he could account for an encouraging success: While awaiting the Israeli retaliatory attack after twenty Israeli teenagers had been killed on 1 June in a Palestinian suicide bomber attack on a discothèque on the Tel Aviv beach (to which he had been an eye-witness, his hotel being located opposite the nightclub), the German foreign minister succeeded in an intensive mediation mission to convince Arafat to call live on TV, and in Arabic, for an “immediate and unconditional, real and effective cease fire.” The retaliatory strike was thus halted.⁵⁸ Fischer’s success, however, was not prolonged. During his consequent visits to the region he was not able to repeat it.

The terror attacks on Washington and New York on *11 September 2001* also constituted a challenge to Germany’s Near East policy. The chancellor made it abundantly clear that the “unconditional” solidarity he had promised the American president immediately after the attack would also include a German military contribution to combating terror. Thus he announced on 6 November that Germany would contribute about 3,900 soldiers, from all sectors of the German armed forces, for the fight against terrorism. He referred to a respective request from Washington and spoke of a landmark decision for German politics.⁵⁹

The German government also committed itself decisively from the outset to the political and economic reconstruction of *Afghanistan*. Even though this was not explicitly intended, the despatch of German soldiers was to be seen within the framework of the Afghanistan conference, officially opened by Foreign Minister Fischer on the Petersberg in Bonn on 27 November 2001. Even abroad, this choice of location for the conference was considered a significant success for German foreign and Near East policy. On 12 December Afghan delegates of different political, ethnic, and religious origins agreed on “provisional arrangements until the restoration of permanent governmental institutions.” Participants and observers alike

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 5 June 2001.

⁵⁹ *NZZ*, 7 November 2001.

praised the host country, Germany, for its indispensable role in the mediation.⁶⁰

In the negotiations concerning a peace force to ensure stability in Afghanistan during a period of transition, the German Federal cabinet decided to provide 1,200 German soldiers for the so called International Security Aid Force (ISAF).⁶¹ The first soldiers of this German contingent arrived in Kabul before the end of December 2001.

Tracks of Political Action

In view of what has been presented above – the interests, opportunities, and failures, but also the fairly constructive elements in the relations between Germany and the region between North Africa and the Persian Gulf within the changing conditions of world politics – the following conclusions can be drawn by way of summary:

1 Integration of German Near East policy within a general European Near East policy does not have to imply that Germany is hiding behind the facade of a European policy, or that the European dimension is being used as a front in order to bypass difficult decisions in the relationship with this region. A German Near East policy must include – in fact it must even exaggerate somewhat – a German *and* a European dimension.

2 In view of Europe's growing affliction by developments in the region, the creation of a European policy is of the highest priority. Since the end of the East–West conflict, European and American interests have increasingly taken different paths in the region between North Africa and the Persian Gulf.

3 Just as in other areas, increased coordination between Germany and France can represent the nucleus of a dynamic European Near East policy. The interests of both countries and the quality of their bilateral relations with respect to the Middle East region, as well as

⁶⁰ FAZ, 4 December 2001; IHT, 7 and 10 December 2001.

⁶¹ FAZ, 22 December 2001.

their capability to integrate Near East policy into the international context, will greatly complement each other.

4 Changed global conditions highlight the different assessments and interests of the EU and its members, on the one hand, and those of the US, on the other, with growing acuteness.⁶² Here, Germany risks getting caught between a European Near East policy and American expectations that it will follow Washington's lead. In this changing situation, a convincing political profile of Europe in the Near East is gaining enough weight to enable the introduction of political alternatives of action. As a close ally of the US, Germany should insist that Washington consult the Europeans in decisions of utmost importance regarding the Near East that concern both sides and should seriously take into account European viewpoints. If necessary, Germany should follow a European perspective – and, should the occasion arise, even a French one – rather than adhere to one-sided American decisions.

5 As a complement to the policy of the German Federal Government, a nucleus of delegates from all parliamentary factions in the Bundestag should be created, delegates whose responsibility it will be to deal with problems in the Near East on an ongoing basis, visiting there regularly and transmitting the impression that the region plays an important and clear role in Germany's foreign policy.

6 German Near East policy should place emphasis on the following: contribution to the solution of regional conflicts (among others the Israeli–Arab and the Kurdish conflicts) as well as support of processes of democratization and the promotion of economic relations.⁶³

7 Political relations with Islamic movements deserve particular attention. In view of the experience gained by Germany with the

⁶² R. D. Blackwill and M. Stürmer (eds.), *Allies Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Near East*, Cambridge, Mass. 1997; Kenneth W. Stein, "Transatlantische Partnerschaft im Nahen Osten? Europa und die USA müssen aktiver werden," *Internationale Politik*, 51, no. 9 (1996), pp. 33–39.

⁶³ The new and growing interest of the German economy is expressed in the "Near and Middle East Initiative of the German Economy," see its "Platform" in the version of 1 December 1996; see also: H. Lieser, "Ökonomische Perspektiven in Nahost – Chancen und Herausforderungen für die deutsche Wirtschaft," E. Hetzke, M. Potthoff, and A. Kössler (eds.), *Die Europäische Union und der Friedensprozeß im Nahen Osten: Sicherheitspolitische Chancen und Herausforderungen*, Hamburg, Berlin, and Bonn 1995, pp. 35–39.

Islamic Republic of Iran, a policy directed at the integration of moderate Islamic forces within the framework of democratic structures seems realistic. Regarding the attitude of goodwill towards Germany in the entire Arab world, an active perception of the Islamic religion, i.e., seeing Islam as a political asset, is an important element in the formation of relations with the entire Arab world, beyond the Near East. This however, also implies working to intensify the track of cultural and social contacts within this mutual relationship.

8 Regarding the permanent presence of almost three million Muslims in Germany, a connection should be established between efforts towards their integration and laying down the principles for Germany's relations with Arab countries. A constructive integration of the Muslims would have a positive influence on these relations and vice versa. On the other hand, tensions on the domestic level would correspondingly lead to a non-beneficial coexistence in foreign relations.

With regard to the new coordinates of international politics, German Near East policy presents itself as a many-faceted collection of political, economic, and cultural factors. For the present, however, Germany only seems to show a rudimentary consciousness of these factors. This is understandable for a country that for decades has viewed the Near East mainly from the narrow perspective of its relations with Israel and the Israeli-Arab conflict. But conditions have changed and the Federal Government can no longer afford such a narrow view.

GERMANY'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY: THE DILEMMAS OF A "POLICY OF EVEN- HANDEDNESS" (*POLITIK DER AUSGEWOGENHEIT*)

FRIEDEMANN BUETTNER

In spite of good and in some cases quite close relations of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) with most states in the Middle East, consecutive German governments from the 1950s onwards have failed to develop a consistent Middle East policy.¹ At the very beginning the agreement on reparations to Israel angered the Arab states to the extent of threatening Germany with a boycott. The later endeavors of the FRG to keep up good bilateral relations with Arab states as well as with Israel without taking any stand in the Arab-Israeli conflict, made Germany susceptible to external pressures and eventually failed, when secret arms deliveries to Israel became known.² While the ensuing crisis eventually led to the long-debated establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, German foreign policy paid a high price as ten Arab states severed diplomatic relations with Germany, while the remaining three recalled their ambassadors from Bonn. As this opened the Middle East to a growing presence of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the "Hallstein

¹ Though the emphasis on factors, contradictions, and dilemmas differs, there seems to be agreement in the literature on the inconsistencies of Germany's policy; cf., e.g., Karlheinz Schneider, "Die Nahostpolitik der Bundesrepublik seit Beginn der fünfziger Jahre," Reiner Bernstein, Yasmin Hamdan, and Karl-Heinz Schneider (eds.), *Der Palästina-Konflikt*, Bad Wörrishofen 1983, pp. 354–372; Susan Hattis Rolef, *The Middle East Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany* (Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems, no. 39), Jerusalem 1985; Josef Joffe, "Reflections on German Policy in the Middle East," Shahrām Chubin (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East: Patterns and Prospects*, London 1992, pp. 195–209. The lack of a consistent policy has been lamented by bureaucrats and politicians, too; cf. Martin Weiss, "Anmerkungen zur Konzeptionslosigkeit der Nahostpolitik im Deutschen Bundestag," *Asien, Afrika, Lateinamerika*, 19 (1991), pp. 275–289.

² Cf. Shlomo Shpiro's contribution to this volume.

Doctrine," the prime instrument of German foreign policy to isolate the GDR internationally, had lost its cutting edge.³

After an all-time low in German–Arab relations during and after the Six-Day War of June 1967, the new social-liberal coalition government of Willy Brandt (Social Democratic Party, SPD) and Walter Scheel (Free Democratic Party, FDP) for the first time tried to formulate, since 1969, a consistent and balanced Middle East policy based on the principle of "even-handedness" (*Ausgewogenheit*). While a definite improvement over the previous situation, this policy failed, however, to deliver the expected results, namely: equally positive or at least undisturbed relations with Israel and the Arabs at one and the same time. Nevertheless, the principle of *Ausgewogenheit* has been kept up under all German governments since then and has, moreover, become a guiding principle in the multilateral context of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) and now the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). In a way, politicians and observers eventually seem to have resigned themselves to the conviction that Germany could not have or even should not have a clear-cut policy in the Middle East. Though this has started to change during the 1990s in the context of united Germany's new international role,⁴ German policy in the Middle East might easily find itself confronted again with one or the other of the dilemmas which have accompanied Germany's endeavors to deal with contradictory interests and conflicting demands.

The inconsistencies of Germany's Middle East policy are usually explained with reference to specific dilemmas, primarily the legacy of the Nazi past requiring a "special relationship" with Israel, while economic interests lie with the Arab world as a main supplier of oil as well as a primary export market.⁵ Against this conventional wisdom it has been argued that such contradictory goals and interests might prevent the Federal Republic from taking a one-sided stance in the Middle East, but that the

³ Cf. the articles by Yeshayahu A. Jelinek and Angelika Timm in this volume.

⁴ Cf. Volker Perthes (ed.), *Deutsche Nahostpolitik: Interessen und Optionen*, Schwalbach 2001; Udo Steinbach, "Der Nahe Osten in der deutschen Außenpolitik: Bonn auf der Suche nach einem Konzept," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B12/98 (13 March 1998), pp. 25–38, and the revised and updated English version of this article in the present volume.

⁵ Cf., e.g., Friedemann Büttner and Peter Hünsele, "Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den arabischen Staaten: Entwicklung, Stand und Perspektiven," Karl Kaiser and Udo Steinbach (eds.), *Deutsch-arabische Beziehungen*, Munich and Vienna 1981, pp. 111–152 (henceforth: Büttner and Hünsele, "Die politischen Beziehungen").

dilemma itself cannot account for the low profile which Germany generally has kept in the Middle East for the forty years from its foundation up to the Second Gulf War in 1991. In order to understand why Germany's conflicting goals and the associated basic dilemma resulted in a pattern of rather reactive and low-key policies, one would have to examine the general features of the German foreign policy-making process and its domestic environment. The Federal Republic's foreign policy, according to this argument, could not be explained without reference to the past, but had at the same time to be understood as driven by dual needs: pursuing goals through co-operation in international institutions and through domestic consensus-building when it comes to issue-areas of high public salience.⁶

Starting from these observations I will argue in this essay, that "muddling through" had to lead to unwanted consequences and produce various forms of crises while on the other hand the endeavor to design a consistent "policy of even-handedness" had to face difficulties because German policy makers did not give enough consideration to two factors. First, it is difficult to start a new policy of balanced relations with partners who so far had been treated – at least in the perception of most of them – quite unevenly and, therefore, would tend to perceive every move towards a more balanced position as "imbalanced": While Israel time and again reacted negatively because German statements or moves went too far, Arabs tended to be disappointed because Germany had not moved far enough. Secondly, when developing the "policy of even-handedness," German foreign policy makers did not consider well enough that German relations with Israel never were, and for quite a time to come would not be, part of German foreign policy in a way comparable to foreign policy relations with other states, particularly with all other states in the Middle East. The "normal relations with a special character" (*Charakter der Besonderheit*), as Chancellor Willy Brandt had formulated it during his visit to Israel in June 1973,⁷ were not the domain primarily of foreign policy experts but from the very beginning an issue of German domestic policy. This began with the birth of the Federal Republic, when the relationship to Israel became a crucial element for the founding myth of the "other Germany" which Konrad Adenauer wanted to create

⁶ Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Muddling through Mined Territory: Germany's Foreign Policy-making and the Middle East," Chubin (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East* (above, n. 1), pp. 177–194.

⁷ Speech by Chancellor Willy Brandt, *Europa-Archiv*, 14 (1973), pp. D 389–390 (quotation on p. D 390).

and to represent. That it continues up to the present is evidenced, for example, by President Johannes Rau's address to the Knesset in Jerusalem on the occasion of his state visit in February 2000.⁸ What distinguishes this relationship from a foreign policy that deals with more or less equal partners is the fact that it is not "normal" – in spite of all the efforts by Foreign Minister Walter Scheel to stress the "normalization" that had been achieved by the time the new policy of "even-handedness" was proclaimed.⁹ The relationship is not normal and, therefore, not on the same level as relationships with other states insofar as it is not negotiable – neither in toto nor even in detail.

This essay will not try to repeat the history of German–Israeli and German–Arab relations but rather focus on the inconsistencies and dilemmas into which German policy in the Middle East got at crucial moments: in the context of the reparations agreements with Israel, during the crisis of 1964–1965, after the formulation of the aim of even-handedness, and in the context of EPC Middle East policy. I will end with a few remarks on the implications for its Middle East policy of a situation in which Germany in general can act more flexibly.

Phase One of a Double Dilemma: The Controversies about Reparations to Israel

From the beginning of post-war Germany's relations with the Middle East virtually all elements which characterized later developments were already present: the impact of the division of Germany with the resulting integration of two emerging German states into the opposing Cold War blocs; the impact of the partition of Palestine and the resulting Arab–Israeli conflict; the presence of contradicting political and economic interests and aims; the resulting inner-German controversies over the right policy in the Middle East which split government and parliament across

⁸ *Ansprache von Bundespräsident Johannes Rau am 16. Februar 2000 vor der Knesset in Jerusalem*, ed. Bundespräsidialamt, Berlin 2000. This speech, delivered in the German language, could have no parallel in form and substance in any speech of a German politician in the parliament of an Arab country; only in Germany's relations with France, Poland, or Russia might a speech be conceived that is somewhat comparable in its references to history and guilt and in the endeavor to find a common ground in spite of all that Germans have done to the Jews.

⁹ Foreign Minister Walter Scheel in an interview with the Israeli paper *Yediot Aharonot*, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Bulletin*, no. 155 (1969), pp. 1313–1314.

party lines; and, last but not least, the impact of the national-socialist past as a continuing problem of the present.

The crimes committed by Nazi Germany had made Germany an outcast among nations, whose eventual re-admittance to the international community only started with the beginning of the Cold War, when due to the strategic standing of West Germany it seemed desirable to the United States to integrate a reconstructed West German entity into the economy and politics of Western Europe. After the inclusion of Germany in the European Reconstruction Program (Marshall Plan) in 1948 and the passing of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) of the Federal Republic of Germany as its constitution on 8 May 1949, four years to the day after the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany, the way was paved for free elections and the formation of the first postwar German government under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer on 9 September 1949.

The following years until 1953 were of crucial importance for Germany's development. During his first year in office, Adenauer persuaded the Allies to stop the dismantling of industrial plants, to lift some of the restrictions on industry, and to grant Germany the right to open consulates abroad. Adenauer, however, did not want merely limited rights: he wanted unhampered economic development and full sovereignty, knowing that this could only be realized by progressive economic, political, and military integration into the West – even if this might prejudice the attainment of Germany's principal political goal of reunification. Adenauer's persistent demands for more sovereignty and his insistence on a West German "contribution to Western defense efforts" nourished apprehensions among Germany's neighbors. The success of his policy, therefore, depended largely upon his ability to convince the Western world that he represented a "new Germany" which was trustworthy.

Adenauer was convinced that in order to achieve his ends for Germany he would have to move carefully, showing determination and perseverance without subservience.¹⁰ In particular, Germany would have to show determination to solve the problems of its past itself, thereby relieving the Allies of their "responsibility" to solve them for the Germans. Consequently, the FRG accepted responsibility for the prosecution of Nazi criminals and declared itself the legal successor to the Third Reich, which meant

¹⁰ Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953*, Stuttgart 1965, p. 246 (henceforth: Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953*).

acceptance in principle of the obligation to pay Germany's enormous prewar debts. These were partly reparations imposed by the Versailles Treaty after World War I, partly loans received during the Weimar Republic, to which now had to be added the claims of the Allies for their expenses in maintaining the Germans during the post-war period. At least as important politically was Adenauer's constant endeavor over a period of years to bring about reconciliation with France and to make amends for the material damage caused by the Nazis. Already after eight weeks in office Adenauer declared that his government would offer ten million German Marks in goods to the State of Israel as an initial token that the injustices done were to be repaired.¹¹

The Israeli government did not react to this offer – but in the following two years informal contacts between Israelis, representatives of Jewish organizations, and German officials prepared the ground for the later negotiations which led to the so-called Luxembourg Treaty of 10 September 1952. For Germans this treaty became the *Wiedergutmachungs-Abkommen*, although the English text of the agreements uses “restitution” and “indemnification” rather than “reparations” in the sense of compensating “to make good again” – the literal meaning of *wieder gut machen*. Of the four related agreements, the Israel Agreement was the most important one.¹² Under its terms the Federal Republic committed itself to pay, over a period from twelve to fourteen years, 3 billion German Marks to the State of Israel as “global recompense for the costs of the integration” of Jewish refugees from Europe. Two thirds of the amount would have to be spent on German-made goods and services, one third would be paid in currency to British oil companies for oil shipments to Israel. Moreover, in the Protocols No. 1 and No. 2 the German government committed itself to initiate new legislation for individual compensation and to deliver 450 million DM in goods and services to Israel, which in turn would reimburse the amount to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany (Claims Conference) for the rehabilitation of Nazi victims.

The deliveries under the terms of the Restitution Agreement greatly helped the State of Israel in the early years of its existence to overcome its

¹¹ In an interview with the editor of the *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, Karl Marx, on 11 November 1949, repr. in Rolf Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel: Eine Dokumentation*, Stuttgart 1967, p. 18 (henceforth: Vogel [ed.], *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*).

¹² Text of the agreement in *Bundesgesetzblatt*, II, Bonn 1953, pp. 35–97. For an interpretation and its implementation cf. Nicholas Balabkins, *West German Reparations to Israel*, New Brunswick, N.J. 1971 (henceforth: Balabkins, *West German Reparations to Israel*).

economic difficulties and firmly establish itself in the region. In addition to the direct deliveries, Israel received indirect economic support by large amounts of foreign exchange flowing into the country from West Germany. Under the Federal Law of Restitution and Indemnification (*Bundesentschädigungsgesetz*) of 1953, the German government paid billions of German Marks, mostly to individuals, out of which large portions went to recipients in Israel. By 1972 the FRG had paid 37.2 billion Marks out of which more than 12 billion had gone to Israel. Until the year 2000, overall payments had reached more than 100 billion German Marks, out of which 33.5 billion went as payments to individuals in Israel.¹³

While no doubt deeply motivated in his efforts towards reconciliation, Adenauer, who had himself suffered under the Nazis, had a strong sense of *Realpolitik* and pursued several objectives simultaneously. His statement in the Bundestag in September 1951 that his government felt obliged to do penance in the form of moral and material amends to Israel and the Jews at large,¹⁴ received an overwhelmingly favorable response all over the world. The *Washington Post* called it "the best thing that came from Germany since before 1933," the *New York Times* took it for "A Sign of Decency," and the *Manchester Guardian* for a "Sign of German Change of Heart."¹⁵ This was exactly the kind of reaction needed for the moral comeback of Germany, which seemed to be a prerequisite for a political comeback.

That the moral and political considerations had economic implications goes without saying. German economic growth depended largely on the expansion of its exports. Furthermore, as Adenauer thought, Germany would only gain good credit standing internationally if the London Debt Conference of 1952 – which primarily dealt with Germany's prewar debts – and the negotiations with Israel and the Jewish organizations would not fail.¹⁶ The close connection between moral and political comeback, between the Restitution Agreement and general foreign policy, was underscored by the timing of the signing of the Luxembourg Treaty, which took place on

¹³ Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Staatliche Leistungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland auf dem Gebiet der Wiedergutmachung*, January 2000.

¹⁴ Statement by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer on the Jewish question and problems of reparations, in the German Bundestag on 27 September 1951, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, pp. 35–36; also Yeshayahu A. Jelinek (ed.), *Zwischen Moral und Realpolitik: Deutsch-israelische Beziehungen 1945–1965: Eine Dokumentensammlung*, Gerlingen 1997, pp. 173–174.

¹⁵ Balabkins, *West German Reparations to Israel*, p. 91.

¹⁶ Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, Stuttgart 1966, p. 141.

10 September 1952 at the early hour of eight o'clock. This was just two hours before Adenauer was to preside for the first time over a session of the Council of Ministers of the European Community for Coal and Steel (*MontanUnion*), the nucleus of what later was to become the European Economic Community (EEC), then the EC and eventually the EU. Adenauer was convinced "that only after a successful conclusion of the German-Israeli agreements would the moral background for an entry of the Federal Republic of Germany into the free family of nations be given."¹⁷

Though for some observers the reparations to Israel represented "a symbol of hope," many Jews and Israelis rightly questioned the "German change of heart," because Adenauer's "moral comeback" policy reflected the will of his government rather than that of the German people in general. Even his own cabinet was all but unanimous in its support. Particularly, Minister of Finance Fritz Schäffer was opposed from the very outset to the basis on which Adenauer had begun the negotiations: the Israeli claim of 1 billion US Dollars (at that time, more than 4 billion German Marks) from West Germany, and an additional half a billion from East Germany. Schäffer feared that West Germany would be unable to raise its share of the money. Seen from today's perspective, the amount finally agreed upon, 3.45 billion German Marks, seems somewhat small; for post-war Germany, however, this sum amounted to 15 percent of the total annual budget – 23 billion DM – for the year in which the treaty was signed. Schäffer, therefore, was strongly supported in his opposition by the banker Hermann Josef Abs, who was heading the German delegation to the London Debt Conference that got under way in spring 1952 while negotiations on reparations to Israel were still being conducted in Wassenaar, in the Netherlands.¹⁸

Opposition intensified after the agreements had been signed and the debate on ratification began. Radical opposition came from the small parties on the extreme Left and Right, such as the Communists who rejected the agreement because the reparations would not help individual victims but just those industrial bosses "who bear a share of the responsibility for the Holocaust as they had made immense profits under Hitler and from his massacres," and now would make immense profits once again.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Das Parlament*, no. 45 (4 September 1972).

¹⁸ Cf. Yeshayahu A. Yelinek, "Political Acumen, Altruism, Foreign Pressure or Moral Debt: Konrad Adenauer and the 'Shilumim'," *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, 19 (1990), pp. 77–102 (henceforth: Yelinek, "Political Acumen").

¹⁹ Oskar Müller, Communist Member of Parliament, during the ratification debate; Protocols

For German business, however, it looked just the other way around. Even under short-term considerations, trade with the Arab states was more important. Exports and investment projects under discussion between German industry and representatives of Arab countries in 1952 were valued by a representative of the German Ministry of Economy at 3 billion German Marks²⁰ – 50 percent more than the value of orders from Israel that German industry could expect over the next twelve to fourteen years under the restitution agreement. German business circles, therefore, were quite alarmed about the possible consequences of the Israel Agreement for Germany's second fastest growing export market when the Arab states began to threaten a boycott of German goods by all members of the Arab League. German business organizations did not question the obligation to pay reparations, but criticized the form of the agreement. Largely following proposals made by the Arab League, German business favored payments not to the State of Israel but to Jewish world organizations; alternatively the UN should be asked to decide on the admissibility of the deliveries.²¹

The Arab League, as well as individual Arab governments, had tried to effect changes in the Israel Agreement as soon as they learned of its contents, but they failed to influence the ratification procedure. The Arab states, too, did not question the moral obligation of Germany to pay reparations for the injustices done to the Jews, but they maintained that the State of Israel was not the legal heir of the individual Jewish victims and therefore could not put forward their claims. Moreover, the State of Israel itself would not recognize claims for compensation in international law; otherwise it would have fulfilled the UN resolutions demanding compensation for the Palestinian refugees. The political arguments emphasized that Israel was in a state of war with seven Arab states; as a neutral country the FRG, therefore, ought not to lend its support to one of the belligerent parties.²²

Not all the Arab arguments had the same validity. That there was no basis in international law for collective reparations was known to all parties to the agreement, who from the outset had conducted their dealings on the

in the German Bundestag on 18 March 1953, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, pp. 94–95.

²⁰ Ministerialdirigent Dr. Seelinger at a conference on foreign trade, October 1952; *Handelsblatt*, no. 120 (10 October 1952).

²¹ *Handelsblatt*, no. 133 (14 November 1952).

²² "Memorandum of the Syrian Government, 15 September 1952," *Archiv der Gegenwart*, 3651A. For similar statements by other Arab governments cf. *ibid.*, 3719 B, 3739 B.

basis of a *moral* claim of the Jewish people as a whole, based on the fact that the Nazis, with their "final solution," had tried to exterminate the Jews as a people.²³ That the State of Israel had been accepted as creditor of the claim again had political and not legal roots. In the 1930s, when the Nazis had begun to persecute the Jews, the world had stood by, doing little to help. When the war was over and the dimensions of the Holocaust became known, the bystanders, out of their bad conscience, voted in the UN for the partition of Palestine and permitted the creation of Israel, which was interpreted by Israel as an act of reparation for the injustices suffered by this people in the course of its history.²⁴ Though legally Israel had not been recognized by any other government as "the state of the Jews," after all Germans had done, the German government was in no position to refute its claim.

On the other hand, could moral reparations for injustices done to a whole people ignore related injustices done to another people? Though these latter injustices had not been perpetrated by Germans, the German government must have realized that the establishment of Israel had largely been made possible by increased immigration of Jews from Europe into Palestine since the early 1930s and that German persecution of the Jews, therefore, had indirectly contributed to the fate of the Palestinians, who by leaving their homes and their fields had to bear a large share of the cost of resettling the Jewish refugees. Neither the issue of compensation for the Palestinian refugees, however, nor the effects which Germany's massive economic support of Israel would have on their prospects to return to their homeland seem to have entered German considerations during their negotiations with Israel.

The most serious Arab argument was their fear that the strengthening of Israel's economy would increase its military potential so that they would have to expect new acts of aggression.²⁵ But even this argument was not accepted by the German government. Adenauer maintained that no violation of neutrality was involved and refuted the Arab objections with the statement

²³ On the issues of (collective) guilt, (moral) obligation, and politics see Thomas Scheffler, "Schuld und Politik: Zur Geschichte der Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik und Israel," *Das schmerzhaft Dreieck: Deutsche – Israelis – Palästinenser (israel & palästina, Sonderheft 27)* (1991), pp. 5–20.

²⁴ Note of the Israeli Government, 12 March 1951, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, p. 33.

²⁵ Memorandum of the Syrian Government (above, n. 22).

that "provisions have been made that the agreement cannot be used for the delivery of arms, ammunition, and other war materials to Israel."²⁶ This argument is particularly unconvincing, because all deliveries under the reparations agreement that substituted necessary investments would increase Israel's available resources for military production or purchases of arms from abroad. Moreover, 60 percent of the goods on the "Schedule of Commodities" appended to the Israel Agreement were, as Arab critics had pointed out, classified as "strategic goods" on the German embargo lists for its trade with Eastern Europe.²⁷

While Adenauer rejected all such criticism, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and the German Party (Deutsche Partei, DP) – those parties in his own government coalition which represented business interests – continued with their strong opposition to the agreements and in their majority eventually voted directly against ratification or abstained. Actually, Adenauer would have failed to have the Israel Treaty ratified by the Bundestag had it not been for the opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD), whose post-war leader, Kurt Schumacher, had been the first German politician who publicly pressured for compensation for the Jews as early as 1946.²⁸ Out of the 238 votes for ratification, more than half came from the SPD, which voted unanimously in favor, while some of the 34 votes against and many of the 86 abstentions came from Adenauer's coalition partners, including members of his own Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU)²⁹; another 44 MPs – over 10 percent of the members of the Bundestag – did not show up for the vote altogether.

The reactions of the general public were even less encouraging. Most Germans had neither accepted the "collective guilt" that victors and victims had been attributing to them, nor did they suffer much from their – as the first president of the FRG, Theodor Heuss, had called it – "collective shame": the shame to bear the name German together with Hitler and his

²⁶ Statement of the Chancellor to start the ratification process in the German Bundestag, 4 March 1953; Protocols of the German Bundestag, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, p. 80.

²⁷ *Handelsblatt*, no. 108 (17 September, 1952).

²⁸ Cf. Thomas Scheffler, "Die Normalisierung der Doppelmoral: Vierzig Jahre deutsch-israelische Beziehungen," *Prokla*, 18, no. 4 (1988), pp. 76–96.

²⁹ *Protokolle des Deutschen Bundestages*, 254th session in Bonn, 18 March 1953, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, p. 96.

accomplices.³⁰ The average German did not like to be reminded of the Nazi past that had meant a long, lost war, ruin and destruction, and the dark and hungry postwar years. In particular the middle classes, who had supported Hitler most and, therefore, suffered most under Allied de-Nazification procedures, were completely occupied with "making a living." Most Germans insisted that they had not participated in Nazi crimes, that they "had known nothing" and, therefore, could not be held responsible. Many were inwardly convinced that the Jews themselves had been responsible for antisemitism,³¹ and quite a few believed the story of the Nazi crimes to be pure "enemy propaganda" designed "to break the Germans' backbone." Not many Germans voiced their opposition to the Israel Agreement publicly, though a public opinion poll in August 1952 revealed that only 11 percent of the persons interviewed were unconditionally in favor of the reparation payments, 24 percent were in favor but thought the amount was too much, while 44 percent deemed reparations as such to be unnecessary.³²

However, during the early years after World War II there were no policy options for West Germany in the Middle East but to support Israel. German policy during those years might cynically be alluded to as "costly cosmetics,"³³ nevertheless, parliament had to endorse the decision of the government. German business circles, too, had to accept the Israel Agreement as irrevocable, and the man in the street, with his not-so-changed heart, had to see its expediency. Even the Arabs had to accept it and refrained from their threatened boycott – particularly after the German government, at the instigation of German business circles, had offered credits to some Arab states as a form of compensation. At the same time hints were dropped in the Arab world that Germany had only yielded to Great Power pressure when it came to terms with Israel.³⁴ Though this was readily believed in the Arab world and though at least the Americans had used their "influence"

³⁰ Inge Deutschkron, *Bonn and Jerusalem: The Strange Coalition*, Philadelphia 1970, p. 13 (henceforth: Deutschkron, *Bonn and Jerusalem*).

³¹ A public opinion poll in August 1949 had revealed that 53 percent of the Germans believed that "particularities of Jewish ethnic groups" had been the cause of antisemitism; cf. Elisabeth Noelle and Peter Neumann, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung 1947–1955*, Allensbach 1956, p. 130.

³² *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

³³ Rolf Breitenstein, *Der häßliche Deutsche? Wir im Spiegel der Welt*, München 1968, p. 158.

³⁴ Muhammad Hassanain Haikal, *Abd an-Nasir wa'l-alam* (Abdul Nasir and the World), Beirut 1972, p. 434.

with the Germans,³⁵ it is doubtful whether any such direct outside pressure would have been necessary.

Muddling Through into Disaster: German Policy in the Middle East 1953–1965

The determining factors for German policy towards the Middle East in the following fifteen years were already present in 1952. The supreme goal of German policy according to the Basic Law (Constitution) of the Federal Republic was the reunification of Germany. But for Adenauer, who had completely thrown in the German lot with the West, the result of reunification could only mean "a reunified Germany enjoying a liberal-democratic constitution, like that of the Federal Republic, and integrated within the European community."³⁶ As reunification under such conditions was impossible as long as the Cold War continued and a communist government, instituted by the Soviet Union, ruled East Germany, it became the principle of Adenauer's Germany policy to isolate this government internationally as the forcefully imposed, illegitimate regime of the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany. He claimed that his government, the only freely elected German government, was the sole legitimate representative for all of Germany (*Gesamtdeutschland*). Any kind of recognition of the "regime" of the Eastern Zone (*Ostzone*, or later: *Mitteldeutschland* – the term "German Democratic Republic" or GDR was taboo in politically correct West Germany until the late 1960s) was considered an unfriendly act against the Federal Republic. When this policy later became more formalized it came to be known as the Hallstein Doctrine, which threatened sanctions such as the severance of diplomatic relations and the discontinuation of economic aid to all states that established diplomatic relations or otherwise recognized the GDR.

West Germany's claim to represent all Germans (*Alleinvertretungsanspruch*) had problematic aspects. It might not matter in politics that a nation will not be loved for using its economic power to pressure other nations, in particular developing countries, into compliance with its political

³⁵ Cf. Jelinek, "Political Acumen" (above, n. 18).

³⁶ Germany Treaty of May 26, 1952, Art. VII (2), *Verträge der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Series A, vol. 7, Bonn 1957, A 63, p. 16; cf. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1945–1953* (above, n. 10), pp. 543–544 and *passim*.

aims. A real problem for Germany, however, was that the claim to represent all Germans could be an effective political instrument only as long as the Western Allies were willing to play the German game, because under the wartime and post-war agreements of Yalta and Potsdam the Big Four still bore direct responsibility for the divided city of Berlin and ultimately for German reunification and a peace treaty. Therefore, in order to commit their respective patron power to support their political points of view the two Germanys became the most reliable allies on either front of the Cold War – themselves still committed to Cold War politics at a time when the two superpowers had started to search for ways and means of coexistence.

Preoccupation with economic growth, political integration into the West, and the “German problem” did not leave much room for a clearly formulated and actively followed policy in areas outside the bi-polar world of the big blocs, particularly if Germany was confronted – as it was in the Middle East – with a regional conflict that would not fit neatly into Cold War politics. For different reasons, both parties to the conflict were important for Germany, but neutrality in the conflict and fairly good relations with either side – a policy successfully pursued by smaller European states and some of the non-aligned countries – proved to be difficult, and finally impossible, because the unresolved past, the dependence on the West, and Germany’s own Hallstein Doctrine narrowed down its freedom of maneuver.

The Arab states were potentially important partners. The Arab market was promising for German exports and direct investment, especially as Germany had a comparative advantage over other industrial countries. Not only was it admired for its supposed diligence and efficiency and for the quality of its industrial products, Germans were considered to be friends – not least because they had fought against Britain and France in the Second World War when many Arabs had hoped that a victorious Germany might liberate them from colonial occupation. For West Germany, some of the Arab states played an increasingly vital role as suppliers of oil. The growing number of independent Arab states, furthermore, formed a significant bloc in international politics and the United Nations, and – as friends – could have been supporters of the German cause. Well aware of all this, the Near East section of the Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) time and again urged the German government to do nothing that could impair the traditionally good relationship between Germany and the Arab world.

Nevertheless, the “traditional German–Arab friendship” – if ever it had existed in reality – was a somewhat one-sided affair in the years under

consideration. While trying to get political support from its Arab partners, in particular on the Berlin question and for the West German point of view concerning reunification, the German government took little interest in the political problems of the Arabs; it particularly refrained from any support for the Arab point of view in the Palestine issue. Not even the refugees seem to have been a serious concern for the German government: its contributions to UNRWA from 1952 to 1965 added up to a meager 13 million Marks.³⁷ The issue of Palestine was excluded from serious German consideration because it touched upon consequences of the German past and thereby upon one of the impeding factors in German policy, which always would work in favor of Israel.

On the other hand, the Hallstein Doctrine worked in favor of good German-Arab relations, particularly when – and as long as – these were in the interest of the United States. In 1956 and 1963, for example, normalization of relations with Israel was postponed in deference to the Arabs, because the German government was afraid that some Arab states might, in spite of the threatened consequences, react by establishing diplomatic relations with East Berlin.³⁸ The United States, though always an advocate of Israel, in both cases seem to have cautioned against German steps in the Middle East that might unfavorably affect German-Arab relations.³⁹ As most Western powers had rather bad relations with the Arabs at the time, Germany's fairly good relations had their value as a possible means to some Western influence. If, however, the Hallstein Doctrine, or US interests, or both, would no longer work in favor of good German-Arab relations, these would be jeopardized in spite of considerable German economic interests in the Arab world, for the dominant feature in Germany's Middle Eastern politics up to 1965 was its ambiguous relationship with Israel.

Though no formal political ties were established, the German government tried to do its best to improve the relationship with Israel and the Jews. It meticulously discharged its obligations under the reparations agreements, hoping that this show of goodwill and sincerity, together with the "healing effect of time," would pave the way for some reconciliation. Jews and

³⁷ J. F. Defrates, "The Federal Republic of Germany and the Palestinian Refugees," *Orient* (September 1972), pp. 124–125. The author was an UNRWA official.

³⁸ Felix E. Shinnar, *Bericht eines Beauftragten: Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen 1951–1966*, Tübingen 1967, pp. 113–117, 123–126.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 125; cf. Deutschkron, *Bonn and Jerusalem* (above, n. 30), p. 101.

Israelis, however, had stressed from the outset that compensation was sought for material losses, while the moral wrongs inflicted were “irreparable in their totality.”⁴⁰ No indulgence could be bought with “the payments,” the *Shilumim* – the usual term used in Israel with reference to the German “*Wiedergutmachung*.” As long as hundreds of thousands of Jews carried their concentration camp registration number tattooed on their arms, nothing could be forgiven or forgotten.⁴¹ Even after diplomatic relations had been established in 1965, most Jews shared Joachim Prinz’s opinion that “the relationship between Germany and Israel cannot be normal and must not be normal, and whatever political exigencies and practical considerations there may be, the principle of a unique relationship must not be relinquished.”⁴²

Bound to Israel out of guilt, the position of the German government would always have been difficult, even without a Jewish refusal to be reconciled. Aggravating the government’s difficult position, however, were the Germans themselves who had not broken with their past clearly enough to be beyond suspicion. Thousands of former Nazis still holding public office, marked leniency in the prosecution of Nazi criminals, no decline in antisemitic sentiments, and – in the late 1950s and early 1960s – a resurgence of right-wing organizations time and again put the German government in embarrassing situations and made it susceptible to reminders of the past and subsequent pressure. A wave of antisemitic incidents in 1959, including acts of vandalism in Jewish graveyards and the daubing of swastikas and Nazi invectives on the walls of synagogues, had particularly unwelcome international repercussions. During the following years the right-wing National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) made a show of surprising strength at the polls, gaining up to ten per cent of the votes in some of the state elections. Eventually, in the spring of 1960 Adolf Eichmann, who had been responsible for the organization of Hitler’s “final solution” (*Endlösung*) of the Jewish question, was abducted by the Israeli secret service in Argentina and brought to Jerusalem, where he was tried a year later.

⁴⁰ Statements of the Claims Conference, quoted in Balabkins, *West German Reparations to Israel* (above, n. 12), p. 138.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 209 and *passim*.

⁴² Joachim Prinz in an address to the Fifth Plenary Assembly of the World Jewish Congress in Brussels on August 4, 1966; *Deutsche und Juden* (Münchener Schriftenreihe DIS, 1), München 1967, p. 48.

The public trial in Israel of a German directly responsible for executing the program of extermination was most embarrassing for Adenauer's government, because it easily could have endangered the hitherto achieved results of his reparations and moral recovery policy. Rumors had it shortly before the trial that Eichmann had named several hundred leading personages of the FRG as his accomplices. To mention but one shows how delicate a problem this could have created for Adenauer himself: Adenauer's personal secretary of state in the Chancellor's Office, Dr. Hans Globke, an obedient and obliging bureaucrat, had written a juridical commentary on the Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935, which were to form the "legal basis" for the persecution of Jews. Although he had always insisted that he had done so in order to help avoid the worst, it might have been quite embarrassing for Adenauer had Globke been implicated in the Eichmann Trial. But the prosecution in Jerusalem "carefully avoided touching upon...the almost ubiquitous complicity of Germans" in transactions which had been more or less directly connected with the extermination of the Jews.⁴³ Moreover, in several statements made during the months of the trial, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion clearly distinguished between the Germany under trial and present-day Germany, and he emphasized his government's readiness to have close, normal relations and full co-operation with the latter.⁴⁴ It seems plausible that Adenauer's government was spared public embarrassment as part of a political deal between him and Ben-Gurion,⁴⁵ as Israel was hoping for German support in the EEC, to which it had applied in 1960 for associate membership. Of equal, if not greater, consequence for Israel were hopes to obtain military equipment and massive economic aid from Germany.

In the years after Suez and the discontinuation of US supplies, Israel had difficulty in acquiring arms from abroad in the desired quantities. At the same time, it was looking for export markets for its own incipient arms production. Ben-Gurion's endeavor to contact Germany on these matters leaked out in December 1957 and provoked, after heated debates in the

⁴³ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, London 1963, pp. 14–16 (quote on p. 15); cf. pp. 113–114.

⁴⁴ Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, pp. 148–150.

⁴⁵ Jörg Seelbach, *Die Aufnahme der diplomatischen Beziehungen zu Israel als Problem der deutschen Politik seit 1955*, Meisenheim 1970, p. 106; cf. Franz Josef Strauss in an interview with *Die Welt am Sonntag*, 20 February 1965; quoted in *Archiv der Gegenwart*, 20 February 1965, p. 11702.

Knesset, a government crisis in Israel. Arab fears aroused by these events were allayed, however, by a German government statement which stressed that it would neither deliver nor allow the delivery of arms or other military equipment to Israel, because of its prevailing practice to check any delivery of arms to areas of conflict in order to avoid an intensification of existing tensions.⁴⁶ The German statement was formulated in such categorical terms that it had to be believed.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Franz-Josef Strauss, the German minister of defense, and Shimon Peres, at that time a high official in Israel's Ministry of Defense, had already met in 1957 and continued to meet during the following years. As a first result, these meetings led to German purchases of the Israeli Uzi sub-machine gun and, starting in 1959, to technical co-operation and the delivery "on loan" to Israel of smaller amounts of military equipment, excluding arms proper.⁴⁸ The first meeting of Ben-Gurion with Adenauer, on 14 March 1960 in New York, then, paved the way for the delivery of arms as well, and for an agreement on German economic aid. Adenauer had pledged a credit of 500 million US dollars (a little over two billion German Marks), to be paid in equal installments over a period of ten years and to be used for the development of the Negev. Negotiations went on, however, for the next two years. But from 1962 onwards, Israel has drawn credits of, originally, 200, and later 140 million Marks annually at unusually favorable conditions. The money came out of the budget of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, with the financial conditions for developing countries – but without the normal strings attached to the disbursement of development aid.

Some Arab governments seem to have known about the agreement, but remained silent as long as they themselves received considerable German aid. Well aware of Germany's delicate position, they still had trust in German-Arab friendship. A considerable amount of pressure must have been necessary to induce the German government to risk a break with the Arabs in spite of its economic interests and contrary to its principle not to supply arms to areas of tension. When this policy later led to the crisis of 1964–1965, the German government – according to Egypt's leading

⁴⁶ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28/29 December 1957.

⁴⁷ Haikal, *Abd an-Nasir wa'l-alam* (above, n. 34), pp. 435–436. Cf. Shlomo Shpiro's contribution to this volume.

⁴⁸ *Deutschkron*, *Bonn and Jerusalem* (above, n. 30), p. 269. See also Shlomo Shpiro's contribution to this volume.

journalist, Muhammad H. Haikal – tried to convince President Nasir that Adenauer had been hesitant ever since Ben-Gurion had asked for German surplus equipment in 1960, but that President John F. Kennedy in November 1961 had practically ordered him to deliver arms to Israel.⁴⁹ This can only partly have been true, however, since German involvement had continuously expanded since 1959 – though major deliveries did not start before 1962.

The year 1961 was that of the Eichmann trial, and embarrassing events which facilitated pressure on the German government did not come to an end with it. In 1962 and 1963 the fact was widely publicized that German scientists were working in Egypt in the fields of aircraft and rocket development and production, and presumably even in the sphere of ABC warfare.⁵⁰ Though the latter seemed extremely unlikely, and although the importance of the German contribution to the arming of Egypt was grossly exaggerated, the Israeli government, after an emotionally loaded debate in the Knesset and an accompanying press campaign, pressed the German government to stop its citizens from working in the production of weapons of mass destruction which would probably be used with the purpose of destroying Israel. Before the German government had been called upon to act, however, the Israeli secret service had already relentlessly begun to persecute the scientists with letter-bombs and by other means, so that most of them had left Egypt by the end of 1964.

To keep the arms deliveries secret proved increasingly difficult after a second agreement had been concluded in 1964. At US instigation, the German government committed itself to deliver, among other items, 200 American M48 Patton tanks, 50 airplanes (Noratlas transports and reconnaissance planes), 15 helicopters, 6 speedboats, and 2 submarines. Another 50 airplanes, 36 howitzers, surface-to-air missiles, and Cobra anti-tank missiles had been supplied during the first phase of deliveries up to 1964.⁵¹ Though only part of the new agreement had been fulfilled by the time the German government stopped the deliveries, Egyptian President Abdul Nasser was furious when he learned the details in late 1964. He reacted by inviting the East German party leader and president of the State Council, Walter Ulbricht, to Egypt.

⁴⁹ Haikal, *Abd an-Nasir wa'l-alam*, pp. 437–438.

⁵⁰ Joachim Kreysler and Klaus Jungfer, *Deutsche Israel-Politik*, Diessen 1965, pp. 78–81.

⁵¹ Ulrich Albrecht and Birgit A. Sommer, *Deutsche Waffen für die Dritte Welt*, Reinbek b. Hamburg 1972, pp. 114–115 (henceforth: Albrecht and Sommer, *Deutsche Waffen für die Dritte Welt*).

Ludwig Erhard, who had succeeded Adenauer as chancellor in late 1963, tried to appease Nasser after the press began to report about the arms deliveries. Convinced of the success of his emissary's mission to Egypt, Nasser's invitation now took him by surprise. At first the German government tried hard to persuade Nasser to revoke the invitation, reminding him that Ulbricht's visit would constitute an unfriendly act towards the Federal Republic; then it offered to stop the arms deliveries, and finally it seriously warned him of the consequences he would have to expect under the Hallstein Doctrine. But Nasser did not give in to such pressures, and Ulbricht arrived in Cairo on 24 February 1965.

Nasser did not diplomatically recognize the East Berlin government; he even obliged the West Germans when he emphasized, upon Ulbricht's arrival, that it was his policy "to do nothing which might deepen the division of Germany and impair the possibility of a German reunification."⁵² The Erhard government felt rebuffed, however, particularly as it had offered to stop the arms deliveries without getting anything in return. On 7 March 1965 Chancellor Erhard, therefore, decided to discontinue economic aid to Egypt and to strive for diplomatic relations with Israel.

Germany's unresolved past, its dependence on the US, and its own Hallstein Doctrine had resulted in years of ambiguity, until the policy of insincerity and double-dealing finally ended in failure. The German government's press release announcing the various decisions of 7 March acclaims the one decision – from now on not to deliver arms to areas of tension – to be "an important contribution to a clear Near Eastern policy."⁵³ Important as it might have been, it came too late: The clear policy for some time to come would have to be a policy without Arab partners. When Germany and Israel announced the establishment of diplomatic relations on 13 May 1965, all Arab governments recalled their ambassadors from Bonn, and ten out of thirteen severed their diplomatic relations with West Germany.

No one at the time could have known that the arms delivered by Germany together with the Mirage fighter planes that Germany helped Israel to purchase, were going to play an important role in the Six-Day War of June 1967. But even without such precognition, the German government – most of all Chancellor Erhard himself – proved to be particularly blind to the

⁵² Haikal, *Abd an-Nasir wa'l-alam*, p. 448.

⁵³ *Archiv der Gegenwart*, 7 March 1965, p. 11733 B.

implications of such a massive supply of arms to Egypt's worst enemy. Even after the opening of the archives, there is no indication that the Germans felt guilty about what they had done, but rather that Erhard, particularly, was deeply offended: How could Nasser, who claimed to be a friend, be so mean as to invite this *persona non grata* from East Berlin for an official visit?⁵⁴

Already when major arms deliveries had begun under Adenauer, he and Defense Minister Strauss had been of the opinion "that it was not only a duty of reparation, but that support of Israel in just the field where blood was involved, was morally and politically of particular importance...[as millions of Jews] had been killed with German weapons."⁵⁵ Consequently military aid to Israel was not treated by the German government as part of official military supporting aid⁵⁶ and, therefore, was not approved by the respective parliamentary procedures. But if Strauss was right and honest in his statement, why then at first the unusually toilsome secrecy to cover up the deliveries, and why their discontinuation after they had become known?

The June War and After: Images, Identifications – But No Policy

The inconsistencies of German perceptions, behavior, and – mostly *ex post* – rationalizations cannot be explained by traditional theories of international relations, but rather should be sought in German domestic politics, deeply imbued with historical narratives, feelings of guilt, repressed or even overt antisemitism and its inverted corollary: philo-Semitism. This can be shown with a closer look at German reactions to the war of June 1967.

During the weeks leading up to the war Germans were confronted with the agonizing thought that Israel was facing a fight for its survival, which might mean that the survivors of the Nazi genocide were again threatened

⁵⁴ Cf. the published Ph.D. dissertation, Dalia Abu Samra, *Deutschen Außenpolitik gegenüber Ägypten: Abbruch und Wiederaufnahme der diplomatischen Beziehungen (1965–1972)*, Berlin 2002, URL: www.diss.fu-berlin.de/2002/92.

⁵⁵ In an interview on 19 January 1967 with Rolf Vogel, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, p. 139

⁵⁶ Albrecht and Sommer, *Deutsche Waffen für die Dritte Welt*, pp. 114–115.

with annihilation. The identification with Israel, therefore, and the great relief when Israel won its war within six days were all-embracing. Though the government maintained a carefully phrased "policy of noninterference,"⁵⁷ the leaders of all four parties represented in the Bundestag left little doubt about whom they held responsible for the war and voiced their clear sympathy for Israel – as Foreign Minister Willy Brandt formulated it in his often quoted statement "that our non-interference, and in this sense neutrality under international law, cannot mean moral indifference and no sluggishness of the heart (*Trägheit des Herzens*)."⁵⁸ The general public, relieved of paralyzing uncertainty by the outbreak of the war, came to the aid of Israel with unprecedented fervor: millions of German marks were collected within days; thousands of Germans donated blood; thousands volunteered for civil tasks in Israel.⁵⁹

The massive aid, however, reflected not only humanitarian impulses and a belated acceptance of responsibility arising from German guilt. Moreover, the extremely one-sided coverage of the conflict in the media⁶⁰ – particularly if compared with, e.g., the British press – was not just caused by traditional misconceptions of the Middle East and the added effect of revived guilt feelings. Closer analysis reveals that in 1967, too, the Germans displayed what Ralf Dahrendorf had referred to as "this mixture of theoretical humanitarianism and practical inhumanity, which makes Germany so unbearable at times."⁶¹

Had the Germans just followed their impulse to relieve suffering, they should have diverted a large share of their aid to the side that had suffered most once the war was over. When dealing with authoritarian regimes – like the German Democratic Republic – West Germans always had

⁵⁷ Foreign Minister Willy Brandt on 31 May 1967, and Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger in a government statement on 7 June 1967, Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, pp. 313, 315. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are by the author.

⁵⁸ Debate on the government statement of 7 June 1967 in the German Bundestag, *ibid.*, pp. 316–320 (Quote from Willy Brandt's speech, p. 320).

⁵⁹ Cf., e.g., the enumeration of "Spontaneous reactions of the German population," *ibid.*, pp. 329–337.

⁶⁰ For the coverage of the June War in the German press cf. the comprehensive study of four leading daily newspapers – *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Welt* – by Kenneth Lewan, *Der Nahostkrieg in der westdeutschen Presse*, Köln 1970 (henceforth: Lewan, *Der Nahostkrieg in der westdeutschen Presse*); the following interpretation, however, though partially based on material collected by Lewan, is based on Friedemann Buettner, "German Perceptions of the Middle East Conflict: Images and Identifications during the 1967 War," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 6, no. 2 (Winter 1977), pp. 66–81.

⁶¹ Ralf Dahrendorf, *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland*, München 1965, p. 394.

distinguished between unacceptable governments and their criminal politics, on the one hand, and the victimized, suffering people on the other. Arab governments were presented in the press in a comparable way – but what about their people? Arab governments were seen as responsible for the war and might seriously have planned “to throw the Jews into the sea,” but why were Germans blind to the pain of the losers? How could German journalists see Egyptian soldiers stride past, “who had taken off their shoes in order to be able to run away faster in the sands of Sinai”⁶² and who were destined to die of thirst, and at the same time praise the grandiose achievement of the Israelis who had made provisions that their soldiers could take a shower midway in the desert?⁶³ I have not come across a single appeal for the relief of those soldiers or other Arabs afflicted by the war.

One-sided partisanship, blindness to contradicting facts, and insensitivity to the consequences of war for the loser were all expressions of an old German resurfacing again – resurfacing, quite often, in a stunning identification with a new image of the Jew. Presented by major sections of the media, there suddenly was a beaming warhero whose radically changed image took the Germans by surprise. But, as Friedrich Hacker – psychoanalyst and émigré of Viennese origin – observed, in this incomprehensibly changed picture of its once despised enemy “Germany, mystically strange, recognizes itself, too. By unconditionally confident support for Israel not only former guilt is paid off and atoned for, but, first of all, self-esteem and pride in one’s own past is salvaged and justified, at least fragmentarily.” This, because the sympathy of the Western world condoned things in the Israeli which had been held against the German as the mortal sin of his nationalism and his national character.⁶⁴

It was not the best that surfaced in the identification, but rather that side which had been repressed for a long time. A first indication of this was the sudden recurrence of a vocabulary from World War II army communiqués, when the June War “like a cleansing thunderstorm” flashed into the “sultry atmosphere” and the “desert foxes” (*Wüstenfüchse*) of “Rommel’s student” Moshe Dayan won “total victory” in a “lightning war” (*Blitzkrieg*).⁶⁵ The

⁶² *Der Spiegel*, 21, no. 25 (12 June 1967), p. 21.

⁶³ Armin Halle, in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 June 1967, quoted in Lewan, *Der Nahostkrieg in der westdeutschen Presse*, p. 113.

⁶⁴ Friedrich Hacker, *Terror: Mythos – Realität – Analyse*, Wien etc. 1973, pp. 96–97.

⁶⁵ Cf. the cover of *Der Spiegel*, 21, no. 25 (12 June 1967), and for a collection of quotes Otto Köhler, “Unsere Araber,” *ibid.*, 21, no. 27 (26 June 1967), p. 66.

“lightning victory” (*Blitzsieg*) caused unreserved joy because it not only relieved the German of his responsibility for the survival of the survivors, but it allowed him to identify with those who, fighting like Rommel until victory, had vicariously realized secret and repressed wishes. By the time the victory was clear, some Germans were so outspokenly their former selves again that their commentaries could only be distinguished from those of Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi minister of propaganda, by their subject matter: “Naturally, there will still be some who sympathize in fossil delusion with the grandiloquent now grandiosely punished enemy of the Jews, [Abdul] Nasser. But they are mute, stooped away into the corners of their benighted frame of mind (*Gesinnungsnacht*).”⁶⁶

Better informed journalists were convinced that Abdul Nasir had not wanted war, because he must have known, as well as Israeli military leaders did, that he could not win⁶⁷ – particularly not as long as his elite troops were still fighting a losing battle in the Yemeni civil war. It was even published news in Germany that Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban had told the US government on 25 May, ten days before the war started, that “the Israelis would finish with their enemies within five days, if only left alone with them” – an assessment which was corroborated by Pentagon calculations.⁶⁸ All newspapers, at least after the war, had to admit that it had been Israel which had attacked. But the aggression was justified almost universally as a necessary step of self-defense against the Arab aggressor.⁶⁹

In the admiration for the “successes of Israeli self-assertion (*Selbstbehauptung*) which border on the miraculous,”⁷⁰ the drama of German history was re-enacted, this time, as it were, for the right cause and this time brought to a successful conclusion. The unreserved hero-worship and the open contempt for the weak other, which were displayed in many commentaries in leading daily papers after the war, cannot be interpreted

⁶⁶ The well-known journalist Matthias Walden, in *Die Welt*, 10 June 1967, quoted in Lewan, *Der Nahostkrieg in der westdeutschen Presse*, p. 110.

⁶⁷ Rudolph Chimelli in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8–9 June 1967, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 89–90. Cf. Yitzhak Rabin, chief of staff during the June War, in an interview with Eric Rouleau of *Le Monde*: “I don’t believe that Nasser wanted war. The two divisions he sent into Sinai on May 14 would not have been enough to unleash an offensive against Israel. He knew it and we knew it,” quoted in Rev. Joseph L. Ryan, “The Annihilation Controversy,” *Middle East International*, no. 24 (June 1973), p. 7.

⁶⁸ *Der Spiegel*, 21, no. 25 (12 June 1967), p. 22; cf. Ryan, *loc.cit.*

⁶⁹ For a collection of quotes cf. Lewan, *Der Nahostkrieg in der westdeutschen Presse*, pp. 79–83.

⁷⁰ Matthias Walden in *Die Welt*, 10 June 1967, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 134.

as a sign that those commentators in their identification with the Israeli had overcome their antisemitism. On the contrary, in the sudden love of Israel and the noisy "philo-semitism" old prejudices often had only been transferred to new forms. To quote a last example from a leading daily, an article by Dieter Cycon in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* is revealing in this respect. Commenting on the observation that during the war "an almost two-thousand-year-old image of the type of man of Jewish derivation had collapsed," Cycon wrote:

Naturally, the merchant and the intellectual as types do still exist today; they are outshone, however, by the image of the Jew as military strategist and brilliant soldier who, resolute in the face of death, plunges into the fire of tank-armies and reaches what is the secret yearning of everybody: the victory of the small over the powerful, threatening, merciless. The desire to identify guilt feelings, rooted in history, flow into a wave of sympathy.⁷¹

The causes for the German identification are recognized with remarkable clarity, but Cycon failed to see that he would give himself away if he distinguished between different types of Jews the way he did: The war hero was even now a "man of Jewish derivation" whose image obviously had not collapsed completely. Are we wrong to conclude that "clever merchants" and "destructive intellectuals" had justly been despised and persecuted?

Among the few voices rejecting this type of journalism with its dubious identifications was Ulrike Meinhof – at that time a remarkable young intellectual, later the most prominent woman in the terrorist Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF) – who strongly expressed the sympathy of the European left with Israel, while at the same time criticizing the "questionable reconciliation" advocated by "a certain press" in Germany as well as criticizing Moshe Dayan's policy as not conducive to peace.⁷² Her contribution was an early indication of the growing split within the German left soon after the June war, which in many ways resulted from a generation conflict between an older generation of friends and a younger one highly critical of Israel.⁷³ Particularly at the universities, where communist and

⁷¹ *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 10 June 1967, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 141.

⁷² Ulrike Marie Meinhof, "Drei Freunde Israels," *Konkret*, 7 (1967); repr. in Isaac Deutscher, *Der israelisch-arabische Konflikt*, Frankfurt/M. 1968, pp. 3–5.

⁷³ Cf. Martin W. Kloeke, *Israel und die deutsche Linke: Zur Geschichte eines schwierigen Verhältnisses*, 2nd enl. ed., Frankfurt/M 1994, esp. pp. 106–219 (henceforth: Kloeke, *Israel und die deutsche Linke*).

other radical groups and parties were sprouting up, "Solidarity with the Just Struggle of the Palestinian People" became a sort of battle cry of the New Left. By the early seventies the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) – or at least the one or other of its member organizations, foremost the PFLP and PDFLP – were celebrated as part of the great liberation movements of the day. So strong was the identification and so close the cooperation of some, that members of the German RAF even received military training in Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

All quotations above in the context of the June war came from leading papers of the so-called "serious press"; contributions of the solidarity movements with the Palestinians, on the other hand, were restricted to the student press, to obscure communist newspapers and to a seemingly endless stream of leaflets and handouts. Their fight for the rights of the Palestinians and for a Democratic State of Palestine was presented as an integral part of the fight against US imperialism, of which Israel was considered by many to be the "spearhead" in the Middle East. In their professed anti-Zionism many of these groups (articles or leaflets were rarely signed by individuals) revealed strong antisemitic sentiments – in spite of all endeavors to keep Jews and Zionism at least nominally apart. Already during these early years Israelis and Israeli politics towards the Palestinians were quite often linked to Nazi symbols in these leftist circles: Zionists, for example, were called "the present-day Nazis" and Israeli politicians accused of being aggressors and terrorists who are turning the country into "a solitary concentration camp (*ein einziges KZ*)" for the Arabs.⁷⁴ And after 1975 the infamous – and 1991-rescinded – resolution of the UN General Assembly stating "that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination," was widely quoted.⁷⁵

Already during the seventies, these antisemitic tendencies were widely criticized, not the least by members of the elder generation sympathetic to Israel, as for example the writers Günter Grass, Heinrich Böll, or Carl Améry.⁷⁶ Later, during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982–84, when again accusations of fascist tendencies and comparisons to Nazi politics in the occupied territories of Eastern Europe abounded among sections of the radical left, the critique of Israel as well as the critique of the obvious

⁷⁴ "Zionisten: Die Nazis unserer Tage!" *Rote Fahne: Zentralorgan der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands (KPD)*, 4, no. 9 (28 February 1973); "Terror und Eroberung: der israelische Imperialismus," *Roter Morgen*, no. 21 (23 October 1972).

⁷⁵ UN-Doc. A/Res. 3379 (XXX) of 10 November 1975.

⁷⁶ Cf., e.g., Jean Améry, "Der neue Antisemitismus," *Tribüne*, no. 59 (1976), pp. 7011–7014.

antisemitism of many of these critics of Israel became part of major debates among German intellectuals.⁷⁷

While such debates do not directly touch upon government policy, they are indicative not only of the extremes between which German published opinion oscillated, but also of clichés and prejudices to which Middle Eastern partners could refer in their endeavors to have relations improved. An improvement was definitely needed, as politicians had to realize that the Federal Republic had not been represented in any major Arab capital during the crisis that led to the 1967 June war. Things became even more difficult in the aftermath of the war when Israeli measures in the occupied territories – administrative integration of Arab East Jerusalem into the Israeli municipal council, establishment of the first settlements, archaeological excavations not allowed under the Fourth Geneva Convention, etc. – soon evoked international criticism even among some European partners of Germany who had fully supported the Israeli point of view during the months up to the war. The Arab states, on the other hand, made it difficult to start a new relationship after they had refused, through their triple "No" at the Arab League summit in Khartoum at the end of August 1967, to recognize Israel and to start negotiations on a settlement. Moreover, major Arab states intensified their relations with the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact states. In this context five of them, including Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, finally established full diplomatic relations with the GDR in spring 1969 – though on the other side Jordan and Yemen had re-established relations with the Federal Republic, and the three North African states which had not severed relations in 1965 had by that time returned their ambassadors to Bonn.

The internal political situation in Germany posed further problems for a new policy. The post-war era had definitely come to an end. Ludwig Erhard had not been able to live up to the over-towering stature of his predecessor Adenauer, and in 1966 had had to give up after only three years in office. The political atmosphere under the ensuing grand coalition of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats with Kurt Georg Kiesinger as chancellor and Willy Brandt as foreign minister intensified a state of immobility that had crept into politics and society. Endless debates on and violent protests against the inclusion of detailed emergency laws into the constitution during spring 1968 created the atmosphere in which the above-

⁷⁷ Cf. Kloeke, *Israel und die deutsche Linke*, pp. 220–237.

mentioned radical left could develop in the context of a growing extra-parliamentary opposition.

Between Well-intentioned Principle and Harsh Reality: The Policy of Even-Handedness

Only when Willy Brandt formed a new coalition government with the Free Democrats in 1969 were the internal conditions finally provided that enabled reformulation of the foundations of foreign policy. Already in his first government declaration on 28 October, Brandt stated that his government would seek relations with all states in the Middle East, shaped in a spirit of "even-handedness" (*Ausgewogenheit*). By referring to Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 as a balanced basis for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the interest of the peoples concerned,⁷⁸ Brandt connected his Middle Eastern policy from the outset with the principles of his policy of détente in Europe: rejection of violence as a means in politics, the right to existence, recognition, and security of all states, and a permanent settlement of borders on the basis of international guarantees.

The Arab states welcomed the change in German policy, but hesitated to resume immediate diplomatic relations. All wanted first to see how German-Israeli relations would develop. Several of them were still suspicious after their former experiences with German ambiguity and double dealings, while some others seemed to have hoped that Germany, with its excellent relations to Israel, might even contribute to an improvement of the situation in the Middle East. Most Arab states, moreover, did not feel a great urgency, as quite good economic relations and even development aid had been possible in the preceding years in the absence of diplomatic relations. As Germany did not feel any urgency either, because Brandt's government wanted first of all to improve its relations with the Soviet Union

⁷⁸ Chancellor Willy Brandt's Government Declaration of 28 October 1969, *Archiv der Gegenwart*, 30 October 1969, pp. 15004–15011 (on foreign policy, pp. 15010–15011). On the endeavors and failures of the social-liberal coalition government to initiate and sustain a policy of *Ausgewogenheit* during the 1970s and early 1980s cf. Büttner and Hünsele, "Die politischen Beziehungen," (above, n. 5), pp. 128–152; Friedemann Büttner and Thomas Scheffler, "Die Nahostpolitik der sozial-liberalen Koalition," Reiner Steinweg (ed.), *Hilfe + Handel = Frieden? Die Bundesrepublik in der Dritten Welt*, Frankfurt/M. 1982, pp. 139–175 (henceforth: Büttner and Scheffler, "Die Nahostpolitik der sozial-liberalen Koalition").

and other Eastern European states, including the GDR, it took more than two years before Algeria and Sudan, as the first two states, and all in all more than five years until finally all remaining Arab states had either resumed or for the first time established diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic.

While Brandt and his foreign minister, Walter Scheel, embarked on their new *Ostpolitik*, other international developments opened a way for trying to implement the new principle of *Ausgewogenheit* in the Middle East. Less than three weeks after Brandt's government declaration, preparatory discussions on Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) started between the United States and the Soviet Union in Helsinki. This prompted the member-states of the European Community (EC) – at that time still just the six founding ones – to establish the European Political Cooperation (EPC). The EPC was an organizational framework to improve consultations and to coordinate the foreign policies of the members with reference to SALT – as well as later in relation to other arms reduction talks (MBFR) and to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). An equally important reason was to monitor the situation in the Middle East, as the Europeans were afraid that during a next major crisis the Arabs might use their oil as a political weapon, as some had already done during the Suez crisis of 1956 and as others had threatened to do during the war of June 1967.

In order to keep foreign policy under national sovereignty, the EPC was a network of foreign ministries independent of the EC institutions. Working papers as well as the declarations of the heads of states and governments at their biannual meetings or of the foreign ministers during the months in between, therefore, reflected, much more than could decisions of the EC bureaucracy in Brussels, the state of discussions among the Europeans and offered better prospects of getting one's own position reflected. This enabled the German government to adopt positions on the multilateral level of the EPC which it would have found more difficult to take as policy declarations on the national level, not to speak of direct bilateral relations, in particular with Israel.

How difficult any move towards more *Ausgewogenheit* might be was brought home to the German government when the foreign ministers, at their first meeting on the Middle East in Paris on 12–13 May 1971, accepted a working paper which had been drafted by the French delegation. This so-called Schumann Paper, which was not published officially, but

paraphrased rather vaguely at a press conference,⁷⁹ went beyond Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 – or at least beyond Israel's reading of it – in three major points: In consonance with other UN resolutions, the working paper implied an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories,⁸⁰ referred to the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, and suggested the internationalization of Jerusalem. While the Arab states welcomed the new policy of the Europeans, Israel strictly rejected the paper. As quite some criticism was voiced in the German press, too, Foreign Minister Scheel went to Jerusalem in order to explain the paper to the Israeli government. While defending the paper as such, Scheel pointed out several aspects in which his government's position differed from the text of the working paper. In the end, Scheel had managed to restore Israel's trust in Germany's Middle East policy; but he had deeply angered France as he had definitely withdrawn from the common position.⁸¹

The affair revealed a structural dilemma in the Community's Middle Eastern policy: Like Germany in its efforts to find a more balanced position, the other Europeans, too, had to start from the basically pro-Israeli position of most of its members. The EPC, therefore, had to face similar reactions as those mentioned above for Germany, because any shift in the status quo tended to go too far for Israel and not far enough for the Arab states. Moreover, the member states were starting from quite different positions: France – and to a lesser extent Italy – were basically “pro-Arab,” the three Benelux countries, on the other hand, took a more “pro-Israeli” position, while Germany shifted around with an added dilemma: Due to its historical responsibility for the Holocaust, closest cooperation with Israel was mandatory, while the disrupted relations with the Arab states needed mending. The strong resentment of the United States, and also of Israel,

⁷⁹ The working paper was attributed to French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann who presided over the session of the EPC. The newspaper *Die Welt*, which had obtained a copy of the paper, published a German translation of the main sections on 14 July 1971, reprinted in Amnon Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen im Schatten der EG-Nahostpolitik*, Frankfurt 1983, pp. 536–537 (henceforth: Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen*).

⁸⁰ The paper refers to the French text of Security Council Resolution 242, while Israel only accepted the more vaguely phrased English version demanding withdrawal “from territories occupied in the recent conflict” rather than “*des territoires occupés*”; on the reasons for the divergent wording, cf. Lord Caradon, “Die Zukunft der Resolution 242,” *Vereinte Nationen*, 27 (1979), pp. 153–155.

⁸¹ For details about the affair around the “Schumann Paper,” cf. Ilan Greilsammer and Joseph Weiler, *Europe's Middle East Dilemma: The Quest for a Unified Stance*, Boulder, Colo. 1987, pp. 27–29.

against any political involvement by the Community in the Middle East also played an important role: France in particular wanted to use the EPC, from the outset, as a vehicle for an independent European role in world politics, while Germany could not risk any deterioration of the strategic alliance with the United States. The same also held true for Great Britain which joined the EC in 1973 together with Denmark and Ireland.⁸²

The deadlock was partially solved by the impact of the first oil crisis during and after the 1973 October War. Under the threat of an Arab oil embargo, the foreign ministers of the nine EC member states issued a common declaration on 6 November 1973. Starting from recent Security Council resolutions to end the war, the Europeans called for a peace settlements based upon:

- (1) the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;
- (2) the need for Israel to end the territorial occupation which it had maintained since the conflict of 1967;
- (3) respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries;
- (4) recognition that in the establishment of a just and lasting peace account must be taken of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.⁸³

The resolution, in general, and the recognition that the Palestinians have "legitimate rights," in particular, was a marked step by Germany in the direction of more *Ausgewogenheit*. This all the more as Germany had been under severe criticism in Israel after it had stressed its strict neutrality during the war and had prohibited the American armed forces in Germany from continuing to load US war material on Israeli ships in the harbor of Bremerhaven. "This is a neutrality that indirectly encourages genocide in order to secure the uninterrupted delivery of oil from Libya," the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv* had commented. "Once they have murdered for ideological reasons, this time for oil. The difference is not big."⁸⁴ When two weeks after this comment and a few days after the EPC declaration, Israeli Prime

⁸² On the Community's Middle Eastern policy in the 1970s and early 1980s cf. *ibid.*; David Allan and Alfred Pijpers (eds.), *European Foreign Policy-Making and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, The Hague 1984.

⁸³ Text of the Brussels Declaration of 6 November 1973, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 11 (November 1973).

⁸⁴ Quoted according to *Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa)*, 26 October 1973.

Minister Golda Meir asked Chancellor Brandt to persuade the other Europeans to pursue a less pro-Arab policy, Brandt assured her that the special character of German-Israeli relations would definitely remain and that no "neutrality of conscience" could be permitted to the Germans. However, in spite of all criticism, the German government this time did not dissociate itself from the EPC declaration.⁸⁵

In the years following 1973, the Federal Republic managed to use the EPC framework as a foreign policy tool to maneuver between Arab demands, Israeli protests, and American misgivings. Together with other EC member states, the governments of Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel and, as of May 1974, of Helmut Schmidt (SPD) as chancellor and Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP) as foreign minister, began, step by step, to take a more "pro-Arab" stand while claiming at the national level that its position towards Israel was unchanged. With reference to the obvious discrepancies, the German government argued that it stood firmly to its responsibilities towards Israel, but could not obstruct a common stance within the EPC without endangering European integration.⁸⁶ As reflected in the EPC declarations of the mid-seventies, the Europeans managed to develop their own position towards the Arab-Israeli conflict: From a refugee problem that was subordinate at first to Israel's problems of being recognized, to the issues of sovereignty and secure borders, the Palestinian problem slowly moved into the very center of any conflict solution. The terminology of the EC declarations shifted from "the Palestinians" to "the Palestinian people," which had "legitimate rights" and a "national identity." By 1977, in their London Declaration of 29 June:

The Nine affirmed their belief that a solution to the conflict in the Middle East will be possible only if the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to give expression to its national identity is translated into fact, which would take into account the need for a homeland for the Palestinian people.

They consider that representatives of the parties to the conflict,

⁸⁵ On the occasion of their meeting at the Conference of the Socialist International in London on 11 November 1973, cf. *Deutscher Depeschen-Dienst (ddp)*, 11 November 1973.

⁸⁶ For the most detailed accounts of German Middle Eastern policy in the European context cf. Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen*; see also Lily Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel*, Boston, London, and Sydney 1984 (henceforth: Feldman, *Special Relationship*).

including the Palestinian people,...must participate in the negotiations...⁸⁷

Some elements were introduced into the EPC's Middle East policy on German initiative. In particular, the "right to self-determination" was supported by Germany as early as the mid-seventies⁸⁸ on the ground that a country that demands the right to self-determination for all Germans cannot deny the same right to the Palestinian people. However, the other Europeans hesitated until 1980, before they demanded, in their Venice Declaration of 13 June, that the Palestinian people must "exercise fully its right to self-determination" and that the PLO, which had not been mentioned before, "will have to be associated with the negotiations" – not meaning as *the* representative, but as *a* representative of the Palestinians. The Venice Declaration was the most carefully worded and most comprehensive of all EPC declarations and has been quoted ever since when the Europeans wanted to explain their position with respect to a solution of the conflict.⁸⁹

A parallel venue for drawing closer to the Arab states had been, for a while, the Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD). The EAD had been suggested to the EC by the League of Arab States as a common forum after the Arabs had welcomed the EC position as expressed in the Brussels Declaration of November 1973. But although the EAD was officially established in 1974, it never really got off the ground. While the Arab side wanted to secure EC support for its political objectives after the October war, the Community bowed to US and Israeli pressure and insisted that the two most burning issues – the Arab-Israeli conflict and the oil issue – must be excluded from the agenda. Moreover, the Europeans successfully kept the EAD under the level of ministerial conferences at the level of meetings of experts dealing with economic and technical cooperation. Nevertheless, Germany

⁸⁷ Text of the London Declaration of 29 June 1977, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 6 (June 1977).

⁸⁸ E.g., Ambassador Rüdiger von Wechmar in his statement of 19 November 1975 to the General Assembly of the United Nations in reply to Yasir Arafat's demand for self-determination at the same place a week before, cf. United Nations, *General Assembly Official Records. Meeting no. 2291*, New York 1975; cf. Foreign Minister Genscher in an interview with the Egyptian newspaper *al-Ahram*, text in *Archiv der Gegenwart*, 9 May 1975, p. 19435.

⁸⁹ Text of the Venice Declaration of 12–13 June 1980, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 6 (June 1980); this declaration is the only EPC declaration still on the EU Website, together with declarations made within the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) since 1999, cf. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/decl/index.htm (25.09.02).

as well as other Europeans, used the EAD, too, as a forum and an instrument for the incremental steps with which they moved towards a "more balanced" – or as the Arabs saw it: "less biased" – stance.

In spite of all changes, the EC's common policy had remained declaratory throughout the 1970s. By early 1980, however, the Europeans felt the need to launch their own Middle East peace initiative. This was due to a number of interrelated factors: The US-led peace process had reached its greatest success when Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat signed the two Camp David Accords in September 1978. But the process had been deadlocked soon after the resultant Egyptian–Israeli Peace Treaty of March 1979 when Menachem Begin's government made serious negotiations on a Palestinian autonomy, as envisaged in the second Camp David Accord, impossible. Therefore, the Arab side – which at the time was gaining additional weight as oil prices were spiraling upwards again – started to pressure the Europeans to use their influence with the United States so that the Americans would put pressure on the Israelis to be a little bit more forthcoming. In addition to the deadlock in the peace process, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reinforced concern about the security situation in the Gulf, already in a critical situation since the Islamic revolution in Iran the previous year. A halt to the peace process, so the Europeans thought, would only strengthen radical anti-Western tendencies in the Arab world, and as the United States were increasingly preoccupied with their upcoming presidential elections it was argued that the Community could not stand aloof.

The outcome of some hectic European activism in 1979 and early 1980 was the Venice Declaration which was conceived as the basis and starting point of a European initiative in the Middle East. Close scrutiny, however, reveals that this initiative was practically dead before it could start. Israel had had strong apprehensions long in advance, particularly because the Europeans were willing to recognize the PLO and to demand its participation in peace negotiations. By the eve of the Venice summit strong pressure from the United States and Israel had already divided the EC members and, due to the necessity to reach the required consensus of all members, original plans for the Community's initiative were changed beyond recognition. Thus from the outset the "peace missions" in the wake of the declaration had little chance of success.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Cf. Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen*, pp. 428–474; a most detailed analysis

Structural deficiencies in the EC's foreign policy-making facilitated successful external pressure, but were not the only reasons for the failure of the European initiative. Equally important was the fact that there was no strong Arab counterpart, due to the split in the Arab world since Egypt's membership in the Arab League had been suspended after Sadat's peace initiative. This had already had the effect that the Euro-Arab Dialogue had practically been suspended by the Europeans. Moreover, the ongoing civil war in Lebanon continued to deepen cleavages in the Arab world; furthermore – only three months after the Venice summit – Iraq launched its war against Iran in which several Arab states were to support either the one or the other of the belligerents. As a result of all these developments cross-cutting Arab alliances emerged in the various theaters of conflict. Furthermore, due to the reduced threat of an all-out Arab-Israeli war and due as well to the precarious situation in the Gulf, the focus of attention shifted more eastwards. The EC now tried – though unsuccessfully – to initiate closer relations on the Community level with the oil-rich countries of the Arabian peninsula, which were drawing closer together and in May 1981 formed their Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Finally, the EC itself went through a deep institutional crisis during the early 1980s ("Euro-sclerosis") on which changes in the member countries had an added effect. The power shifts involved when Margaret Thatcher took office in Great Britain already in 1979, François Mitterand in France in 1981, and Helmut Kohl in Germany in 1982 brought with them different priorities in their countries' relations with and policies in the Middle East, too. When Greece joined the EC in 1981, the Community for the first time had a member that had fully recognized the PLO and given it diplomatic status. The Greek position was supported some years later with the membership of Portugal and Spain. As a result, after the failure of Venice the EC maintained a low profile in the Middle East for most of the 1980s, just

of the developments from Camp David to the Venice Declaration is Martin Landgraf, "Die Europäische Politische Zusammenarbeit – eine gemeinsame europäische Außenpolitik? Nahostdiplomatie der Europäischen Gemeinschaft vom ägyptisch-israelischen Friedensvertrag bis zur Erklärung von Venedig," Dipl.Pol. thesis, Freie Universität Berlin 1991; cf. Friedemann Buettner and Martin Landgraf, "The European Community's Middle Eastern Policy: The New Order of Europe and the Gulf Crisis," Tareq I. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael (eds.), *The Gulf War and the New World Order: International Relations of the Middle East*, Gainesville, Fl., etc. 1994, pp. 77–115, esp. pp. 78–85 (henceforth: Buettner and Landgraf, "The European Community's Middle Eastern Policy").

repeating the Venice Declaration while concentrating on bilateral relations and accepting again the dominant role of the United States in any attempt at conflict resolution in the region.

For a decade the Federal Republic of Germany had tried to organize its Middle East Policy with foreign policy instruments, bilaterally as well as within the multilateral framework of the EPC.⁹¹ With this policy Germany had been quite successful in presenting its new even-handed policy to its Arab partners. And as long as the EPC's statements remained purely declaratory, Israel seems to have accepted the German role within the EPC – assured that the bilateral relations would continue to develop: By 1980 the economic, scientific and probably even military cooperation between Germany and Israel was more intensive and much larger in volume than ever before.⁹²

However, if Germany touched upon, or even crossed, the line where Israeli interests were seriously affected, Israel's reactions brought home to Germans the extent to which *Ausgewogenheit* would be tolerated: This had been the case at the very beginning of the EPC when Scheel had to rescind the German consent to the Schumann Paper; and it had led to irritations on different occasions during the following years. Particularly disappointed and angry were Israeli reactions when the German government gave in to the hijackers of a Lufthansa plane in October 1972, handing over the three surviving members of the Palestinian terrorist group which, six weeks earlier, had attacked the Israeli team at the Munich Olympic Games and – after an attempt by German security forces to free the hostages had failed – left eleven Israeli athletes dead. Irritations became more frequent after 1974, when Hans-Dietrich Genscher had succeeded Walter Scheel as foreign minister, though these seem to have been reactions – at least at the beginning – more to the changing position of the Europeans in general than to Genscher's personal stance. Only when the Camp David process reached stalemate and the Europeans were beginning to think about a European role in the Middle East were German-Israeli relations really badly affected.

In spite of the rather negative position of France, the Community had still accepted the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty as a first step in the direction

⁹¹ For a detailed account of the following cf. again Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen* (above, n. 79).

⁹² Cf. Feldman, *Special Relationship* (above, n. 86), pp. 87–156.

of a comprehensive solution of the Arab–Israeli conflict.⁹³ During the following months, however, the Europeans became more and more critical of Israel's position concerning the future of the occupied territories in general and of the settlement policy in particular. Even the US State Department had criticized the latter after the Israeli cabinet had authorized the building of new settlements less than a month after the signing of the treaty with Egypt.⁹⁴ The unanimous position of all other Arab states against Egypt's Treaty with Israel had its effects on the Europeans, too, who were trying at the time to negotiate cheaper energy prices with the Arab oil producing countries.

When Foreign Minister Genscher visited Libya and Saudi Arabia in June 1979 shortly after the EC had issued a declaration which was rather critical of Israel,⁹⁵ his endeavor to treat Germany's energy needs as a matter completely unrelated to the German position on the Arab–Israeli conflict could not be very convincing. Already then, Germany's leading conservative newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* spoke of a "low (*Tiefstand*)" in German–Israeli relations.⁹⁶ Matters got worse when the increasing readiness of German politicians to establish contacts with the PLO could no longer be explained away: In early July Willy Brandt, the party chairman of the governing SPD, and Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky – though both in their capacity as president and member of the executive of the Socialist International – met PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat in Vienna. Though the German government insisted that it had nothing to do with this and that its position had not changed, the event in any case was "not helpful" for German–Israeli relations – as the Israeli ambassador in Bonn put it.⁹⁷

In spite of harsh criticism by politicians and the media in Israel, and by opposition members and parts of the press in Germany, too, Genscher continued his visits to Arab states and eventually, at a press conference on 2 September 1979 in the Egyptian sea-resort of Abuquir, outlined six principles for a Middle East peace settlement: (1) the right of the Palestinians to self-determination; (2) their right to a homeland; (3) their right to decide by themselves who should represent them; (4) their right to decide by

⁹³ Cf. EC Declaration of 26 March 1979, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 3 (March 1979). For the following sections cf. Neustadt, *Die deutsch–israelischen Beziehungen*, pp. 378–395.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁹⁵ Cf. EC Declaration of 18 June 1979, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 6 (June 1979).

⁹⁶ Neustadt, *Die deutsch–israelischen Beziehungen*, p. 390.

⁹⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 409.

themselves about their future; (5) the necessity of a comprehensive peace; and (6) the inadmissibility of a separate peace.⁹⁸ While the last point was a calculated rebuff to his Egyptian hosts, the reaction of Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, who visited Bonn just a week later, was unexpected. While Genscher seems to have hoped to win Dayan over to his position, Dayan told journalists already on his departure from Israel that the already strained relations between the two countries had taken a turn for the worse. Once in Germany, Dayan used every opportunity to reject any interference in Israeli affairs: The right to self-determination was neither grounded in the Camp David Accords nor in EC Declarations; the Federal government's insistence on its demand that the Palestinians must be enabled to exercise this right would be changing the relations for the worse.⁹⁹ Genscher argued that the right of self-determination, though not included verbally, was materially covered by the recent EC Declarations, but in the end, after some harsh exchanges with Dayan, Genscher, though he repeated his demand that the Palestinians must be enabled to exercise their right to self-determination, had to add the proviso that this would need the agreement of all parties concerned (*Zustimmung aller Beteiligten*).¹⁰⁰ As this meant that Israel could veto the exercise of any of the Palestinian rights enumerated in the six principles, Genscher's Abukir initiative was dead.

There was no follow-up to the Abukir initiative. And the failure of the Community's Venice initiative, in which Germany fully participated during the following months, in a way also marked the end of Germany's endeavor to actively pursue its policy of *Ausgewogenheit*. The principle has remained ever since, but matters had become too controversial and the relationship with Israel too strained. No doubt, disagreements are normal in international relations and might create tensions which cannot be solved, so that diplomatic relations are broken off. However, diplomatic relations with Israel cannot be risked in the same manner in which the government of Erhard had risked the relations with the Arab states in 1965. The "special relationship" is not negotiable, and what we are observing in the developments at the end of the 1970s and during the early 1980s is the slow

⁹⁸ Text in *Europa-Archiv*, 19/1979, Z 175.

⁹⁹ Dayan, at a press conference in Bonn on 11 September 1979, cf. *Europa-Archiv*, 19/1979, Z 176. For accounts of Dayan's visit cf. Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen*, pp. 422–428; Büttner and Hünslers, "Die politischen Beziehungen" (above, n. 5), pp. 142–143.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Bulletin*, 102/1979, pp. 949–950.

withdrawal of German foreign policy from a strategically designed and actively pursued Middle East policy – giving in to United States and Israeli pressure and thereby allowing German internal policy to reassert itself again.

This could already be seen in the intra-German controversies during the months before the Venice Declaration, particularly when Franz Josef Strauss, the candidate of the CDU/CSU opposition for chancellor in the upcoming general elections, used his visit to Israel, in May 1980, for his election campaign by aggressively attacking the German government's Middle East policy, most of all the contacts with the PLO.¹⁰¹ Another major incident was the so-called Begin–Schmidt controversy about a year later, at the end of April 1981, when Chancellor Helmut Schmidt – who for years had been criticized in Israel as well as in Germany for not visiting Israel or, rather, for postponing such a visit time and again – stressed the "moral claim of the Palestinian people to self-determination" in a television interview just a few days after he had returned from Saudi Arabia. This provoked Prime Minister Menachem Begin to violently attack Schmidt for his "greed of the worst kind" because Schmidt must have made quite lucrative oil and weapons deals in Saudi Arabia which must have "affected his ability to remember."¹⁰² This was a clear reference to the German past and the limits it imposes – or is at least supposed to impose – on an "even-handed" approach to Middle Eastern problems, an approach, that was getting somewhat lopsided in the other direction, when the German government started to negotiate a multi-million dollar deal with Saudi Arabia on the purchase of Germany's highly advanced Leopard II tank.¹⁰³ Finally, Helmut Kohl, who succeeded Helmut Schmidt as chancellor by a "constructive vote of no confidence" in September 1982, did not fare much better: Kohl provoked angry reactions during his first visit to Israel, and corresponding commentaries in Germany, when he spoke in his speech in the Knesset on 25 January 1984 about the effects of the generation change on the bilateral relations and remarked that he could not have been laden

¹⁰¹ Cf. Neustadt, *Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen*, pp. 450–458.

¹⁰² On the Begin–Schmidt controversy cf. "Dokumente zur Zeit," *Die Zeit*, 8 May 1981; "Deutsche tragen gemeinsame Schuld," *Der Spiegel*, 35, no. 20 (11 May 1981), p. 29; Büttner and Scheffler, "Die Nahostpolitik der sozial-liberalen Koalition" (above, n. 78), p. 139.

¹⁰³ For the issue of the Leopard II tank in the quarrel between Begin and Smith cf. www.deutsche-chronik.de/dcx/dcx_1982 and www.gesis.org/information/themen/fokus/isr_pal/isr_pal07.htm.

with guilt during the Nazi period because he had “the grace of the late birth (*die Gnade der späten Geburt*).”¹⁰⁴

The Israeli invasion into Lebanon in June 1982 should serve as a last example for the dilemmas involved in trying *Ausgewogenheit*, this time on the civil society level. Immediately after the invasion had begun, a group of German intellectuals drafted a clear but nevertheless circumspectly phrased “Appeal for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.” This Appeal was signed by about 100 politicians, journalists, theologians, and scholars beyond the traditional political divides – including many well-known friends of Israel and Members of Parliament from the governing SPD and FDP as well as the opposition CDU, among them most MPs involved in Middle East politics. While the initiators were trying to recruit signatories, the Israeli embassy, which had been alerted the very first day, started to influence others against the Appeal. After the Appeal had been published for the first time in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the MPs of the CDU had to withdraw their signatures while the Israeli ambassador, Yitzhak Ben-Ari, replied with an “Appeal for Peace and a Free Lebanon” a few days later in the same paper. When it turned out that two of the MPs who had signed – or wanted to sign – had a Nazi past, the embarrassed organizers had to exclude them for the follow-up publication of the Appeal in the *Jerusalem Post*.¹⁰⁵

Reactions in Germany were mixed, to say the least, and the publication in the *Jerusalem Post* was a disaster. Dozens of letters arrived at the *Jerusalem Post* and many more were addressed to the initiators: Many writers felt offended, some of them very deeply, writing touching letters about their experiences with living in shelters time and again. Others questioned the motives of “just you as Germans” who don’t know anything about security needs or “the Arabs” and should better have kept silent. And the few who reacted on the level intended by the initiators of the appeal and started a dialogue, could probably have been found and reached by other means. What some of them wrote in a way prefigured what was going to

¹⁰⁴ Text of the speech in Auswärtiges Amt (ed.), *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Nahe Osten: Dokumentation*, Bonn 1987, pp. 139–141 (quote on p. 141).

¹⁰⁵ The “Aufruf für den israelischen Rückzug aus dem Libanon” was published first in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 June 1982; then, with an increasing number of signatures, in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 19/20 June 1982, and *Die Zeit*, 9 July 1982; the English translation “An Appeal for an Israeli Withdrawal from Lebanon,” in *The Jerusalem Post*, 18 June 1982; *Al Fajr Palestinian Weekly*, 25 June–1 July 1982. The reply of the Israeli ambassador in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 June 1982.

happen in Israel itself: the emergence of Peace Now as a mass movement which was able – at a later stage of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon – to recruit so many Israelis for one of their demonstrations that a similar mobilization in Germany would have meant a demonstration of some six million people in Bonn. This unbelievable mobilization of internal criticism very much affected intellectual debates among those close to the initiators of the Appeal. But as the public debate in Germany, particularly among the left, polarized the issues, bringing up all sorts of arguments, many of them – as described above – of subdued, but others of a quite open antisemitic character, the initiative behind the Appeal failed on the civil society level as politicians had failed in their own contexts.

A Fresh Start after 1989?

The end of the Cold War, the gradual disintegration of the Eastern Bloc, and in particular the events from the fall of the Berlin Wall up to the unification of Germany changed the parameters of German foreign policy at least as much as those of global politics. Germany finally gained full sovereignty, was no longer dependent, as the two Germanies had been previously, on the good will of its superpower, and now could face new demands and new opportunities to shape its own foreign policy. The respective hopes and/or fears of Germany's immediate neighbors and the new perceptions and actual changes in German foreign policy do not concern us here¹⁰⁶ – only the question how Germany reacted to simultaneous changes of the political situation in the Middle East and how it reacted to possibly changed expectations of its Middle Eastern partners.

As vice-chancellor and foreign minister in the conservative-liberal governments of Helmut Kohl since 1982, Hans-Dietrich Genscher had stood for the continuity of German foreign policy. But little had happened in Germany's policy in the Middle East since the failure of the European Venice initiative until 1987/88 when the first Intifada began to change the basic set-up of the Israeli–Palestinian relationship. The – by then – Twelve States members of the European Community welcomed the decision of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers of November 1988 to accept

¹⁰⁶ On the new conditions for and forms of German foreign policy cf., e.g., Volker Rittberger (ed.), *German Foreign Policy since Unification: Theories and Case Studies*, Manchester 2001.

Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973)¹⁰⁷ as well as “the decision of the United States Government to initiate a substantive dialogue with the PLO, following...its explicit renunciation of terrorism.”¹⁰⁸ But Germany did not move beyond its low profile policy in the Middle East neither with respect to the Intifada nor during the Kuwait crisis and the second Gulf War – in spite of the fact that Germany’s overall contributions to America’s “Desert Shield” and “Desert Storm” added up to more than 12 billion US Dollars, the second largest foreign contribution after Japan, another low profile ally.¹⁰⁹ And this low profile policy did not change substantially when Klaus Kinkel took over from Genscher as vice-chancellor and foreign minister in 1992, or later when the Europeans, after the Maastricht Treaties of 1993, intensified their cooperation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

A real chance for Germany to show some profile in the Middle East came with the Oslo Declaration of Principles in September 1993 and the resultant Gaza-Jericho Agreement in May 1994. Only four days after PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat had set himself up in Jericho on 4 August 1994 to start the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) from there, Germany and Sweden were the first two foreign countries to open their diplomatic representations in Jericho. For Germany the early and close cooperation with the PA was a singular chance to demonstrate practical *Ausgewogenheit* by mutual consent with Israel. Germany became the largest bilateral donor to the Palestinians as well as multilaterally through projects of the European Union (EU). Moreover, an agreement was reached with Israel, that the DM 140 million, which Israel had received annually as a result of the 1960 Adenauer–Ben-Gurion meeting in New York, were slowly to be phased out and transferred to infrastructure projects in the Palestinian territories and in Jordan as a neighboring Arab state participating in the peace process.

¹⁰⁷ Declaration of 21 November 1988, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 11 (November 1988).

¹⁰⁸ Statement at Athens on 16 December 1988, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 12 (December 1988).

¹⁰⁹ On Germany’s position within the European context before and during the second Gulf War cf. Buettner and Landgraf, “The European Community’s Middle Eastern Policy” (above, n. 90), esp. p. 98. For an annual overview of the relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Middle East cf. the respective articles in Thomas Koszinowski and Hanspeter Mattes (eds.), *Nahost Jahrbuch 1987[ff.]: Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Nordafrika und dem Nahen und Mittleren Osten*, Opladen 1988ff.

The mutual trust established thereby during the second half of the 1990s suddenly opened up the rare chance that Germany – or rather: a German – might play an active role in the peace process, when Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer was close by at the time a Palestinian suicide-bomber blew himself up at the entrance to a Tel Aviv beach-side discothèque on 2 June 2001, killing 21 young Israelis. As a go-between, Fischer was able to wrest from Arafat a clear public condemnation of the attack – addressed in Arabic to Arafat's own people and not just in English for foreign consumption – and to stop Prime Minister Ariel Sharon from ordering the expected revenge raid. During the following months Fischer kept close contact with both Sharon and Arafat, developed, in close coordination with the other Europeans, his own variant of a peace plan, and eventually helped to bring the Europeans into the quartet of peace brokers with the United States, Russia, and the secretary general of the United Nations. Even Berlin was discussed at some time as a possible neutral site for high level talks between Israel and the Palestinians. But eventually Fischer's endeavors to influence both sides to more moderation failed as the Intifada al-Aqsa escalated and Sharon's endeavor to quell it at all costs resulted in an endless spiral of violence and counter-violence and more counter-counter-violence.

While the latter developments are rooted in the region itself so that the outcome cannot be attributed to Fischer, the personal role he has played is a clear indication of a German political profile in the Middle East and even of a possible active role of Germany in the peace process – something many analysts would have thought impossible before these developments actually took place. However, I do think that my thesis still holds that German policy in the Middle East cannot deliver its promise of *Ausgewogenheit* because German relations with Israel never were, and for quite a time to come will not be, part of "normal" foreign policy relations but rather an issue of German domestic policy which lends it a priority that cannot be matched by whatever foreign policy may have to offer to the Arab side. This is particularly true as long as the United States supports Israel unswervingly, in spite of some criticism here and there, and Germany does not want a direct confrontation with either of them.

This comes out time and again as, for example, in a fairly recent debate between the director of the German Institute for the Modern Middle East in Hamburg, Udo Steinbach, who had always tried to pressure the German government and particularly the Foreign Office into a more active Middle East policy, and Hans-Ulrich Klose, chairman of the Committee on Foreign

Relations in the German Bundestag, on the issue "May German politics criticize Israel," which Klose clearly answered in the negative.¹¹⁰ The basic position of German Middle East policy is in consonance with the European Union's, even if formulated somewhat differently as in a recent Declaration of the Bundestag:

The right of Israel to exist for us is inviolable [*unantastbar* – which in German carries the meaning of "sacrosanct"]. Israel has the right to an existence in peace and within secure boundaries. At the same time the German Bundestag recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinians to a democratic state which exists in peace and freedom side by side with Israel.¹¹¹

Here already some unevenness might be seen in the wording. To make it clearer, Foreign Minister Fischer should be quoted from an interview with the daily *Die Welt*:

It is important that we do make it clear...that Israel does not stand alone and never will stand alone. On the basis of our special relationship with Israel this is self-evident (*eine Selbstverständlichkeit*) and has to be particularly stressed in times like this.¹¹²

Could a similar statement be made with reference to the Palestinians or any other Arab partner to an even-handed German policy?

Taking the issue out of parliament and government politics, the underlying reasons for the darker side of German–Israeli relations becomes clear. There can be no doubt that antisemitism has increased markedly in Germany after the unification. This is predominantly the case in Eastern Germany, where the negative social consequences of the unification have given rise to right-wing tendencies, particularly among the large number of unemployed younger people. But it is still endemic in parts of the Left, too. Time and again, antisemitic tendencies have become obvious, not the least in a seemingly endless series of debates on the meaning of the Holocaust, on the involvement of the German military beyond the special SS units, on the instrumentalization of the Holocaust by Israel, Jews in

¹¹⁰ Udo Steinbach and Hans-Ulrich Klose, "Darf deutsche Politik Israel kritisieren? Pro und Contra," *Orient-Journal*, 1 (Spring 2001), pp. 30–31; cf. the article by Steinbach in this volume.

¹¹¹ Resolution of the German Bundestag of 25 April 2002, *Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 14/8879* of 24 April 2002 and *Plenarprotokoll 14/233* of 25 April 2002.

¹¹² Text of the interview, *Die Welt*, 5 November 2001.

general, and Germans in particular, and so on – starting with the heated debate conducted already in 1986 between historians and intellectuals on the singularity of the Holocaust, the so-called *Historikerstreit*, to the public controversies over the book by the American political scientist Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1996), through author Martin Walser's speech when he received the German Booksellers' prestigious Peace Prize at the Frankfurt International Book Fair in 1998 and lamented that Auschwitz could so easily be used to intimidate Germans, to the book by US historian Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*, published in the year 2000. Already during the process of unification the German government had pledged to erect a memorial as a reminder of what Germans had done during the years of Nazi terror; but only in 1999 did the German Bundestag finally end ten years of public debate and quarrel about where it should stand and what form it should take. Last but not least, remarks on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, first by a member of the Free Democratic Party in the state parliament of North-Rhine-Westphalia and then by that party's vice-chairman – who was simultaneously president of the German–Arab Society – poisoned the FDP's campaign for the federal elections in 2002.¹¹³

But there is a positive side to it, too: Never did Germans so seriously and with such a broad participation discuss Germany's past. Since the American TV series on the Holocaust was shown in Germany in 1979, and much more so after the re-run in 1982, the Nazi crimes did become part of a broadly based debate. Particularly youth in the generation of the grandchildren have been asking those questions their parents rarely asked their own parents on their involvement and on what they must have known. And that to me is a sign of hope – not that Auschwitz will be forgiven, not to speak of forgotten, but that Germans will be able to live up to it and thereby find a way to a changed relationship with Israel, a relationship which then might make *Ausgewogenheit* acceptable to our Israeli partners, too.

¹¹³ This has been analyzed in detail in an outstanding, but yet unpublished, almost 750-pages long thesis by Lars Peter Rensmann, "Demonkratie und Judenbild: Antisemitismus in der zeitgenössischen politischen Kultur: Eine Untersuchung zu Formen, Ursachen und politischen Wirkungen von Judenfeindlichkeit in Deutschland im Licht kritisch-theoretischer Modelle," Ph.D. dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 2002.

GERMANY, THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND THE MIDDLE EAST: APPROACHING THE REGION THROUGH EUROPE

VOLKER PERTHES

When European Union (EU) leaders and European Commission administrators began to set the framework for a New Mediterranean Policy in the early 1990s, the German government was not exactly enthusiastic about this undertaking. Germany wanted the EU to give clear preference to its neighbors in Eastern Europe, particularly insofar as financial commitments were involved. Implicitly at least, the Mediterranean was considered a special interest of the southern EU member states. Still, during preparations for the EU summit at Cannes in the summer of 1995, Germany sought to limit the EU budget funds that would be set aside for financial assistance to the Mediterranean partner states; and German officials regarded it as a success when the summit cut down the proposals which the Commission had originally made for this package.

Since that time, however, particularly since the Barcelona Conference of November 1995, German interest in Europe's Mediterranean neighborhood has been on the increase. Today, Germany's political elite gives clear support to the Barcelona process: it views the Mediterranean and the Middle East as important fields of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and it accepts the need to commit the necessary funds. In a way, as will be explained in the following, Germany has approached the region through Amsterdam and Schengen: as a result, that is, of the progressive communitization of foreign and security policies, and of the changing geopolitics of a European Union whose "domestic"

* The article, originally presented as a paper to the conference on *Germany in the Middle East*, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 19–21 March 2000, draws partly on my *Germany and the Euro-Med Partnership: Gradually Becoming a Mediterranean State* (EuroMeSCo Papers, no. 1), Lisbon 1998.

borders have all but disappeared. Besides, it is still easier for Germany to leave to European bodies some of the more touchy policy questions that pertain to the Arab–Israeli conflict.

The Implications of CFSP

Let us begin with “Amsterdam,” i.e., with the institutional development of the EU and its implications.¹ Germany, as a key member of the European Union, has also been an outspoken supporter of a common foreign and security policy that deserves its name. It has thus been in favor of endowing the office of a Secretary General/High Representative of the CFSP with credible competence, of allowing majority decisions on foreign policy issues, and also of developing common defense policy structures under the CFSP. With no difference between the former center-right and the present center-left coalition governments, Germany has made multilateralism its favored approach in dealing with international affairs. This may have been easier for Germany than for several of its European partners: historically, for (West) Germany, European integration was never a trade-off whereby sovereign power would be relinquished for the chances of multilateral cooperation. Rather, inasmuch as Germany wasn’t sovereign at that time, integration and the establishment of viable and effective European institutions was Germany’s chance of (re)gaining sovereignty and international influence.² Today, in contrast to P-5 members Britain and France, Germany does not have to defend any special nation-state privilege in international bodies, and there is little reason, from a German perspective, to exempt particular international policy issues – namely those that are dealt with in the Security Council – from the CFSP context.

The commitment to a common EU foreign and security policy does not imply, however, that Germany or any other EU member state would simply deliver certain files to the SG/HR or other EU bodies. What it entails, rather, is the need to deal more intensively with and develop a sense of responsibility for issues that earlier might have been seen as special interests of other countries – such as the Mediterranean or the Middle East. Germany,

¹ Reference is to the Treaty of Amsterdam (Treaty on European Union) of 1997.

² Eckhard Lübke, “Germany’s Post-Wall and Post-Kohl Foreign and Security Policy,” unpublished manuscript (henceforth: Lübke).

according to Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, would not, or not any longer, endorse geo-clientalism, i.e., an approach whereby Germany would deal with Eastern Europe, while France, or other Southern European countries, would be in charge of the EU's southern or, for that matter, Mediterranean policies.³ This commitment also entails, even more importantly, developing a deeper interest and concern for problems and developments in areas where joint European action may take place at some point, including Petersberg missions (humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, and peace-making) that would involve German personnel and resources.

For Germany, of course, such considerations became possible only in a post-Cold War environment in which both the old geo-political definition of Germany (or West Germany, to be precise) and the security implications of that definition had vanished: Germany is no longer the state on the confrontation line between East and West where a security threat was identical with a threat to territorial integrity. Today, as Germany finds itself surrounded by friends, and territorial defense is no longer the major pre-occupation of its security policies,⁴ a greater preparedness has come about, quite naturally, both to consider those "softer" security risks that other – particular the southern – EU states have long perceived in Europe's Mediterranean neighborhood, and to engage in common European or multilateral policies and actions aimed at confronting such challenges or other threats to wider European stability.

Becoming a Mediterranean State through Schengen

"Schengen" denotes the gradual emergence of a European space of freedom of movement and security.⁵ The fact is that integration, and more particularly the disappearance of intra-European borders in "Schengenland,"

³ See Fischer's speech in the French National Assembly, 20 January 1999. In the original text, it goes as follows: "Es gibt deshalb zur Erweiterung der EU keine Alternative. Sie muß allerdings durch eine engagierte Mittelmeerpolitik ergänzt werden. Dabei dürfen wir keinen 'Geo-Klientelismus' in der EU – Deutschland 'bedient' den Osten, Frankreich den Süden – zulassen. Die Stabilisierung unseres östlichen wie unseres südlichen Umfeldes liegt in unser beider und im gesamteuropäischen Interesse."

⁴ See Lübkemeier.

⁵ Reference is to the Schengen agreement of 1985 which came into force in 1995 and has been superseded by the implementation of the Treaty of Amsterdam after its ratification in 1999.

have also brought Germany and the other northern EU states closer to Mediterranean problems and developments. Geo-politically – at least in terms of its external border – Germany has already become a Mediterranean state. This is not to say that the German political elite would totally share their French, Italian, or Spanish counterparts' perceptions of the Mediterranean and Euro-Med relations. Germans definitely do not regard themselves as part of a common Mediterranean culture, nor are Germany's relations with individual countries of the region marked by the type of postcolonial emotional ties that impact upon, among others, France's relations with Algeria and Lebanon, or Italy's relations with Libya. What has become more congruent over the last couple of years, however, are Germany's and the southern EU states' perceptions of risks and security challenges from the Mediterranean and, thus, of the need to develop a common policy towards the area.

Despite concerns about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles in the Middle East, European policymakers and pundits largely agree that there exists no military security threat from the Mediterranean to the EU at large or, for that matter, to Germany. Weapons proliferation in the region is disturbing inasmuch as it threatens regional stability; it is not, however, an expression of conflicts or conflict dynamics between the EU and its southern neighbors. The principal security challenges which Europe faces with respect to the region are of a "soft," non-military nature. The main issues in this respect are uncontrolled migration, organized crime such as drugs trade or trafficking in human beings, and terrorism, as well as what could be called the export of conflicts. Direct environmental risks from the Mediterranean figure prominently in the security debate of some European countries, but less so in Germany – mainly for reasons of geographic distance.

It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to assess these challenges or make a critical evaluation of their assessment by policymakers in Germany and the EU. More important, in this context, is the fact that the growing concern in Germany with what is perceived as challenges from the Mediterranean is largely a result of European integration. Thus, with the implementation of the Schengen agreement, migration has ceased to be a national problem of individual EU states and has become a European issue. Once a migrant has entered Italy or Spain, he faces no more borders if he wants to reach Germany. Moreover, there is a common fear among policymakers in Germany and other EU states that right-wing groups in

their respective countries would exploit the issue of migration in order to re-nationalize political discourse, spread anti-EU feelings, and change majorities. It is no secret that the active participation of Germany and other EU states in the Kosovo war, or in political and military efforts that aim at the stabilization of Bosnia, Albania, or Macedonia, have been related, aside from other things, to the expected direct effects on EU-Europe, not least in terms of uncontrolled migration, if the ethno-political conflicts of these countries were not settled or at least contained.

The disappearance of border controls between EU states is also a critical issue with regard to the problem of illicit drugs and drug trafficking. Today, surface trade between Morocco and Germany, for example, has to pass only one international border. From the perspective of a German security official, therefore, Morocco, as a main drug producer, has become a direct neighbor of Germany, with the one border left, namely the Moroccan-Spanish one, not even under the control of German police.

Overall, and most importantly, German policymakers have accepted that the security of Southern Europe and of the entire EU is closely linked to the stability of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. This includes such issues as terrorism or the export to Europe of regional civil wars or inter-state conflicts. Consider, for instance, the not-so-unrealistic scenario of Turkish-Kurdish or inner-Algerian conflicts being transported to Germany or France via the respective migrant communities.

German policymakers are also aware that such risks, as well as migratory pressures, have to be considered against the background of regional instabilities or, more precisely, of ongoing territorial conflicts in the region, particularly the Arab-Israeli one, of violent domestic power conflicts, and of socio-economic imbalances. The threat of instability among its Mediterranean neighbors was not only the main reason for the EU to launch its Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) initiative, but also the main reason that led Germany to support it.

The European approach, as demonstrated by and embodied in this initiative, is to project stability, as it were, into the southern neighborhood, or at least try to do so, both multilaterally and bilaterally. The multilateral dimension includes primarily the attempt to set up common Euro-Mediterranean institutions and structures that further dialogue, the establishment of common norms and principles, and multilateral co-operation in various fields, not least that of regional security. On the bilateral (EU-partner state) level, the EU tries, by means of political dialogue and

financial and technical aid, to support the integration of its Mediterranean partner states into a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Zone, envisaged for 2010, and to encourage economic as well as political liberalization measures (i.e., opening markets, privatization, tax reforms, judicial reform, and measures to enhance good governance).

It is worth noting that Germany's economic interests in the Mediterranean have remained relatively limited. Exports to the EMP partner states (approximately US \$16 billion in 1997) represent only some 3 per cent of Germany's total exports. More than 45 per cent of these Mediterranean exports go to Turkey, some 15 per cent to Israel, and around one third to the Arab countries along the Mediterranean. Unlike the case with regard to the more important markets of Eastern Europe, German industry never lobbied the government for an active policy towards the Mediterranean. Actually, Germany's relations with Libya and Algeria – Germany's OPEC oil suppliers number one and three – seemed to prove that longstanding economic relations did not necessarily need a particularly warm political relationship. Over the last couple of years, German business has shown an increasing interest in the Mediterranean. This was largely due to the Mid-East peace process and the Euro-Mediterranean initiative, which seemed to promise both a more peaceful and stable region, and easier access for European and German industrial products and investments. It is difficult to imagine, though, that German business interest in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean could ever match that in Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, inasmuch as Germany produces neither oranges nor olives, it also finds it less problematical to accept the opening of European markets to the agricultural produce of Arab and other Mediterranean partner states – less problematical, that is, than other states, notably those Southern EU states that have been the main political backers of the Barcelona process and of an active European role in the Middle East.

Germany's policy towards the Mediterranean will, therefore, most probably continue to be motivated primarily by overall political as well as security considerations. From this vantage point, the German government, as well as the political spectrum represented in parliament, regard the EMP process as a so far largely positive experiment that should be developed and enhanced. General interest, of policymakers as well as the public, in developments in the southern neighborhood of Europe has increased, and there is wide agreement that Germany should constructively contribute to the development of EU Mediterranean and Middle East policies. This was

clearly demonstrated at the Third Euro–Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Stuttgart under the German EU presidency in April 1999. Not only was Germany actively engaged in preparing the Guidelines for a Euro–Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Security that were adopted as a working document at the Stuttgart conference; in contrast to earlier reservations, Germany now also declared its support for maintaining or even increasing, rather than freezing or reducing, the EU's financial commitments to the Barcelona process. Five years into that process, Germany has become more Mediterranean than it was at the outset.

The Middle East Peace Process and Relations with Israel

The Euro–Mediterranean Partnership is no substitute for a European policy on Arab–Israeli issues, but there is a strong relationship, of course, not least because of the participation of all core countries of the peace process in the Barcelona framework. The EU also has a long record of common positions on the Middle East and the peace process, whose progress and problems have figured prominently at basically every Summit or Council meeting. One of the advantages for Germany of the progressive emergence of a CFSP and of the chance to act as part of the Union rather than as a nation-state towards the region, is that it helps to overcome – or, rather, skirt – particular political constraints in dealing with Arab–Israeli issues. Not only has the European umbrella made it possible for Germany to keep a relatively low profile in questions regarding the Arab–Israeli conflict; it has also been, and still is, easier for any German government to commit itself to following a common European line than to develop a political stance of its own in regard to such questions. Notably, Germany has not, so far, developed a defined Middle East policy.⁶

Germany, to give but one example, fully supports EU initiatives on the ground that aim at strengthening the Palestinian entity and supporting its state-building efforts, it has continuously been in support of the Palestinian right to self-determination, and there exists a consensus of sorts that solidarity with Israel is best expressed by clear support for the peace process

⁶ An attempt to develop a possible framework for such a policy has been made recently by a working group of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin, which involved policymakers and civil servants. See V. Perthes (ed.), *Deutsche Nahostpolitik: Interessen und Optionen*, Schwalbach 2001.

and acknowledgement of Palestinian rights.⁷ Germany is in fact, and it is proud of being, the largest single contributor of EU aid to the Palestinians. At the same time, it has cautiously sought to avoid taking sides with the Palestinians or openly criticizing, let alone condemning, Israeli policies or conduct perceived to be detrimental to the peace process or to undermine international and European efforts at stabilizing the Palestinian entity. And Germany would certainly not develop any initiatives that would arouse disagreement between Europe and Israel.

The German approach is not stagnant, though, and developments are most likely to take place in the context of EU policies. In general (to the extent that a generalization is possible at all), younger German policymakers – Gerhard Schröder, Joschka Fischer, and even younger ones – are less emotionally attached to Israel than many of Germany's political old guard, for which Johannes Rau may serve as a prime example. This is not an abrupt break, but rather a process, whereby younger politicians and officials increasingly share the more balanced, or equi-distanced approach towards Arab–Israeli issues that prevails in other European capitals. Consequently, they do not in principle find any wrong in judging Israel for its deeds, or criticizing it where its policies seem inappropriate. Something like *raison d'état* or political calculation, rather than emotion and moral obligations, may still make it expedient for German policymakers to refrain from open conflicts with Israel and leave overtly critical assessments of Israeli policies to the EU and other European states. This is so for Israeli as well as German idiosyncrasies, so to speak: Israel would, if it was to take anybody's criticism or advice, rather take it from the US, from Britain, or even from France than from Germany; and Germany is the weakest point in any conflict that might arise between the EU and Israel, i.e., the EU country most susceptible to Israeli pressure and (counter)criticism. German policymakers, from whatever generation, certainly don't want to appear as someone who tries to teach Israel a lesson; and they do not want to risk an argument with Israelis in which they could be accused of compromising the security of Israel or the Jewish people. At the same time, there is little disagreement today that Germany, in respect to the Middle East, acts – and ought to act – in the framework of the EU consensus. EU relations are far more important than Germany's relationship with any friendly country outside the Union.

⁷ Note that Germany's acknowledgement of the Palestinian right to self-determination is not new. In divided Germany, Bonn raised the banner of self-determination, and it could hardly deny to other peoples what it demanded for the Germans.

And while a special relationship with Israel is acknowledged and even appreciated by almost the entire political spectrum, this younger generation is not prepared to normatively accept special rights, or special criteria, for Israel in its dealings with other nations. Moreover, the understanding of what this "special relationship" actually is about, is gradually changing. German-Israeli relations are and will remain special because of the German crimes against the Jewish people (the "closed scar," as Israel's former ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, put it). But they are also special relations – and this dimension is of increasing importance – because Germany and Israel are bound together by a particularly dense web of inter-societal relations.

It is quite natural that this second dimension is gaining importance, whereas the historical dimension is gradually losing its relevance for an increasing part of society. Demography plays a role – in a double sense. The fact is, first, that Germany's teens and twens of today do not, in general, feel responsible for a past which was not even their fathers', but their grandfathers' and great-grandfathers' making. And secondly, one must not ignore the fact that this generation is more multi-ethnic than any of its predecessors. This means that a substantial percentage of the younger generation in Germany have no reason at all to feel responsible for a *German* past. Many of them are Muslims, even more of Mediterranean origin.

Moreover, as regards German policymakers and the politically interested sectors of society, the trend is to see the special relationship with Israel as an implement (rather than a historical liability) which can and should be invested into the peace process, thereby contributing to the European role in the region. In other words: Germany should use its strong relations with Israel to foster cooperative projects in the region that aim at building peace between Arabs and Israelis. Mostly, such projects are in the economic realm, others aim at removing barriers of misunderstanding.⁸ Economic cooperation projects, in particular, reflect the largely functionalist approach of German policies, and they may occasionally involve an element of functionalist illusions in that they assume that politics, or harder political

⁸ The first category includes the joint Jordanian-Israeli River Jordan project that was inaugurated by ex-Chancellor Helmut Kohl, or efforts at developing Israeli-Palestinian cross-border cooperation in the Jenin-Haifa region, a project sponsored by the social-democratic Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung. Among the second category there is, e.g., a program of visits to Yad Vashem for Palestinian students and journalists organized by the conservative Konrad-Adenauer Foundation.

issues, can be bypassed or even removed if cooperation takes off. They certainly are in the economic interest of the regional participants, though, and in Germany's interest of maintaining good relations with Israel's Arab neighbors alongside its privileged relations with Israel. Little wonder also that Palestine and Jordan are the largest per-capita recipients of German development aid.

Finally, Germany is, and will likely remain, one main link between Israel and the EU. However, the times where Germany was seen, or even viewed itself, as the representative of Israel inside the EU may come to an end. Israel's relations to the EU are privileged anyhow – certainly in comparison to other Middle East states. Israel has earned, and it will be able to maintain, such a privileged status on the basis of its economic and technological performance (which has made it possible for Israel to become a full participant in the EU's research framework program) and of the democratic nature of its political system (which also involves, of course, that Israel's conduct is measured by standards that apply to other democratic states, not those that would be applied to some of its less democratic neighbors). Israel does not need German mediation or agency, and it should not expect that Germany take Israel's side in disagreements or conflicts that have or may come up with the EU, be that over peace process issues, Israel's obstruction of the EU–Palestinian trade relations, or breaches (by means of false declarations of origin) of rules of the EU–Israel association agreement. The commitment to a European consensus is indeed an opportunity for Germany (and maybe for other EU countries too) to abandon clientelistic approaches and to fully participate in the development of genuine EU policies towards the Middle East.

VIEWS ON THE SUDAN AFTER INDEPENDENCE BASED ON REPORTS OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC'S EMBASSY IN KHARTOUM

GABRIEL WARBURG

The following survey will be rather sporadic since I have neither undertaken research on relations between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Middle East in general, nor with the Sudan in particular. While enjoying a year's Fellowship at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, in 1992, I was tempted to have a look at the archives of the GDR's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was then still in Potsdam. I did so in order to satisfy my curiosity with regard to a view on Egypt and the Sudan from the GDR which I had hitherto ignored. However, having satisfied my curiosity at the time, I have not been able to undertake further research on this topic and hence the following should be viewed only as a tentative and partial examination.¹

The first political report I found of interest dealt with the August 1955 disturbances in southern Sudan, which in the historiography of the ongoing civil war in that region serves as its starting point.² The prevailing narrative regarding the eruption of this conflict may be summarized as follows. The Anglo-Egyptian agreement of February 1953, which granted the Sudanese the right of self-determination, found the southern part of the country at a great disadvantage. With backward economic and educational systems and a lack of political organization and qualified manpower, the South was soon overrun by northern politicians and officials, usually not well prepared nor of the highest quality. Some of them, though not familiar with the

¹ I wish to express my thanks to the Keeper of the Bundesarchiv, Abteilung Potsdam (BAD), who kindly enabled me to copy these documents in 1992, shortly after German reunification.

² Politische Situation im Sudan, Khartoum, den 5. Okt. 1955, "Streng vertraulich!", BAD, B6/IB6, L2 1882.

South, realized nonetheless its inherent suspicions of the North and suggested various remedies. Thus Muhammad Ahmad Mahgoub, a leading member of the Umma party and later foreign minister and prime minister of Sudan, stated that the main difficulty was the result of southern illiteracy and suggested an ad-hoc administration, until the southerners were ready to determine their own future. He advised his fellow-countrymen to grant the British governor-general the right of veto, in respect of the South.³

In the South, there was an outcry, even before the Anglo-Egyptian agreement was signed. Its leaders objected to the fact that northern political parties had signed the agreement with Egypt without even consulting them. A "Southern Sudan Political Emergency Committee" demanded special treatment for the South which would take into account its low level of education, as well as the racial, cultural, and religious differences between the two regions. Religion led to the partition of India, the committee warned, and "it is what will happen if the...Sudanese Government issues a law that the official religion of the Sudan must be Islam."⁴ Southern politicians and members of the new parliament favored unity but insisted on an intensive plan for furthering education in the South and on the "Southernisation" of the administration. They also supported the continuing missionary education, but agreed that in a united Sudan Arabic would also be taught in the South.⁵ In November 1954, Benjamin Lwoki, a southern M.P., wrote a letter addressed to the British and Egyptian foreign secretaries and the prime minister of Sudan, in which he stated that southern Sudanese "were not willing to have 'Northern Colonialism' in the South."⁶ On 18 August 1955 a revolt started among the Equatorial corps at Torit which, judged by southern apprehensions and suspicions, could have been predicted. This mutiny, which ended only after 261 northerners and 75 southerners had lost their lives, signified the beginning of the Sudanese civil war which has plagued the country since independence. When submitting the report on

³ "Northern Sudanese discuss Southern Sudan," (translated from *al-Saiha*, 1 January 1953), Public Record Office, London (PRO), FO 371/102743.

⁴ "Southern Sudan Political Emergency Committee" to Governor General, 23 January 1953 (signed by M. Aligo Baraba, President), FO 371/102747.

⁵ "Report on the South," enclosed in Riches to Eden, 11 June 1954, FO 371/108323; those quoted included Sheikh 'Abd al-Rahman Sule, Benjamin Lwoki, Gordon Balli, and Joshua Malwal.

⁶ B. Lwoki, Chairman of Southern Conference, Juba, to the Foreign Secretaries of England and Egypt, the Governor-General of the Sudan and the Prime Minister of the Sudan, 15 November 1954, FO 371/108326.

this tragic event, the British Ambassador in Egypt made the following observations, in which he put some of the blame for the mutiny on British administrators in the Sudan:

Certainly we are not solely responsible for that past.... But for 50 years, or two generations, we were in charge and the policy that inspired our stewardship during that period cannot be left out of account.⁷

This was the background on which the GDR diplomats in Khartoum based their first report.⁸ Its first claim was that an infiltration of freedom fighters, under British and French control, from neighboring countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo, provided the leadership of the bloody fighting at Torit. Secondly, it blamed Great Britain for seeking to partition Sudan in order to be able to continue to control the South politically, from Kenya and Uganda, and thus to continue its exploitation after independence. It also maintained that since the South was the source of the Sudan's riches, the North depended on it for its future well-being. Although the actual state of the economy in the South was rather primitive, the report claimed that according to Soviet and other sources considerable exploitation of copper mines was taking place south of Wau, while the gold mines of Juba were also of considerable value. A Soviet paper which reported the discovery of uranium in the South was also quoted. Finally, the writer of the report stated that in order to perpetuate the conflict between North and South, hundreds of American and English infiltrators were then in the South, under the guise of Catholic missionaries. They wandered from one village to another pretending to proselytize, while in reality they were bribing southern tribes to carry on their anti-northern activities. According to the report, Prime Minister al-Azhari complained in a conversation with Mr. Peters, head of the water-management delegation of the GDR who was then in Sudan, that he was unable to act against these so-called missionaries since he did not want to alienate the Catholic Church. It is interesting to note that neither al-Azhari himself nor

⁷ Chapman-Andrews to Lloyd, 30 October 1956, FO 371/119604; Duncan who minuted the report agreed that "the policy of separation continued too long," *ibid.*, 23 November 1956. In an unexpected move, the disgraced Col. Salah Salim demanded the redeployment of British and Egyptian troops in the South to avoid further bloodshed. Both Prime Minister al-Azhari and the British governor-general, regarded it as superfluous.

⁸ "Politische Situation im Sudan," Khartoum, den 5 Okt. 1955, "Streng Vertraulich!", BAD, B6/Tb8.

other sources available for that period, corroborate the claims made in this report.

Another topic of discussion throughout 1956–57 was whether the Sudan should become a federation, as requested by the South. All northern political parties rejected this request with the exception of the Communist Anti-Imperialist Front (AIF) which consistently supported it. In a "Political Report" written later that year, the South once again featured prominently, although the first part of this report was devoted to internal politics in the North and to the forthcoming general elections.⁹ Following a brief outline of southern insecurity, highlighting the fact that the new government, under Prime Minister 'Abdallah Khalil was no nearer to a solution than its predecessor,¹⁰ the author once again blamed England for the ongoing conflict, claiming that Britain continued to support the southern forces which were seeking autonomy, while at the same time urging the Sudanese government to undertake drastic measures in order to pacify the region. Britain was in fact aiming at being asked by the Sudanese government to come to its aid militarily, from British bases in East Africa. This, according to the report:

wurde England den Vorwand verschaffen, "im Interesse der Sicherheit Kenias, Tanganyikas und Ugandas" zum Schaden einer sudanesischen Süd-Nord-Assimilation und damit zum Schaden der Einheit der Republik Sudan zu intervenieren.

Britain's dominant position was attributed by the author of the report to its leading role in the country's economy, especially in the marketing of the Sudan's cotton. Furthermore, England had been supporting the Sudan in its dispute with Egypt over its share in the Nile waters. Here, once again, England was exploiting a regional conflict between two neighbors and was backing the Sudan in order to punish Egypt for the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Uganda and Tanganika, from where the White Nile flows, enabled the British to intervene and thus hold both Egypt and northern Sudan to ransom. However, according to "reliable sources," Britain had

⁹ "Politischer Bericht," Khartoum, den 16 Okt. 56, "Streng Vertraulich!", BAD, B6/Ib6, L2 1882/a, signed Noelle, stelv. Leiter Niederberger, Handelsrat.

¹⁰ 'Abdallah Khalil was the secretary general of the Umma party, who succeeded in forming a coalition with the Khatmiyya and thus was able to oust Isma'il al-Azhari from office. The quoted passage: "would provide England with the pretext for intervention 'in the interest of the security of Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda,' to strike at the assimilation of North and South Sudan and thereby undermine the unity of the Republic of Sudan" (author's translation).

also been paying considerable sums of money to Muhammad Ahmad Mahgoub, Sudan's minister of foreign affairs and a leading member of the Umma party, in order to enable him to finance his son's studies in England. Great Britain consistently emphasized that the Sudan was not only an Arab state but also an African one and hence it would be of advantage to strengthen its ties with Ethiopia as well as with British East African states. In fact Sudan's unreliability in so far as the Arab league was concerned was demonstrated by Mahgoub during the Suez crisis. Sudan expressed its full sympathy with President Nasser and offered moral support, suggesting that the conflict be put on the agenda of the United Nations. But at the same time it refused to be actively involved and even allowed the British forces to use Khartoum airport for the transport of troops via Aden to the Suez. Once again the confusion of religion and politics was demonstrated when Sudan declared at the Arab League's gathering that Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi offered his services as mediator in the Suez conflict.

At the time the report was written, a Sudanese delegation headed by al-Siddiq al-Mahdi, Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's son and president of the Umma party, was exploring possibilities of using Ethiopia, Kenya, and other countries along its southern borders in case the Suez Canal was blocked. The report stated that this policy, encouraged by London, aimed at keeping the Sudan as aloof as possible from the anti-Imperialist forces in the Arab world, whilst at the same time it was encouraging close economic and political relations with Ethiopia, Kenya, and other former colonies of England and France, in order to place it firmly in the Western camp.

In February 1956 the GDR embassy in Khartoum reported at some length on another occurrence which hardly featured in British or even Egyptian reports at the time.¹¹ It happened at Kosti, about 200 kilometers south of Khartoum, where a bloody clash occurred on 12 February 1956, less than two months after independence. The conflict was between small cotton farmers, who demanded a higher percentage of the income from their cotton crops than the 40% allotted to them, and the government, which refused their request and sent in the police to suppress them.¹² In the ensuing clash

¹¹ Niederberger Handelsrat, Khartoum, to Walfried Lange, Ministerium für Außenhandel und Innerdeutschen Handel, BAD, B6/Tb6, L2 1882/b, [n.d., March 1956?]; I have not found any mention of this event in either Western or Arab sources.

¹² This is somewhat reminiscent of the bloody suppression of the textile workers' strike in Egypt's Kafr al-Dawwar, which took place shortly after the 1952 revolution.

one policeman was killed and several others were injured. About 600 demonstrators were later imprisoned in such appalling conditions that some 190 either suffocated or died of thirst. Although al-Azhari had supported the peasants' demands, he was outvoted in parliament and the demonstrators blamed him for the results and demanded his removal. They also insisted on the inclusion of workers and farmers in the government. The trade unions and the AIF, who had often supported the peasants in the past, were blamed by the government for the violent troubles. Although the mass demonstrations in all of the larger urban centers were organized by the lawyers union, the Communists were made the scapegoat, and one of their leaders was even arrested despite his being a member of parliament.

The GDR's political standing in Sudan had been weakened considerably ever since 'Abdallah Khalil's pro-Western government assumed power. But while officially the GDR suffered from the change in Sudan's political map, the report claimed that its popularity among the Sudanese people, including the press, remained unchanged. An exception was the unfortunate failure of the GDR's experts to discover water resources in Kordofan, which somewhat undermined its popularity. In a report printed in a Kordofan paper early in October, later reprinted in the influential *al-Umma* daily, it was stated that the GDR was not really interested in water but sought to discover crude oil. In fact, the report claimed that oil had already been discovered but the fact was hidden from Sudanese authorities by the GDR in order to force them to sign an agreement with the GDR concerning privileges in oil exploitation. However, it had to be admitted that the water projects had failed, and since these had been the GDR's trump-card in its relations with Sudan the author of the report, Mr. Noelle, urged his government to look into alternative ways to improve its standing in Sudan. Among the suggestions put forward he repeated a plan he had submitted in July 1956, to tighten the cultural bonds between the Sudan and the GDR, to which he had so far received no response.

Finally, a concise assessment of the Sudan's reactionary political forces was the main topic of two further reports sent by Mr. Noelle to Berlin. The first dealt primarily with the Umma party and its leaders, Prime Minister 'Abdallah Khalil and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ahmad Mahgoub, who in March–April 1957 embarked on an extensive tour of the Arab world.¹³

¹³ "Politischer Bericht I/57" (2. Teil: Außenpolitik), Khartoum, den 21. 5. 57, "Streng Vertraulich!", signed W. Noelle & [?] Sterna. The quoted passage: "Khalil and Maghoub

One of the main aims of the tour was to come to an agreement that foreign aid, as proposed by the Eisenhower Doctrine, was a matter on which each of the members of Arab League had to decide in accordance with his country's interests and was not the concern of the league.

Khalil und Mahgoub haben auf diesen Punkt vor allem deswegen großen Wert gelegt, weil es im Sudan eine weitverbreitete Forderung gab, bis in die Reihen der Regierungskoalition, die Eisenhower-Doktrin solle von allen Mitgliedstaaten der Arabischen Liga mittels einer gemeinsamen Konferenz einheitlich beantwortet werden.

It was with this in mind that the visit to Egypt and Syria, both of whom strongly opposed the Eisenhower Doctrine, was left to the end of the tour. Iraq, which shared Khalil's anti-communist views, was seen as a potential ally and was visited following a brief round of talks with the equally anti-communist Saudi Arabia. In a joint communiqué, signed by Nuri al-Sa'id and 'Abdallah Khalil, the leaders declared that all doctrines which contained anti-Islamic views should be openly denounced by the Muslim world. Trustworthy informants in Khartoum told Mr. Noelle that this was an open declaration of hostility aimed both at the Socialist camp as well as against Egypt and Syria. This was further emphasized by 'Abdallah Khalil and Nuri al-Sa'id when they declared that no Arab state should interfere in the internal affairs of other members of the Arab League.

As for the Eisenhower Doctrine, the report stated that Khalil's government had so far neither accepted nor rejected it. As is well known, the Umma party had openly welcomed this doctrine but was unable to endorse it due to the reservations of its main coalition partner, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), led by the Khatmiyya. United States Vice-President Richard Nixon, who at the time paid Sudan a one-day visit, tried to convince Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, the head of the Khatmiyya order and the PDP, to see the advantages of the Eisenhower Doctrine. But although al-Mirghani agreed to meet Nixon, he came to the meeting accompanied by some fifty supporters and hence Nixon's attempt was futile. Or as the humorous Sudanese expressed it: the two leaders discussed the weather

consider this point, first and foremost, to be of the greatest importance, because there was a widespread demand in Sudan, even in the ranks of the government coalition, that the unanimous reply to the Eisenhower Doctrine should be drafted by all the states which are members of the Arab League at a joint conference" (author's translation).

in Texas, California, and Khartoum in some detail! To this one may add, according to Noelle, that Nixon's visit hardly received any notice and the streets of Khartoum through which he traveled were practically empty.¹⁴

The visit of Ambassador Richards, President Eisenhower's special envoy, to Sudan was equally futile. He stayed in the country between 20–22 April 1957 and tried to clarify some queries regarding the Doctrine which had been submitted to him by the government. A government decision stated that according to Richards the economic aid offered under the Eisenhower Doctrine was a separate issue and could be adopted without the military part of the doctrine. Similarly Sudan could continue its adherence to Positive Neutralism even after it accepted this doctrine. Finally, the Doctrine did not imply that Sudan was barred from accepting aid from other parties, including the Soviet Union. Noelle concluded that these clarifications indicated the continued opposition of the PDP to the Eisenhower Doctrine. He regarded the opposition to the doctrine as an expression of the view of the overwhelming majority of politically minded Sudanese. However, he admitted that the PDP may be motivated by tactical rather than ideological considerations since it had to take into account the forthcoming elections in which it would compete for votes against the National Unionist Party (NUP). On the other hand, the Umma party was not burdened by such considerations since the majority of its supporters came from the underdeveloped western provinces of Kordofan and Darfur, which were hungry for the investments promised by the Eisenhower Doctrine. However, there were, according to Noelle, indications that the sons and supporters of the Mahdi's successor, the Khalifa 'Abdullahi al-Ta'aishi, were about to form their own pro-Egyptian party and thus undermine the superiority of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi.¹⁵

Another topic raised by the Khalil government was that of the Nile waters. The dispute with Egypt, which had been going on even before independence, concerned the percentage of water that would be apportioned to the Sudan following the completion of the High Dam at Aswan. President Nasser had insisted that the Sudan not begin any new irrigation projects before the agreement was signed. Apparently Khalil decided that he might reap an advantage if he recruited Ethiopia to participate in the negotiations

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁵ This was a popular rumor which kept on surfacing during periods of crisis but never materialized.

with Egypt. He therefore traveled to Ethiopia for "friendly talks" which lasted for nearly a week. Noelle wrote that although the final communiqué did not clarify the nature of the talks, he knew through reliable sources that Khalil's aim was to put pressure on Egypt both with regards to Sudan's share of the Nile waters and with regard to the US plan to create an "African Belt" which would stop Egypt's penetration into that continent and thus serve the anti-communist policy of the United States.¹⁶

The final report I intend to examine concerns the military coup of 11 November 1958, led by General Ibrahim 'Abbud, Chief of Staff of the Sudan Defence force.¹⁷ The unsigned report described the coup as follows. First, it was stated to have been led by the most reactionary forces in the Sudan and of having received unlimited support from the main imperialist powers, namely the United States, Great Britain, and West Germany. Secondly, it was directed explicitly against the forces of progress which were gaining ground in the Sudan. Thirdly, it was reported that the main economic problems facing the Sudan under Khalil continued after the coup, namely the falling prices of cotton on the world market and the lack of markets for Sudan's export of cattle and durra. Following the coup, the United States extended its aid to the Sudan, Great Britain extended a 5 million Sterling line of credit, and West Germany granted a loan of DM100,000,000, clear proof of their complicity in the coup. Fourth, following the coup industrialization was stopped, since it was not in line with the interests of the Imperialist states. Fifth, prices of consumer goods rose considerably, thus causing a further decline in the living conditions of the working masses, who were consequently dissatisfied with the shrinking democratic rights. In particular they demanded the right of association for trade unions, freedom of expression, and a free press.

In contrast to the reactionary nature of the 11 November coup, led by 'Abbud, the author of the report hailed the progressive nature of the 3 March 1959 movement, which was led by mid-echelon officers and was aimed against the interests of the upper classes and their imperialist supporters. The movement failed, however, because its support was limited to northern and eastern sections within the army and it declined to broaden

¹⁶ On the water dispute see G. Warburg, "The Nile in Egyptian-Sudanese Relations: 1956-1995," H. Erlich and I. Gershoni (eds.), *The Nile: Histories, Conflicts, Myths*, Boulder, CO 1999, pp. 227-234.

¹⁷ "Kurzbericht über die gegenwärtige politische und ökonomische Lage," BAD, B6/Ib6, L2/875, DZA [n.d., June 1959?].

its ranks to include the progressive elements within the civilian population led by the AIF. Finally, the March 1959 movement was strongly opposed by the USA, Britain, and Germany, but following its willingness to compromise it ended up by pursuing similar policies to those of its predecessors. In conclusion, the movement may be judged as a failure despite its early promises. The political standing of the GDR in the Sudan was consequently diminished. On 14 December the 'Abbud regime declared that it recognized the GDR mission in the Sudan as a trade mission only, and forbade its emissaries from undertaking any non-commercial activities. Consequently all previous contacts with the press, the Ministry of Education, and politicians had to cease. However, although the above limitations had not been canceled, the GDR mission decided to test the grounds and discovered that they were not being fully enforced.

In the annual report on the Sudan for the year 1958 submitted by the British Ambassador in Khartoum to his government, the 1958 coup featured prominently.¹⁸ According to the report the reasons leading to the 'Abbud coup were both political and economic. The major one was the cotton crisis, the result of mistaken assumptions made by the Gezira board which overstated the price it demanded for Sudan's cotton crop. Instead of selling the cotton at the market price, as done during the Condominium, the new government decided to bargain for a higher price, assuming that Lancashire industrialists would be forced to compromise because of the crisis in Britain's relations with Egypt.¹⁹ In addition, the political dispute mentioned above with regard to the Eisenhower Doctrine prevented the coalition government from accepting aid from the United States. Thus a political issue, manipulated by the opposition and directed from Cairo through the Egyptian subsidized Sudanese press, led the economy into an even graver crisis. Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, leader of the Khatmiyya and the PDP, was mainly to blame since he was in favor of accepting American aid but failed to intervene and let PDP President 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahman, a well known "Egyptian agent," lead the country down the drain. Indeed Egypt, according to the Ambassador, exploited the crisis in order to force the Sudan to sign the new 1959 Nile waters' agreement on terms dictated from Cairo. In

¹⁸ Ambassador Chapman-Andrews to Foreign Office, submitting The Annual Report on Sudan in 1958, Despatch no. 18 (1014) Khartoum, Confidential, February 7, 1959, FO 371/138628.

¹⁹ This is reminiscent of the cotton price crisis during the 1870s, when Egypt ran into bankruptcy due to falling prices of cotton at the end of the American Civil War.

addition, Egypt used the crisis in order to claim Egyptian sovereignty over the Halayib Triangle.²⁰

The July 1958 military coup in Iraq which toppled the Hashemite Kingdom and the government of Nuri al-Sa'id, further weakened the Sudan, since 'Abdallah Khalil had cultivated a special relationship with Nuri al-Sa'id, based on their shared fear and hatred of Nasser and of the Syrian regime, and on their belief that only the Eisenhower Doctrine could save the region from Communism and disaster. 'Abdallah Khalil, "The Nuri of the Sudan," was now left to his own devices and hence supported the military coup in Sudan in November 1958. To this one should add that al-Azhari and 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahman were planning to topple the coalition government, probably prompted by Nasser. This was the situation which led the British Ambassador to urge Khalil to broaden his coalition by including the NUP. Ambassador Chapman-Andrews called on Khalil when rumors reached him of the possibility of a military coup, hoping that with al-Azhari in the government the crisis could be avoided. As he reported to his government: "I had ascertained that Azhari's assurance to me a fortnight earlier that the N.U.P. were ready to discuss terms for inclusion in the Government if invited to do so by the Umma, still stood."²¹ But although Khalil assured him, as late as 16 November 1958, that he was attempting to get the NUP into his coalition, "next day however before dawn army units moved into Khartoum and provincial capitals throughout the country and seized power. The take-over was swift, complete and unopposed."

Chapman-Andrews explained the various alternatives, including a Nasserist-backed coup, and summarized his views as follows:

On this assumption one is bound to admit that the *coup* was in the best interests not only of the Sudan but also of the West. The new regime, disciplined and nationalistic, shows determination to restore good government, to put things back where they were, not to make all things new. That is the fundamental difference between this movement and the mutinous upheavals in Egypt and Iraq. This was a "conservative" movement, an attempt to preserve for the future what was best in the past.²²

²⁰ For details see G. Warburg, "The Nile Waters, Border Issues and Radical Islam in Egyptian Sudanese Relations," J. Spaulding and S. Beswick (eds.), *White Nile, Black Blood*, Lawrenceville, NJ, 2000, pp. 73–90.

²¹ Ambassador Chapman-Andrews to Foreign Office (above, n. 18), p. 5.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

If one compares the two reports, that of the GDR's mission in Khartoum and the one submitted by the British Ambassador, the similarity becomes obvious. Assuming that Great Britain would have preferred a democratic solution, as claimed by the ambassador, his total support of 'Abbud's regime following the coup confirms the charges made by the GDR and other anti-Western observers regarding complicity.

It would be unwise to attempt to reach any conclusions regarding the GDR's mission in Khartoum based on the random sample of reports quoted above. The fact that some of the observations and comments were ideologically motivated should come as no surprise. On the other hand, Noelle and his fellow diplomats seem to have gained a good grasp of Sudanese affairs within a rather short period. Most of their reports deal with well-known events and add a different point of view to some of them. However, the report dealing with the Kosti dispute, in which many peasants lost their lives, seems to be an exception. I have not seen it mentioned in the reports on that period, but based on our knowledge regarding conditions prevailing in the Gezira Project at the time, it is likely to be true.

PART THREE

GERMANY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMY

GERMAN MOTIVATION, CONCEPTS, AND ACTIVITY IN THE EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY PALESTINE

DIETRICH DENECKE

Activities in Exploration and in Regional Investigation, Analysis, and Development

Innovations and the diffusion of ideas, colonization, and regional development are not only the introduction of new inventions, the transfer of ideas, or the adoption of new techniques, methods, or designs; they are also motivated by, and based on, regional concepts, on ideas of spatial organization, or on initiatives to develop regional networks. The first stage of the structural elements and activities of regional planning and organization in nineteenth-century Palestine can be discerned in the numerous projects carried out by scientists and by religious and missionary societies, many of them conceptualized and initiated in Germany.

Many of these projects and activities were short-lived or were subsequently transformed, modified, and adapted to the limited possibilities of the underdeveloped environment; others failed or followed utopian aims. However, the ideas and concepts on which they were based, which have to be discovered, reconstructed, and analyzed, throw light upon spatial and regional philosophies, upon the thoughts and concepts that motivated early European colonization, and upon the abilities and ways of spatial organization – but also on reasons for stagnation or failure. The actors in, and promoters of regional investigation and development were travelers, scientists, societies, religious groups, missionaries, politicians, and governments motivated by scientific ardor and interest, by belief and ideology. They were also motivated by social involvement and economic or political interests, but especially by the spirit of colonization and modernization, by the ideal of creating a model – a prototype of a developed

life style and economy, and of social and regional organization which was proposed for adaptation and diffusion in an underdeveloped environment.¹

The German "Templers," who settled and established colonies in the country itself, are the most obvious example.² However, other societies (including the "Jerusalemsverein," the "Deutscher Verein vom Heiligen Lande," the "Deutscher Palästinaverein," and the "Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas") as well as various religious, scientific, and educational groups also followed the ideas for exploring the land and for its spatial organization and development, which are well documented in their numerous current publications.³ For Christian religious reasons, Palestine – with Jerusalem as its heart – was adopted as a nucleus for the building up of a model Christian empire⁴ exemplified by the spirit of order and activity, and with an industrious life style at its core of living (the house, the settlement, the community). From there it was to spread throughout the Holy Land, to be transformed into a sphere of action, education, and mission, finally expanding out into the entire Ottoman Empire and the rest of the Middle East, illuminating the general perceived "darkness" of this area of the world.

The viewpoint and approach adopted in the present study is to analyze the concepts of regional development and of the methods and techniques which were applied to improve and modernize a traditional or – in the eyes

¹ C. Schick, "Fortschritte der Civilisation in Palästina in den letzten 25 Jahren," *Österreichische Monatsschrift für den Orient*, 6 (1880), pp. 10–13, 63–66; A. Schölch, *Palästina im Umbruch, 1856–1882: Untersuchungen zur wirtschaftlichen und sozio-politischen Entwicklung* (Berliner Islamstudien, 4), Stuttgart 1986; idem, *Palestine in Transformation, 1856–1882: Studies in Social, Economic and Political Development*, Washington 1993.

² A. Carmel, *Die Siedlungen der württemberger Templer* (Veröffentlichung der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde, 77), Stuttgart 1973; H. Goren, "Erste Siedlungsversuche der deutschen Templer in der Jesreel-Ebene im 19. Jahrhundert," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes*, 1 (1989), pp. 100–130; Y. Ben Artzi, "Religious Ideology and Landscape Formation: The Case of the German Templers in Eretz-Israel," A. R. H. Baker and G. Biger (eds.), *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography), Cambridge 1992, pp. 83–106.

³ *Die Warte des Tempels* (1845–); *Neueste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande* (1856–); *Altneuland*; *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*; *Das Heilige Land* (1857–); *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* (1878– henceforth ZDPV); *Jerusalem-Jahrbuch zur Beförderung einer wissenschaftlich genauen Kenntnis des jetzigen und des alten Palästinas* (1881–); *Palästinahefte des Deutschen Vereins vom Heiligen Lande*; *Palästina-Jahrbuch des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes zu Jerusalem*.

⁴ R. Kark, "Millenarism and Agricultural Settlement in the Holy Land in the 19th Century," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 9 (1983), pp. 47–62; K. Hammer, "Die christliche Jerusalemsehnsucht im 19. Jahrhundert: Der geistige und geschichtliche Hintergrund der Gründung Johann Ludwig Schnellers," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 42 (1986), pp. 255–266.

of the Europeans – an underdeveloped landscape which was inefficiently utilized and managed. The innovation and diffusion of Western ideas, techniques, and equipment, meaning at this time especially those originating in Europe, is the basic element in this process of creating and improving a newly developed cultural landscape. There is, of course, a vivid and critical debate on “diffusionism” or on “Eurocentrism” which might be referred to but will not be discussed here in detail.⁵ However, emphasis upon recent geographical paradigms of action in space, of spatial analysis, of functional location analysis, and of ideas of regional concepts might be in order.

Having this in mind, a structuralist approach will be followed, searching for some of the ideas, concepts, projects, and initiatives which created the basic networks of spatial organization in Palestine, setting the scene and creating a scenario for regional development. This approach is also closely related to the quite recent geographical approach of studying “landscape and power,” and specifically the geography of imperialism.⁶ This requires analysis of the spatial impact of international and regional policies, foreign aid, capital, or manpower. This approach follows the complex process of the implementation and enforcement, and of the success or failure, of the propagated and applied ideas and projects of regional development. It is also necessary to keep in mind that space, places, and landscapes are not just natural phenomena when thought and action are applied. When that is the case, they lead to regional meaning, environmental perception, and regional identity; they lead to social separation in space, to religious, social, and economic values of an environment, and finally to political and territorial strategies.

In Palestine, colonization was closely related to Christian belief and ideology and in this context the colonizers brought with them a Eurocentric view of their religious worlds.⁷ The motivations to explore the country and

⁵ P. Blaikie, “The Theory of the Spatial Diffusion of Innovations: A Spacious Cul-de-sac,” *Progress in Human Geography*, 2 (1978), pp. 268–295; J. M. Blaut, “Diffusionism: A Uniformalitarian Critique,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 77 (1987), pp. 30–47; H. Kohn, *Die Europäisierung des Orients*, Berlin 1934; A. Schölch, “European Penetration in the Economic Development of Palestine, 1856–82,” R. Owen (ed.), *Studies in the Economic and Social History of Palestine*, Oxford 1982, pp. 10–87.

⁶ M. Bell, R. A. Butlin, and M. J. Heffernan (eds.), *Geography and Imperialism 1820–1940*, Manchester 1995; A. Lester, “Historical Geographies of Imperialism,” B. Graham and C. Nash (eds.), *Modern Historical Geographies*, London 2000, pp. 100–120.

⁷ W. Holsten, “Israel und Palästina im Missionsdenken des 19. Jahrhunderts,” *Evangelische Theologie*, 14 (1954), pp. 212–226 (henceforth, Holsten, *Israel und Palästina*); K. Hammer, *Weltmission und Kolonialismus: Sendungsideen des 19. Jahrhunderts im Konflikt*, Munich 1978;

subsequently to settle it were manifold, and were not simply practical or economic. The motivation, behavior, activities, communication, social coherence, involvement, and the manner of integration were very different from any other colonization movement of the time and were much more complex. Ideologies and ideologically-based activities find their expression in regional improvement and they have an impact on the shaping of a cultural landscape in the process of colonization.⁸ Motivations and belief become visual signs; they create a landscape; they lay out a system of signification; they express meaning. In the early phase of the colonization of Palestine which finally lead to the State of Israel there was a great variety of ideologies at work. A systematic synopsis of the ideologies which might have had an impact on the creation of a cultural landscape may give some idea of their complexity (see diagram).

Approaches of Historico-Geographical Research on Palestine: From the Reconstruction of the Holy Land towards an Analysis of Spatial Organization

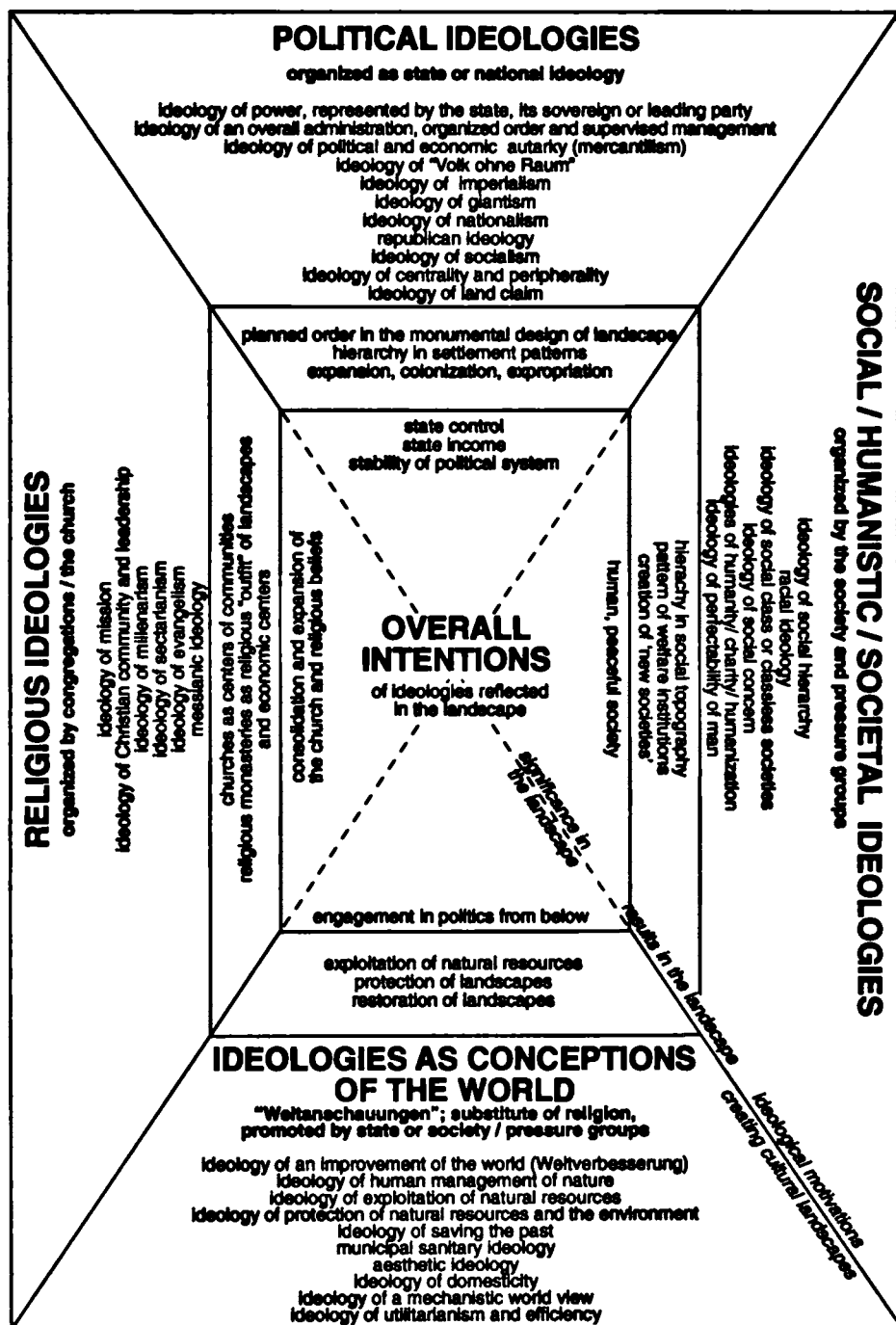
Different phases or steps in the historico-geographical and regional research of Palestine may be distinguished. Each period is characterized by specific perspectives and particular research issues. Based on the philosophy of the Enlightenment, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the first period of the historico-geographical study of Palestine was focused on the reconstruction of the "Bible Lands," and on the exploration and documentation of regions and sites of biblical events during the lifetime of Jesus Christ.⁹ This approach of the reconstruction

T. O. Beidelmann, *Colonial Evangelism*, Bloomington 1992; J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's View on the World: Geographical Diffusion and Eurocentric History*, New York 1993. Concerning the early Jewish colonization in Palestine, see the profound study by Ran Aaronsohn, *Rothschild and Early Jewish Colonization*, Lanham and Jerusalem 2000, esp. the introduction and part of the Epilogue.

⁸ E. Cohen, *The City in the Zionist Ideology*, Jerusalem 1970; A. R. H. Baker, "On Ideology and Landscape," A. R. H. Baker and G. Biger (eds.), *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography), Cambridge 1992, pp. 1–14; D. Denecke, "Ideology in the Planned Order upon the Land: The Example of Germany," *ibid.*, pp. 303–329; Z. Shilony, *Ideology and Settlement: The Jewish National Fund, 1897–1914*, Jerusalem 1998.

⁹ E. Robinson and E. Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine and the Adjacent Regions: A Journal of Travels in the Years 1838 and 1852*, vols. I–III, London 1856, 1867 (1st ed., Boston

Ideologies in the Landscape: Ideology as Manifest in the Planned Order of the Land



and revitalization of a historic environment as the scenario of historic events is for many scholars the way in which the discipline of historical geography, as a geography of history, began during the eighteenth century. An early example is the well-prepared expedition to Palestine planned by Johann David Michaelis at the University of Göttingen and carried out by Carsten Niebuhr in 1762.¹⁰ This field of research is still well treated.¹¹

A second phase of geographical research on Palestine was dominated by scientific exploration. Scientists, well-educated travelers, and clergymen explored the country, collected objects, took samples, and brought together data and topographic surveys to document geographic knowledge as a basis for geographical description of the country.¹² Recent research brings to light these activities, which are hidden away in contemporary reports, letters, and surveys.¹³

1841, 1856); H. Kiepert, *Bibel-Atlas, nach den neuesten und besten Hilfsquellen*, rev. by A. Lionnet, Berlin 1847; L. Schneller, *Kennst du das Land? Bilder aus dem gelobten Lande zur Erklärung der heiligen Schrift*, Leipzig 1894; F. Buhl, *Geographie des alten Palästina* (Grundriß der theologischen Wissenschaften R. 2, 4), Freiburg 1896.

¹⁰ J. D. Michaelis, *Fragen an eine Gesellschaft Gelehrter Männer, die auf Befehl Ihrer Majestät des Königs von Dänemark nach Arabien reisen*, Frankfurt 1762.

¹¹ Y. Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the 19th Century*, Jerusalem 1979; O. Keel and M. Küchler, *Orte und Landschaften der Bibel: Ein Handbuch und Studien-Reiseführer zum Heiligen Land*, Göttingen 1982; Y. Ben-Artzi, "Germany-Holy Land Studies: A Conceptual Framework," M. Davis and Y. Ben-Arieh (eds.), *With Eyes toward Zion, III: Western Societies and the Holy Land*, New York 1991, pp. 179-185; R. Butlin, "Ideological Contexts and the Reconstruction of Biblical Landscapes in the 17th and Early 18th Centuries: Dr. Edward Wells and the Historical Geography of the Holy Land," A. R. H. Baker and G. Biger (eds.), *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography), Cambridge 1992, pp. 31-62.

¹² Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas, *Die Arbeiten des Deutschen Vereins zur Erforschung Palästinas von 1878-1897*, Leipzig 1897; J. Wimmer, *Palästinas Boden mit seiner Pflanzen- und Tierwelt von Beginn der biblischen Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart* (Vereinsschrift der Görres-Gesellschaft 1902), Cologne 1902; F. J. Bliss, *The Development of Palestine Exploration, being The Ely Lectures for 1903*, New York 1907, repr. 1977; T. Tobler, *Zwei Bücher Topographie von Jerusalem und seinen Umgebungen*, I-II, Berlin 1853-54; C. Zimmermann, *Karten und Pläne zur Topographie des Alten Jerusalem, mit einer Begleitschrift*, Basel 1876; G. Schwarz, "Jaffa und Umgebung (mit einem Plan von Sandel)," *ZDPV*, 3 (1880), pp. 44-51; G. Schumacher, "Karte des Ostjordanlandes," *ibid.*, 22 (1900); for a historical review of the phenomenon, see J. Seide, "Doctors and Naturalists as Pilgrims and Travellers to the Holy Land," *Janus*, 48 (1959), pp. 53-61.

¹³ H. Goren, "Johannes Rudolf Roth: Ein Leben für die Palästinaforschung," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes*, 5 (1997), pp. 22-44; *idem*, "Go View the Land": *German Study of Palestine in the 19th Century* (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1999; *idem*, "Zieht aus und erforscht das Land": *Die deutsche Palästina-Forschung im 19. Jahrhundert*, chapter 5: "Spezielle und angewandte Forschung" (forthcoming); Y. Ben-Artzi, "Unbekannte Pläne und Landkarten von Gottlieb Schumacher," *ZDPV*, 107 (1991), pp. 176-192.

A third approach, during the second half of the nineteenth century, may be characterized as a contemporary descriptive geography (*Historisch-Geographische Landeskunde*). This emphasizes presentation of a precise topographical description, based on the physical setting and resources, on looking back into history, describing the settlement and economy of the native inhabitants, as well as recent developments created and promoted by European activities. Explanation – whenever provided beyond the mainly descriptive presentation – is an historic, geo-deterministic, and comparative one.¹⁴ When studying settlement, society, or economy, traffic connections and communication are quite often stressed as basic factors, following the theoretical approaches of Johann Georg Kohl and Carl Ritter.¹⁵

Such academic regional geographies were based on the reports and the data collected by those travelers, explorers, clergymen, and political personalities who had experience in the country itself. This kind of geographical description was well developed and published at the time, especially in Germany. There was vivid interest in Germany in all parts of the world, but Palestine had an outstanding and special standing. Only a few of these geographers had personal experience of the country. German and British scientists had a leading interest in the investigation of the land of Palestine and the Middle East.

An analysis of the early regional geographies shows in general a narrow, systematic, and standardized approach to geographical description and the compilation of geographical facts. There is little reference to contemporary regional and economic development, to the possibilities for exploration and exploitation of the resources, or to the colonial impact and expansion of settlement. Applied perspectives are almost completely absent, though the reports on colonial and missionary activities were well known. There are only a very few exceptions. Academic scientific geography at that time,

¹⁴ E. Robinson, *Physische Geographie des Heiligen Landes*, Leipzig 1865; C. Ritter, *The Comparative Geography of Palestine and the Sinaitic Peninsula*, I–IV, New York 1866, repr. 1968; V. Schwoebel, "Die geographischen Verhältnisse des Menschen in der Wüste Juda," *Palästina Jahrbuch des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes zu Jerusalem*, 3 (1907), pp. 76–132; idem, *Die Landesnatur Palästinas* (Das Land der Bibel: Gemeinverständliche Hefte zur Palästinakunde, 1, 3), Leipzig 1914; H. Guthe, *Palästina* (Monographien zur Erdkunde, 21), Bielefeld 1927; H. Goren, "Carl Ritter's Contribution to Holy Land Research," A. Buttner and S. D. Brunn (eds.), *Text and Image: Constructing Regional Knowledge*, Leipzig 1999, pp. 28–37.

¹⁵ V. Schwoebel, "Die Verkehrswege und Ansiedlungen Galiläas in ihrer Abhängigkeit von den natürlichen Bedingungen," *ZDPV*, 27 (1904), pp. 1–152.

especially in Germany, had lost its links with any applied work that had previously been developed in the eighteenth century. The journals and reports of the religious and scientific societies, however, providing information on land management, debate, and advertising projects – many of them specifically related to Palestine – are valuable documents. They show that there were traces of conceptual spatial ideas and projects of realization behind the missionary and colonial activities in Palestine.

In comparison with international developments in historical geography, it is a particular characteristic of academic work in Israel that all these approaches of historical-geographical research on Palestine, having been developed over time, are still followed and to a greater or lesser extent are represented by research in Israel today. Traditions in research are well kept and recent research is based on a continuity of perspectives, going into more detail, drawing together more sources, and opening up broader perspectives. This fourth phase of modern detailed research began during the 1960s, and is represented by historians and historical geographers in Israel and mainly by historians in Britain, America, and Germany. It is characterized by a detailed reconstruction of political and social history, focusing on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, based on the evaluation of source materials. Research is related to the history of cartography, the history of settlement and settlement patterns, to European colonization, to urban history and topography, to the regional activities of societies, institutions and missions, to the geopolitical movements and developments, and to the economic history of nineteenth-century Palestine. The broad perspectives in the recent development of approaches of historical geographers in Israel are well represented in the collected papers, edited by Ruth Kark under the title *The Land that Became Israel*, proving indeed “to be a landmark in Israeli studies.”¹⁶

In recent research projects the modern geographical approach of analyzing the spatial processes of innovation and diffusion was developed as a guiding line of historico-geographical research, to give a more dynamic, theoretical, and general view. This approach, introduced during the 1960s by Hägerstrand and others, corresponds well with processes of agricultural colonization. The detailed recent studies on the nineteenth-century

¹⁶ R. Kark (ed.), *The Land that Became Israel: Studies in Historical Geography*, Jerusalem and New Haven 1989 (henceforth: Kark [ed.], *The Land that Became Israel*).

colonization by the German Templers and of early Jewish colonization have used these ideas to follow specific questions about the innovation of agricultural techniques or the designs of settlement patterns and domestic architecture¹⁷ transferred from Germany or other parts of the world. However this approach must also be criticized when it leads to diffusionism in a simplistic way. In the case of nineteenth-century Palestine especially, most of the "innovations" were simply the introduction of equipment, techniques, and methods which were easily available as imports. These introductions were not innovations followed by spatial processes of diffusion, since regional adaptation was limited and sometimes opposed by the inhabitants of the country.

A more recent approach, which I would like to follow, in investigations of the European impact and expansion in nineteenth-century Palestine is focused on the question of ideologies, propagations, and activities in the newly colonized land. The creation of functional structures in space (Funktionale Raumstrukturen), a regional organization (Raumorganisation), and regions of action and activity (Aktionsraum, aktionsräumliches Handeln) have to be discovered. The change, improvement, and organization of the natural environment and the creation and management of a modern cultural landscape have to be analyzed. The aim is to discover and analyze ideas about the spatial concepts of development (Ideen entwicklungsorientierter Raumkonzepte), about utopian schemes and projects of regional development (Utopien räumlicher Entwicklung), and about evaluations of location, central places, and corridors of development (Standortbewertung, Konzept von Entwicklungsachsen) which were behind European, and especially German, projects and activities in nineteenth-century Palestine.

¹⁷ Sh. Avitsur, "The Influence of Western Technology on the Economy of Palestine during the 19th Century," M. Ma'oz (ed.), *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*, Jerusalem 1975, pp. 485–494; N. Thalmann, "Introducing Modern Agriculture into Nineteenth-Century Palestine: The German Templers," Kark (ed.), *The Land that Became Israel*, pp. 90–104; R. Kark, "The Introduction of Modern Technology into the Holy Land, 1800–1914," T. E. Levy (ed.), *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, London 1995, pp. 524–541. Y. Ben Artzi, "Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement Types in Eretz-Israel in the Modern Era," Kark (ed.), *The Land that Became Israel*, pp. 133–146.

Examples of Applied Regional Concepts: The Introduction and Installation of Scientific Observation and Recording Networks

There was only very limited information on climatic, geological, or seismic data before European scientific activities; even the measurement of time was not standardized, so that a scientific recording system had to be set up. A regional network of stations had to be installed, and a spatial process of technical and scientific diffusion begun. The process of creating a network of scientific observation and the investigation of topographic data began with individual observations by a few scientists and travelers. The results were documented in travel accounts or scientific reports. A period of comparison, control, and adjustment in accuracy followed. The compilation of data, correlations, and scientific evaluation were in the hands of scientific research institutions in Europe, mainly in Britain and Germany. Finally, after individual survey projects came the public organization of standardized surveys covering the complete territory which led to modern standardized recording. For quite a number of fields the early spatial and regional development of scientific surveys and data networks in Palestine can be reconstructed. Examples are the precise measurement of time, the measurement of altitudes, topographic surveys and mapping, documentation of seismic events, survey of meteorological and climatic data, and the evaluation and regionalization of the land as a resource for settlement and exploitation.

The measurement of time: From individual public clocks towards a network of timing and a society under time pressure

A hundred years ago there did not yet exist a standard time in Palestine. There were only a few public clocks in the country, serving individual regions. Quite a number of Germans were involved in the introduction of clocks and watches and with them a pattern of standardized time measurement, which was especially important for a precise and comparable scientific data system.¹⁸ In 1847, Christian Friedrich Spittler brought Samuel Müller, a German clockmaker to the Pilgrims Mission in Jerusalem. By 1854 there were two clockmakers in the city. Not until 1884,

¹⁸ M. Blanckenhorn, "Über die letzten Erdbeben in Palästina und die Erforschung etwaiger künftiger," *ZDPV*, 28 (1905), pp. 206–207.

when the tower clock of the Franciscan monastery was installed, did the local time of Jerusalem become adjusted to this clock, which, however, did not run precisely. In the same year there was also a clock installed at the schoolhouse of the German colony in Jerusalem, adjusted from a sundial built by Christian Paulus, who also installed sundials in the German colonies in Jaffa, Sarona, and Haifa. This pattern of individual clock- and time-regions existed up to the 1920s.

Recording of seismic events: Setting up a regional recording system

The German geologist Max Blanckenhorn, from Berlin, was the first to collect data of seismic events for the years 1896, 1900 and 1903.¹⁹ He contacted a few individual informants, German settlers, who noted and documented earthquakes in their home regions. These included the teachers Gerhard Dück and Bauer in Rephaim, the German colony in Jerusalem, Dr. Carl Sandreczki in Safed, Theodor Wolfer in Jaffa, and Dr. Gottlieb Schumacher in Tel Ta'anach. This individual material was insufficient and difficult for comparisons. To get a more dense and comparable network of information, Blanckenhorn published a report on seismic data collection in Palestine in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina Vereins*, with a questionnaire which encouraged the members of the society in Palestine to fill it in and report any seismic events, and to send this information to Dr. Immanuel Benzinger in Jerusalem, who served as a coordinator of the newly installed seismic data network.

The installation of a network of observation and recording of meteorological data

A very good example of a systematic layout of a regional network of recorded scientific data is the establishment and organization of a complete system of meteorological observations as a basis for scientific meteorology in Palestine. One of the main aims of the project was to serve as a guide for land-use purposes in the context of colonization.

Initiated by the Deutscher Palästinaverein, Otto Kersten, a leading member of the society, in 1894 drew up a complete network of recording stations throughout all of Palestine. During the same year the geologist Blanckenhorn collected some individual data, especially in Jerusalem, on the occasion of geological studies in the vicinity. Kersten himself established

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 206–221.

the first stations, provided them with instruments and gave instructions for recording. He organized the scientific evaluation and publication of the data by the Zentralanstalt für Meteorologie und Geodynamik in Vienna. When Kersten died, Blanckenhorn took over and installed a number of new stations between 1904 and 1908 (at Wilhelma, Zikhron Ya'akov, Melhamia, Mesha, 'Ain Tabigha, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Ma'an). The network that Kersten had planned was still far from completion around 1920. In contrary, some stations had been lost or there were gaps in the series of data. In the remote areas there was little interest in collecting any information. However, in 1910 the material was for the first time summarized and published by Felix M. Exner, based on fourteen stations for the period 1896–1905.²⁰ During the first thirty years, the network of observatories remained very unstable: reliable persons changed quite often; the main stations were expanded with additional equipment (Jerusalem, Haifa, Gaza, and Wilhelma), but some were only experimental while others were given up after a short period of existence, and therefore the system became hierarchical. There were repeated efforts to stabilize, to modify, and to adapt the network to the given possibilities and to the key scientific interests for the supply of the information needed for cultivation.

In summary, it might be pointed out that the reconstruction of the processes of establishing regional networks of scientific surveys and data provides an important insight into individual and public activities and communications, contributing to regional knowledge, information, and development. A more or less complete reconstruction of the development of a recording network might ultimately be summarized in chronological maps and tables.

Networks of communication and trade

There are interesting examples which suggest that there were planned concepts of spatial networks and careful decisions in the selection of locations. The concepts might have been developed spontaneously, but it is more likely that they followed models based on knowledge brought from home. In 1852, Christian Friedrich Spittler of the Pilgrims Mission, St. Chrischona, in Switzerland, acting in Palestine, developed the plan to lay

²⁰ T. Chaplin, "Das Klima von Jerusalem nach eigenen Beobachtungen dargestellt," *ZDPV*, 14 (1891), pp. 93–112; H. Hilderscheid, "Die Niederschlagsverhältnisse Palästinas in alter und neuer Zeit," *ibid.*, 25 (1902), pp. 1–105; F. M. Exner, "Zum Klima von Palästina," *ibid.*, 32 (1910), pp. 107–164.

out a chain of mission colonies (twelve in all) along a trade route between Jerusalem and Abyssinia, which he named "Apostelstraße."²¹ At a distance of every 50 hours of travel, he planned to lay out colonies. All of them were to be provided with a store trading with imported European goods and with products from Palestine. In 1856 the store in Jerusalem was opened up ("Fa. Spittler & Cie."), and in 1857 a trading company was founded; in 1866 a trading center in Jaffa began to develop under brother Peter Martin Metzler. At the same time colonies and trading posts were founded in Cairo (St. Markus-Station, 1861), Alexandria (Matthäus-Station, 1861), Matammah (St. Paulus-Station, 1862), Khartoum (St. Thomas-Station, 1864), Aswan (St. Petrus-Station, 1864), and Berber (St. Bartholomäus-Station, 1864). At first the venture made good progress, but by about 1870 most of the places had been given up or changed hands, so that the proposed system collapsed. Another trade route, with four colonies, was planned to connect Palestine with the regions along the White Nile and Galla in Africa; however, this also very soon failed. No doubt, the idea of this trading network was well based, and was similar to the well-established theory of medieval urban development in central Europe, initiated as stopping places along main trade routes (Rastort-Theorie). However, in this case, capital and manpower were lacking, so the project failed and became a utopian experiment. Shortly after, in 1872, the Pilgrim Mission society ceased its activities in Palestine, which had declined after the death of their main promoter, Christian Spittler, in 1867.

Rural settlements (colonies) as centers for urban supply (Städtischer Versorgungsbereich): The emergence of market production and central places

The colonies of the German Templers were nearly all situated close to important urban centers (Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa), which developed very rapidly soon after the Germans settled down. True, the settlements of the Templers were self-contained, enclosed, and in some respects economically independent communities, as this was a guiding principle of their

²¹ J. Kober, *Christian Friedrich Spittler's Leben*, Basel 1887; A. Carmel, "C. F. Spittler and the Activities of the Pilgrims Mission in Jerusalem," G. G. Gilbar (ed.), *Ottoman Palestine 1800-1914: Studies in Economic and Social History*, Leiden 1990, pp. 255-286; Holsten, Israel und Palästina, p. 218; A.-R. Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palästina 1841-1989: Aktivitäten religiöser Institutionen, wirtschaftliche und politische Einflüsse* (Studien zum modernen islamischen Orient, 3), Berlin 1982, pp. 51-55.

society and their colonies. However, their industrial abilities, craftsmanship, and agricultural efficiency provided a surplus that they traded to the nearby towns. Their colonies developed a supply function for the urban centers. This functional organization in space, the relation between productive rural areas and urban central places, was quite familiar to the German settlers from Württemberg, and it is obvious that this rural-urban interplay and connection was a system and network which they strove to establish, and in many respects did so successfully.

Further projects of regional development, following ideas of spatial concepts

Spatial and regional conceptualism and structuralism might also be proven in other colonial projects which need to be investigated in more detail:

- a The improvement of the extensive, underdeveloped periphery by sedentarization of the nomadic tribes;
- b Division and evaluation of the land, concerning its capability as a resource for settlement and efficient land use;²²
- c The improvement and change of the natural resources by drainage or irrigation;
- d The organization of new methods of land use and the supply of modern agricultural machinery;
- e The concepts, strategies, and regional impacts of various utopian canal projects;²³
- f The concepts of spatial organization and expansion (Raumerschließung) by means of road schemes and railway links;²⁴
- g The regional organization and improvement of the harbors and harbor regions (Hafen-Einzugsbereiche);²⁵

²² M. Blanckenhorn, *Der Boden Palästinas, seine Entstehung, Beschaffenheit, Bearbeitung und Ertragsfähigkeit* (Pro Palästina, 5), Berlin 1918.

²³ L. v. Wildenbruch, "Über die Schwierigkeiten welche sich aus einer Kanalverbindung zum Roten Meer ergeben," *Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, NF 6 (1848-49), pp. 29-43; C. Schick, "Der Palästina-Kanal," *Neueste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande*, 28 (1884), pp. 40-48; R. F. Burton, "The Proposed Jordan Canal," *The Academy*, 24 (1883).

²⁴ "Die Eisenbahn nach Jerusalem," *Das Heilige Land*, 9 (1865), pp. 44-58; E. Elath, "A British Project for the Construction of a Railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem in the 19th Century," M. Ma'oz (ed.): *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*, Jerusalem 1975, pp. 415-422.

²⁵ F. Bömches, *Bericht über die wichtigsten Hafenplätze der Levante in kommerzieller und maritimer Beziehung*, Leipzig 1882.

- h The layout of a planned modern tourist infrastructure (hotels, transportation, points of interest, attractions, service, and spas);²⁶
- i The layout of a network of medical services (hospitals, doctors);²⁷
- j The layout of a network and communication system of missions and churches.²⁸

Further Research on Regional Concepts and Networks of Regional Improvement in Nineteenth-century Palestine

Historico-geographical research has to be continued through reconstructing and analyzing the different patterns, ideas, concepts, and processes of regional planning and development during the "modernization" and improvement of nineteenth-century Palestine. The corresponding fieldwork to the historical investigations will also lead to initiatives for the preservation and interpretation of monuments and relics of nineteenth-century improvements as historic landmarks in the modern cultural landscape of the State of Israel.

Since it is focused on the roots and the development of a landscape constructed by people, with its still visible monuments, this regional research is not only historical, but it leads directly to basic elements of the present-day cultural landscape in Israel; to the idea, meaning, ideology, and strategy of former actions in space, region, environment, and territory. The historical reconstruction and geographical analysis of spatial ideas, concepts, and patterns over time finally leads us to the question of general, repeated, and changing motivations of action in space, covering ground and setting up a network of functions and communications, following scientific aims, ideological motivations, economic advantages, or political strategies.

²⁶ C. Baedeker, (edited by I. Benzinger), *Palästina und Syrien: Handbuch für Reisende*, Leipzig 1875; Th. Fischer, "Palästina: Eine länderkundliche Studie," *Geographische Zeitschrift*, 2 (1896), pp. 241–261, 319–331; H. Dechent, "Über Heilbäder und Badeleben in Palästina," *ZDPV*, 7 (1884), pp. 173–210.

²⁷ N. Schwake, *Die Entwicklung des Krankenhauswesens der Stadt Jerusalem von Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, I–II, Herzogenrath 1983.

²⁸ E. Geldbach, "The German Protestant Network in the Holy Land," M. Davis and Y. Ben-Arieh (eds.), *With Eyes toward Zion – III: Western Societies and the Holy Land*, New York 1991, pp. 150–169.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION IN PALESTINE: THE ROLE OF THE GERMAN TEMPLERS

RUTH KARK AND NAFTALI THALMANN

Introduction

Since the late 1970s, new or revisionist approaches to Western influences upon Middle Eastern societies, as well as the “Orientalist” debate, have led to studies and theories advanced by scholars which range from study of the family, gender, and social and cultural minorities to production, distribution, and political economy; balance of power; and the state. These developments have yielded insights into internal dynamics and worldwide trends, rather than the traditional core theme of the impact of the West.

The pendulum reflecting interpretations of Western settlement activity and its role has swung wildly from an entirely Eurocentric stance to the other extreme of recent revisionist historians who view the settlers’ role as being detrimental to the wider societies in which they were operating. Subsequently even more recent studies suggest that the downgrading and dismissal of the European and American settlers’ role as being purely colonialistic are not well grounded.

Historians such as Stephen R. Graubard, David Landes, and recently the physiologist Jared Diamond,¹ have tried to answer the question of how technological innovations occurred in the ancient and modern world, why they developed as they did, whether they were culture-dependent, and why and how a given society assimilated those new technologies that it accepted.

* This article is dedicated to the memory of Professor Shmuel Avitzur, a pioneer in the study of the history of technology in Palestine.

¹ S. R. Graubard, Preface to special issue: “Modern Technology: Problems or Opportunities?” *Daedalus*, 109, no. 1 (1980), pp. v–vi.; D. S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Changes and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, Cambridge 1969; idem, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London 1998; J. Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, New York and London 1997.

Michael Adas and Daniel Headrick² weighed the contribution of modern Western technology as compared with indigenous elements in non-Western peoples or Third World countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Headrick, in his study of technology transfer in the age of imperialism (1856–1940), identified four basic categories: geographic relocation of technology and cultural diffusion of technology by Western experts, and by non-Western experts. Although Palestine was not a case of classic imperialism, and thus Headrick's categories are only partially relevant, the role of the German Templers settlers in the introduction of innovations into Palestine may be discussed in this context.

The Contribution of the German Templers

Seven settlements were established by the German Templers in Palestine during the last five decades of Ottoman rule: Haifa, Jaffa, Saron, and Jerusalem in the first wave (1868–1878) and Wilhelma, Bethlehem in Galilee, and Waldheim in the second (1902–1907). Before the outbreak of WWI in 1914 their combined population numbered about 1,800–2,200 persons and "...reached a level of development unparalleled in Palestine," while "in planning, beauty and organization, they had no equal in the country."³

The background to the settlement of the German Templers in Palestine was a combination of religious, cultural, social, and economic ideologies, in addition to colonialism. One of their declared motives at the beginning of the 1870s was "Raising the Orient" from its lowly position ("Hebung des Orients"). They believed that they should work to ameliorate the welfare and economic state of the local populations and to improve the infrastructure of Palestine by establishing an exemplary community. In order to achieve these aims they should first strengthen their own settlement and passive "missionary" trends.⁴ Over time these ideological trends weakened, as well

² D. R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940*, New York and Oxford 1988; M. Adas, *Machines in the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Ithaca 1989.

³ A. Carmel, "The German Settlers in Palestine and Their Relations with the Local Arab Population and the Jewish Community, 1868–1918," M. Maoz (ed.), *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*, Jerusalem 1975, p. 445.

⁴ Ch. Paulus and H. Aberle, "Plan zur Hebung des Orients durch christliche Colonisation zunächst in Palästina," 18 April 1872, Hauptstaatsarchiv, Stuttgart (HstAS) E14, Büschel 1585;

as the wish to influence local communities. This was due in part to lack of response by the local population, and to the relatively small number of Templar settlers.

Though they were not alone in this endeavor, the Templars played an important role in the introduction of technological innovations into Palestine in many spheres, the most important being agriculture, agriculture-related industries, other industries, architecture, and construction. The main spheres into which modern technology was introduced into Palestine during the period 1800–1914 were agriculture, industry, infrastructure (transport and road services, communications, energy, finance, education, health, and welfare), construction, and private consumption.⁵

Agriculture

With over 80 percent of the population living off the land, the agricultural sector took primacy in technological experimentation and progress. This included the introduction of new agricultural tools and machinery, as well as various cultivation methods and crops. From 1831 until the organized settlement of the German Templars since 1868, there had been only a few pioneering and short-lived beginnings, chiefly by Protestant missionaries and American Christian settlers.

As Thalmann has shown, the Templer settlement was accompanied by a process of diffusion of modern innovations from Europe – Germany in particular – and America. In agrotechnology, this included tools and modern machinery: light and heavy steel plows from Ulm (Tiefkulturpflüge); cultivators and plows operated by horse gear (*manège*) – “Göpelpflüge” – and later by steam locomobiles, some of which were not always suitable for local conditions; scythes, harvesting machines, drills, and mowing machines.⁶ A ribbon stone threshing roller was imported from Russia to

Ch. Hoffmann, *Occident und Orient*, Stuttgart 1875, pp. 129, 191–192, 270; *Die Warte des Tempels* (henceforth: *Warte*), no. 29 (19 July 1883).

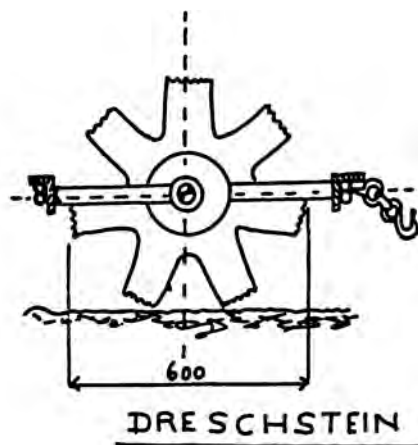
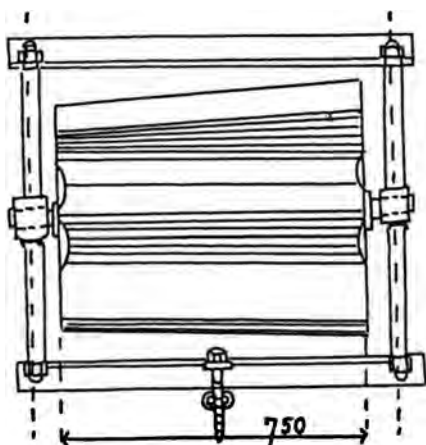
⁵ R. Kark, “The Introduction of Modern Technology into the Holy Land, 1800–1914,” T. E. Levy (ed.), *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, London 1995, p. 533 (henceforth: Kark, *Modern Technology*).

⁶ N. Thalmann, “The Character and Development of the Farm Economy in the Templer Colonies in Palestine, 1869–1939” (Hebrew), Ph.D thesis, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1991, pp. 279–281 (henceforth: Thalmann, *Farm Economy*); K. Imberger, *Die deutschen landwirtschaftlichen Kolonien in Palästina*, Oehringen 1938, p. 59 (henceforth: Imberger, *Die deutschen Kolonien*).

replace the local threshing sleds. Other machinery was imported from Europe and the US, and sold in Jaffa and Haifa, or assembled, adapted, and – towards the end of the period – manufactured in Palestine.⁷ One



Threshing stone found in the former German colony of Sarona
(Courtesy of Eretz-Israel Museum, Tel Aviv)



Sketch of modern threshing stone designed and constructed in Wagner Brothers
factory in Jaffa (Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, L2/150)

⁷ Sh. Avitzur, "Wind Power in the Technological Development of Palestine," D. Kushner (ed.), *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period*, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 231–244 (henceforth: Avitzur, Wind Power).

result of the power revolution in Europe and America in the nineteenth century was the introduction and spread of the use of modern machinery, mainly for the improvement of agricultural techniques, via the Templers in Palestine. They introduced modern threshers, harvesters, reaping machines, saw mills, grist mills, harvesting machines (Getreidemähmaschinen), and seed cleaning mills (Putzmühlen).⁸ (For further details see Appendix.)

The Templers instituted rational, intensive farming using irrigation and fertilizers (unknown to the Arab *fellahin*), and regular crop rotation, including green fodder such as clover, which enabled feeding cattle in barns and stimulated the development of dairy farming. They developed a new line of cattle by breeding local and Lebanese cows which produced more milk,⁹ and introduced the use of organic and chemical fertilizers.¹⁰ Among the fundamental features of their farming in Palestine were a modern crop-rotation system with variegated crops, advanced tilling methods, introduction of new crops, and improving strains for plant proliferation. They planted vineyards for wine production (uncommon in a Muslim country), and also introduced improved strains resistant to diseases and pests. They "paved the way for West-European agriculture in Palestine, which became the basis for the development of modern mixed-farming in this area."¹¹

They played an active role in the revolution in the use of water made possible by importing European equipment for the drilling of deep wells, suction pumps, and coal-gas motors. This change was accompanied by the use of iron pipes and improved cement-lined irrigation channels. Two local firms in Jaffa, the Jewish Stein Company (1888) and the German Wagner Brothers (1890), handled all the business, and assured customer confidence. These factories imported, assembled, adapted, and developed irrigation facilities, playing a central role in the diffusion of these innovations not only in Palestine but also in Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, and Egypt. The first modern wine cellars were also established by the German Templers

⁸ R. Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land, 1832–1914*, Detroit and Jerusalem 1994, pp. 68–74.

⁹ Imberger, *Die deutschen Kolonien*, p. 95; L. Anderling, "Ackerbau und Viehzucht in Syrien insbesondere in Palästina," *ZDPV*, 4 (1886), p. 68.

¹⁰ *Warte*, 1879, no. 21, p. 8; Elimelech Zagorodsky to Cohen, 6 May 1913, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, L2/149.

¹¹ *Thalmann, Farm Economy*, pp. 56, 94–99; *Warte*, 1879, no. 42, p. 9; *ibid.*, 1882, no. 37, p. 10; 1884, no. 5, p. 6; 1885, no. 40, p. 6; 1889, no. 23, p. 179.

GEBR. WAGNER

**EISENGIESSEREI & MASCHINENFABRIK
JAFFA (PALÄSTINA)**

**Grösstes Unternehmen dieser Art in
Palästina und Syrien.**

**Spezialität: Mühlen- und Pumpenbau in Verbin-
dung mit Original-Otto-Motoren**

**Uebernahme, Lieferung und Einrichtung voll-
ständiger maschineller Betriebe jeder Art.**

Advertisement for the Wagner Brothers factory in Jaffa
(*Warte des Tempels*, 1900, no. 41, p. 96)

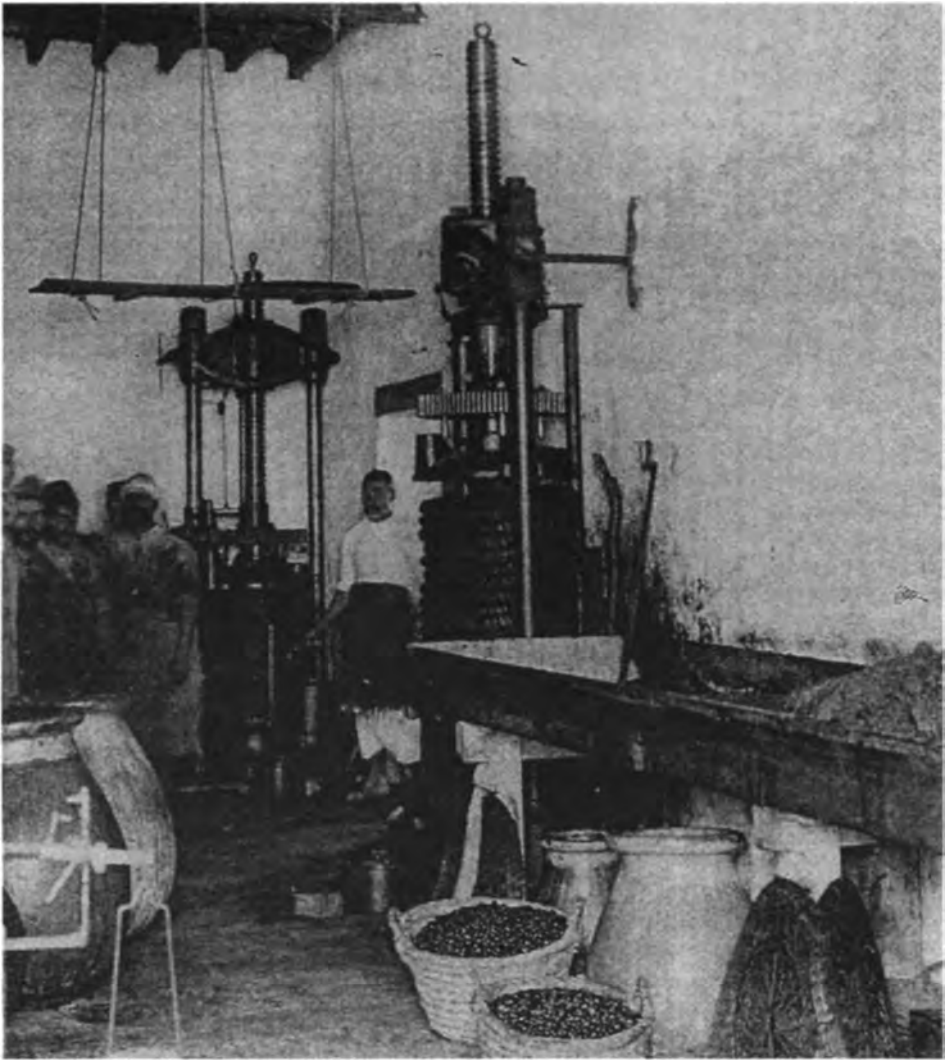


Deutsche Weinbaugesellschaft * * *

* * * *Sarona-Jaffa (K. a. m. d. H.)*

Sarona bei Jaffa
(Palästina)

Advertisement for the "Association of German Winegrowers, Sarona-Jaffa-Jerusalem" and logo of the "Deutsche Weinbaugesellschaft"
(*Warte des Tempels*, 1893, no. 20, p. 160; Israel State Archives, RG 67, file 831)



Oil presses at the German soap factory in Haifa (Paul Sauer, *Uns rief das Heilige Land*, Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss Verlag, 1985, fig. 53; courtesy of Tempelgesellschaft in Deutschland e.V., Stuttgart-Degerloch)

(1886), who were also the first to establish steam-operated flourmills (1873).¹²

Craft and Industry

The information we have regarding growth and technological change in the industrial sphere is erratic and fragmentary. From the sources available, which may be biased, it seems that the pioneers in this sphere

¹² Thalmann, *Farm Economy*, pp. 168–177; Imberger, *Die deutschen Kolonien*, pp. 77–80; *Warte*, 1887, no. 6, pp. 42–44.



Ruff's joinery in Haifa (Paul Sauer, *Uns rief das Heilige Land*, fig. 76
courtesy of Edith Imberger, Bayswater)

were once more the German urban settlers, European Jewish philanthropists, and indigenous and immigrant Jews. The few industrial establishments equipped with modern machinery were agriculture-related – those engaging in production of olive oil and soap, and sesame oil.¹³

The German Templers were among the first to develop workshops and small industries in Palestine from 1869 onwards. They built improved wind-driven flour mills, and were pioneers in introducing steam-driven flour mills which replaced the windmills. Those were first erected in Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem, while Ramle and Saron followed. Data from 1889 shows that all in all there were nine steam-powered mills.¹⁴ The Templers also established the first machinery, cement, wine, and beer factories. At Haifa, the Struve family opened a soap and oil factory in the 1870s, and the German Colony there also contained three workshops, as well as a mechanical wind-operated flour mill.¹⁵ The first workshop built carriages, the second was a mechanized bakery, and the third was a mechanized carpentry shop. In Jaffa in 1869 the Templers took over the steam-operated flour mill, the sawmill, and the oil press from the Basel Pilgermission missionary Peter

¹³ Kark, *Modern Technology*.

¹⁴ Avitzur, *Wind Power*, pp. 231–244; *Warte*, 1912, no. 9, pp. 69–70.

¹⁵ *Warte*, 1884, no. 30, pp. 3–7.

Martin Metzler who left the country. Towards the end of the century the Templers opened two plants in Jaffa. They were among the few big industrial works in the country, by Palestinian standards. The first was that of the three Wagner brothers mentioned above. The second, established at the beginning of the twentieth century by Hugo Wieland, was a factory producing pre-fabricated building materials. More than 100 persons were employed at the Wagner metal factory in 1913.¹⁶

Planning, Architecture, and Building Materials

Ben-Artzi's study of the Templer settlements in Palestine stressed the fact that they were the result of both planning and innovation, combining imported and local elements and materials. The Templers introduced a grid plan and a pre-defined concept of modern European land-use zoning in their settlements, allocating different zones for public buildings, trade and services, crafts and light industry, and housing. Their intention – to fashion a model of a spacious and modern settlement – guided the planning of the colonies' layout, streets, and buildings.¹⁷

Germans were some of the first engineers and architects in Palestine. Among the most prominent ones deserving of mention are Theodor Sandel, a member at first of the Jaffa Templer Colony and later of the one in Jerusalem who was involved in mapping in and around Jaffa and in the planning of impressive institutions in Jerusalem, and Gottlieb Schumacher of the Haifa Colony, who functioned as a cartographer, as well as a planner and builder of many buildings and institutions in the northern part of Palestine, including the Rothschild winery at Zikhron Ya'akov.¹⁸ From 1877

¹⁶ Y. Ben-Artzi, *From Germany to the Holy Land: Templer Settlement in Palestine*, (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1996, pp. 157–162 (henceforth: Ben-Artzi, *From Germany to the Holy Land*); A. Carmel, *Die Siedlungen der württembergischen Templer in Palästina 1868–1918: Ihre lokalpolitischen und internationalen Probleme*, Stuttgart 1973, pp. 37, 52–53, 76–79 (henceforth: Carmel, *Die Siedlungen*); E. J. Eisler, *Der deutsche Beitrag zum Aufstieg Jaffas 1850–1914: Geschichte Palästinas im 19. Jahrhundert* (Abhandlungen des deutschen Palästina-Vereins, 22), Wiesbaden 1997, pp. 96–98, 106–107, 123–126; H. Seibt, "Moderne Kolonisation in Palästina, I: Die Kolonisation der deutschen Templer," Inaugural-Dissertation, Stuttgart, 1933, pp. 66–68; *Warte*, 1913, no. 7, pp. 53–54; *Damals in Palästina: Templer erzählen vom Leben in ihren Gemeinden*, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 14–16.

¹⁷ Y. Ben-Artzi, "Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement Types in Eretz-Israel in the Modern Era," R. Kark (ed.), *The Land That Became Israel: Studies in Historical Geography*, New Haven and London 1990, p. 138 (henceforth: Ben-Artzi, *Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement*); idem, *From Germany to the Holy Land*, pp. 176–194.

¹⁸ R. Kark, *Jaffa: A City in Evolution, 1799–1917*, Jerusalem 1990, pp. 63–73 (henceforth: — Kark, *Jaffa*); D. Gavish and R. Kark, "The Cadastral Mapping of Palestine, 1858–1928," *The*

onwards the Templers began to use European roof tiles. Red tiled roofs became a characteristic of their houses.¹⁹

Several trading initiatives were established by Templers in Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. They imported and supplied to the Germans and the local population goods and building materials from Europe, including Germany. One of the major imported items was wood for construction and building furniture. Paul Breisch of the Jaffa colony was the first to establish a lumberyard, in 1873. The wood, imported from Mersin and Trieste, was supplied to builders in Jaffa, Jerusalem, Haifa, Nazareth, and Tiberias. In the 1870s, the Wieland family also established a business to supply building material. Abraham Dück's trading house in Haifa became one of the biggest businesses, to be followed in 1901 by Georg and Fritz Beilharz who not only sold building materials but were also involved in large-scale construction. In Jerusalem, some members of the Templer colony opened new shops and warehouses along Jaffa Street.²⁰

Transportation

The American and Templer settlers were pioneers in reintroducing wheeled vehicles into Palestine after hundreds of years in which they had disappeared from the scene. Before the 1860s, as Avraham Moshe Luncz, the nineteenth-century Jewish historian summed up, "...there were no paved roads at all in the country and, of course, there were no carriages or carts; travel between towns was by donkey, mule, or on horseback, and the fellahin also rode camels."²¹

The Haifa colonists were the first to introduce the wheel-cart into that part of the country, adapted and maintained the roads and bridges from Haifa to Acre and Nazareth for carriage traffic, and organized a regular carriage passenger service between Jaffa and Jerusalem.²² The first modern

Geographical Journal, 159 (1993), pp. 70–80; Y. Ben-Artzi, "Unbekannte Pläne und Landkarten von Gottlieb Schumacher," *ZDPV*, 107 (1991), pp. 176–192; P. Lange, "Theodor Sandel – Baumeister für Jerusalem: Porträt eines fast vergessenen Mannes," K.-H. Ronecker, J. Nieper and T. Neubert-Preine (eds.), *Dem Erlöser der Welt zur Ehre*, Leipzig 1998, pp. 101–115.

¹⁹ E. Ayalon, "The 'Roofscapes' of the Land of Israel" (Hebrew), G. Barkay and E. Schiller (eds.), *Landscapes of Israel*, Jerusalem 2000, p. 128.

²⁰ *Warte*, 1874, no. 14, pp. 53–54; *ibid.*, 1876, no. 16, p. 1; *ibid.*, 1888, no. 25, pp. 194–195; *ibid.*, 1899, no. 51, pp. 405–406; Israel State Archives, RG 67, 483/P, File 836; P. Sauer, *The Story of the Beilharz Family*, Sydney 1988.

²¹ A. M. Luncz, *Palestine Almanach for the Year 1910* (Hebrew), 15 (1909), pp. 17–18.

²² R. Kark, "Transportation in Nineteenth-Century Palestine: Reintroduction of the Wheel,"

carriage road connecting Jaffa and Jerusalem was opened in 1869. The carriages using this road were imported and driven by Templers and Americans. From the 1870s onwards, coach transport and travel services between the two cities were the specialization of the Templers of the Jaffa colony. In 1875, the Templers organized the first transport company in Palestine that owned twenty three horses and four carriages. An omnibus line was inaugurated with two vehicles running daily in each direction. The famous Thomas Cook travel agency signed a contract with the German company to provide transport for its tourists. A side effect of this development was the production, assemblage, and repair of carriages.²³



Appinger's workshop for the production, assemblage, and repair of carriages
(Yossi Ben-Artzi, *From Germany to the Holy Land* (Hebrew),
Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996, p. 159)

idem (ed.), *The Land That Became Israel: Studies in Historical Geography*, New Haven and London 1990, pp. 57–76 (henceforth: Kark, Transportation); Carmel, *Siedlungen*, pp. 33–40, 296.

²³ Kark, *Jaffa*, pp. 221–224; idem, Transportation, pp. 57–61; Carmel, *Siedlungen*, pp. 33–40; L. Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine*, Edinburgh 1887, pp. 10–11; *Warte*, 1875, no. 24, p. 95.

The Templers' Differential Impact on the Arab and Jewish Sectors

The Templer settlement in Palestine was accompanied throughout its history by grave incidents between Germans and the local inhabitants. Carmel quoted one Templer as admitting in 1928 that "no one denies that we could often have done more [for the local Arabs]." As for the Jews it was a condition of "co-existence without friendship." A Jewish newspaper commented that the Templers patronized the local Arabs,²⁴ who were hostile to the Templers. Already in 1898, *Al-Ahram* suggested that instead of local residents prospering due to the German settlers, the Germans wished to get rich at the expense of the local inhabitants. In Arab eyes, the Templers were those who took over agriculture and industry, dispossessed the indigenous population, and drove them to poverty and emigration.²⁵ There were also bitter disputes over land ownership issues, as shown, for example, in Kark's Haifa case study.²⁶

Most researchers of the German Templers tended to stress the Templer point of view and their positive impact on the country and its populations.²⁷ There is still much to be done in the study of how the indigenous populations viewed the Templers and of their impact upon them. Ben-Artzi has noted the influence of the Templers on the development of various spheres of life in Palestine. He concluded that they gained unusual influence over daily affairs, and served as a model for emulation by other residents. "They were innovative pioneers in many areas: transportation, hotels, agriculture, industry, construction, medicine and research. Despite their small numbers (around 1,800 people in 1914) they maintained primacy in these fields, and created well established communities that earned the admiration of all."²⁸

²⁴ *Havazeleth*, 7 May 1885, quoted in Carmel, *Siedlungen*, p. 254.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 449, 455, 460; quoted by Carmel, *Siedlungen*, pp. 238–239; *Warte*, 27 April 1914, pp. 133–134.

²⁶ R. Kark, "Land Purchase and Registration by German-American Templers in Nineteenth Century Haifa," *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 5 (1990–1991), pp. 71–82.

²⁷ Ben-Artzi, *Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement*, pp. 133–146; Carmel, *Siedlungen*; Thalmann, *Farm Economy*.

²⁸ Ben-Artzi, *Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement*, p. 138; see also D. Denecke, "German Motivation, Concepts and Activity in the Exploration and Development of the Cultural Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Palestine," in this volume.

Thalmann, in his studies, suggested that the Templers contributed indirectly to the general economic development of Palestine, since it also depended on the willingness of different sectors to adopt innovations. From the moment they appeared in Palestine the Templers encountered animosity and at times violence on the part of the indigenous Arab population. The Arabs saw them as intruders and sensed themselves exploited by the Germans. Although contact was limited, mutual influence – both direct and indirect – did not vanish. The Templers did adopt some local methods and crops on their farms. The Templer impact on the Arab rural sector included recognition of the importance of using organic manure, of raising fodder and potatoes, and of utilizing modern vineyard planting techniques, adopting new methods of raising cattle, and harnessing horses to wagons. The readiness of the Jews to learn from the Templers' experience led them to adopt the system of modern agriculture and mixed farming. There was cooperation between the Jewish and the Templer settlers in the professional aspects of agriculture, such as the search for disease-resistant species of grapevine. The Jewish farmers learned from the German women colonists occupations such as fowl raising and growing vegetables in home gardens.²⁹ Arthur Ruppin, director of the Palestine Office of the World Zionist Organization, noted the relatively rapid spread of improvements resulting from the "water revolution" among what he termed "the natives."³⁰

The introduction of technological innovations certainly had a great influence on the Templer population and settlements. Their impact and influence on the larger societies in which they were operating was limited, and remains to be examined.

In the sphere of transportation, for example, the Templer enterprise did quickly spread to and influence the local population. In the mid-1870s a local Arab joined the trade, setting up his own transportation company after purchasing a carriage from the Templers. By the mid-1880s, many Jewish, German, and Arab carriages were plying the Jaffa–Jerusalem road and Jewish drivers appear on the scene for the first time. The fierce competition cut into the profits of the German Transport Company in Jaffa and eventually led to its closure. To solve the profitability problem, it was decided in 1884 to establish a formal carriage-owners cooperative. The

²⁹ Thalmann, *Farm Economy*; *Ibid.*, "Introduction of Modern Agriculture into Nineteenth-Century Palestine: The German Templers," R. Kark (ed.), *The Land That Became Israel: Studies in Historical Geography*, New Haven and London 1990, pp. 99–104.

³⁰ A. Ruppin, *Syria: An Economic Survey*, New York 1918, pp. 25–26.

executive committee of the company set regular prices for the trip from Jerusalem to Jaffa (five and a half francs) and in the return direction (six and a half francs – this was an uphill journey), and higher fees for the tourist and pilgrim season. Carriages were numbered, and plans were made – and later put into practice – to print tickets and open reservation offices in Jaffa and Jerusalem. This company was granted official recognition by the government, had a monopoly over passenger transport, and was entitled to request road repairs when necessary. It consisted of sixteen German drivers, as well as Jews and local Christian and Muslim Arabs, who divided the profits between them each month. Eight daily trips were scheduled in each direction, with more carriages, belonging to German farmers and others, added during the peak season.³¹

This may also have been the case with regard to planning and construction. According to Ben-Artzi, people flocked from far and near to see the new “wonder” that had sprung up on the landscape of Palestine. It was not long before wealthy Arabs who built homes in new parts of Haifa began copying the Germans. Their modernly planned settlements inspired local Arabs, Ottoman rulers, and Jews.³²

Yaffa Szekely, in her recent study, claimed that the building style and form of the Jewish colonies was much influenced by the buildings of the German Templers. For the Jewish farmers, the German colonies were a model of successful agricultural life, and evidence of the possibility that European settlers could succeed in Palestine. The settlers in the first Jewish colonies rented horse-operated threshing machinery and other modern agricultural implements from the Templer farmers.³³

Conclusion

The introduction of modern technology into Palestine after hundreds of years of stagnation began only in the second half of the nineteenth century. The motivating forces were both internal and external. These included imperialistic political, military, and economic endeavors both by the

³¹ Kark, *Jaffa*, pp. 221–224.

³² Ben-Artzi, *Traditional and Modern Rural Settlement*, pp. 133–146.

³³ Y. Szekely, “Daily Life in the Hebrew Colonies in Palestine (Eretz-Israel), 1882–1914 (Hebrew),” Ph.D thesis, Haifa University, 1998, pp. 77–78, 107, 112, 392–395.

Ottoman Empire and Western nations. Philanthropic and religious bodies engaged in such activities were motivated by philosophies or social and national aspirations, whereas foreign and local entrepreneurial companies and individuals were intent mainly on making a profit and enhancing their status.³⁴

In Chris Park's discussion of the principles of religious diffusion, he suggests adopting principles and concepts arising from the study of the diffusion of innovations. "Most of the principles that apply to the diffusion of innovations – like new agricultural and industrial technologies, new architectural styles or consumer preference – should apply equally well to the diffusion of religious beliefs and practices."³⁵ We believe that not only should the method of this study be adopted, but also its topic: study of missionary influence upon technological diffusion. Reinhard Henkel has examined the impact of missions in Zambia on education, health care, settlement structures, development projects, and economic development as they propagated "the spirit of capitalism."³⁶

Kark has suggested that due to the cultural and religious uniqueness of Palestine in the nineteenth century, and the weight of non-economic factors, the geographic relocation of technology by Western experts discussed by Headrick was followed in Palestine by its cultural diffusion in select groups.³⁷ The relocation and diffusion of Western innovations reflected these cultural groups and their beliefs and ideologies. The process of technological transfer to Palestine was led by the advanced minority sectors of the population, including the Templers. These sectors also were those that mainly gained from it, once more including the German Templers, who were spatially segregated in their separate agricultural settlements or urban neighborhoods.

Some scholars who have studied the German Templers in Palestine have tended to adopt a "German Orientalist Orientation." We suggest that contrary to the a-priori assumption that Germany is the fountain of most of the innovations and the source for most of those involved in the process of diffusion of innovations from Europe to Palestine in the nineteenth century,

³⁴ Kark, *Modern Technology*, p. 529.

³⁵ C. C. Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, London and New York 1994, p. 99 (henceforth: Park, *Sacred Worlds*).

³⁶ R. Henkel, *Christian Missions in Africa: A Social Geographical Study of Impact of their Activity in Zambia*, Berlin 1989; quoted in Park, *Sacred Worlds*, p. 140.

³⁷ Kark, *Modern Technology*.

there is ample evidence presented in the main publications in the field³⁸ that several other European nations, as well as America, played an important role in this process. The contribution of the indigenous population, whether Arab (Muslim and Christian) or minority groups (Armenians, Greeks, and Jews) to local innovation and diffusion, and their role as mediators was also apparent. In this respect it is important to consult further studies,³⁹ contemporary newspapers (*Falastin*, *Havazeleth* etc.), and Ottoman and local archives (Arab and Turkish publications and private archives of Armenian, Greek, Arab, and Jewish families, for example). An evaluation of the contribution of immigrants from other parts of the Ottoman Empire who settled in Palestine in the nineteenth century (Egyptians, Circassians, and Bosnians) should also be included. It will enable us to arrive at a balanced view of the German contribution in a broader context.

It may be commonly accepted that when analyzing the flow of cultural influences from East to West (and not West to East), it really depends on what you want to look at. Of course European science and technology were more developed by the nineteenth century. But this opens again the issue of how historical questions are framed and how particular historical archives are constructed. It really depends on how much these questions interest one. We have searched rather widely for the flow from East to West in the nineteenth century, and have to date come up with modest evidence. This includes influences on religious and cultural concepts concerning the Holy Land, its images, and millennial future which arose as a consequence of the encounter with the Holy Land and its indigenous

³⁸ Sh. Avitzur, *Daily Life in Palestine in the Nineteenth Century* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv 1972; idem, *Harvesting Tools for Traditional Agriculture in the Land of Israel: Harvesting, Threshing, Fruit Harvesting* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv 1986; idem, Wind Power, N. Lifschitz and G. Biger, "Man is the Tree of the Field": The Trees of the Land of Israel, Their Characteristics, History, and Uses" (Hebrew), *Ariel*, nos. 124–125 (1998), pp. 189–211; M. Davis and Y. Ben-Arieh (eds.), *With Eyes toward Zion III: Western Societies and the Holy Land*, New York 1991; M. Eliav, *The Land of Israel and its Yishuv in the 19th Century, 1777–1917* (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1978; Kark, *Modern Technology*; Y. Nir, *The Bible and the Image: The History of Photography in the Holy Land*, Philadelphia 1985; N. Perez, *Focus East: Early Photography in the Near East, 1839–1885*, New York 1988; D. J. Penslar, *Zionism and Technology*, Bloomington 1991.

³⁹ M. R. Buheiri, *Formation and Perception of the Modern Arab World: Studies by M.R. Buheiri*, ed. L. I. Conrad, Princeton 1989; B. Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900*, Berkeley 1995; D. Kushner, *A Governor in Jerusalem* (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1995; H. I. Malak, *History of Jaffa* (Arabic), Amman 1996; A. H. Sa'di, "Modernization as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist–Palestinian Relations," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 24 (1997), pp. 25–48.

peoples. Clearly, there was substantial influence flowing from East to West within the Jewish people. However, the major scientific and cultural contributions and technological innovations of the Islamic world belonged largely to an earlier era.

There is no evidence yet that this was the case in nineteenth-century Palestine. At least the case study of the German Templers examined here proves otherwise – that the major flow of technology at that time was from the West to the East.

Appendix

Innovations introduced by the Templers in Agriculture, Crafts, Trade, and Industry in Palestine

Agriculture

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
The Templers introduce new agricultural implements: steel ploughs, sickles, cultivators	Germany	1871	Haifa, Jaffa, Sarona	For the purpose of agricultural work in the agricultural settlements
The use of threshing stones	Russia	1877	Haifa, Sarona	More effective instrument for crop threshing
The use of a harvesting machine and a machine for cleaning seeds	The U.S., Germany, distributed by trade houses in Jaffa and Haifa	1892	Sarona	The mechanization of the agricultural farm as a result of enlargement of agricultural areas
The use of deep ploughs	Germany	1896	Sarona	As a result of the extension of lands for planting

Field Crops

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Raising a variety of vegetables and the introduction of European species, such as potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, beetroot, spices etc.	Local sources and the import of seeds	1877	Haifa, Sarona	Usually in irrigated gardens
Introduction of manure as fertilizer in the fields	Manure brought from Jaffa and the nearby Arab villages	1879	Sarona	Became routine practice in the settlements
The introduction of green fodder, such as corn, beetroot, clover etc.	Local; seeds of some species brought from abroad	1884	Haifa, Sarona	Brought about a change in the seeding cycle and an enlargement of dairy farming and supply the year round
Experiments in the raising of new fodder, such as fodder, carrots, and lupine	Personal initiative of Fritz Keller in Wilhelma	1910	Wilhelma	The introduction of new, cheaper crops as a substitute for food for work cattle and the enrichment of greens eaten by beef cattle
The raising of potatoes became economical	Local German initiative	1884	Sarona	Supplies sold to urban markets, especially to the European population; effect on the Arabs

Vines for Wine

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Vine shoots are brought in	The Neckar and the Rems valleys	1871	Haifa, Sarona	First plantings of vineyards
First experiments of dusting with sulphur	Professional agricultural knowledge of the settlements' vinegrowers	1880	Haifa, Sarona	Pest control against vine diseases in the settlements vineyards
Experiments with local, European and American vine species, such as Bordolo, Isabella, Tokayer, Aligant	Hebron, Jerusalem, France, Germany, America, Hungary	1884	Haifa, Sarona, Jerusalem	Examination of the various species in order to find out which yield the best wine
The beginnings of wine production using professional methods	The brothers Friedrich and Johannes Laemmle	1886	Sarona	Local use
The opening of the large winery (wine cellar)	Local initiative; equipment brought from overseas	1898	Sarona	Concentration and processing of the wine crop and the production of high quality wine for export
Deutscher Weinbauverein Wilhelma – Sarona	German initiative	1903	Wilhelma	Cooperative organization intended to centralize the running of vineyards – the marketing of grapes to the winery in Sarona

Cattle Farming

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Introduction of cows from Damascus and Beirut	Lebanon	1882	Sarona	Maintenance of the dairy farms; increase of milk production
Establishment of a small dairy	Local initiative	1884	Sarona	Centralization of handling of milk in the settlement and marketing from Sarona to Jaffa
Breeding of cattle	Local initiative, introduction of cows from Beirut and Egypt for cross breeding	1892	Sarona	For the improvement of milk production by the local species
Cattle vaccination	Assisted by German consulate	1910	Sarona, Wilhelma	Combatting cattle fever
Establishment of a new dairy	Local initiative, equipment brought from Germany	1937	Wilhelma	The dairy was equipped with modern equipment and was established to process the milk which accumulated when they turned to new consumers following the dispute with the Jewish community
Establishment of the "Dobeg" firm	Local organization; agents in Germany	1900	Jaffa, Sarona	Founded following the enlargement of orchard plantations with the aim of professional instruction and export

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Establishment of the "Landwirtschaftliche Betriebs-gemeinschaft"	Professional German initiative	1902	Wilhelma	Cooperation with the aim of marketing the settlements' agricultural produce and the granting of credit for the purchase of material and equipment for agricultural farms
Establishment of an agricultural school	Initiated by Fritz Keller	1910	Wilhelma	Theoretical and practical agricultural training for adults and youngsters according to a German study plan

Crafts

Craftspeople and merchants offered their services	Trained abroad	From the beginning of the 1870s	Craft and service centers in Jaffa, Haifa, and Jerusalem	For the use of the settlements' inhabitants, the indigenous well-to-do population, and the Europeans

Trade

A trade center for timber	Initiated by Paul Breisch, who brought trees from Mersin and Triest	1873	Jaffa	For the supply of timber for construction in the settlements, later developed into a large business for the rest of the population

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Trade stores	Georg and Fritz Beilharz and Abraham Dück	1901	Haifa	A trade center for construction materials and the carrying out of construction work on a large scale; a trade center for agricultural equipment brought from abroad and for other products

Flour Mills

Establishment of a flour mill	Matthaeus Frank	1873	Jerusalem	For local customers; was also imitated by Jews and Arabs
Construction of windmills for flour	Equipment brought from England	1874	Haifa	For the production of flour in the settlement and to serve the <i>fellaheen</i> who brought grain to be processed
Establishment of the Dampf-muehlen Genossenschaft Jaffa, GmbH	Stock owners' local initiative	1894	Jaffa	Cooperative organization for the operation of steam-run mills for the production of flour

Industries

Establishment of a factory for oil and soap	Established by Andreas Struve and Georg Scheerer	1874	Haifa	Products intended for local use and for export to Europe and the United States

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
A craft center for the production of wagons	The Appinger family	1874	Haifa	Construction of wagons and carriages for the conveyance of passengers and products
A factory for the production of building materials and prefabricated concrete products	The Wieland family	1870s?	Jaffa	For supply of building materials
A factory for cast iron and the construction of machines	The brothers Georg and Adolf Wagner	1900	The Walhalla neighborhood in Jaffa	Local agents of Gasmotorenfabrik Deutz – Köln in Germany, for years the suppliers of gas motors and other products to the local population
An olive-oil press factory	Christian Plugfelder	1912	Sarona	The production of olive oil from the olive plantations in Wilhelma and those belonging to the Arabs living in the region; for marketing and for the use of the settlements

Road Services

Establishment of hotels	The entrepreneurs Ernst Hardegg, Karl Bohnenberger	1874	Haifa, Ramla	Road services for tourists and pilgrims

INNOVATION	SOURCE	YEAR	LOCATION	EFFECT ON:
Operation of a regular service of passenger carriages	Carriage owners and farmers	1877	Haifa, Jaffa, Sarona	Passenger service from Haifa to Acre, and from Jaffa to Jerusalem
Establishment of a carriage owners' cooperative	Local German initiative	1884	Jaffa, Sarona	Routine daily road services to Jerusalem

MEISSNER PASHA: GERMAN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

WALTER ROTHSCHILD

Introduction

Heinrich August Meissner – known as “Meissner Pasha” – was not the only German involved in railway construction in Ottoman Turkey, but certainly the best-known and most successful one. His career spanned the construction of the Hedjaz Railway from Damascus to Ma'an, the “branch” from Der'a to Haifa and then Afula to Nablus; he then transferred his attention to planning and construction of sections of the famous “Bagdadbahn,” especially in northern Syria and Iraq. He accomplished more than two-thirds before the outbreak of the First World War caused cancellation of this project's completion, but instead drove him to extend Turkish military railways into southern Palestine and Sinai.

* This article did not require a vast amount of academic preparatory effort, since a great deal of the work had already been done for me by Herbert Pönicke, *Die Hedschas- und Bagdadbahn, erbaut von Heinrich August Meißner-Pascha* (Beiträge zur Technikgeschichte), Düsseldorf 1958 (henceforth: Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*). This brief biography of Meissner was based on access to a variety of German consular records of the period – i.e. primary sources. I am much indebted to this work. Other sources available to me have also been mainly secondary, notably Manfred Pohl and Jürgen Lodemann, *Die Bagdadbahn: Geschichte und Gegenwart einer berühmten Eisenbahnlinie*, Mainz 1989 (henceforth: Pohl and Lodemann, *Die Bagdadbahn*); the notes to the video film “Bagdadbahn” produced by Komplett-Video: “*Die Bagdadbahn*”: *Abenteuer auf die Schiene*, Grünwald [ca. 1995]; Dieter Noll, Benno Bickel, and Ahmad von Denffer, *Die Hedschas-Bahn: Eine deutsche Eisenbahn in der Wüste*, Karlsruhe 1995; Rick Tourret, *The Hedjaz Railway*, Abindgon 1989 (henceforth: Tourret, *Hedjaz*); Hugh Hughes, *Middle East Railways*, Harrow 1981 (henceforth: Hughes, *Railways*). In the archives at St. Antony's College in Oxford are, amongst other treasures, notes by Dieckmann in the papers of R. F. Scrivener, Box 2. A pioneer in this field of studies was Walter (Pinchas) Pick. My attention has been drawn to an article of his: “Meissner Pasha and the Construction of Railways in Palestine and Neighbouring Countries,” G. G. Gilbar (ed.), *Ottoman Palestine 1800–1914: Studies in Economic and Social History*, Leiden 1990, pp. 179–218. The author is in the possession of a photocopy of Pick's unpublished Ph.D thesis for Dropsie University, “Development of Railways in Palestine.” It is clear from the notes that when dealing with Meissner and his career, especially in the Balkans (pp. 269–271 of the typescript), he is drawing heavily upon Pönicke.

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 he remained in close contact with Turkey, helped rebuild the railway system damaged during the war, and taught a new generation of railway engineers.

Born in Leipzig in 1862, he died in Istanbul in January 1940, a period when the completion of this Bagdadbahn had almost been achieved – except that in this case it was the British hurrying to close the gap between Nusaybin and Tel Kotchek. An ironic symbol of the changing fortunes of colonial power.

Early Life and Career

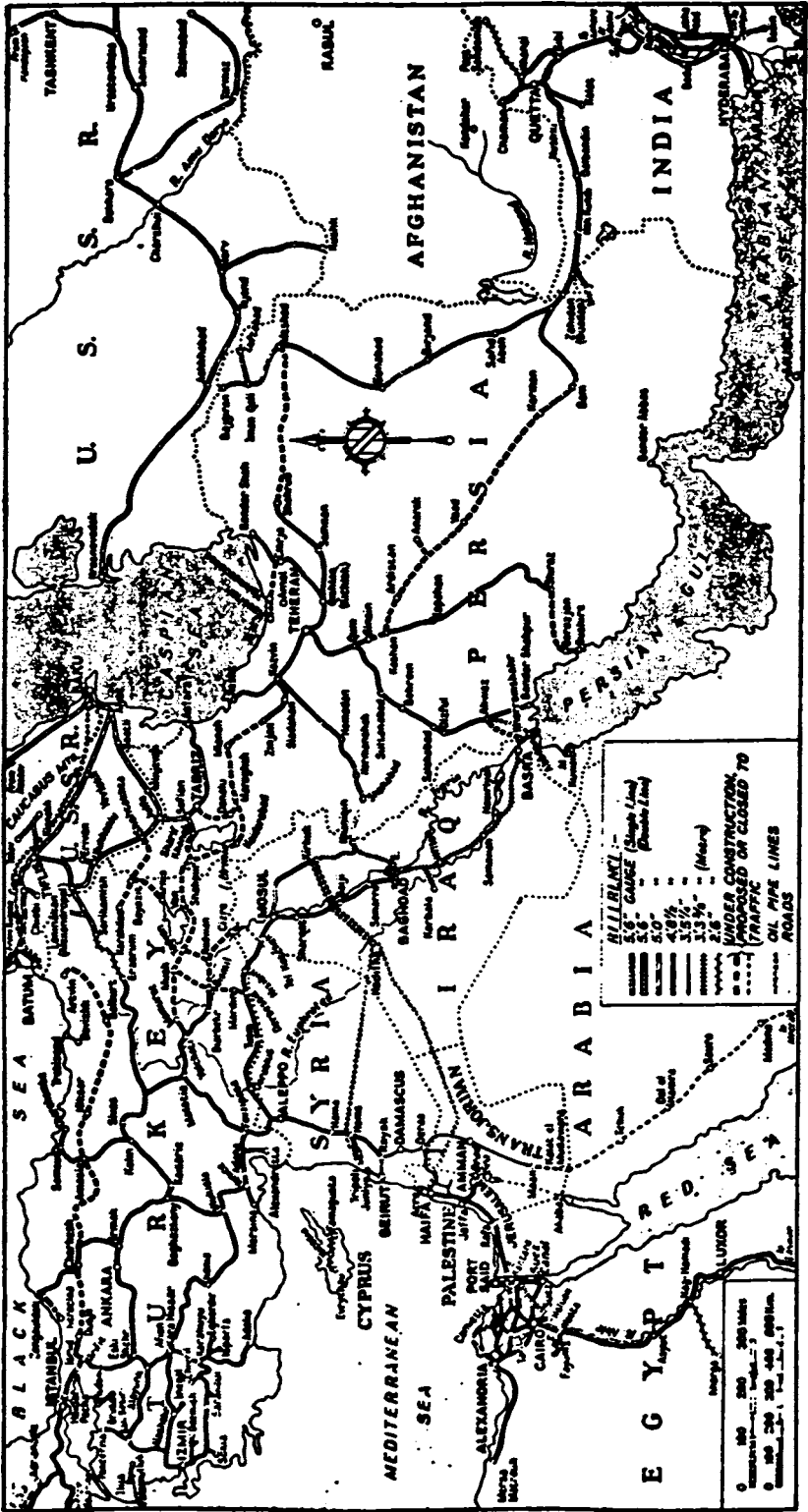
Heinrich August Meissner was born on 3 January 1862 in Leipzig – the son of a lawyer. His father died the same year, and his mother moved to Dresden. There the boy attended school and the Annenrealgymnasium from 1874 to 1881, graduating as one of the best to attain “Abitur.” His military service was performed in a Saxon “Schützenregiment.” From 1881 to 1885 he studied at the Technical High School in Dresden, initially the Basic Engineering course followed by special classes and semesters devoted to Railway Permanent Way, Telegraph- and Signals, Road, Earth Tunnel and Water/Drainage construction. Because of his good marks he regularly received additional stipends from the Hauboldschen und Gerstkampschen Stiftung (scholarship funds), and in October 1883 graduated from the first section of the Engineering Department with a “Very Good,” and in October 1885 likewise with his diploma – an academic attainment that virtually guaranteed him entry into the profession of construction engineering. In addition, he followed Turkish language courses in Dresden, and in 1885 traveled to Constantinople to take up a position at a glass factory run by his uncle, and also worked for a year on the Bellowa–Vakarel line in the Balkans. Following this early experience he returned to Dresden the next year, worked in an engineering office, then in 1886 spent six months as an “assistant lecturer” in Railway Construction at the Prague Polytechnic. Following a few months working in Vienna, he returned to Constantinople in 1887.

It is clear that by this time – aged 25 – his destiny was already marked; as a well-qualified railway engineer who spoke Turkish and had family connections within Turkish industry, he was the right man in the right place at the right time.

The Turkish railway system really began to expand around the end of the nineteenth century. This was as much a political as an economic development, with the Great Powers anxiously competing with each other for influence over the design, the financing, the construction, and control of various lines, each feeling threatened when another gained any "success." German firms – with political assistance from the Kaiser's government and financial assistance from the Deutsche Bank – were a major influence at this time, though other concerns were sponsored by French or British interests.

Meissner began work around 1888 on the line from Izmit to Ankara via Eskişehir, a part of the "Bagdadbahn" project. The "Bagdadbahn" is the term applied to the scheme to build what amounts to a trans-continental rail link between Central Europe and the Persian Gulf. (The phrase "Berlin to Baghdad" is sometimes used.) In practice, the term is usually confined to that section in Asiatic Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. Most of the early controversy and different plans lie outside the scope of this article. First floated as early as the 1850s, the scheme developed momentum as European Turkey was connected to the Central European network. Thence the idea was to construct a line from the eastern side of Istanbul and through Anatolia, the Taurus and Amanus mountain ranges, to Adana – at the "north-east corner of the Mediterranean" – thence following the ancient "Fertile Crescent" past the headwaters of the Euphrates to the Tigris Valley and down this to Baghdad and eventually Basra, at the head of the Persian Gulf. Whoever controlled this line would effectively be able to control swift communications to India and the Far East. Since German capital was invested in this prestigious diplomatic scheme, which was perceived as threatening British interests in the Gulf and India, Britain strongly opposed it, and brought France and Russia in to join the opposition. Years of delicate diplomatic arrangements were necessary to reduce this opposition. Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876–1909), in contrast, perceived this line as of vital importance to internal Turkish interests, helping to link distant parts of the Ottoman Empire both economically and militarily (and hence politically).¹

¹ See Pohl and Lodemann, *Die Bagdadbahn*, p. 4. The 92 km. line from Istanbul Haidarpasha to Izmit had been constructed at the initiative of the Turkish government from 1871 onwards, but operation was initially entrusted to an English concessionaire. By the time of later schemes, such as the Haifa–Baghdad scheme of 1934, the development of air transport had changed the entire context of international travel for mails and the privileged few.



Railways of the Near East
(Reproduced from *The Railway Gazette*, 19 & 26 December 1941, p. 649)

From 1892 to 1894 Meissner was chief engineer of the second section of the Salonica–Monastir railway in what is now northern Greece (which he would have to help rebuild thirty years later), and his prodigious organizational and engineering talents were soon recognized: from 1894 to 1896 he was appointed head engineer of the seventh section of the Salonica–Dedeagatsch line. At the end of 1896 he was appointed scientific head of railway construction at Constantinople, where he exercised influence. It is no secret that most of the station and other buildings on this stretch of railway are modeled on German designs of the period. German technology, rails, signaling, and even locomotive and rolling stock designs within Turkey to this day remain based on contemporary German work.² To the initiated, the contrast with the French-design signaling and operating techniques used until recently in Syria is very obvious. The “colonial influence” lingers on.

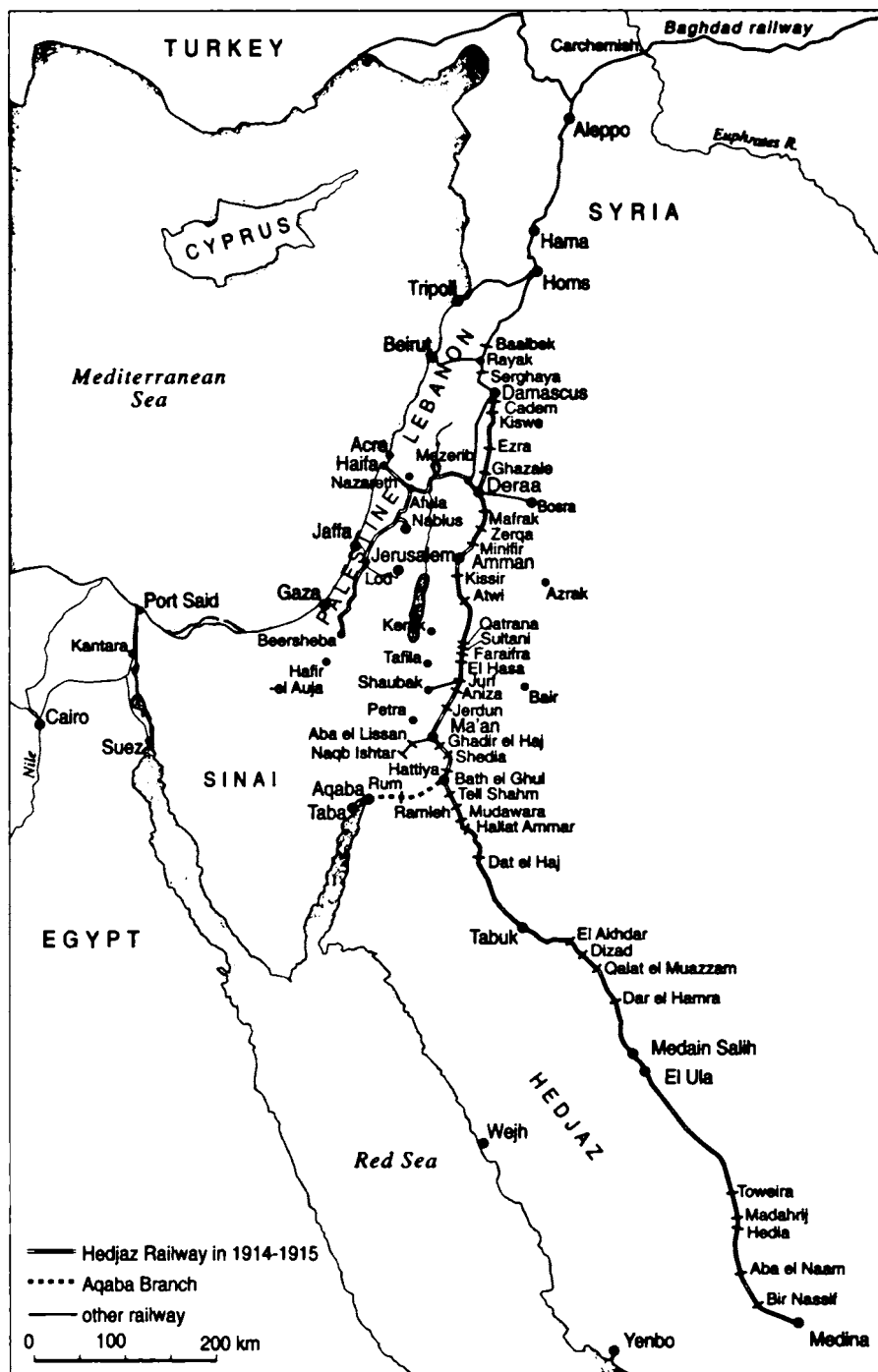
The Hedjaz Railway

By 1900, plans were becoming more concrete for a line from Damascus to Medina and Mecca – what became known as the “Hedjazbahn.” On 26 October of that year the *wali* of Damascus went to Muzeirib, the terminus of a Belgian-built line southwards from Damascus, to mark the official inauguration of work. But it was clear that the abilities of the small pool of Muslim engineers available was not up to the task. Pönicke cites an article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of 10 December 1900 on the early conferences,³ at which it became obvious that they needed some non-Muslim foreign consultants if anything was even to be begun, let alone achieved. Two senior engineers were appointed – an Italian named Labella, and Meissner; Labella’s contract was terminated after a year, whereas Meissner proved to be master of the job.⁴ It is intriguing to think what might have occurred had Labella remained – would these orders for equipment have gone to Italian firms?

² One viaduct is still apparently known locally as the “Varda Viaduct,” the reason being that as a young German engineer lost his footing during an inspection as the bridge was under construction, and fell to his death, he called out “Wahr da!” – “Beware down there!” to the workers on the valley floor....

³ Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 2.

⁴ Hughes, *Railways*, p. 72.



Hedjaz Railway

Based on *Mitteilungen des Vereines für die Förderung des Lokalbahn- und Straßenbahnswewen*, 7, no. 6 (June 1909), p. 174

In December 1900 Meissner was placed in charge of the engineering side of this project, based in Damascus. It was an enormous task, building a line through over 1,308 km. of mostly uninhabited and waterless desert. The last section, indeed, he was forbidden as a Protestant to see and work on himself, since only Muslims were allowed south of al-'Ula; he managed to complete the task at an annual average rate of 150 km., completing the line as far as Medina by 1908.⁵

The work involved surveying a route, control of the several thousand Turkish troops allocated to the physical construction of the line, and the ordering of materials for construction and operation – mostly from Germany. Examples of such materials are locomotives from Krauss, Hohenzollern, Hartmann, Henschel, & Jung; coaches from Kelsterbach of Frankfurt and Ammandorf; sleepers from Dortmunder Union; pointwork from Gothaer Maschinen- und Waggonfabrik; Feldbahn material (for construction purposes) from Koppel of Berlin; pumps from Körting of Hanover; boilers from Reinsch of Dresden – the list goes on, and is an indication of the involvement of German industry in the provision and export of almost everything the new railway needed, down to paper and stationery (Schleicher & Schull of Düren). Because of the high transport costs imposed by the French-owned company that operated the Beirut–Damascus railway, Meissner surveyed and built in 1903 a branch from Dera' to Haifa, incorporating parts of an abortive British-sponsored standard-gauge line from Haifa into the Jezreel Valley. This became the well-known “Rakevet Ha-'Emek” or “Valley Railway” of Israeli myth, the butt of jokes and songs regarding its operational inadequacies.⁶

Funding was available, from donations and taxes on Muslims around the world, since this was designated a “Holy Project” and a *waqf*, as well as an annual sum of 1 million Turkish Pounds allocated from a deposited amount (by 1908) of 74.25 million Francs. Meissner commented that “this fund was the only fund in the whole of Turkey that was properly and honestly administered, and no one dared tap into it, for such would have caused a religious scandal in the entire Muslim world.”⁷

⁵ According to Tourret, *Hedjaz*, p. 21, the line is 1,320.5 km. long, and al-'Ula is at km. 983. There are some discrepancies between various accounts: Hughes, *Railways*, p. 72, lists it as 1,302 km. or 810 miles, while Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 6, gives its length as 1,308 km.

⁶ Many countries have a folk myth concerning the train from which one can safely descend and pick flowers whilst it is in motion. The “Rakevet Ha-'Emek” is Israel's!

⁷ Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 3.

The locomotive stock has been mentioned briefly above, but is deserving of more detailed mention. The reasons for the sheer variety of stock purchased, with all its consequent problems of spare parts supply, are not known, and may be to do with slow release of funds. However, if one excludes six small Belgian-built tank engines taken over from the "Tramway Libanais" and used for construction purposes, one batch of locos from Schweizerische Lokomotivfabrik in Winterthur, and some further locos captured by the British during World War I and supplied to their operating troops, *all* the Hedjaz Railway motive power was German-built.⁸ These include 12 0-6-0T's from Krauss of Munich (in four batches from 1902-5); 8 0-6-0T's from Hohenzollern (Düsseldorf) (1905-8); 7 2-6-0's from Hartmann of Chemnitz (1906-7); 7 2-6-0's from Jung of Jungenthal, Siegen; 8 2-8-0's from Krauss (from 1903), 22 2-8-0's from Hartmann (1906/7); 12 2-8-0's from Jung (in 1907); 4 2-4-6-0 Mallet articulated locos from Henschel of Kassel (1907); the 10 SLM 2-8-0's (1912/13); 5 2-8-0's from Borsig (Berlin) (1914). Delivered during the war (when Meissner was in charge again) were 4 2-8-0's from Hanomag (Hanover) (1917); 6 0-6-6-0T articulated locos, also from Henschel (part of a series of 20 built for the German Army), and 12 2-8-2's from Hartmann. The Borsigs were part of a batch being built for the Peleponnese Railway in Greece. The Hartmann 2-8-2's were actually part of an order for 22 – the remaining ten were sent after the war to Java!

Some of the first passenger coaches, delivered before 1904, came from Baume et Merpent of Haine St. Pierre in Belgium. The reason for this is

⁸ **Locomotive Descriptions:** The "Whyte" system of descriptive notation normally posits three figures representing the leading wheels of a locomotive, the coupled wheels (which transfer the actual power) and the trailing wheels. Should any be absent they are represented with a Nought. As a rough guide, the larger the number of coupled wheels, the more powerful an engine is, extra wheels at the front indicate it can traverse curves more easily and hence travel faster, and trailing wheels indicate that there is a heavy boiler and firebox to be carried. Thus "0-6-0" indicates six coupled wheels and all weight carried upon them, "2-6-0" indicates six coupled wheels and a leading axle in a separate truck which helps the locomotive "lead into" a curve, and "2-8-2" indicates a heavy locomotive which requires extra axles to spread the weight upon the track. If the water tanks and coal bunker are hauled separately in a tender, this is not normally indicated; if they are carried on the locomotive chassis itself, this is indicated by "T" (for "Tank"). Depending on the position of the water tank it can additionally be defined as a "Saddle Tank" ("ST"), "Well Tank" ("WT"), or "Pannier Tank" ("PT").

Where the drive is divided into two separate sections of coupled wheels – as occurred with some HR locos – they can be described as, e.g., "2-4-4-0T" – thus maintaining the principle of first and last digits representing carrying and not powered wheels. SLM is the Schweizerische Lokomotiv Fabrik of Winterthur, Switzerland. They also constructed the locos for the Beirut-Damascus railway.

unknown, except that a Belgian-owned line already existed from Damascus to Muzeirib (and was driven out of business by the new Hedjaz route); it is possible these coaches came from that company, or were simply available quickly to an existing design. What is known is that the first 100 vans and 145 low-sided wagons, also delivered by 1904, came from Süddeutsche Wagon Fabrik-Kelsterbach of Frankfurt am Main and Gothaer Wagonfabrik Fritz Bothmann & Gluck.⁹ By 1918 the passenger stock comprised 116 coaches and 35 baggage vans, and was also from Nürnberg (now MAN), Werden, Gotha, Ammendorf and Kelsterbach (i.e. Frankfurt), as well as the Belgian suppliers Roeulx and Baume et Marpent, and the Turkish Arsenal at Constantinople.¹⁰ Nürnberg 1st-class coach No. 31 or 32 was used by Meissner as his personal conveyance. The freight stock comprised 1147 vehicles, mainly from the same suppliers.

Much of the construction was delegated to Turkish troops from the 5th Army Corps; by 1907 7,500 men were at work from the north, with another 1,800 of the Hedjaz Division working northwards from Medina. Bearing in mind that *everything* had to be imported, down to survey instruments, the achievements were remarkable – 114 km. in 1904/5 and 288 km. in 1906/7, an annual average of 150 km. of line including many bridges, culverts, station buildings, fortified posts, water towers, cisterns, and depots etc., these latter constructed mainly by Austrian and Italian workers – all through arid, inhospitable terrain. The achievement is largely due to Meissner's organizational and leadership skills. Each new section, of between 50 and 150 km., was divided into three "zones" – initial survey, detailed measurements, and construction. In the construction phase the work was so organized that the troops in several small companies were moving the earth or rock, civilian contractors worked on the masonry and final grading, and construction companies then laid the sleepers and rails. Workers, especially skilled workers, were hard to find in the virtually-uninhabited area, and the Beduin had no interest in such activity, and so it sometimes occurred that the rails were provisionally laid well ahead of the point where the actual earthworks and masonry were complete. The eventual total was 1,532 bridges or culverts.

Each section of the new line was formally opened on 1st September, the

⁹ *Rolling Stock*: By June 1909, according to *Mitteilungen des Vereins für die Förderung des Lokalbahn- und Strassenbahnwesens*, 7, no. 6 (June 1909), p. 187, there were 71 locomotives, 48 passenger coaches, 692 goods wagons, 7 luggage vans, 200 "workmen and ballast wagons," 25 Draisines, and 2 water wagons "exclusively of German manufacture."

¹⁰ Details from Tourret, *Hedjaz*, pp. 42–63 *passim*.

Sultan's birthday: thus Zarka–Qatrana on 1.9.1903; Qatrana–Ma'an on 1.9.1904; Ma'an–Mudawwara on 1.9.1905; Mudawwara–Tabuk on 1.9.1906, while al-'Ula was reached 1.9.1907. In 1904 a base camp was established at Ma'an and Meissner based himself there so that queries and problems could be dealt with locally rather than requiring referral to Damascus. As Turret writes, "He was either given, or assumed, greater authority."¹¹ But his obvious competence had also impressed the Sultan. On 7 March 1904 he had been made a Pasha – an extraordinary distinction for a foreigner, but one which at least gave him greater authority in the eyes of local bureaucrats. Prior to this, the issue of sending all queries to a commission in Constantinople, where influence could be exerted by the chief vizier, the influential Izzet Pasha, Navy Minister Hasan Pasha, and others had caused tremendous delays and frustrations, against which Meissner had energetically fought.

The enormous task of construction was completed despite difficult topographical conditions and disease amongst the workforce, and the Hedjaz Railway as far as Medina was handed over in its entirety for operation, in 1910.¹² Indeed, attacks by Beduin at the southern end led to some of the work being destroyed, and it was left to another German engineer, P. Dieckmann,¹³ to rebuild this section later.¹⁴

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹² Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 10, states 1.9.1908, but it is possible that this was the ceremonial rather than the actual completion; for example, the Dera'a–Haifa line was officially handed over on 1.9.1905 even though two of the bridges in the Yarmuk Gorge had hardly been started!

¹³ This man was considered to be an anti-Jewish general manager by Jewish workers during the First World War, see B. Katinka, *From Then Till Now* (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1964, pp. 164ff.; *Harakevet*, 24, no. 11 (March 1994), including the story of von Griebel's attempts to divine for water in the desert south of Beersheba with an aluminium rod. Katinka wrote (pp.149f.): "The general manager was Dr. Dieckmann. He was a German, educated at school for the priesthood, an aggressive and crass man who threw fear into his subordinates, dictating their moral standards, and more than once interfering in their private and family lives. He did not like Jews and only employed them on the railway because of a shortage of experts who would work for the limited wages paid by the railway management.... He once told me that it was known that Jews use the blood of Christians for making their *matzot*.... He also fought energetically against the custom of 'baksheesh'." In the 1920s he was a Reichsbahnrat in Limburg/Lahn and in 1927 wrote an article, "Die Eisenbahnen in Palästina und Transjordan im Krieg und in der Neuzeit," *Archiv für Eisenbahnwesen*, 1929, pp. 387–399. This includes very negative comments on Jewish immigration. Katinka, p. 161, refers also to an Ing. Kurtz as head of the Mechanical Department in Haifa, and an engineer named Lorenz, actually born in the German Colony in Jaffa.

¹⁴ Auler Pasha notes that a Turkish railway engineer, Muchtar Bey, was responsible for surveying the line south of El-'Ula "as I have not seen the area, and no European has visited it," Auler Pascha, "Die Hedschasbahn, II: Ma'an bis El 'Ula," *Ergänzungsheft Nr. 161 zu Petermanns*

As Meissner himself explained to the German ambassador in Constantinople, the railway served two main functions: firstly, the transport of pilgrims to Medina (and Mecca), and secondly, the strategic interests of the Sultan, who was now in a position to send three battalions, each 1,000 men strong, from Damascus to Ma'an within 36 hours at an average speed of 30 km/h, whereas previously this would have taken 12 days, excluding time taken for acquiring camels. General Colmar von der Goltz wrote, in 1908, that the Sultan's achievement in completing this transport link could have major consequences:

Because of the enormous distances to the southern provinces of the Empire it was not until now possible...in times of great danger to bring troops from the north to the south for defense. One should not forget, that until now the Ottoman Empire in all previous wars on the Danube and in the Balkan peninsula has only been able to attack with half its strength. The distant provinces in Asia did not only provide no men for defense, but in fact even required strong garrisons in order to prevent themselves also becoming victims of aggression. That situation will now change....¹⁵

Mitteilungen, Gotha 1908, p. 7. (Auler is described as a Divisional General in the Imperial Ottoman Army and as a former royal Prussian Oberst.)

In the opening train for the section Ma'an-El-'Ula, departing Damascus on 27 August 1907 (*ibid.*, p. 14), special guests included: Marshal Kiasim Pasha, General Director of the Railway; Marshal Riza Pasha, Operating Superintendent, then: Meissner Pasha (Technical Director of Construction), and then Directors of Operations and Workshops, Herr Gaudin and Herr Nötel, as well as a number of engineers including Herr Schröder. We see that the top positions were filled by Turks, but the practical ones by Germans. He stresses that the locomotives were from Chemnitz and the coaches from Nürnberg. The train averaged up to 45 km/h between stations, and reached Ma'an in 28 hours from Damascus as a result of many lengthy stops for greetings and festivities. Auler notes that the German engineers were, apart from some more gray hairs, not substantially altered from the time he had seen them three years previously; that at Ma'an he was greeted and received by Meissner in his single-story home, on a parcel of land personally presented to him by the Sultan, and here he found "allen für den deutschen Haushalt nötigen Nebengelassenen.... Am Eingang des Hauses von der liebenswürdigen Hausfrau empfangen, genoss ich zum letztenmal vor meiner Fahrt in das Innere Arabiens die Errungenschaften deutscher Kultur, unter denen ich nicht als letzte die eines köstlichen Trunkes Münchener Spatenbräu erwähnen möchte." This is the only reference I have found to Meissner's wife, or to his home, furnished in German style, and able to provide a cold German beer when necessary.

Kiasim Pascha is described in an article, "Die neue Mekka-Bahn," *Katholische Missionen*, 35, no. 10 (July 1907), p. 219, as "the spiritual father of the entire plan" for the Hedjaz Railway. The same article describes Meissner as earning an annual salary of 25,000 Francs for his work as Director of Construction.

¹⁵ Report to Auswärtiges Amt., Berlin, Abt. IIE, vol. 15, no. 94, cited in Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 12.

Further Plans

During the construction of the Hedjaz line itself, the Sultan also asked Meissner to survey and prepare plans for further lines: one for a branch from Ma'an to Aqaba, 160 km. long, to ensure access to the Red Sea – though British reactions due to a perceived potential conflict of interests led to the Turkish government abandoning this idea, at least temporarily, in 1906. It was at this point that the British occupied Tâba and threatened a naval blockade of Constantinople.

Instead Meissner was asked to consider plans for further projects connecting to the Anatolian Railway, from Ankara via Sivas to Erserum. Finance would be tight, but Meissner was hoping that profits from the Hedjaz line operations would be forthcoming – following a 1900 agreement between Russia and Turkey, no other country was permitted to be involved in railway projects in this region, and that meant Turkey would have to find the funds alone, without recourse this time to donations from generous Muslims. Russia had assumed until this point that, considering the famous Turkish efficiency in handling money, no such scheme would ever appear from the Turkish side, and the speed and success of Meissner's work in the Hedjaz was rather a shock. Meissner's plans were put into concrete form as far as Sivas, after which priority attention turned once more to the extension of the railway from Konia towards the Tigris. This was not done, however, before he had recommended to the government the construction of a branch line from the Haifa branch at Afula (36 km. from Haifa) via Nablus to Jerusalem. He was thanked for this idea but other priorities meant that it was not until February 1913, and without Meissner's involvement, that the first section to Jenin was opened.¹⁶

¹⁶ In a brief article signed by "P. Dieckmann in Haifa," "Die Zweiglinie 'Affule-Jerusalem der Hedschazbahn,'" pp. 267–270 (of unknown provenance, photocopy only available to the author, probably 1914), it is stated that the plans for extension to Mecca etc. were held back after the fall of the Sultan and his Second Secretary, Izzet Pasha, a notable supporter of construction – even though rails and sleepers for another 450 km. of line already lay at Haifa. The time was used to improve the existing tracks before, in 1911, it was decided to use some of these idle track materials for other extensions, including Der'a–Bosra–Eski Scham (40km.), Haifa–Acre (23 km.), both opened in 1913, and then from Afula towards Jerusalem, although only the first half to Nablus (77 km.) had by then been opened.

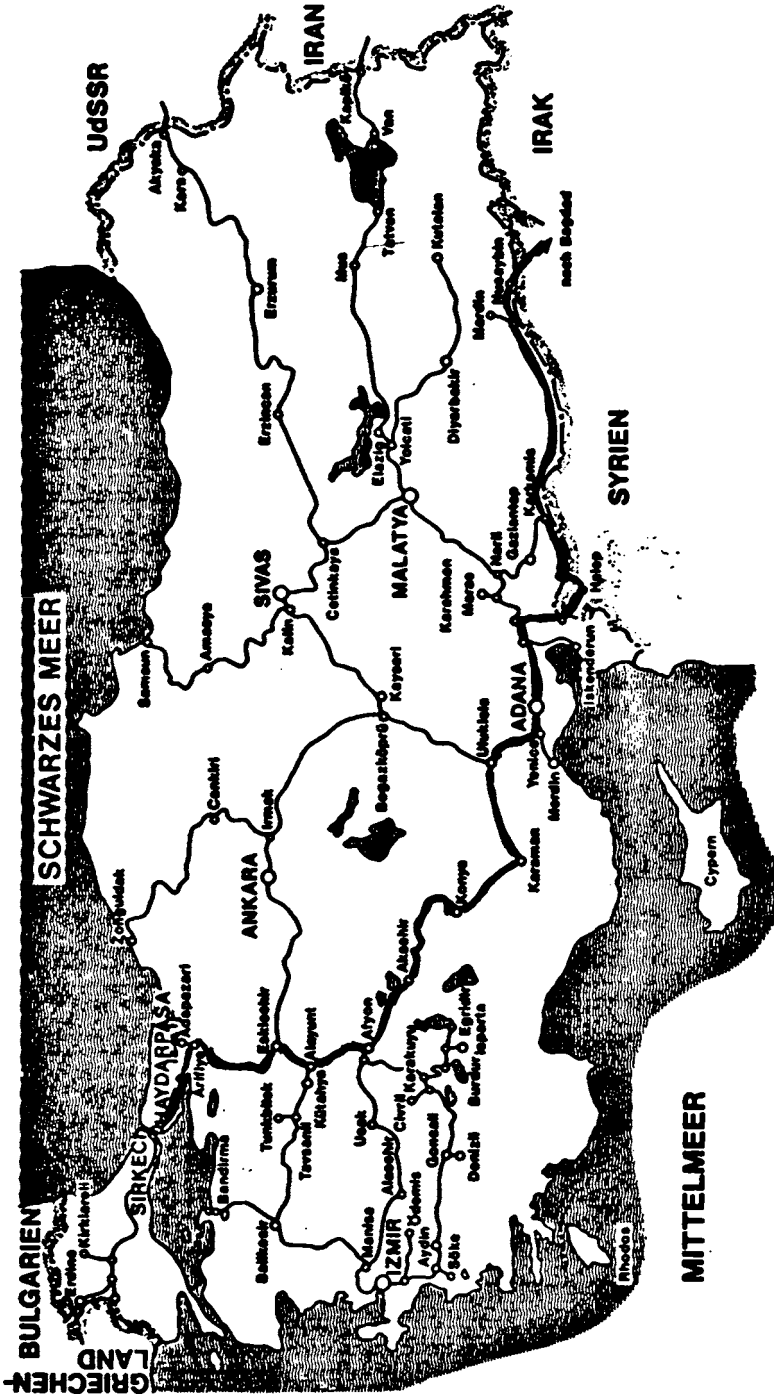
Bagdadbahn

In the spring of 1910 Meissner Pasha commenced work for the Anatolian Railway Co., specifically the Bagdadbahn, run by the Gesellschaft für den Bau der Eisenbahnen in der Türkei, based in Frankfurt am Main, headed by Geheimrat Dr.-Ing. e.h. Otto Riese, and financed by a 1909 contract with the Deutsche Bank which had taken over the shares for the second and third sections of the line, through syndicates, at a cost of 108 and 119 million Francs respectively. Construction was placed exclusively in the hands of Philipp Holzmann GmbH in Frankfurt am Main.¹⁷ Apart from the local provision of cement and timber, as well as food for the 30,000 workers, all building and technical equipment and supplies were provided through Holzmann.

From April 1910 Meissner was based in Aleppo and commenced preparation of the route and earthworks from Aleppo to Islahiye. Initial Turkish plans had indicated leaving Aleppo off the route, and this had caused some civil unrest, which Meissner himself was able to calm. On 25 November 1910 he received instructions to complete a survey for a line: Islahiye–Katma–Muslemiye–Aleppo, Muslemiye–Uetschkupe–Djerablus–Harran–Helif (the 15km. section Muslemiye–Aleppo section leading to a terminus where trains reversed). The line of route was swiftly marked out, major difficulties being encountered only in the Islahiye–Raju section where mountainous terrain meant tunneling would be necessary. This surveying and marking-out work continued systematically and methodically throughout 1910 and 1911, the route being divided into sections. Progress was so good that a further 25 km. extension to Nusaybin was added to his tasks, since 25km. worth of concession had been “lost” by diversions in the Adana region! The government was offering a kilometer-guarantee payment and simply offered a further 25 km. in another place rather than purchasing the 25km-worth back from the company. At least this way the line would end in a town rather than a village. The Porte also planned eventual extension, with Meissner’s help, all the way to Baghdad: a report in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in December 1910 stated that the hope was to have such a line completed “within five years.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Ironically, in 1999 this concern went spectacularly bankrupt, and no archives survive.

¹⁸ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Nr. 355 (24 December 1910), cited by Pönicke, *Meißner-Pascha*, p. 18.



Map of the Turkish railway system and the line of the Baghdad Railway to Nusaybin. The thick line is the "Baghdadbahn."
(Reproduced from *Mürklin Magazin*, February 1986, p. 51)

While negotiations were in progress Meissner occupied himself with ordering building materials, which were to be brought in by sea and conveyed over the French-owned railways from Beirut (via Rayak) and Tripoli to Aleppo. Haggling over the prices proved difficult – Meissner was only allowed discretion over a specific amount (the exact amount appears to be nowhere recorded) and all other decisions had to go via the office in Frankfurt. Indeed, delays to the opening of the Tripoli–Homs line (which should have opened on 1 March 1911) led to consequent delays in the construction of the Bagdad Railway. The eventual contract allowed for transport, over two years, of 32,000 tons of rails, 33,000 tons of sleepers, 500 tons of small items, 7,000 tons of lime and cement, 13,500 tons of coal, 200 tons of machines and tools, 300 tons of bricks, and 1,000 tons of bridge parts, in addition to 10 locomotives of 12–14 tons weight, 20 wagons of 8–12 tons weight, and 160 flat wagons at 4–5 tons. The Bagdad Railway committed itself to transporting at least 3,000 tons per month over the Damas–Hamas et Prolongements company's system in this period. That company was therefore guaranteed at least a half-million Francs income in its first two years. Meissner then rented quay areas at Tripoli for storage of materials as they arrived, transported exclusively by the Deutsche Levant Linie. The first materials arrived in August 1911.

In the meantime, permission to start construction of the Aleppo–Katma section was given in April 1911. From 1911 the third section of the line had been divided into four stages, with a construction leader in charge of each; Meissner was now put simultaneously in charge of the difficult section based upon Baghdad. Other German engineers – Föllner, Klöveborn, and Mankiewitz – took over work in his absence, but he visited Aleppo regularly to keep an eye on matters. The German consul in Aleppo described his impact thus:

His departures are regretted by everyone. He maintains good relationships with the local Germans, with the Turkish authorities and the other foreign consulates, and is respected by all his engineers who include, apart from Germans, citizens of many nationalities. He has never made any problems for the German consulate here, neither for himself nor for any of his numerous employees.... For his successful work in his occupation he brings apart from his technical expertise a deep knowledge of the country, its culture, how to handle the peoples, and excellent organizational ability.¹⁹

¹⁹ German Consulate, Aleppo, Report dated 12 April 1911, cited in *ibid.*, p. 20.

In Baghdad he established good relations with Jemal Bey, the *wali* of Baghdad – a very important situation, as it enabled acquisition of land to proceed at a suitable pace. He rented a suitable building as offices for the construction project and with a team of 30 to 40 people was able to get the planning stage completed by March 1912. Since the regime was contracted to examine and approve plans within two months, it could be assumed that construction would be able to begin in June 1912, and here expert organizational ability was required, since it could take up to six months to bring supplies upstream from Basra, and the existing steamers could hardly handle the existing commercial traffic. He negotiated with British and Turkish ship-owners in Basra and Bombay, and contracted them to bring 50,000 tons of supplies per year over five years to Basra – what would be required for the Baghdad–Helif line. In Bombay he also contacted representatives of the Forestry Commission for deliveries of wooden sleepers. In this way he hoped to get sufficient commercial interest awakened among the British for a railway from Basra to Baghdad, which would in turn lessen their resistance to the line to Baghdad from the north. In the meantime he supervised work on the station and depots at Aleppo, since supplies for the eastwards construction towards Mosul could come only by the line as it was laid.

Outbreak of World War I

By 1914 he had therefore surveyed, organized, and constructed several sections, including from Muslimiye eastwards from Aleppo, and northwards from Baghdad itself, paying special attention to the issue of water supplies, but the outbreak of war brought new priorities: the lack of completion of this line, especially through the Taurus and Amanus mountain ranges, proved to be a severe handicap for the Ottoman forces in the Middle East. 1,060 km. had been completed in Turkey and Syria, and 650 km. in Iraq, but gaps totaling 722 km. remained. Meissner reported to the Deutsche Bank that work could only continue if materials could be supplied from Germany to Karapounar, when the necessary engineers and personnel could be left in Baghdad, and when the remaining monies for expenses could be guaranteed to the Turks. However, in view of the urgent construction projects elsewhere, these guarantees could not be given.

The 1906 plan for a branch to Aqaba was dusted off. The Turkish/German

armies planned an attack on the British-controlled Suez Canal and this required better transport links for men and supplies (and water) – either to the Red Sea or through the Sinai Desert. In September 1914 Meissner and several of his assistants were provisionally released from their work on the Bagdadbahn for “improvised extensions to the Hedjaz Railway.” The eventual solution was the extension of his planned line of 1908, i.e., construction of a line from near Nablus to Tulkarm, then southwards via Lod to Beersheba, and out into the Sinai desert at El Auja. In November 1914 the Bagdadbahnbaugesellschaft in Frankfurt approved Meissner’s appointment into the 4th Turkish Army Corps under Jemal Pasha as construction leader, based in Damascus. He was now responsible for the entire organization of supplies and construction for various lines connected to the military effort, and for the workshops necessary for the provision and maintenance of all equipment. This included the finding of fuel supplies once the British were blockading the Mediterranean, and the locos of the Hedjaz Railway were switched to wood fuel, with extra lines being laid to tap the then-existing forests. 2000 trained soldiers were available to him for construction work. The 160 km. of track to Beersheba were completed by the end of 1915; El Auja was reached by 1917, and during the war Meissner laid 365 km. of line for the Turkish military. Although the changing fortunes of the war meant that these lines soon lost their original purpose, the German consul in Jaffa described the work of planning and construction at such speed and under such conditions as a masterwork that “only such an excellent organizer with such a good knowledge of the land as Meissner Pasha could have achieved.”²⁰

Post-War Experiences.

With the cease-fire conditions that applied, Meissner had to leave Turkey in 1918. He returned briefly to Dresden, then in 1923 took a post as advisor to the Ministry of Construction in Albania, based in Tirana, before being called once more into the service of Turkey in 1924, as “adviser for building and railway maintenance” in Istanbul. Destruction by the British and Greeks during the war period had left large sections of the Anatolian

²⁰ Deutsche Botschaft, Jaffa, “Bericht an Auswärtiges Amt, 3 November 1915, cited in *ibid.*, p. 31.

Railways in poor condition. From 1927 to 1933 he headed the Engineering Department of the Anatolian Railways. He turned down an offer to become transport minister, as this would have meant becoming a Turkish subject, and lectured until 1940 on Railway Engineering at the Technical High School in Istanbul. In 1924 the Technical High School in Dresden had granted him the honorary title of "Doctor-Engineer."

Meissner died on 14 January 1940, at the age of 78, and is buried in the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy, in Istanbul. Ironically, the final section of the Baghdad Railway, between Qayyarah and Baiji, was opened on 14 July 1940 – by the British.

This brief review of an eventful life is intended as an indication of the part played by German technical experts in the construction and operation of the Ottoman railway system and the fulfillment of the various grandiose dreams for a "Berlin to Baghdad" or "Muslim pilgrimage" railway system.

The result of this work, and the contacts and precedents established on the ground (in addition of course to the financial and diplomatic activities at a higher level), was a railway system – or two systems – thoroughly Germanic in character, in architecture, in locomotive and rolling stock design, and in signaling – a relationship which has lasted virtually to the present day. In Turkey, the "standard" TCDD steam locos of the 1930s were designed and built by Henschel of Kassel, with another 37 being ironically built in Britain by Beyer, Peacock Ltd. and the Vulcan Foundry in 1948!²¹ In the 1980s diesel locos from MaK of Kiel and second-hand ex-DB Class 211s formed the main shunting and light traffic fleet. In 1986 Krauss Maffei delivered 50 diesel line locos of type DE 1000.²²

On the former Hedjaz line, re-opened a few years ago, the surviving trains run for tourists in Jordan use post-World War II locomotives but pre-World War I coaches; the trains run in Syria employ mainly modern Hungarian coaches but pre-World War I German locomotives. The sole surviving steam locomotive in Israel, in the Railway Museum at Haifa East, was built by Krauss of Munich.

The imprint of these German engineers, and the man who organized so much of their work, can still be discerned today.

²¹ *The Locomotive, Railway Carriage and Wagon Review*, 54, no. 676 (15 December 1948), pp.182ff.

²² *Eisenbahn Journal*, August 1996, p. 36.

PART FOUR

**GERMANY AND ISRAEL:
TWENTIETH-CENTURY DIPLOMACY**

THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF EAST GERMANY

ANGELIKA TIMM

An analysis of the Middle East policy of the German Democratic Republic (GDR)¹ cannot be limited to a description of the relationship between the East German state, on the one hand, and the Arab countries and Israel on the other, but must take into account international, regional, and national developments. Several criteria were inter-connected and complemented one another, while at other times they opposed each other and even made decision-making more difficult. In addition, the question should be raised as to what extent the GDR modified its policy during the four decades of its existence.

General Aspects and Considerations

The most important criterion in shaping the GDR's attitudes towards the Arab states and Israel was the *incorporation of its foreign policy into that of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact*. The East German government had only limited scope for independent decision-making. During the Cold War it more or less identified with the approach of the Soviet leadership to international affairs, and this also held true for the Middle East conflict. Nuances in official and semi-official statements were hardly of any consequence. It was not until the 1980s that the GDR attained some political latitude and from that time on was able to modify its foreign

¹ The article is a revised version of the author's essay "The Middle East Policy of the German Democratic Republic," *Journal of Arab Affairs*, Special Issue: "Germany and the Arab World," Fresno, Calif. 1993, pp. 160–175. For a detailed analysis of East German–Israeli relations see the author's books *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern: Das gestörte Verhältnis der DDR zu Zionismus und Staat Israel*, Bonn 1997 (henceforth: Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*), and *Jewish Claims against East Germany: Moral Obligations and Pragmatic Policy*, Budapest 1997 (henceforth: Timm, *Jewish Claims*).

policy to suit its own ends, largely in order to further its economic aims.

A second factor that should be borne in mind is *the relationship between the two German states*. From the very outset East Germany viewed itself as being the antithesis and counterbalance to West Germany, first and foremost in order to prove the legitimacy of the GDR. Since the 1950s, East Germany's eagerness to be recognized as an independent and sovereign state was confronted with the West German Hallstein Doctrine. In 1955, Walter Hallstein, state secretary in the West German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declared that his country would break off diplomatic relations with any country formally recognizing the GDR. Since then East German politicians sought political support, especially in the Third World, including some Arab countries. In their efforts to achieve international standing they exploited temporary confrontations that arose between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Arab states due to its relations with Israel.

Furthermore, the *claims of Israel and of Jewish organizations* against the GDR greatly influenced the approach of GDR leaders towards Israel. The East German government denied the guilt of all Germans for the Holocaust and refused to enter into negotiations on Jewish material claims, declaring that reparations were defined by the Allies as compensation for damages inflicted by Nazi Germany. As for the Potsdam Agreement, GDR statesmen emphasized that their government had fulfilled all of its obligations by paying reparations to the Soviet Union and Poland. The payment of compensation to individuals living in countries of the Western hemisphere or to the Israeli government was rejected on the grounds that it would strengthen "imperialism" and, moreover, could only be done at the expense of reparations to Moscow.

Another factor was *the connection between ideology and "Realpolitik"* in GDR foreign policy, that led to a specific approach to problems in the Middle East. Like other communist parties, the ruling Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) characterized Zionism as "upper-class nationalism" and "chauvinism," while considering the Arab national movement a progressive movement of liberation which played an important role in the Third World. East German politicians hoped for expansion of the so-called "real socialism" through the development of several Arab countries as non-capitalist economies. Therefore, the GDR – like the USSR – sided with the Arab countries in the Middle East conflict without differentiating between the political and social forces active in the region. It was not until the end of the 1970s that any mention was made of "reactionary Arab

regimes.”² The East German leadership condemned any kind of cooperation between “imperialist powers” and the Israeli government (and, later, Arab “reactionary” governments) as being directed against peace and progress in the region.

One cannot ignore *economic considerations* favoring the extension of relations with Arab states that were rich in oil and/or interested in importing services and industrial goods. The official view was that improving relations with Israel would have endangered contacts with the Arab states, possibly leading them to apply strong economic pressure on East Germany. At the end of the 1980s, Arab countries – first of all Iraq and Syria – were more than two billion DM in debt to the GDR.³ The permanent economic weakness of East Germany led to the adoption of a kind of pragmatism in its foreign policy that was only imperfectly veiled by ideology.

Last but not least, the *domestic policy of the SED* should be taken into consideration. The GDR leadership, like that in other East European countries, tried to convince its own people of the necessity of fighting the “imperialist enemy” throughout the world in order to prove its own legitimacy. Israel, which saw itself as part of the Western world and cooperated with the United States, West European countries, and South Africa, was considered “an imperialist bridgehead in the Near East” or “an imperialist outpost in the Arab region.” At the same time, leading GDR politicians confirmed that their country “supports the struggle of the peoples of all continents for political and economic liberation from imperialist oppression and exploitation in many ways”:⁴ they declared solidarity with the Vietnamese people, the Arab national movement, and especially with the PLO. The ideological offensive was based on the general principle of “the joint struggle” of all progressive forces “against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and Zionism.”⁵

² “Aus der Gemeinsamen Erklärung des Allgemeinen Algerischen Gewerkschaftsbundes (UGTA) und des Freien Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes anlässlich des Besuches einer Delegation des FDGB unter Leitung des Vorsitzenden Bundesvorstandes, Harry Tisch, vom 18. bis 22. Mai 1979 in der Demokratischen Volksrepublik Algerien, 22. Mai 1979,” W. and A. Bator (eds.), *Die DDR und die arabischen Staaten*, Berlin 1984, p. 38 (henceforth: Bator, *Die DDR*).

³ H.-D. Winter, “Bemerkungen zur DDR-Politik gegenüber Israel,” *Asien Afrika Lateinamerika*, 21, no. 1 (1993), p. 160.

⁴ *Neues Deutschland*, 20 November 1964, 6 February 1965, and 24 February 1965, respectively.

⁵ Bator, *Die DDR*, p. 161; see also pp. 142, 146, 147, 153, 155, 157, 161, 164, 168, 170, 171, 193, 197, 220, 228, 232, 234, 252, 263, 266, 268, 290.

Although the internal and external components that determined the Middle East policy of East Germany did not basically change during the four decades of its existence, the relationship to the Arab states and to Israel did in fact undergo some modification. There were two main periods – from 1949 to 1965, and from 1965 to 1989 – which were different in principle and comprised several stages. During the first period, international acceptance of the GDR was the major objective of its political elite, while it was economic considerations and efforts to gain international standing on the part of the SED leaders that, to the greatest extent, characterized the following years.

Political Support for the Jewish State

The first stage in East Germany's Middle East policy was very short, lasting from 1948/49 to 1952 and was characterized by support of the UN General Assembly's decision of 1947 to partition Palestine, creating two states – one Arab and the other Jewish. A special announcement of the SED Central Committee in early 1948 declared: "We consider the foundation of a Jewish state to be an essential contribution enabling thousands of people who suffered greatly under Hitler's fascism to build a new life."⁶ Politburo member Paul Merker wrote on 24 February 1948 in the SED daily *Neues Deutschland*: "The Jewish population has the sympathy and active assistance of all progressive forces. The democratic forces in Germany are especially compelled to show their sympathy and readiness to help."⁷

Early contacts between representatives of the Jewish community in Palestine and East German politicians had already been established before the State of Israel and the GDR came into existence. In April 1948, Chaim Yahil, the Jewish Agency representative in Munich, met with Otto Grotewohl, a former Social Democrat who at that time was one of the two chairpersons of the SED. In accordance with Stalin's policy of supporting the establishment of two independent states in Palestine as a means of

⁶ Cited in H. Eschwege, "Die jüdische Bevölkerung der Jahre nach der Kapitulation Hitlerdeutschlands auf dem Gebiet der DDR bis zum Jahre 1953," S. Arndt et al., *Juden in der DDR*, Duisburg 1988, p. 89.

⁷ P. Merker, "Der neue Staat des jüdischen Volkes," *Neues Deutschland*, 24 February 1948, p. 8.

terminating the British Mandate and increasing Soviet influence in the Middle East, Grotewohl declared the readiness of his party to recognize the Jewish state. He rejected any restitution of "Aryanized" Jewish property in the Soviet Occupation Zone, but held open the issue of collective compensation to be paid to the Jewish state after its foundation. Grotewohl also promised financial support for the transport of Jewish survivors from DP camps located in Western Europe to Palestine.⁸

When Israel fought its War of Independence with weapons airlifted from Czechoslovakia, East German newspapers and journals adopted a clear position in favor of the Jewish state, then under attack by the armies of conservative Arab regimes. In January 1949 the weekly *Weltbühne*, for instance, praised the Israeli army that had been able to repel the invaders – Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Military advisors of the Egyptians were castigated as being former Nazi officers.⁹

These stands can be explained by Soviet interests in the region and Stalin's Middle East policy. The Soviet Union and other East European countries recognized Israel and began to develop political, economic, and cultural relations with the new state. This, of course, also influenced the positions adopted by the East German political elite. In addition, feelings of guilt toward the Jews because of the Holocaust, articulated during the early post-war years by many East German anti-fascists – communists and non-communists alike – played a significant role. Even after the publication of anti-Zionist articles in the Soviet press in autumn 1948, newspapers and journals in the Soviet Occupation Zone continued to declare their support for Israel. Several contacts between East German and Israeli representatives are documented for the years 1949 and 1950.¹⁰

The Slansky Trial and the Luxembourg Agreement

The honeymoon in relations between the East European countries and Israel was short-lived. When the antisemitic Slansky trial was conducted in Prague in the fall of 1952, the East German political elite aligned itself with the policy of the Soviet Union and exchanged its pro-Israeli position

⁸ Foreign Ministry (FM) Files, 130.11/2511/17, Israel State Archives (ISA), Jerusalem.

⁹ *Die Weltbühne*, 4, no. 3 (18 January 1949), p. 87.

¹⁰ See Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*, pp. 81–97; Y. A. Jelinek (ed.), *Zwischen Moral und Realpolitik: Eine Dokumentensammlung*, Gerlingen 1997, pp. 139–140.

for an anti-Israel and anti-Zionist stance. In February 1953 the SED monthly *Einheit* published a paper approved by the SED Central Committee entitled "The Lessons from the Trial against the Conspiracy Center of Slansky." It declared, inter alia, that "the Zionist movement has nothing in common with the aims of humanity and true love of mankind. It is dominated, directed, and commanded by US imperialism, serving exclusively its interests and the interests of the Jewish capitalists."¹¹

Leading East German politicians used the anti-Zionist campaign in order to justify their position regarding reparations. The Israeli government had sent diplomatic letters to each of the four Allied powers on 16 January 1951 and 12 March 1951¹² demanding one and a half billion dollars from Germany as the amount necessary for the resettlement of 500,000 Jewish immigrants from the countries formerly under Nazi control. While the Western powers supported the Israeli demand, and the West German government began negotiations with representatives of Israel and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany in 1952, the GDR refused to accept any East German responsibility for the Holocaust.

The Luxembourg Treaty, signed by the governments of Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany on 10 September 1952, came under heavy attack by the SED. *Neues Deutschland* published an article under the headline "Reparations – For Whom?" It condemned the agreement as "a deal between powerful West German and Israeli capitalists...who intend to open up new sources of profit by expediting the expansion of new enterprises...of industries essential for the waging of war.... The promoters of this deal [are] American imperialists."¹³ It was no coincidence that this article appeared only three days after parts of the indictment in the Slansky trial were published in the same newspaper. For the first time, East German politicians linked the reparations issue with their attitude toward Zionism and Israel.

Walter Ulbricht and his followers exploited the anti-Zionist campaign in their efforts to dominate the SED. They tried to get rid of their opponents – communists and other emigrants who had returned to East Germany from exile in the West. Some of these were convinced that their country should not blindly follow Soviet policy without any discussion; rather it

¹¹ "Lehren aus dem Prozess gegen das Verschwörertum Slansky," *Einheit*, 8, no. 2 (February 1953), p. 205.

¹² FM 130.02/2417/1 and 130.10/2539/2, ISA.

¹³ *Neues Deutschland*, 25 November 1952.

should seek a specifically German way to build up a democratic and socialist country. The Slansky trial was used by Ulbricht and his followers to purge the ranks of the SED of "Trotzkyist, Titoist, and Zionist elements" – as they were officially termed. Paul Merker, a non-Jewish communist member of the Politburo of the SED and a strong opponent of Ulbricht, was accused of leading a Zionist espionage ring and of "defending the interests of Zionist monopolist capitalists," having arranged "the financing for Jewish capitalists to emigrate to Israel."¹⁴ He was imprisoned from 1952 to 1956. Show trials like the ones in Budapest and Prague were not conducted in East Berlin; attempts to stage such trials ceased primarily as a result of Stalin's death.

During the period of the Slansky trial, diplomatic contacts between East German and Israeli officials seemed to be impossible, but in 1954 the Israeli government again approached the GDR, proposing negotiations on reparations. Representatives of both states met several times in Moscow in 1954 and 1955, but without any positive results. The policy of the GDR government was stated in a diplomatic letter delivered to the Israeli ambassador on 28 December 1955:

The government of the German Democratic Republic has done everything in its power to destroy German fascism at its roots and to create conditions that preclude the possibility of another threat to the security and existence of other peoples – including the Jewish people – arising in Germany. The victims of fascism living within the territory of the German Democratic Republic were given generous support and aid. The government of the German Democratic Republic has thus fulfilled all of the requirements of the four Allied powers for reparations to compensate for the destruction wrought by German fascism.¹⁵

¹⁴ Lehren aus dem Prozess, p. 207. Cf. W. Kießling, *Partner im "Narrenparadies": Der Freundeskreis um Noel Field und Paul Merker*, Berlin 1994; J. Herf, "East German Communists and the Jewish Question: The Case of Paul Merker," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 29 (1994), pp. 627–661.

¹⁵ FM, 93.39/547/2, ISA. See also Archives of the GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (GDR FM), A 13364.

Seeking Support in the Third World

When that East German statement was delivered to the Israeli embassy in Moscow, the Middle East policy of the Soviet Union had already undergone change. While, following the military coup in Egypt in 1952, Soviet politicians had characterized the Nasser regime as being "madly reactionary, terrorist, anti-democratic, demagogic,"¹⁶ relations between the Eastern bloc and Egypt quickly improved from the mid-1950s. The Soviets supported Nasser who became, together with Jawaharlal Nehru and Ahmed Sukarno, a recognized leader of the non-alignment movement and an opponent of the anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact.¹⁷ The Czechoslovak–Egyptian arms deal of September 1955 was a manifestation of the new policy. At the same time, the Federal Republic of Germany became a member of NATO and the GDR joined the Warsaw Treaty. The call for German unity was now replaced by the thesis of independent development of the two German states. This change can be seen as the political background for the more intensive search by the East German leaders for support among Third World countries, as well as for their attacks on cooperation between Israel and West Germany. GDR policy was implemented in accordance with Soviet efforts in the Middle East and supported by the other members of the Warsaw Pact.

Since the early 1950s, the GDR had been eager to establish relations with several Arab states. Its first treaty with a Third World country was signed in March 1953, when a trade and payments agreement was concluded with Egypt. Similar agreements were signed with Sudan, Lebanon, and Syria in 1955. Very close contacts developed between the GDR and Egypt: trade missions were established in East Berlin and Cairo in 1955, and consulates-general were opened in 1959; from 1953 to 1964, 58 delegations on an administrative level were exchanged, and 13 governmental agreements were concluded.¹⁸ In January 1959, East German Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl visited Cairo and Baghdad as part of a good-will tour of Arab and Asian countries.

¹⁶ *The Imperialist Struggle for Africa and the Peoples' Liberation Movement* (Russian), Moscow 1953, p. 126; quoted in A. H. Voth, *Moscow Abandons Israel for the Arabs: Ten Crucial Years in the Middle East*, Washington 1980, p. 157.

¹⁷ See G. Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East from World War II to Gorbachev*, Cambridge 1990, pp. 44ff.

¹⁸ Werner Lamberz and Ernst-Otto Schwabe, "Die VAR – unser Freund und Partner," *Einheit*, 20, no. 5 (1965), p. 132.

GDR politicians exploited the Suez Campaign of 1956 to improve relations with Egypt and other Arab countries. Grotewohl declared on behalf of his government: "The aggression against Egypt reveals the full brutality of imperialist colonial policy." At the same time, he attacked the Federal Republic of Germany which had "granted over three thousand million marks in so-called reparations to the aggressive circles of Israel, which that state is utilizing in its struggle against the national liberation movement of the peoples of the Near East."¹⁹ Some weeks later GDR Foreign Minister Lothar Bolz again used the reparations issue to make some gains in the Arab world. On 22 December 1956 he stated: "The government of the German Democratic Republic appeals to the government of the Federal Republic of Germany demanding to transfer the so-called reparations, that serve as a contribution to the armament of the Israeli aggressor, to the Republic of Egypt in order to compensate for the damage done by Israeli troops."²⁰ By equating the Holocaust with the Suez Campaign, the SED made it quite clear that it denied not only the uniqueness of the Holocaust, but also German guilt and responsibility. The attacks against the "imperialist alliance between West Germany and Israel" continued after the Suez Campaign. Wishing to enhance their political and economic relations with Arab countries, East German politicians stressed that West Germany had demonstrated its hostile intentions towards the Arab peoples by strengthening Israel and endangering peace in the Near East.²¹

Efforts by GDR officials to break out of their diplomatic isolation were given top priority during the 1960s. The East German government was especially interested in developing its relations with Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, but did not consider any improvement of relations with Israel. An internal report of the Foreign Ministry (22 January 1963) stated, *inter alia*: "The relatively good relations with some Arab states must not be aggravated by striving to establish official relations with Israel at the present stage of the struggle for the international recognition of the GDR."²²

¹⁹ *Neues Deutschland*, 3 November 1956.

²⁰ "Erklärung des Ministers für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR, Dr. Lothar Bolz, zum Abzug der englischen und französischen Truppen aus Aegypten," Bator, *Die DDR*, p. 62.

²¹ "Erklärung des Ministerrates der DDR zum Nahostbeschluss der UNO vom 21. August 1958," *Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, VI, Berlin 1959, pp. 71–72; "Aus der Erklärung des Ministeriums für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR zum Treffen Adenauers und Ben Gurions in New York, 17. März 1960," *ibid.*, VIII, Berlin 1961, pp. 52–53.

²² GDR FM, A 12608.

Diplomatic Recognition by the Arab World and Hostility towards Israel

A new chapter in East Germany's Middle East policy was begun when the chairman of the GDR State Council (the head of state), Walter Ulbricht, visited the United Arab Republic (UAR) upon the invitation of President Gamal Abdul Nasser in the early spring of 1965. The Egyptian invitation to Ulbricht was related to a crisis in West German–Egyptian relations due to media reports of West German arms deliveries to Israel; it also gave the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel a higher priority. On 7 March 1965, only a few days after the spectacular state visit of Ulbricht to Cairo, West German Chancellor Ludwig Erhard offered Israel the establishment of full diplomatic relations. After this was put into practice on 12 May 1965, nine Arab states severed their relations with West Germany. Now the way was paved for official recognition of East Germany by some Arab states.

In the joint communiqué signed by Ulbricht and Nasser on 2 March 1965 in Cairo, both sides condemned "the aggressive imperialist plans that promoted the establishment of Israel as a spearhead of imperialism directed against the rights of the Arab nations and their struggle for liberation and progress."²³ At a time when the other East European countries maintained diplomatic relations not only with most of the Arab states but also with Israel, such an official declaration was rather unusual. The GDR ignored international protests, including strong criticism from Maki (the Israeli Communist Party), exhibiting no interest in a balanced Middle East policy. East German politicians, seeking a way to break through the Hallstein Doctrine, used every opportunity to point out that their country was a loyal ally of the Arab states, this at a time when West Germany was strengthening its cooperation with Israel. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Wolfgang Kiesewetter stated, for example, in an article published in the Egyptian daily *al-Ahram* on 1 March 1966: "The same imperialist powers which pursue an aggressive policy against the GDR are also the worst enemies of the Arabs."²⁴

²³ "Aus der Gemeinsamen Erklärung über den Freundschaftsbesuch des Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR, Walter Ulbricht, in der Vereinigten Arabischen Republik vom 24. Februar bis 2. März 1965," Bator, *Die DDR*, p. 98.

²⁴ *Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the GDR, 15 March 1966, p. 60.

On 30 April 1969 Iraq became the first non-communist country to recognize the GDR and establish full diplomatic relations. Other Arab countries followed suit within a few weeks – Sudan on 27 May, Syria on 12 June, South Yemen on 30 June, and Egypt on 10 July. Diplomatic recognition was accompanied by the development of economic and military relations. GDR exports to Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and Egypt, for instance, increased from 205.1 million marks in 1968 to 303.3 million marks in 1970. According to official data, imports from these Arab countries increased from 123.6 million marks to 217.1 million marks during that same period.²⁵ Recognition of the GDR was the peak of East German–Arab relations. It concluded the most active period of the GDR's Middle East policy, lasting from 1965 to 1969, when a new chapter of more or less normal relations was begun.

The development of relations with some Arab countries was accompanied by pro-Arab and anti-Israeli statements. This was especially true during the wars in the Middle East – the Six-Day War (1967), the Yom Kippur War (1973), and the Lebanon War (1982). After the Six-Day War, all East European countries, with the exception of Romania, broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. Their stand greatly influenced the attitude of the GDR political elite towards Israel. The GDR condemned “the imperialist aggression of Israel” and accused the United States and West Germany of being “accomplices to the aggressor.” Resolutions adopted at SED meetings or conferences, as well as communiqués signed by East German officials, stressed “the GDR's firm solidarity with the Arab states in the anti-imperialist struggle, especially in repelling Israeli aggression and overcoming its consequences.”²⁶

Since the early 1970s, East German cooperation was not limited to the Arab countries alone, but was also extended to include the Palestine Liberation Organization. The PLO played an important role in all political strategies of the GDR leadership concerning the Middle East. While relations with Arab countries in the 1970s and 1980s were based mainly on economic interests, political motives were dominant in East German cooperation with the Palestinians. The ideological justification for the supply of military materials to the PLO and the training of Palestinians in East Germany was the assumption that the success of the anti-imperialist

²⁵ *Statistisches Jahrbuch der DDR 1970*, Berlin 1971, pp. 296–297; *Statistisches Jahrbuch der DDR 1971*, Berlin 1972, pp. 122–123.

²⁶ *The GDR Fulfills the Legacy of the Antifascist Fighters*, Berlin 1974, p. 19.

struggle to a great extent depended on solidarity between the socialist countries, the international working class, and the national liberation movements. Walter Ulbricht went so far as to write letters to CPSU Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev in 1969 and 1970, suggesting that volunteers from the socialist countries be sent to the occupied Arab territories in order to liberate them.²⁷

The first formal agreement between the SED and the PLO was signed during Yasir Arafat's visit to Berlin in August 1973. It included the opening of a PLO office in East Berlin – the first such bureau in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the agreement made arrangements for the supply of “non-civilian goods” to the PLO.²⁸ In 1974 the SED recognized the PLO as “the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.”²⁹ In evaluating the relationship between the SED and the PLO, one should not overlook the personal friendly relations between Arafat and SED Secretary-General Erich Honecker. Through relations with Arafat, Honecker tried to influence the political process in the Middle East, definitely overestimating the weight of the GDR in international affairs.

The Camp David agreements of September 1978 and the Egyptian–Israeli peace treaty that followed in 1979 were met with hostility on the part of all East European countries. The GDR condemned the separate agreements, availing itself of the opportunity to improve its relations with the opponents of the Camp David accords – the members of the “Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation”: Libya, Syria, South Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, and the PLO. High level delegations visited East Berlin in 1978, including Syrian President Hafez el-Assad, Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi, the head of the People's Republic of Yemen, Ali Naser Muhammad, the vice president of Iraq, Taha Muhiyiddin Maarouf – and even PLO leader Arafat came twice. In this manner the GDR leadership lent its support to Soviet policy in the Middle East, whose objective was to strengthen those political forces and regimes which opposed growing American influence in the region. Furthermore, the East German

²⁷ Foundation of the Archives of GDR Parties and Mass Organisations within the Federal Archives, Berlin (SAPMO-BArch), DY 30/J IV 2/202/387. The documents are published in Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*, pp. 535–536.

²⁸ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/B 2/20/309.

²⁹ “Kommuniqué über den Besuch der Delegation des Exekutivkomitees der Palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation (PLO) unter Leitung von Yasser Arafat, Vorsitzender des Exekutivkomitees der PLO in der DDR vom 6. bis 8. August 1974,” Bator, *Die DDR*, p. 262; cf. *Neues Deutschland*, 10 August 1974.

government used this opportunity to extend its economic relations with those countries. Long-term agreements on economic and scientific-technological cooperation were signed; joint committees for economic cooperation between the GDR, on the one hand, and Syria, Iraq, and Algeria on the other, were put into operation. The significant improvement of relations with the members of the Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation was accompanied by an unprecedented propaganda campaign against Israel. Especially during the Lebanon War in 1982, Israel was attacked in the GDR press, as well as in official statements, and its military actions were compared with those of the Nazi German army.³⁰

The ideologically motivated support of the Arab countries by the GDR also had economic reasons. Therefore, especially in the 1980s, the GDR showed an interest in improving its relations with what were termed "conservative regimes." One example of this tendency was the 1982 state visit of Erich Honecker to Kuwait. As for the Iraq–Iran military conflict, East German politicians stressed the neutral position of their government. It was during that period that several East European countries began to implement a Middle East policy that was now less in harmony with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union than before.

Recognition of Israel as an Important Factor in the Middle East

The East German stance towards Israel was thus marked by condemnation of Israeli policies, the adoption of a unilateral position in the Arab–Israeli conflict, and denial of claims for reparations and restitution. It was only after 1985 that the GDR made some timid overtures towards normalizing relations with Israel. It was the "new thinking" of Gorbachev in the years 1985–1989 that influenced and changed GDR foreign policy to some extent. It gave the Soviet allies more latitude and promoted clearer recognition of real conditions. Among other things, this meant realizing that Israel could no longer be ignored as an important political, military, and economic factor in the Middle East. Moreover, it was evident by now that not only had the socialist countries' severance of political relations

³⁰ *Neues Deutschland*, 16 August and 20 September 1982; *Horizont*, 15, no. 34 (1982), p. 5; *Volksarmee*, 16 August 1982, p. 6; "Erklärung des Solidaritätskomitees der DDR, 24. September 1982," Bator, *Die DDR*, p. 414.

with Israel in 1967 and the boycott of the Jewish state not promoted peace in the Middle East, but had actually hindered it.

In the second half of the 1980s, the GDR, for the first time, tried to balance its Middle East policy and considered conducting normal relations not only with the Arabs but with Israel as well. More influential than the new political tendencies in the Soviet Union, in this case, was the hope that the World Jewish Congress would be helpful in initiating an invitation for SED leader and GDR head of state Honecker to come to the United States. In addition to political intentions, economic considerations played an important role. The GDR was primarily interested in obtaining most-favored-nation status from the United States. Its leaders hoped for a breakthrough in 1988 when talks were conducted on a "package deal" with the Claims Conference and American diplomats.³¹

In October 1988 the president of the World Jewish Congress, Edgar Miles Bronfman, visited the GDR. Here he advocated the idea of building "bridges...between the GDR and the people and government of the Israeli state." At a press conference in East Berlin he said that "he had been given to understand that a certain renewal in the relations between the two countries is seriously being considered."³² The commemoration ceremonies in 1988 marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi "Kristallnacht" were undoubtedly an important step forward in the process of rapprochement with Israel. For the first time representatives of Israel were officially invited, including Yitzhak Arad, director of Yad Vashem, Yosef Burg, former minister of interior and religious affairs, and other public figures. In late January 1989, GDR State Secretary for Religious Affairs Kurt Loeffler left for an official visit to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, leading a delegation which included two officials of the East German Foreign Ministry. The first ever talks at a governmental level were held when Loeffler met with Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs Zevulun Hammer. However, there was never a return visit because both sides insisted on certain pre-conditions.

Though the GDR was very much interested in intensifying contacts with Israel, it still made it conditional on Israel's Middle East policy. The SED Politburo resolved on 14 February 1989 that the GDR should take steps towards the establishment of diplomatic relations "dependent upon Israel's

³¹ Timm, *Jewish Claims*, pp. 125ff.

³² *Neues Deutschland*, 19 October 1988.

positions regarding a solution of the Middle East conflict.”³³ How this sentence should be interpreted was made clear in a paper prepared by the Middle East Department of the Foreign Ministry: Israel was required to declare its readiness to enter into negotiations with the PLO or independent Palestinians recognized by the PLO as its representatives, to take part in an international peace conference on the Middle East, or to suggest a peace plan that would not be rejected by the PLO. Only if one of these conditions were fulfilled would the GDR be prepared to “consider talks on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel.”³⁴

Israel, for its part, considered the East German position on acceptance of responsibility for the past and on moral and material compensation as being unsatisfactory. In contrast to Hungary and Poland, who gradually began to normalize relations with Israel, and unlike the Soviet Union, where negotiations at a consular level were under way, the GDR did not find a way to conduct further official talks with Israel before the political changes in autumn 1989. One reason for the delay lay in its friendly, and even improved, relations with the PLO during the Intifada. Arafat visited the GDR three times in 1988. On 15 November 1988 the GDR recognized the State of Palestine that had been proclaimed by the PLO, and in January 1989 the PLO embassy was renamed the Embassy of the State of Palestine in the GDR. This development was rejected by the Israeli government of national unity headed by Yitzhak Shamir. It became obvious that the Middle East policy of the GDR had not fundamentally changed despite the contacts with the World Jewish Congress and the first meetings with Israeli politicians.

Consequences of the Political Changes in 1989/90

Only the political upheaval in the GDR in 1989 led to substantial changes in its Middle East policy. Opposition forces in the GDR raised expectations that not only domestic policy but also the GDR's foreign policy would change and – among other issues – Jewish material claims would be settled and diplomatic relations with Israel would be established. Both the governments headed by Hans Modrow and Lothar de Maizière took important steps in this direction.

³³ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2315/2.

³⁴ Working paper of GDR Foreign Ministry (Middle East Department), 17 March 1989, published in Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*, pp. 581–583.

In mid-November 1989, the new GDR prime minister, Hans Modrow, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that his country seeks "good relations with all countries in the Middle East, including Israel."³⁵ On 8 December, Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer emphasized in a meeting with leading representatives of the Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR that his government "was now prepared to establish diplomatic relations with Israel without prior conditions."³⁶ The public saw in the anticipated establishment of diplomatic relations and the end of anti-Zionist propaganda a significant signal and an expression of political change. Normal relations with Israel could become an act symbolizing a break with the past of the past four decades.

The Modrow government initiated two rounds of talks in Copenhagen, from 29 January to 2 February 1990, and from 7 to 9 March. In the second round, a letter from the GDR prime minister was delivered to Israeli Prime Minister Shamir declaring: "The GDR recognizes that all German people are responsible for what happened in the past. This responsibility results from the deep guilt of the crimes which the fascist regime under Hitler committed against the Jewish people in the name of the German people.... The GDR recognizes its humanitarian duty towards all Jewish people who survived Nazi repression, having gone through immense suffering, and reinforces its readiness to show solidarity and give material support to all Jewish victims of Nazi persecution."³⁷ However, this statement, in which the GDR declared its willingness to discuss the settlement of proprietary questions raised by Israeli citizens, fell short of the expectations of the Israeli government.

Only four weeks after the elections of March 1990, the newly elected GDR parliament asked "the Israeli people to forgive us the hypocrisy and hostility in the GDR's official policy towards the State of Israel, to forgive us the persecution and degradation to which Jewish citizens were exposed in our country even after 1945."³⁸ This declaration caused both sides to consider anew whether they should enter into diplomatic relations. Two months later, on 13 June 1990, the new GDR Council of Ministers resolved

³⁵ *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 28 November 1989.

³⁶ *Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, Berlin, 29 December 1989, p. 4.

³⁷ Letter from GDR Prime Minister Hans Modrow to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, delivered to the head of the Israeli delegation in Copenhagen on 8 March 1990, published in Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*, p. 588.

³⁸ *Horizont-International*, 23, no. 6 (1990), p. 16.

to establish diplomatic relations with Israel and begin negotiations with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany for "a just and appropriate settlement of the Jewish claims expressed by this organization against the GDR."³⁹ The president of the People's Chamber, Sabine Bergmann-Pohl, visited Israel together with Rita Suessmuth, president of the Bundestag, in late June. The signing of an agreement establishing diplomatic relations seemed to be near at hand.

The new East German government of Lothar de Maizière once again dispatched a delegation to Copenhagen for a third round of official negotiations on 2 and 3 July. At that time both sides considered an exchange of ambassadors to be possible and desirable. But it was too late. In view of the advanced stage of the unification process, this was already out of the question. Until 3 October 1990, when the existence of the GDR came to an end, its government did try to follow the Middle East policy of the Federal Republic of Germany. Not only were negotiations conducted with Israel on the establishment of diplomatic relations, but the PLO embassy was closed down, and the training of Palestinians in the former GDR became a subject of investigations.

Conclusion

The political changes in East Germany, which began in the fall of 1989, raised hopes that diplomatic relations with Israel would be established and Jewish material claims would be settled. Statements made by the governments of Hans Modrow and Lothar de Mazière indicated a clear departure from the position adopted by previous governments regarding German responsibility for Nazi crimes and East German commitments to the Jews. Several historians and political scientists evaluated these declarations and the start of East German–Israeli negotiations in the spring of 1990 as being, first and foremost, pragmatic steps taken at a time when fears and anxieties regarding a united Germany were expressed in Israel. It cannot be denied that some leading GDR politicians were interested in prolonging the existence of the East German state, but reducing the anticipated establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel to mere pragmatism does not take account of the context of the political changes in

³⁹ Federal Archives, Potsdam Branch (BArch P), C-20, I/3-2991.

the country and in Eastern Europe. The public interpreted the new approach towards the Jewish state and the end of anti-Zionist propaganda as being an important signal, and a symbolic act of breaking with the past four decades of East German history. However, the speed of the unification process provided little time for coming to grips with the new reality. The government was neither able nor willing to give the definition of a balanced Middle East policy high priority because of the necessity to deal with the great number of vital problems relating to the future.

AMERICAN INFLUENCE ON THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY'S ISRAEL POLICY, 1951–1956

DOMINIQUE TRIMBUR

A crucial factor in the reconstruction of postwar Europe in 1945 was the return of Germany to the fold of the democratic system. Occupied by the four allied victors and divided, its future hung in the balance. West Germany, which claimed a monopoly on the representation of Germany as a whole, was keenly interested in the rapid renewal of its international relations. What was its margin of maneuver? Study of a key issue of the time, namely the FRG's relationship to the Jews, the main victims of the murderous regime that preceded it, may provide certain clues. It can also shed light on the role of the new Germany on the international scene at the beginning of the Cold War.

After years of occupation by the Allied powers, Germany's dependence was only formally terminated with the ratification of the "2+4" Agreement in July 1990, which set down the principles of international law for the unification process. In fact, however, the Federal Republic of Germany had exercised nominal sovereignty as of 5 May 1955, when the Paris Agreement of 23 October 1954 went into effect. This sovereignty, that extended an initial semi-sovereignty agreement dating back to March 1951 by which Bonn was authorized to form a foreign ministry and open embassies abroad, allowed West Germany to conduct its international relations in an autonomous fashion.

This change in status, one year before and one year after 1955, is illustrated by Bonn's policy towards Israel in the 1950s. Two events, corresponding to two radically different situations, are crucial to this examination: the first was the reparations agreement signed by the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel in 1952; the second was the Suez crisis in 1956. These two factors prompted more or less direct intervention by the USA, Bonn's tutelary occupying power. The West German attitude towards

American influence and its variations is worth analyzing. However the two episodes should not be lifted out of the context of the period, and it is this that calls for a closer look at changes in American influence on Bonn's Israel policy between 1951 and 1956.

The United States and the German–Israeli Reparations Agreement

The USA first of all played a key role in the negotiation and signing of the German–Israeli reparations agreement. As the major player in the establishment of the Bonn regime, the Americans took steps to guarantee the democratization of the new government. The American concern to obtain fair compensation for the victims of Nazism must be considered in this light.¹ After initial statements that meshed with a series of concrete measures, the Americans,² in conjunction with the other Western powers, stood behind the German–Jewish–Israeli negotiation process which began to take shape at the beginning of the 1950s. As of early 1951, following the new note delivered by the Israeli authorities to the occupying powers on 12 March, containing the demand that Germany (West and East) pay reparations to the Jews, the Americans welcomed the demand but refused to act as mediators. In the American view, the sole solution to this problem was through direct negotiations between the parties involved (even though the US taxpayers might voice their objections, considering this to be a misappropriation of Marshall Plan funds).

This stance reflects a major turnaround as compared to the early postwar years. After the occupying powers had taken complete control of German affairs, they gradually gave the country more freedom of action: the

¹ This is what prompted the American High Commissioner in Germany, John McCloy, in 1949 to declare that the attitude of the Germans towards the Jews would show whether they had really turned their backs on their Nazi past, R. Vogel (ed.), *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel*, Stuttgart 1967, pp. 275–276 (henceforth: Vogel, *Deutschlands Weg*).

² The American military government initiated the first claims legislation organized in the south of the Trizone (before its extension to the rest of the FRG and the drafting of a federal law on reparation); similarly, it associated Jewish organizations aimed at resolving the problem of the restitution of Jewish assets or instances where the legitimate owners had left the country. See A. L. Smith, "A View of US Policy toward Jewish Restitution," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 5 (1990), pp. 247ff.

Petersburg agreement of 22 November 1949,³ like the "semi-sovereignty" granted to West Germany on 6 March 1951, are indicative of West Germany's gradual regain of international status. From this perspective it was logical that: (1) West Germany accept responsibility for Germany's past, including its darkest days, as Adenauer indeed stated to the Bundestag in September 1949; and (2) that it become a partner in the negotiations whose purpose was atonement for this past.

Nevertheless, the United States kept a watchful eye on the initial contacts between Jews and West Germans on the one hand,⁴ and between Israelis and Germans on the other.⁵ This was true both before formal negotiations began, and for the negotiations themselves between West Germans, Jews, and Israelis proposed by Adenauer on 27 September 1951 in a speech delivered to the Bundestag.⁶ Affirmed in a vote of the Knesset (Israeli parliament) early in January 1952, the talks began on 20 March at Wassenaar, near The Hague, in the Netherlands.

It is quite difficult to assess the true role played by the Americans in the setting up of the German-Jewish-Israeli talks. It seems erroneous to claim that the West Germans only agreed to negotiate under pressure from the Americans; but it is also clear that West Germany's yet heavy dependence on Washington influenced the West Germans to call for direct talks with Jewish organizations and the Israelis.

As regards the German-Israeli Treaty, the US was indeed behind the instigation of the talks that led to the signing of the agreement. US influence operated in two ways. First of all, there was American indirect influence on the German decision. One example was McCloy's statement, referred to above, which pointed the West Germans in the right direction, i.e., towards making financial reparations to the Jews. This also is evident in the American attitude towards the Israeli note of 12 March 1951 and the

³ It authorized West Germany to conduct consular relations with the Western countries and to join international organizations.

⁴ Following a meeting between Herbert Blankenhorn, Adenauer's closest advisor, and Noah Barou, the European representative of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in 1950, on 6 December 1951 Adenauer met with Nahum Goldmann, president of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany (henceforth: Claims Conference), a group of Jewish organizations representing Jews who had fled Germany and were residing outside Israel.

⁵ Adenauer met with Israeli Finance Minister David Horowitz in April 1951.

⁶ The chancellor acknowledged Germany's moral obligation to pay reparations to the Jews and announced his willingness to negotiate with representatives of the Jewish people, Vogel, *Deutschlands Weg*, p. 35.

reactions concerning compensation. Indicating to the Israelis that they should deal directly with the Germans also was a way of reminding the Bonn government that it needed to deal with the issue of Jewish reparations.

Secondly, there was also indirect pressure in the minds of West German decision-makers. For instance, during a visit to the USA in 1949, Max Brauer, the German Socialist Party mayor of Hamburg, realized how much importance Americans attached to reparations to the Jews.⁷ Adenauer also held similar views: among other concerns, this is what prompted him to make his statement to the Bundestag in September 1951, after publication in the West German press that citizens of that country favorably viewed direct talks with the Israelis.⁸

Not only was German awareness present before the Wassenaar negotiations, it was also palpable during the negotiations themselves. This is what, for example, prompted Adenauer to decide to agree to the Israeli monetary requests, even though the sums demanded by Israel and the Claims Conference representatives conflicted with the need to settle pre-war financial litigation, causing a breakdown and a serious crisis in the talks in May 1952.⁹ The American argument was decisive in bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion, resulting in the signing of the reparations agreement in Luxembourg on 10 September 1952. Although some ministers were more inclined to heed the first Arab objections, Adenauer insisted on the crucial impact that the treaty would have on the USA.¹⁰

West German concern to comply with American wishes, arising from indirect pressure from Washington, could also be discerned in Bonn's efforts to improve its image in the USA, less than seven years after the end of the Second World War. This was apparent in the West German foreign minister's analyses of reactions by the foreign press to the signing of the agreement.¹¹

⁷ Amerika-Reise mit dem Bürgermeister M. Brauer in den USA, Staatsarchiv der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg (Archives of the City of Hamburg), Erich Lüth Papers, 622.1, 5.

⁸ "Wir suchen Frieden mit Israel," *Neue Zeitung*, 31 August 1951; Rudolf Küstermeier, "Friede mit Israel," *Die Welt*, 1 September 1951.

⁹ This was during the London Conference on the settlement of German pre-1939 debts. In this instance Adenauer adopted a stance in support of the West German negotiators in Wassenaar, Franz Böhm and Otto Küster, and was critical of his finance minister, Fritz Schäffer, as well as of the West German negotiator in London, Hermann-Josef Abs.

¹⁰ For Adenauer's stand against Franz-Josef Strauss during the meeting of the West German cabinet on 29 August 1952 see K. Gotto et al. (eds.), *Im Zentrum der Macht: Das Tagebuch von Staatssekretär Lenz 1951–1953*, Düsseldorf 1989, p. 412.

¹¹ See, for example, Israel – Abkommen, Presse u. Informationsamt, 17 September 1952, "Ausländische Pressestimmen zum deutsch-israelischen Wiedergutmachungsabkommen,"

It was most apparent, however, when the Bundestag delayed debate on ratification of the agreement, the *sine qua non* condition for its coming into force, which would enshrine Bonn's will to atone. This delay prompted the Germans to launch a publicity campaign to enhance West Germany's reputation in the USA, a campaign that forced Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Walter Hallstein, to become personally involved.¹²

Indirect US pressure reached its height and had its greatest impact in the efforts to accelerate ratification of the Luxembourg agreement. When the debate was shelved *sine die* and the Bonn government attempted to quell the heated response of Arab countries opposed to the treaty,¹³ Adenauer decided to wait no longer and submitted the ratification bill directly to the parliament in Bonn: to the Bundesrat in early February, and to the Bundestag in early March 1953.

Adenauer's commitment to ratification of the treaty has at times been interpreted as one expression of his intent to successfully bring about a historical reconciliation between Jews and Germans.¹⁴ Clearly, his concern to make amends for crimes committed by the Nazi regime must also be taken into consideration since Adenauer, who suffered directly at the hands of the Nazis¹⁵ and was helped by a Jewish friend in his most difficult hour,¹⁶ was deeply convinced of the need to act. Though this reason is certainly fundamental, it should not overshadow more pragmatic motivations.

Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (Archives of the Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bonn; henceforth: PA/AA), Abt. II, vol. 1671.

¹² Telegram from Hallstein to West German embassies in Washington, Paris, and London, 8 November 1952, PA/AA, cabinet of the secretary of state, (Sts 1657/52), and responses from Washington, *ibid.*, Telegrams (580), 12 November 1952 and (584), 17 November 1952; Krekeler to Hallstein, 11 November 1952, *ibid.*, Israel - Abkommen, Telegram (573), Abt. II, vol. 1685. For an analysis of West German efforts to improve its image in the USA, see Sh. Shafir, "Postwar German Diplomats and Their Efforts to Neutralize American Jewish Hostility: The First Decade," *YIVO Annual*, 22 (1993), pp. 155-201.

¹³ This was done by sending commercial delegations to Saudi Arabia and Egypt at the beginning of 1953; Th. W. Kramer, *Deutsch-ägyptische Beziehungen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Tübingen and Basel 1974.

¹⁴ Mentioned by Adenauer himself in his speech to the Bundestag on 4 March 1953 and recorded in his memoirs, K. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen - 1953-1955*, Stuttgart 1966, p. 132, which R. Vogel, who is very hagiographic (Vogel, *Deutschlands Weg*, p. 67) also interprets in this manner.

¹⁵ Adenauer was arrested three times by the Gestapo, see R. Morsey and H.- P. Schwarz (eds.), *Adenauer im Dritten Reich*, Munich 1991.

¹⁶ H.- P. Schwarz, "Dannie N. Heinemann und Konrad Adenauer im Dialog (1907-1962)," K.- D. Bracher et al. (eds.), *Staat und Parteien: Festschrift für Rudolf Morsey zum 65. Geburtstag*, Berlin 1992, pp. 803-825.

Adenauer was a realist, aware of his country's best interests, and adhered to a clear foreign policy (restoring sovereignty and reunification). Within this framework, he evaluated the importance of ratification in terms of the reinstatement of Germany on the international scene. In addition, his thinking on this matter was influenced by a deadline – his visit to the USA, set for early April 1953, which could not take place without this trump card in his pocket.¹⁷

This is a clear case of indirect influence on the part of Washington. Given the need to act as quickly as possible to ensure ratification of the treaty, particularly before the end of the budgetary debate in the parliament, Adenauer made it his top priority. The bill was passed, with a slim majority, in the Bundestag on 18 March 1953.¹⁸

Alongside these instances of indirect American influence, there were also cases of direct influence. However, a reading of the official documents of the time suggests that these cases were limited in number. Only a few documents in the archives confirm interpretations presented by certain historians who have studied this issue. Evaluating American influence on West Germany's Israel policy boils down to determining the degree of German autonomy and the authenticity of its good will towards the Jews and Israel. It is difficult to give a definitive answer to these questions; moreover, they are made more complex by the fact that German–Israeli relationships are fraught with myth, exaggeration, and a-posteriori embellishments.

An inventory of American interventions concerning the reparations agreement (prior to and during the talks, after its signature, and up to ratification) reveals the following. The Americans expressed themselves directly on the issue of the Wassenaar negotiations in certain specific instances. Although generally leaving the West Germans free to act, they intervened when the process appeared to be stalemated or when it actually

¹⁷ The relationship between the two emerges clearly from the Auswärtiges Amt itself (PA/AA, Abt. III, 210.01/35E, vol. 6, Telegram from AA [244.13 II 69/53] to the West Germany Embassy in Cairo, 10 February 1953, secret). See the brochure by M. W. Krekel, *Aufbruch in die neue Welt: Konrad Adenauers erster Staatsbesuch in den Vereinigten Staaten (6.–18. April 1953)*, Rhöndorf 1996, which views this visit as one of the high points of Adenauer's career. However, once in the US, he hardly mentioned the agreement, confident that he was able to enjoy a triumphal visit. Sh. Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations: The American Jewish Community and Germany since 1945*, Detroit 1999, esp. pp. 159–178 (henceforth: Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations*).

¹⁸ Although the SPD voted unanimously in favor of the bill, Adenauer's CDU was split on the issue: in its ranks, 86 deputies abstained.

broke down. This occurred as early as April 1952 when the talks first wavered because of differences of opinion between Israelis and Jews, on the one hand, and the Germans, on the other, over the sums in question. The Americans brought it directly to Adenauer's attention that it would be inopportune should the talks, which had only begun a few days earlier, not reach a conclusion.¹⁹

A similar American stance was adopted when the Bonn government appeared to be sidelining the Wassenaar talks in order to devote more time to financial haggling in London. In May 1952, there are records of American intervention through General Julius Klein, a senator, President of the American Jewish Veterans Association, and the chairman of an advertising agency. Whether on an official mission or not, Klein felt obligated to point the Germans back towards their initial intentions.²⁰ Adenauer, apparently, was very receptive to this type of intervention, in particular in the still fragile situation of a Federal Republic on the path towards regaining full-fledged international status: any false move would be detrimental to that effort. This is in fact what made an Arab commentator remark somewhat later that West Germany had acted under American pressure.²¹

Lastly, it should be pointed out that, for their part, the Israelis, but more particularly American Jewry, were aware of the potential influence of the USA on Bonn's policy. American Jewry, which still found it difficult to accept that more freedom was being granted West Germany so soon after 1945, saw an opportunity to limit it to some extent. That is why American Jewry did not hesitate to appeal directly to the State Department for assistance in talks with West Germany, particularly at a time when these talks were foundering.²² For this same purpose Nahum Goldmann directly

¹⁹ Verlaufsprotokoll der Sitzung vom 4 April 1952, H.-P. Schwarz (ed.), *Adenauer und die Hohen Kommissare 1949-1951: Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Munich 1989, vol. 2, no. 40 (p. 34) (henceforth: Schwarz, *Adenauer*).

²⁰ On Klein's intervention, see S. Bauer-Hack, *Die jüdische Wochenzeitung Aufbau und die Wiedergutmachung*, Düsseldorf 1994, p. 157. In any case, Julius Klein tended to greatly exaggerate the role he played: see Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations*, p. 184.

²¹ Meeting between Adenauer and the Syrian Mamum al-Hamawi, 8 September 1952, quoted in W. Atek, "Der Standpunkt Ägyptens zur westdeutschen Wiedergutmachung an Israel," *Orient - Deutsche Zeitschrift für Politik und Wirtschaft des Orients*, 24, no. 3 (September 1983), pp. 470-485.

²² Thus, an American Jewish delegation met with Secretary of State Dean Acheson on 5 May 1952; the purpose of their visit was to request Acheson to put pressure on the West Germans to change their reparations proposal, which Jewish Americans considered to be too low; Memoranda of Conversations 1952; Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, 5 May 1952, Truman Library, Independence, Mo., Dean Acheson Papers.

approached the American high commissioner in West Germany, demanding that he adopt a favorable stance on the ratification of the Luxembourg treaty.²³ The Germans, for their part, were fully conscious of the influence of American Jewry, utilizing – but in a positive manner – the idea of a “Jewish lobby” that was all-powerful in international affairs. To this end they tried to reduce anti-German feelings in particular by requesting the American government to take a stand in favor of Bonn.²⁴

Whether West Germany acted of its own free will during the reparations treaty process – its initiation, during the talks, or its ratification – or whether it was simply bowing to American pressure, divided historians at the end of the 1980s. In the opinion of Kai von Jena, the crucial feature was West Germany’s lack of independence. He argues that Bonn was too concerned with its integration into the Western world to endanger or scuttle its chances entirely.²⁵ It is clear to von Jena that West Germany was totally under American influence, and even the more so on a burning issue such as this one.

In response to von Jena’s article, Michael Wolffsohn attempted to place events in perspective and in particular distinguished between the facts and the emerging myth concerning the reparations agreement.²⁶ From an analysis of the press in numerous countries between Adenauer’s statement to the Bundestag (27 September 1951) and ratification of the treaty (18 March 1953), Wolffsohn reached the following conclusion: no position in favor of reparations was expressed by any country (and, naturally, no encouragement was forthcoming from the Arab or Communist countries, while the USSR declined to respond to the last Israeli note, dated 12 March 1951, defining the final amount demanded by Israel from Germany). For

²³ “Amtierender US-Hoch-Kommissar empfängt Nahum Goldmann,” *Die Neue Zeitung – Die amerikanische Zeitung für Deutschland*, 28 January 1953. On Goldmann’s role, see R. Patai, *Nahum Goldmann: His Missions to the Gentiles*, University, AL 1987.

²⁴ H. E. Riesser, *Von Versailles zur UNO: Aus der Erinnerung eines Diplomaten*, Bonn 1962 (henceforth: Riesser, *Von Versailles zur UNO*); S. Tempel, *Legenden von der Allmacht: Die Beziehungen zwischen amerikanisch-jüdischen Organisationen und der Bundesrepublik seit 1945*, Frankfurt 1995 (henceforth: Tempel, *Legenden von der Allmacht*). The chancellor’s biographer, Hans-Peter Schwarz, writes on this point that “for Adenauer, the accord of Jewish organizations and the press in the USA was more important than the complaints of Arab governments,” H.-P. Schwarz, *Adenauer: Der Staatsmann 1952–1967*, Stuttgart 1991, p. 65.

²⁵ K. von Jena, “Versöhnung mit Israel? Die deutsch-israelischen Verhandlungen bis zum Wiedergutmachungsabkommen von 1952,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 34 (1986), pp. 457–480.

²⁶ M. Wolffsohn, “Die Wiedergutmachung und der Westen: Tatsachen und Legenden,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 16–17 (1987), pp. 19–29.

the Munich historian, this implies that no pressure was exerted on West Germany between these two dates. Overall, the countries studied by Wolffsohn adopted a fairly realistic stance, stressing the economic hardships that West Germany would face if payments to Israel were too high. This being the case, Wolffsohn concludes, it is even more remarkable that the West German government was able to successfully conclude the negotiations without being subjected to pressures, aside from self-imposed ones.

What about the American press in Wolffsohn's study? He reports restraint, if not indifference, particularly in newspapers owned by Jews. In general, although the American press applauded the Adenauer government's willingness, the concerns focus on the financial burden that could become too great at a time when Washington was considering German rearmament. According to Wolffsohn, this attitude was not limited to the press but also characterized that of the American government. On the one hand, it was distrustful of a possible West German return to the Weimar "Sonderweg" after the publication of the Soviet note of March 1952;²⁷ on the other hand, it was mainly concerned with restricting sums destined for Jews and Israelis. Wolffsohn concludes that Washington did not pressure Bonn in favor of reparations. Contrary to his supposition, however, there is no record of any intervention on the part of the White House to restrict the amount of these payments.

Given the details described above, how can the West German position during negotiation of the reparations treaty be explained? Was the FRG actually subjected to pressure from Washington? As we have seen, a more modulated response to these questions is called for.²⁸ More specifically, an overly flattering portrait of the actions of the Bonn government, such as the one painted by Michael Wolffsohn,²⁹ should be avoided, as should

²⁷ This suggested to Germany reunification accompanied by neutrality, an operation in which Bonn would ally itself with Moscow and which would force the Americans to abandon their positions in Europe. This note, however, was rejected by the Adenauer government, M. Kittel, "Genesis einer Legende: Die Diskussion um die Stalin Noten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1952-1958," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 41 (1993), pp. 355-389.

²⁸ This is what Israeli historian Yeshayahu Jelinek has called for in order to put an end to the debate mentioned above, Y. Jelinek, "Political Acumen, Altruism, Foreign Pressure or Moral Debt: Konrad Adenauer and the 'Shilumim,'" *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, 19 (1990), pp. 77-102.

²⁹ This portrayal is found in the article cited here: it is referred to again in what has now become the standard work on the subject, written by this author: M. Wolffsohn, *Ewige Schuld? 40 Jahre deutsch-jüdisch-israelische Beziehungen*, Munich 1988, chap. 2: "Etappen deutsch-jüdische-israelischer Geschichtspolitik, 1: Wiedergutmachung 1949-1953/55," pp. 21-29 (henceforth: Wolffsohn, *Ewige Schuld?*).

other accounts found in the writings of the main protagonists of the time,³⁰ ones designed to assign merit solely to the chancellor's activities. Although West German willingness to pay 3 billion DM in reparations is to be assessed at its real and very consequential value, and although the Jewish-German reconciliation sought by Adenauer or Franz Böhm, the head of the West German delegation, should clearly not be downplayed, neither should Bonn's realism or the needs of the time be disregarded. Indeed Bonn's Israel policy in 1952–1953 was primarily one of reaction, as was in fact its entire foreign policy.³¹ West Germany felt that it had to react to indirect or direct pressure, whether real or imaginary, from the USA, and guarantee its integration into the West. Although some obedience did arise from its limited sovereignty, it would be erroneous to view all West German initiatives as dictated solely by the USA. Nevertheless, in contrast to what would occur later on, it is clear that the reparations agreement and the acceleration of the ratification process were aligned with the American hope to see West Germany make amends for the horrors committed during the Nazi era.

The Role of the United States in Changing West German Policy towards Israel

As Anneliese Poppinga points out, Bonn quickly developed an *active* foreign policy, in contrast to the *reactive* policy of the beginning of the decade.³² By the mid-fifties, West Germany had attained a certain degree of maturity. Although the formal appearances confirm this observation, with attainment of the full sovereignty enabled by the coming into force of the Paris Agreement on 5 May 1955, the facts are even more demonstrative. West Germany, which formerly did not enjoy full freedom of movement, now benefited from a much broader margin of maneuver.

³⁰ Such as Adenauer's memoirs or those written by Felix Shinnar, director of the Israeli commercial mission to Cologne set up by the Reparations Agreement, *Bericht eines Beauftragten: Die deutsch-israelischen Beziehungen 1951–1966*, Tübingen 1967 (henceforth: Shinnar, *Bericht eines Beauftragten*).

³¹ See the analysis by Anneliese Poppinga, A. Döring-Manteuffel (ed.), *Adenauerzeit-Stand: Perspektiven und methodische Aufgaben der Weltgeschichtsforschung (1945–1967)* (Rhöndorfer Gespräche, 13), Bonn 1993, p. 124.

³² *Ibid.*

This change in Bonn's behavior was due to a great extent to the interest of the Western Allies, and in particular the US, in freeing from occupation that part of Germany in which their troops were stationed. It also stems from the strong personality of Adenauer, whose steps were approved by the West and by the West Germans themselves.³³

The growth in West Germany's powers of state and action was also paralleled by developments in the political thinking of West German leaders. The 1950s concretized Adenauer's foreign policy goals, which the chancellor aimed at achieving against all odds. This perseverance, if not obstinacy, was visible in the daily workings of the Bonn government. Discourse and action were deeply imbued with the fervent wish to achieve the reunification of Germany, or at least to prevent anything that might contribute to prolonging its partition. This prompted West Germany to formulate a foreign policy theory known as the "Hallstein Doctrine," designed to discourage any delay in the recognition of West Germany by a third party.³⁴ This is also what caused government anxiety about changes in international politics, when summit conferences, after having centered on the issue of German reunification, turned instead towards easing the Cold War and promoting détente.³⁵

The stiffer attitude adopted by Bonn can clearly be discerned in the realm of its relationship with Israel, and the US role in this specific context. The changes can be described as being somewhat ambivalent. First of all, West Germany continued to seek US support for its Israel policy. Like Erich Honecker thirty years later, Adenauer used American Jewish middlemen to obtain a rapprochement with Washington.³⁶ Although there was basically no doubt as to US support, Bonn nevertheless was constantly concerned about improving its image in North America. Who better suited this purpose than representatives of the Jewish community? Adenauer also

³³ The chancellor had the support, in particular, of US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, while his CDU party easily won the legislative elections of 1953.

³⁴ The Doctrine threatened to break off diplomatic ties with that third party. Drawn up after diplomatic ties were established between Moscow and Bonn in September 1955, it was applied for the first time against Yugoslavia in 1957.

³⁵ This was the case with the Geneva Conference held in July 1955, whereas the Berlin Conference of January-February 1954 had dealt with the German issue, without, however, reaching an agreement.

³⁶ D. Trimbur, "L'attitude de la R.D.A. face au problème de la réparation aux Juifs," *Revue d'Allemagne*, 26, no. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1994), pp. 591-607, esp. 600-602.

had the backing of German Jews now living in the USA,³⁷ and of some American Jews. Although Bonn and its embassies had to employ an advertising agency to improve its image in the USA, West Germany also had the “natural” backing of one of the most eminent Jewish figures, Nahum Goldmann, president of the Claims Conference, but also – and above all – president of the World Jewish Congress. It is clear that due to the real or presumed impact of the Jewish lobby in the USA, the popularity campaign of West Germany in the USA went well.³⁸

Despite its foray into public relations, the FRG did not necessarily need to improve this particular facet of its image. Although public opinion was not entirely convinced of the democratic convictions of the Bonn government,³⁹ leaders in Washington had no doubts as to the reliability of their Rhineland partners. Historians regularly stress the close ties that rapidly developed between Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and the chancellor.⁴⁰ In fact, Washington fully backed Bonn’s Israel policy, in particular since the USA was now contributing less to the upbuilding of the Jewish state, a trend that emerged more notably after the Republican victory in the 1952 elections.⁴¹ The US welcomed the punctuality and efficiency with which Bonn executed the clauses of the reparations agreement and watched with a paternal eye the growth of de facto relationships between Germany and Israel.

Furthermore, just as West Germany’s position in Europe was becoming more preponderant, in particular after its entry into NATO and the creation of the Bundeswehr in 1955, Bonn began to play a leading role in the Middle East. The only position for the US was to back Bonn’s growing ties with

³⁷ This was particularly true in New York, including the staff of the German emigrant newspaper *Aufbau – Reconstruction*; in fact its editor-in-chief, Manfred George, and one of his main contributors, Kurt R. Grossmann, provided him with very effective assistance, see Riesser, *Von Versailles zur UNO*, p. 229.

³⁸ Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations*, pp. 179–197; Tempel, *Legenden von der Allmacht*, chapter 22: “Ruhige Zeiten”; for instance, during the annual meeting of the WJC in Geneva, in 1953, Goldmann came to the defense of West Germany, countering the fury of other Jewish leaders who refused to trust Germany.

³⁹ Telegram from AA (253/3 III 444/53), Lilienfeld to the West German embassy in Washington, 19 January 1953, concerning a campaign by the *New York Telegram* denouncing the persistence of Nazism in Germany, PA/AA, cabinet of the secretary of state, vol. 245.

⁴⁰ M. Görtemaker, “Adenauer und die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik,” *Adenauer und die USA* (Rhöndorfer Gespräche, 14), Bonn 1994, pp. 75–101 (henceforth: Görtemaker, Adenauer).

⁴¹ The Administration tended to adopt a position more favorable to the Arabs, in the light of a growing anti-soviet “chill” in the Middle East (which resulted in the 1954 Baghdad Pact).

Israel and with the Arab states, although the US itself was to experience a number of setbacks in the region, simultaneously with the British withdrawal.⁴²

Bonn's increasingly important role in the Middle East was the source of a dilemma for the West German leaders. On the one hand they continued to execute, to the letter, the terms of the Luxembourg Agreement; a policy acknowledged and saluted by the Israeli authorities and producing, *nolens volens*, closer ties between the two countries, something which was unimaginable even during the Wassenaar talks. This rapprochement was due not only to the West German desire to adhere to commitments and make amends for the crimes of the past; it was also – and above all – motivated by the effects of *Realpolitik* on both sides. While West Germany needed Israel as proof of its unswerving commitment to the democratic camp, the Jewish state needed West Germany to escape from its isolation in the Middle East and link itself to a partner with growing impact in Western Europe.

Secondly, as we have seen, West Germany needed to adhere to its overriding goal of reunification, or at least to prevent anything that could prolong the division of Germany. This motivation, along with the traditional pro-Arab stance of German foreign policy,⁴³ prompted Bonn and the Auswärtiges Amt to observe Israeli advances with a doleful eye, advances which became regular from 1953 onwards.⁴⁴ This was so because the Arab states realized that implementation of the Hallstein Doctrine could be of singular use to them. Thus, Arab leaders regularly broached the topic of the Arab states' recognition of East Germany in their discussions with emissaries from Bonn concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel. This threat, which was gaining momentum in the minds of West German leaders, was the critical diplomatic pitfall

⁴² On 19 October 1954, Great Britain signed an agreement with Egypt for the evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal zone, the real end of its colonial adventure, J. Pickering, *Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez: The Politics of Retrenchment*, London 1998.

⁴³ This tradition goes back to the time of the special relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Wilhelmine Reich, see S. Berggötz, *Nahostpolitik in der Ara Adenauer: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen, 1949–1963* (Forschungen und Quellen zur Weltgeschichte, 33), Düsseldorf 1998, esp. pp. 35–48, (henceforth: Berggötz, *Nahostpolitik*). To this should be added the questionable relationships between Hitler and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, see K. Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem, Amin el-Husseini und die Nationalsozialisten*, Frankfurt a.M. 1988.

⁴⁴ For the specifics of the Israeli maneuver and changes in the West German attitude, see D. Trimbur, *De la Shoah à la réconciliation? La question des relations RFA–Israël (1949–1956)*, Paris 2000.

they absolutely had to avoid, for recognition of East Germany by the Arab states, in addition to the fact that it would spread the USSR-initiated theory of two Germanies to non-Communist states, would lead to clear-cut weakening of the West German position in the Middle East. The German leaders believed that this loss would add to the American retreat from the region. Since the West German diplomats were convinced that the US viewed Germany as the last representative of Western Europe in the Middle East, the Federal Republic could not allow itself to let the diplomatic game depend on its passing whims.⁴⁵

The implications of this reasoning on the West German leadership and the representatives of the AA had immediate repercussions in terms of West Germany's Israel policy. In July 1955, Bonn was still favorable to the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries,⁴⁶ but the winds had already shifted by January 1956, when it was asked to respond to Israel's offer to open a diplomatic mission in the country. After due consideration, the Israeli offer was rejected in May, and the decision to officially recognize Israel was shelved until a more appropriate date.⁴⁷

Bonn's response, if examined in the light of Washington's policy, seems superficially, at least, to run counter to American ideas. Wouldn't American interests have been better served by a rapprochement of the two countries, both of which were among its most trustworthy partners, so as to strengthen Western presence in the Middle East? And wouldn't this decision risk undermining the emerging democratic process in the Federal Republic? In absolute terms however, contrary to American views, Bonn's decision seems to have been a sovereign act, in line with the margin of maneuver conferred by its new status as a Federal Republic.

However, a closer look suggests that Bonn's decision adhered to the American line of reasoning, a feature cited by West German diplomats

⁴⁵ This was the only conclusion to be drawn from the Istanbul Conference which convened all the West German ambassadors on assignment in the Middle and Near East from 3-7 April 1956; *Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und anderen Ländern*, Report on the "Nahost-Konferenz in Istanbul (April 3-7 1956)" (Sts 627/56), PA/AA, cabinet of the secretary of state, vol. 162.

⁴⁶ This can be seen from a circular signed by von Welck and sent to all the German missions in the world, for the purpose of testing the reaction of the host countries to the establishment of these ties (Document [308.210.02 92.19 1149/55], 2 July 1955, von Welck; *ibid.*, Abt. VII, vol. 1025).

⁴⁷ This is demonstrated by a document from the AA in preparation for the interview between Heinrich von Brentano and Felix Shinnar on 14 May 1956 during which the Federal Republic made its official reply, written note by von Welck (zu 308.210.01 92.19 1100/56) 11 May 1956, *ibid.*, vol. 1024.

opposed to rapprochement with Israel. Although Washington believed that the Baghdad Pact could have been formally ratified and would have helped restrict the spread of Communism, its efficacy would have been limited in particular because of the instability of Iraq. Thus it was beneficial to the White House to have Germany concerned with guaranteeing a Western presence in the Arab countries, which were regularly shaken by political upheavals and tempted to maintain closer ties with the USSR.⁴⁸

Overall, then, the West German decision of May 1956 was indicative of a certain change in American influence over Bonn's policy. The refusal to establish diplomatic ties with Israel did in fact represent a deviation from the spirit of the Luxembourg Treaty, supported at the time by the USA, but it also corresponded *de facto* to what had become the White House's assessment of the political situation in the Middle East.

West Germany's Handling of the Suez Crisis

Despite the general impression emerging from the picture presented above, West Germany did not only choose complete submission to or full agreement with Washington's policy. The events of the spring of 1956 were even more demonstrative, since Germany's situation was far from comfortable. Although Germany appeared to be sure of itself as regards major decisions, true calm was beyond its reach. Changes in the international scene were troubling, and the main goal of its foreign policy – reunification – seemed less than ever to be a major concern of the two superpowers.

Adenauer thus found himself in a problematic position. Although West Germany's integration into the ranks of the Western world was progressing well, he nevertheless refused to let this take place to the detriment of Germany's national interests. The gradual fading away of the German issue and greater stress on the need for ending the Cold War were antithetical to his hopes. This is why he continued to express his interest in having these two issues dealt with separately in international meetings in 1955 and 1956. The lack of a satisfactory stance from Washington forced him to distance himself somewhat and make even greater use of Bonn's newly-acquired sovereignty. This new West German attitude emerged with greater clarity

⁴⁸ Demonstrated by the disclosure, in October 1955, of the supply of Czech arms to Egypt.

over the course of 1956 within the framework of the Middle East crisis and the Israel policy of the Federal Republic. The ongoing Suez crisis and the role played by West Germany in this affair shed light on the considerable degree of change.⁴⁹

The Bonn government's behavior at the outset of the Suez crisis, following Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal Company on 26 July 1956, is noteworthy. West Germany's attitude was particularly striking during the two key events which affected the international community: the London Conference, held in late July, that brought together the users of the international waterway, and the French–British–Israeli military operation in October and November.

The FRG participated in the London Conference, called by the French and the British in order to adopt measures to counter Nasser's decision to nationalize the canal. Invited as a mere "user," Germany took part as the legal heir of the German Reich, which had signed the Constantinople accords of 1888. Although the German government was in agreement with the reasoning that led to the convening of the conference, it nevertheless restricted itself to this position. West Germany saw itself as a mere user of a waterway currently in the hands of the Egyptians, and it was solely in this capacity that it expressed its consternation. This was done despite the fact that its Western partners, in particular the US, were courting the Federal Republic.

Why did the FRG adopt this position at the London Conference? On this occasion Bonn once again made use of an argument put forward in the spring, when it refused to establish diplomatic ties with Israel. The detachment exhibited by the FRG throughout the entire affair is based on a kind of "non-alignment" policy. The justification was that West Germany had no direct political interests in the Middle East, nor did it make major use of the canal. This explanation enabled Germany to resist further pressures from its now natural allies (and the main players in the crisis), France and Great Britain, but above all the US, and hence refuse to be completely implicated in an affair in which it wished to preserve its autonomous status.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ On the unfolding and the extent of the Suez crisis, see, e.g., M. Ferro, *Suez, naissance d'un Tiers-Monde: 1956*, Brussels 1995.

⁵⁰ Diplomatische Gespräche, minutes of a meeting between von Brentano and Dulles, 16 August 1956, PA/AA ministerial cabinet, vol. 155. In any case, as indicated by Alain Clément, the *Le Monde* correspondent in Bonn, this observer position "is the only seat that federal diplomacy

Another explanation, however, can be presented for the West German attitude. In line with its policy of rejecting closer German-Israeli ties, that dated back to the previous spring, and clearly anxious not to get on the wrong side of the Arab countries who supported Nasser's decision, the FRG refused to become involved, more than it already was, in a condemnation of Cairo, given that in addition East Germany, adhering to USSR policy tactics, was making ever greater efforts to gain advantages in the region.⁵¹ Thus Bonn's behavior can be interpreted as the pursuit of an obedient policy towards Washington, which was attempting to maintain a Western presence in the Middle East at any price.⁵²

Despite statements aimed at preserving its non-involvement in the Suez affair,⁵³ with every passing day West Germany was more and more forced to take a stand.⁵⁴ This was the outcome of American statements that gradually obligated Bonn to express itself on this issue. At the same time, it also was the outcome of Israeli appeals, in line with the radicalization of which Bonn had become aware since the return of Ben-Gurion to public office.⁵⁵ After the London talks, which did not include Egypt who rejected its conclusions, and following an appeal to the UN Security Council, Israel took the offensive on 29 October. Ben-Gurion, in a letter addressed to Adenauer as early as 1 November, explained what had led Jerusalem to launch a military campaign.⁵⁶

could dream of," see A. Clément, "Bonn cherche à maintenir de bonnes relations avec le monde arabe malgré l'accord de réparations avec Israël," *Le Monde*, 8 September 1956, p. 2.

⁵¹ J. N. Lorenzen, "Die Haltung der DDR zum Suez-Krieg: Das Jahr 1956 als Zäsur in der Nahost-Politik der DDR," *Deutschland-Archiv*, 3 (1995), pp. 278-285; A. Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern: Das gestörte Verhältnis der DDR zum Zionismus und Staat Israel*, Bonn 1997, pp. 141-146.

⁵² Diplomatische Gespräche, minutes of a meeting between von Brentano and Dulles, 16 August 1956, PA/AA ministerial cabinet, vol. 155. At the same time, Bonn did not wish to appear too pro-Egyptian, and made sure that publicity was kept low-key for the upcoming West German industrial exhibit to be held in Cairo in February 1957; Deutsche Industrie-Ausstellung in Kairo, Letter from the AA (403.307.02/1 10 469/56), Graeff and Altendorf to the West Germany embassy in Cairo, 16 August 1956, and Document Ref. 403, 10 October 1956, respectively, *ibid.*, Abt. IV, Ref. 403, vol. 18.

⁵³ A. Clément, "Tout en se disant prêt à participer à une conférence des usagers, Bonn penche pour le neutralisme," *Le Monde*, 15 September 1956, p. 3.

⁵⁴ "La Turquie, l'Allemagne fédérale et la Norvège donnent leur adhésion à l'Association des usagers du Canal promue par Paris et Londres, malgré de récentes critiques de Bonn à son rencontre," *ibid.*, 26 September 1956, p. 2.

⁵⁵ After a brief retirement from office, Ben-Gurion once again became minister of defense in February 1955, and prime minister in November of that year.

⁵⁶ Ben-Gurion to Adenauer, 1 November 1956, Bundesarchiv, Hangelar, Archives of the

Close examination of this letter shows that the Israeli prime minister did not merely desire to inform one of his most trusted allies of ongoing events; he also wanted his support in circumstances which were likely to create discord between the two partners. Could Germany give its unconditional support to a country that had initiated a conflict whose repercussions were incalculable? Very concretely, the prime minister feared the activation of the *rebus sic stantibus* proviso which applies to any agreement under international law in the case of a major change in the situation existing at the time of its signing.⁵⁷ Ben-Gurion clearly perceived that the Suez crisis, and in particular the most recent developments, were likely to be detrimental to the German-Israeli relationship that had slowly been woven over the previous years. Above all, it could deprive Israel from one day to the next of a source of supplies which had contributed in no slight way to the strengthening of the new state.⁵⁸ This is why the prime minister took the lead, placing Bonn face to face with its moral obligations, and wrote that should the FRG halt shipments to Israel, this would constitute failure to adhere to the spirit of the treaty and could in no case be interpreted as the expression of any kind of West German neutrality.

Indeed Ben-Gurion was right in fearing a halt to West German shipments, since the USA vigorously condemned the Israeli attack on Egypt, condemnation that was the logical outcome of America's increasingly critical attitude since November 1952 with the election of a Republican president into office. This time Washington no longer tolerated the bellicose behavior of the Israeli prime minister.⁵⁹ That same line of reasoning, according to the West German and American press, prompted the White House to demand that West Germany suspend the shipments to Israel

Chancellery (B 136), vol. 3635. Letters of this kind, explaining Israel's gesture, also were sent to other international leaders.

⁵⁷ This proviso stipulates that in the case of a major change in the circumstances that constituted the context of a binding commitment, one party may demand the suspension of the agreement until return to normalcy or a change in the text itself.

⁵⁸ Until the end of 1956, the FRG supplied Israel with the equivalent of 1,150 billion DM in various types of goods. For the figures see a publication of the Bundesminister für Wirtschaft, *Bericht über des Durchführung des Abkommens zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und dem Staate Israel vom 10 September 1952*, Bonn 1966.

⁵⁹ Since Ben-Gurion's return to public office, border incidents had increased. For the cooling off in US-Israeli relations, see Z. Levey, *Israel and the Western Powers, 1952-1960*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1997.

stipulated by the reparations treaty,⁶⁰ although Washington was fully aware of the extent to which the Jewish state was dependent on these supplies when it included this measure in the developing boycott of Jerusalem. The crisis was discussed regularly in the days following the brief military campaign, the occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, and the heated debate in the UN, sparking reactions from diplomats and the Bonn government.

Before continuing this account of events, an attempt should be made to define what really happened, i.e., to determine whether there was indeed pressure from Washington on Bonn at that time. The truth of the matter is that no document presently available from American sources indicates a *pro forma* demand of this type on the part of the United States.⁶¹ Among the West German documents dealing with the Suez crisis, a single source, emanating from the Economic Affairs Board of the AA, mentions the American desire to have West Germany suspend its shipments to Israel; it however was obtained from reliable sources in Washington.⁶² Thus, Washington's interest in seeing West Germany temporarily halt fulfillment of its obligations under the reparations treaty appears to be a tendency rather than a direct expression of its wishes. In the wake of the Israeli offensive, Washington was one of the strongest supporters of the retaliatory measures against Israel voted at the UN on 5 November. Although historians who claim that US pressure was applied to West Germany refer to the early days of November, their argument appears to be flimsy, because the press – the only source of information that mentions the topic concretely – refers to American constraints at a later date. This stance was part of the more radical US stance towards Israel in early 1957, during talks on the evacuation of Israeli troops from the Sinai Peninsula. In that case the US went beyond the global measures adopted by the UN to take more specific decisions on the bilateral level. Washington acted in two stages: first of all, it threatened to freeze American aid to Israel,⁶³ and then carried out this threat and aired the idea of preventing American Jewish financial aid.⁶⁴ In

⁶⁰ See P. Münch, *Israel als Störfaktor der westeuropäisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen 1956–1982*, Munich 1993, pp. 77–78.

⁶¹ See, e.g., *Foreign Relations of the United States of America [FRUS], 1955–1957, XV–XVI: Arab–Israeli Dispute 1956*, Washington 1989–1990.

⁶² Van Scherpenberg, "Proteste gegen Israel-Abkommen," handwritten note, 5 November 1956, PA/AA Abt. VII, Ref. 708, vol. 1029.

⁶³ "Israël paraît décidé à résister à la pression américaine", *Le Monde*, 1 January 1957, p. 2.

⁶⁴ E. Sablier, "Après la campagne du Sinai, II: La lutte pour la vie," *ibid.*, 24 January 1957, pp. 1–2.

addition, Washington did in fact consider placing pressure on the FRG to stop reparations payments.⁶⁵ However, given the international situation, the US became more hesitant and gradually abandoned collective sanctions.⁶⁶

Thus, although it cannot be said that there was direct US pressure, it is clear that the Bonn leadership, in line with a practice dating back several years, was subjected to pressure from Arab states, since the latter viewed the reparations treaty as a breach of West German neutrality in Middle East affairs. The view from the Arab capitals was that a continuation of shipments to Israel under present conditions would be another, even more telling, illustration of Bonn's partiality.⁶⁷ Regardless of whether there was indeed pressure from the US on Bonn, the Suez crisis forced it to take a stand.

Would the FRG comply with Washington's presumed wishes? The US stand and the issue of shipments to Israel were discussed both within the Bonn government and in consultations between the government and some West German embassies. At the peak of the crisis, the trend was towards appeasement. For example, according to Herbert Blankenhorn, one of Adenauer's close associates and the West German representative at the UN, who reacted as early as 3 November, Ben-Gurion's fears concerning a halt of West German deliveries were baseless: the rumors disseminated by the press were baseless, given the peaceful nature of the reparations treaty.⁶⁸

Similarly, the AA wished to reassure all the parties involved in German-Israeli exchanges – both companies⁶⁹ and banks – which were anxious about their future. When queried by Rofert Pferdmenges, a banker and

⁶⁵ Ibid., but here once again the conditional tense is used.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 19, 20, and 23 February 1957.

⁶⁷ The AA received a telegram from the secretary of the Arab League, H. A. Fakoussa, on 5 November along these lines: *Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu den Ländern im Nahen Osten*, PA/AA, ministerial cabinet, 708, vol. 130. In addition, Heinrich von Brentano heard similar complaints two days later from the Syrian and Lebanese representatives in Bonn: handwritten note by Weber (MB 2240/56), 7 November 1956, Weber, *ibid.*, vol. 156.

⁶⁸ *Korrespondenz in auswärtigen Angelegenheiten*, secret letter from Blankenhorn to von Brentano, 3 November 1956, Bundesarchiv, Heinrich von Brentano Papers, vol. 165. This opinion was reiterated by the Economic Affairs Bureau of the AA in a letter sent on 8 November to the Ministry of Finance, Israel, Letter from the AA (412.304.06/5 2983/56) written by van Scherpenberg, PA/AA, Abt. IV, Ref. 412, vol. 136. Indeed, the peaceful nature of the reparations treaty is declared in the clauses themselves.

⁶⁹ Telegram from the AEG company, Frankfurt, to the AA, 2 November 1956, *ibid.*

close associate of the chancellor, the ministry stressed that no decision had been taken and that it was ready to cover German banks who had commitments to the Israeli mission in Cologne in the case of a suspension of German payments to Israel.⁷⁰ While at other times the AA would have grasped at any opportunity to remind German companies to proceed cautiously with regard to business dealings with Israel, in this case it demonstrated an astonishing degree of detachment: its motto was "business as usual," with complete trust in the protection provided by insurance companies.⁷¹

The West German embassy in Washington attempted to reduce dramatization of the issue to an even greater extent. It stressed, for example, the lack of real American pressure of the sort reported in the press. According to the embassy, the articles citing constraints by the White House were simply part of the Democratic campaign for the upcoming presidential elections: denouncing the Republican Administration which intended to put pressure on Bonn against Israel, would be the best way to garner the Jewish vote.⁷² In addition, the ambassador to Washington, in a statement issued as soon as military operations began, was of the opinion that a halt in German shipments would most likely meet with incomprehension on the part of the Americans.⁷³

Lastly, the Bundestag also debated the policy that the Adenauer government should adopt in this situation. The CDU argued unconditionally for continuation of good relations with Israel, a logical attitude for the chancellor's party; the SPD was somewhat troubled because Israel was, after all, the aggressor; the FDP and the other minor parties were opposed.⁷⁴ After three weeks of consultations and internal debate, Adenauer finally responded to his Israeli counterpart on 20 November 1956. His letter was

⁷⁰ Handwritten note by van Scherpenberg, D4, 2 November 1956, *ibid.*

⁷¹ Kiderlen to the federal minister of the economy, 10 November 1956, *ibid.*, AA (412.304.06/35 2965/56).

⁷² Telegram by Kessel from the West German embassy in Washington (1294) to the AA, 17 November 1956, *ibid.*

⁷³ Telegram by Krekler from the West German embassy in Washington (1203) to the AA, 2 November 1956, *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Noteworthy on this occasion was a statement by Deputy Erwin Feller, of the Gesamtdeutscher Block/Block der Heimatvertriebene und Entrechtete (a right-wing party representing Germans who were expelled from the eastern territories in 1945), demanding a halt to deliveries until Israel complied with the UN resolution. Feller was applauded by the deputies from the liberal and the social-democratic parties, *Deutscher Bundestag*, 2. Wahlperiode, 168. Sitzung, 8 November 1956, p. 9280B.

carefully drafted: it was intended to reassure Ben-Gurion, yet demonstrated a certain amount of daring, something not to be anticipated by Bonn's circumspect attitude during the previous months. Despite everything, Bonn decided to continue shipments to Israel.⁷⁵

What led to this decision, which turned the Federal Republic's fairly passive attitude during the London Conference into a much more active one? First of all, the legal argument for enforcement of the *rebus sic stantibus* clause was weak compared to the political considerations. The West German attitude was highly cautious and neutral: as an AA internal document states: "for the time being the [Federal Republic] will not take a stand as regards the issue of who is the aggressor." The document claimed that Bonn's neutrality was guaranteed by the fact that there were no shipments of arms included in the reparations treaty.⁷⁶ In any case, West Germany's non-interventionist policy also held for the Franco-British intervention. Taking a stance in favor of Paris or London in this crisis would endanger the image of the FRG "in the entire Near East and in the other states [who participated in the Bandung Conference], in the USA, in Germany, and even among a goodly number of British people themselves."⁷⁷ In any case, Bonn preferred to wait for the formal UN decision before adopting a policy, and hence complying with the Security Council resolution of 5 November was rendered even easier, given that West Germany was not a member of the UN.

In the view of those who idealize Adenauer, on the basis of the treaty of 10 September 1952, and by his favorable letter to Ben-Gurion, he was

⁷⁵ Adenauer to Ben-Gurion, 20 November 1956, Bundesarchiv, Hangelar, Archives of the Chancellery, vol. 3635. Given its importance in Adenauer's policy vis-à-vis Israel, it is unfortunate that precisely this letter was omitted from the most recently published volume of the chancellor's correspondence, which specifically covers this period: *Adenauer-Briefe 1955–1957*, ed. H.-P. Mensing, Berlin 1998. However it can be found in Y. Jelinek (ed.), *Zwischen Moral und Realpolitik: Eine Dokumentensammlung*, Gerlingen 1997, p. 422 (henceforth: Jelinek, *Zwischen Moral und Realpolitik*).

⁷⁶ Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik zu den Ländern im Nahen Osten, "Gesichtspunkte für eine Sprachregelung zum ägyptischen Konflikt," 22 November 1956: "The treaty was drawn up in a context of an on-going state of war between Israel and the Arab states. This is why measures were taken in the treaty itself to guarantee that the goods shipped to Israel could only be used for peaceful goals and were solely destined for this purpose," PA/AA ministerial cabinet, vol. 130.

⁷⁷ Ibid. Unofficially, however, Adenauer thought the Franco-British intervention was justified (Schwarz, *Adenauer*, p. 301). In the final analysis, Bonn's formal neutrality was successful since the FRG was approached, as of December of that year, to take part in the repair work on the Canal which had been blocked since early November by boats sunk by the Egyptians, von Brentano (2513/56) to Adenauer, 7 December 1956; von Brentano (2516/56) to P. Bausch, Bundestag deputy, 17 December 1956, PA/AA, ministerial cabinet, vol. 130.

anxious to show his unwavering commitment to the reparations operation that had begun four years earlier. According to them, with the credibility of West Germany at stake, it needed to prove that it did not subordinate its legal and moral obligations to the vagaries of international politics and that it wished to maintain its role as a bridge between the West and the Middle East.⁷⁸ However, Adenauer's position, which can clearly be defined as pro-Israel, expresses much more than a concern for German-Jewish reconciliation. In particular, it is a clear-cut demonstration of Bonn's realism.

Two facets of this decision must be stressed, since Bonn's stance was directed towards its two main partners in the operation. The decision expressed in the letter of 20 November was first of all a signal to Israel. Once again, more than a "mere" desire to adhere to German-Jewish reconciliation, it was a way for Bonn to put an end to the cooling-off in relations arising from the decision taken in the spring of that year. West Germany's refusal to establish diplomatic ties between the two countries had had a profound effect on the Israeli leaders,⁷⁹ was a fact that was obvious to the Bonn government. Although the Federal Republic's leaders felt that formal ties were definitely out of the question for the moment,⁸⁰ there nevertheless had to be a way to move towards closer ties through other channels – such as a "commercial friendship,"⁸¹ which would eventually rank West Germany as Israel's second economic partner, or military cooperation, which would enable the FRG to redeem itself by developing relations in this area as early as 1956-1957.⁸²

⁷⁸ Shinnar, *Bericht eines Beauftragten*, chap.: "Die Entwicklung der politischen Beziehungen"; M. Wolffsohn, *Spanien, Deutschland und die "Jüdische Weltmacht": über Moral, Realpolitik und Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Munich 1991, p. 140; L. Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel*, Boston 1984, p. 88.

⁷⁹ Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett, to F. Shinnar, 22 February 1956, Nahum Goldmann Papers, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, Z6/1111, cited in Jelinek, *Zwischen Moral und Realpolitik*, pp. 386-392.

⁸⁰ As Foreign Minister von Brentano stressed in February 1957 to two proponents of ties, Franz Böhm and the secretary general of the SPD, Erich Ollenhauer, *Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu den Ländern im Nahen Osten*, handwritten note (364/57), 9 February 1957, PA/AA ministerial cabinet, 708, vol. 130.

⁸¹ R. A. Blasius, "Geschäftsfreundschaft statt diplomatischer Beziehungen: Zur Israel-Politik 1962/63," idem (ed.), *Von Adenauer zu Erhard: Studien zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1963*, Munich 1994, pp. 154-210.

⁸² This caused numerous scandals in Israel in 1957 and 1959, as well as in the sixties. See, for instance, "Regierungskrise-Schauerne Seelen," *Der Spiegel*, no. 28/34, 1959; Wolffsohn, *Ewige Schuld?* chap. 2: "Zwischen Geschichts- und Tagespolitik, 1955-1965," pp. 29-37.

The West German decision to continue its shipments of goods to Israel was first and foremost a statement intended for Washington. It clearly emerges as a break in German–American relations, in particular as regards Washington’s influence over West German decisions in the realm of German policy towards Israel until then. It was first of all a clear statement of Bonn’s sovereignty, in an issue in which West Germany did not consider itself to be truly involved. Bonn maintained its firm attitude, even though rumors of American pressure were more frequently cited. This was the case when Jerusalem delayed evacuation of the Sinai Peninsula: Bonn did not participate in the general initiative to threaten Israel, affirming that “the Federal Republic will take no sanctions against Israel.”⁸³ The West Germans justified this stance by their previous commitments, but above all by the fact that East Germany, clearly hostile to Jerusalem, was calling for such severe measures.

This symbolic act of regained sovereignty was also a demonstration of a pro-European policy on the part of the Bonn government. After its deep disappointment at the French refusal of the European Defense Community on 30 August 1954, the upbuilding of a common Europe was re-launched in June 1955 following the Messine Conference. In this resolutely European initiative, West Germany could thus envisage a means of further distancing itself from American dominance of its foreign policy.

However, in the final analysis the decision to continue shipments emerges as a sign of dissatisfaction with Washington. Although there was much agreement between Bonn and the White House, particularly on the need to combat the spread of Communism, since the Republican victory in the 1952 elections the Administration’s disinterest in Adenauer’s wider goal of reunification was steadily on the increase. The chancellor, by acting counter to American policy in the Suez crisis, demonstrated that Germany could not adhere totally to a détente strategy that was detrimental to Europe, in particular to a strong West Germany. The chancellor’s anger was fueled even more by the publication, in the spring of 1956, of the Radford Plan, which called for a drastic reduction in the number of American troops in Europe.⁸⁴ This led to Adenauer’s “Postdam complex,” i.e., his anxiety about any American–Soviet agreement that would be to the detriment of Germany and which might resemble the nightmare of the July 1945 conference.

⁸³ *Le Monde*, 23 February 1957, p. 2.

⁸⁴ Schwarz, *Adenauer*, pp. 291–296.

Lastly, the chancellor viewed American condemnation of the French–British–Israeli intervention as a dangerous precedent.⁸⁵

Denouncing the American position, Adenauer criticized the hesitant – if not frivolous – US electoral system, which produces leaders who are primarily interested in being re-elected. This system, for instance, was seen as accounting for the American refusal to finance the Aswan Dam, a refusal that the chancellor viewed as a weakness and a mistake that worsened Western positions.⁸⁶

In sum, American behavior during the Suez crisis confirmed Adenauer's impression that the US was no longer fully trustworthy, and was causing damage to the entire Atlantic alliance.⁸⁷ This is what warranted the warning delivered in the form of the decision to continue implementation of the reparations agreement, a gesture that could be viewed as assistance to a country at war.

How did the US react to the West German decision? The American government was troubled, if not unhappy, about the defection of an ally. However, this reaction came relatively late, because Washington still hoped that Bonn would later associate itself with sanctions against any state that violated the United Nations Charter, stressing this point by the promulgation of the Eisenhower Doctrine.⁸⁸ This point was in fact included in the final stipulations of the London Conference that established the sovereignty of West Germany.⁸⁹

For their part, American Jews viewed Bonn's decision as a sign of friendship towards Israel but also as a declaration of sovereign neutrality

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 302.

⁸⁶ N. Wiggershaus, "Adenauer und die amerikanische Sicherheitspolitik in Europa," *Adenauer und die USA* (Rhöndorfer Gespräche, 14), Bonn 1994, pp. 13–46; N. Altmann, *Konrad Adenauer im Kalten Krieg: Wahrnehmung und Politik 1945–1956*, Mannheim 1993, p. 212. This mistake was even more damaging in that it also temporarily put an end to prospective West German participation in work on the dam; thus Adenauer's attitude was also based on very concrete motivations, Berggötz, *Nahostpolitik*, pp. 335–360.

⁸⁷ Görtemaker, Adenauer, p. 96.

⁸⁸ In diplomatic documents, the German attitude towards the Suez crisis is mentioned during debates on evacuation of the Canal Zone, early in 1957. See document 110: "Memorandum of a telephone conversation between the Secretary of State in Washington and the Representative at the United Nations [Lodge] in New York," 18 February 1957, *FRUS*, XVII: *Arab–Israeli Dispute 1957*, Washington 1990, p. 199; document 117: Memorandum prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, 19 February 1957: "Probable Effect of a US-Supported UN Resolution Applying Sanctions to Israel," *ibid.*, p. 209.

⁸⁹ *Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik zu den Ländern im Nahen Osten*, handwritten note by Blomeyer (500.84.07/3), 26 February 1957, PA/AA ministerial cabinet, 708 vol. 130.

by West Germany. This stand strengthened feelings of sympathy among those who were partisans of closer ties between the Federal Republic and Israel.⁹⁰

The Israelis were beholden to the chancellor for having chosen to act in this way, since from now on the reparations agreement did in fact become "one of the pillars of the Israeli economy."⁹¹ Such expressions of gratitude were voiced both in the Israeli Hebrew press⁹² and in government circles.⁹³ The continuation of West German shipments was clear confirmation that closer ties with the FRG were possible, justifying Ben-Gurion, the promoter of the concept of a "New Germany." The government expressed its delight that "Chancellor Adenauer did not use the Sinai Campaign as a pretext to suspend his payments."⁹⁴ In fact, Adenauer succeeded from this point of view in achieving his goal: closer ties between West Germany and Israel were once more on the agenda as of 1957.⁹⁵

What remains to be examined is the reaction of the Arab states. We have seen that some Middle East capitals were quick to react to the Israeli offensive and had demanded that West Germany suspend its shipments to Israel. Adenauer's decision to nevertheless continue the shipments provoked their anger, leading West German representatives in these countries to fear that Bonn's interests would be greatly damaged and prompting AA officials to envisage measures to placate Arab discontent.⁹⁶ However, as in the past – in particular during the ratification of the reparations treaty – these

⁹⁰ N. Goldmann to Adenauer, 19 February 1957, Bundesarchiv, Hangelar, Archives of the Chancellery, vol. 3635.

⁹¹ "Le moment décisif," *Le Monde*, 23 February 1957, p.1. For the very positive impact of West German reparations on the Israeli economy, see Y. Jelinek, "Implementing the Luxembourg Agreement: The Purchasing Mission and the Israeli Economy," *The Journal of Israeli History: Studies in Zionism and Statehood*, 18 (1997), pp. 191–209.

⁹² Bonn's attitude was mentioned in the Israeli Hebrew press as of the month of December; see "Sharett is Suggested Instead of Goldmann" (Heb.), *Yediot Aharonot*, 13 December 1956; "Richard Strauss and Konrad Adenauer" (Heb.), *Ha'aretz*, 12 December 1956.

⁹³ Handwritten notes by Wolff, 5 September and 5 October 1957, PA/AA Abt. VII, vol. 1045.

⁹⁴ "Israël seul au monde," *Le Monde*, 9 February 1957, III, p. 4.

⁹⁵ This took on strange appearances, since the two countries began a military collaboration which was, if anything, surprising; N. Hansen, "Geheimvorhaben 'Frank/Kol': Zur deutsch-israelischen Rüstungszusammenarbeit, 1957 bis 1965," *Historisch-Politische Mitteilungen: Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik*, 6 (1999), pp. 229–264. See also the article by Sh. Shpiro in this volume.

⁹⁶ Telegram from Ambassador Walther Becker, West German Embassy in Cairo (116) to the AA, 26 February 1957, PA/AA Abt. VII, vol. 1029; Politische und sonstige Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik zu fremden Ländern, *ibid.*, Abt. II 200 von 80 SL/0 bis 80 SL/5.

threats were proven baseless, and the relationship between Bonn and this region of the globe were not particularly affected.⁹⁷

As for German-American relations, after the crisis things were sorted out as of March 1957, during a meeting between Brentano and Dulles in Washington. In an attempt to reduce tensions, the affair was now considered to have been a momentary relapse, uncharacteristic of their firmly shared worldview.⁹⁸ However, West German reaction to the Suez crisis was indicative of a new feature of Bonn's foreign policy as compared to 1952: the Federal Republic was able to act, albeit temporarily, contrary to American wishes. Bonn now possessed an active foreign policy and would no longer agree to back down in the face of circumstances imposed by international events. And, indeed, West Germany took advantage of the temporary withdrawal of the three allies/rivals. On the one hand, the US was unable to impose its views despite its condemnation of the joint French-British-Israeli attack. The British and the French, on the other hand, were heavily marked by their pro-Israeli and colonial attitude.

In terms of its overall significance, the analysis of American influence on the Israel policy of the Federal Republic of Germany helps reveal and assess the impact of certain historical as well as historiographical myths. As regards history, the "legend of the omnipotence of the Jews," analyzed by Sylke Tempel, continues to make inroads, even though this time it was to their benefit (since, in the eyes of American Jewry and Israel, Adenauer's bowing to the so-called omnipotence of the Jews helped West Germany move in the right direction: towards democracy and the payment of reparations). In the realm of historiography, the issue is the reality of American pressure on West Germany. Although cited by certain authors,⁹⁹ no document dating from that period indicates categorically that such pressure was really exerted. Thus, high probability and political logic (Washington could not ask its West German partner to behave otherwise) have influenced analysis to the extent that they have elicited a historical and historiographical "truth" which diverges sharply from the facts.

⁹⁷ See the commentary by the French ambassador to the FRG, Maurice Couve de Murville: "We will probably hear a great deal in the months to come, and much discussion of grandiose projects for economic expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond," *Documents diplomatiques français*, 1956, III: 24 October-31 December, Paris 1990, p. 406. The correspondent for *Le Monde* entitled his article as follows: "Bonn is Believed to Have Taken Steps to Guarantee the Construction of the Aswan Dam," *Le Monde*, 20 December 1956, p. 6.

⁹⁸ Handwritten note dated San Francisco, 11 March 1957, PA/AA ministerial cabinet, vol. 156.

⁹⁹ For example, even as late as 1999 by Sh. Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations*, p. 178.

LIKE A BALL IN THE FIELD: ISRAEL BETWEEN THE TWO GERMANIES, 1949–1965

YESHAYAHU A. JELINEK

In memoriam Ori Jelinek

The object of this article is to survey and analyze the four-cornered game between the two Germanies, the State of Israel, and the Arab countries from the reparations negotiations in 1952–1953 until the establishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel in 1965.

From the very outset, with the establishment of Israel in 1948 and of the two German states in 1949, Israel faced a dilemma: whether the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) or the German Democratic Republic (GDR) would make a more advantageous partner for cooperation. The Israelis soon made up their minds. When the opportunity for receiving reparations payments proved to be more promising through cooperation with Bonn, Jerusalem began to play the FRG card. Quite naturally, this affected and limited contacts and the possibility of such relations with the GDR.

It should be pointed out, from the outset, that it was not only Communist and Stalinist policies – which dictated the choices of Pankow – but also Israeli preferences that shaped and molded future developments between Israel and East Germany. The Israelis were never quick or happy to admit this aspect of their foreign policy. It was always more convenient to place the blame for the cool to frosty relations between the two countries upon Communist Germany. Israel in particular criticized the East German refusal to indemnify the victims of Nazi persecution, making the point that the territory and population of the GDR constituted an integral part of the Third Reich, and that the Nazis had originated from what was later to become two post-war German states. Both parts of Germany enjoyed the benefits of the Nazi loot, and both bore responsibility and had moral obligations for its past deeds.

For Communist Germany, keeping the Jewish state at a distance was rather convenient, as we shall soon see. Pankow was not overtly anxious
it its early efforts (and even courting) to cement relations with

Jerusalem. Later, it would parade its ostracism and rebuff of Israel before the Arab states. Despite its early courtship of Israel, the GDR considered boycotting the Jewish state to be an asset in its own right. During later years, both sides were to indulge in attempts to improve relations in a variety of fields – especially in commerce – and sent up occasional trial balloons to test the other side's reaction. Initially, neither Israel nor the GDR treated each other as coolly and as hostile as the next years would make it seem.

Bonn and Jerusalem cherished a sort of strange – one may say schizophrenic – relationship. On the one hand, they would ostentatiously display good will and a wish to improve – even to normalize – their mutual relations. On the other hand, both would don angry countenances and condemn the other side for abstaining from or evading the improvement of relations. This line of action was very evident in West Germany during 1952–1956, when from time to time the FRG would present its stand vis-à-vis Israel as deriving from Israeli inhibitions and limited willingness to advance towards Bonn. It was rather convenient to justify the West German desire to maintain the status quo, not to impede the existing state of Mid-Eastern relations, and not to alienate the Arab states, by placing the responsibility (one would prefer to say, the blame) on Israeli opposition to closer ties with the FRG.

The Israelis, too, had their set of considerations. Although from 1955 onwards Israel clearly indicated its inclination for closer ties with the FRG, including the exchange of diplomatic representatives, it still displayed official coolness towards this idea. On the one hand, Jerusalem voiced anger over Bonn's refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, this in informal contacts with the German Foreign Office and the leading politicians. On the other hand, Israel continued to present the burden of the past as an impediment. To overcome Israeli "shyness," Bonn would have to perform a certain set of rituals, thus paving the way for Israel to take the next step. Israel always insisted that each new step must be the outcome of a German initiative, that Bonn should clearly admit its interest in the next move, and that its details should be fashioned in negotiations between the two countries.

In Israel there was a rather vocal lobby, comprising both right- and left-wing opposition elements in the Knesset (parliament) as well as extra-parliamentary forces, which objected to improved relations with one or

the other of the Germanies, or with both of them. The opposition exerted pressure on the government and went on a rampage at any sign of talks with the Germans, or even any move towards them. It tried hard to tie the government's hands behind its back, blaming it for any move towards Germany, and adopted a variety of steps to block the possibility of a change in policy. On occasion, this opposition was conveniently exploited by the Israeli government, whenever it wished to have its own policies interpreted in one way or another.

For their part, both Germanies kept their distance. In 1955, the GDR had sent Israel an unofficial memorandum making it clear that it was not interested in establishing relations between the two countries. The FRG did not display a different attitude: a conference of its diplomats convened in Istanbul in the spring of 1956 decided to oppose any sort of relations with Israel, even a trade mission. A vacuum was thus created between Israel and the two Germanies. Any show of willingness on the part of one side to improve mutual relations would be nullified and cancelled out by the consecutively demonstrated refusal to do so on the part of the other side. This vacuum attracted the Arab states. They efficiently exploited the impact of the Cold War on both Germanies, for while West Germany wished to be the sole representative of the entire German nation vis-à-vis the outside world, East Germany sought to achieve a status of equality with its sister state. Consequently, both German states consciously and purposefully exploited their schizophrenic relations with Israel to advance their own particular interests and to curtail their adversary's freedom of action. The FRG, guided by the Federal Constitution which proclaimed it to be the sole representative of the entire German nation, attempted to keep the GDR at bay, in what could be termed a sort of international quarantine. Bonn's interpretation of its non-existing relations with Israel was colored by its need to prevent Arab recognition of East Germany, and by a desire to adopt a neutral, even-handed stance towards the rivals in the Middle East. Following the "Hallstein Doctrine," which specified how West Germany would react to attempts by foreign countries to improve their relations with East Germany, Bonn warned the Arabs that any move towards the GDR would invariably lead to a deterioration in Arab–West German relations. To constrain the Arabs and deny them an excuse to establish relations with East Germany, Bonn froze any advancement on the diplomatic front with Israel.

Bonn argued that the Arabs could use West German–Israeli relations as

an excuse to conduct a policy detrimental to West Germany. In other words, if the Arabs should wish to improve their relations with East Germany, for reasons unrelated to Israel, or to undermine possible FRG–Israeli contacts, they could always hold Bonn responsible and charge it with improper and unfriendly behavior. Bonn, therefore, would be better off refraining from any formal improvement in official contacts with Jerusalem. This would deny the Arabs any excuse for action potentially harmful to West German interests – always interpreted as the future reunification of the German nation. Moreover, under certain circumstances the Arabs could (and did) blackmail West Germany into adopting a political stance favorable to them, exploit it economically, and extract from Bonn concessions and favors. To publicize their policy, in late 1964 the Arab countries drafted what was, for the time being, called the “Aref Doctrine,” which declared that any improvement in West German–Israeli relations would be followed by similar improvement of relations between the Arab countries and East Germany.

West German policy was marked by an inner contradiction. Abstention from improved relations with Israel, as already noted, denied Jerusalem possible advantages. On the other hand, however, such a policy provided the Arabs with a lever and the opportunity to exploit – even to pressure – West Germany for political, diplomatic, and economic gains. The Hallstein Doctrine thus proved to be a rather expedient means by which the Arabs could dictate policies to Bonn that were convenient for their anti-Israel campaigns. The Arab states were able to force West Germany to conduct a policy of adjustment to their needs, above all in the spheres of economy and finance. The overt and covert West German submission to the Arab boycott of Israel would have been unthinkable without the need to prevent the accruing of advantages to its East German adversary. Once again: the FRG diplomatic boycott of Israel was advantageous to the Arabs and enabled Bonn to reap political profits in the Cold War. Only naturally, however, there is a price-tag for everything.

In the competition between the two Germanies, the GDR could make considerable gains. It depicted its western counterpart, and the Luxembourg Agreement, as supporting Israel, while presenting its own stand as one of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, and thus consistent with Arab needs. Pankow could attempt to exploit Arab hostility towards Israel for the advancement of its own international political ambitions. By presenting itself as a state seeking to keep its distance from Israel, and as being critical

of Bonn's Middle Eastern policies, the GDR believed – with much justification – that it was luring the Arab states to its side.

In order not to be left behind in this competition, Bonn also had to adopt a stand sympathetic to Arab interests. While neither willing to forego the Luxembourg Agreement nor to display an openly cool, let alone hostile, approach towards Israel, Bonn nevertheless posed neutrality in the Arab–Israeli conflict. Moreover, it could point to its abstention from diplomatic ties with Israel as proof of its real attitude towards the Arabs. Bonn could argue that the propaganda emanating from Pankow was not only mistaken, but was also false and deceitful. In its defense, the FRG argued that East Germany was purposely misrepresenting the real intentions of West Germany, and that consequently the Arabs would do well not to put their trust in the GDR proclamations. An observer of the scene could discern that West Germany, in its efforts to defend itself against East German accusations, was adopting a limited positive stand towards Israel.

The aim of East Germany was to break out of the siege mounted against it by West Germany (and its allies), to gain international recognition, and to establish normal diplomatic and other ties with the family of nations. While accusing Israel of an assortment of political, ethical, and anti-humanistic sins, including colonialism and support of imperialism, Pankow attempted to present itself to the Third World countries as being on the side of those struggling for self-determination and seeking political, social, and economic progress. Israel was to be the test case: as far as the East German propagandists were concerned, support of Israel meant support of the reactionary social forces in the divided world. Subsequently, Israel and West Germany could be lumped together, while East Germany could sing with the angels.

The GDR's anti-Israel policy paid off. Some of the Arab states, those considered to be "progressive" (primarily Egypt and Syria), allowed East Germany to establish consular missions on their territory, and even offered it political support in a selective manner. Syria, the glaring example, was willing to go one step further: to recognize the GDR and establish full diplomatic relations with it.

The GDR, plagued by a problematic and ailing economy, was willing to enter into competition for foreign aid against the FRG's robust economy, to compete with it in the fields of education and culture, and to assist the Arab states politically and morally in their military confrontation with Israel.

It was clear to Bonn that in the Arab states, the GDR was an effective competitor and adversary, and that every effort should be made to defeat it, and to cause international defection from and the political defeat of Pankow. West Germany was therefore extremely wary in its policy towards Israel, continuing a policy of qualified friendship, but careful to refrain from any gestures that could irritate the Arabs, and subsequently advance the objectives of East Germany.

It was the West German Foreign Ministry that cautiously maintained that policy line. It did not permit any advancement of the pro-Israel lobby, and blocked any policy which seemed to deviate from the closely maintained neutrality between the two sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict. But the FRG also benefited from its Middle Eastern policy. In controversial votes in the United Nations and other international forums, Bonn could count upon Arab friendship and some, or all, of the Arab votes. It could recruit Arab support – at least partial support – as it attempted to foil GDR initiatives and to block East Germany's attempts to normalize its international status. Egyptian President Gamal 'Abdul Nasser personally intervened on behalf of West Germany at conventions of the non-aligned countries and in the Organization of African Unity, thus arresting the diplomatic advance of East Germany and preventing condemnation of Bonn. The pro-Western Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia, adopted the Western and anti-Communist policies with regard to East Germany.

Bonn was well aware that its informal diplomatic boycott of Israel was paying off. In all likelihood, the main advantage of drawing nearer to Israel would be in the realm of ethics and morality. It would improve West Germany's standing within the international community – above all with those who still vividly remembered World War II – and with world Jewry, particularly in the United States. And, indeed, Israel did exploit latent Jewish hostility towards Germany and the suspicions of the democratic public to advance its particularistic interests, including some that had little direct connection to Germany and the Germans. Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and his circle were well aware of the advantage that might accrue to the FRG from Israel's moral support, this despite West Germany's improved international standing. This was evident, to bring but two examples, during the "Swastika campaign" in 1959–1960, and on the occasion of the Ben-Gurion-Adenauer meeting in the spring of 1960, which was directly related to that campaign. Late in 1959, the walls of the brand-new synagogue in Cologne were painted with Swastikas and antisemitic slogans. Similar acts

were quickly perpetrated in many other German cities, and then in other European states and even in the US. The meeting of Ben-Gurion with Adenauer on 14 March 1960 was meant to be a step to counter the “Swastika campaign.”

Bonn, therefore, could not afford to adopt a one-sided policy of sole preference for the Arab side. The Foreign Ministry, the primary body responsible for conducting West Germany’s neutral policy, kept a close watch to deny the Arabs any opportunity for complaint. While the ministry did at times behave very coldly towards Israel, it was forced to remain attentive to both sides. It did provide Israel with certain advantages, but was careful to prevent any steps that could arouse Arab anger. This attempted “even-handed” policy was evident not only in international relations and contact between West Germany and Israel at large, but also in specific matters such as cultural exchange, social relations, and economic affairs. Due to Arab sensitivity towards the Luxembourg Agreement, the Foreign Ministry was very attentive to complaints lodged by Middle Eastern states, even if these complaints were openly regarded as being boorish and foolish. One may assume that East Germany served the Arab states as a “big stick” with which to keep the FRG in line.

Not all West German ministries strictly followed the Foreign Ministry’s policy, or at least they did not always faithfully comply with it. The Ministry of Defense, more than any other, followed an independent policy towards Israel while withholding information from the Foreign Ministry and, naturally, concealing it from the Arab states. It should be noted, however, that East Germany’s propaganda machine frequently raised the issue of West-German–Israeli military cooperation, and its intelligence services provided some rather delicate details about this cooperation. It may be assumed that the scandal which erupted in the mid-sixties, concerning the supply of armaments to Israel by the Ministry of Defense behind the back of the Foreign Ministry, also had something to do with the transfer to Israel of information by the GDR intelligence. At any rate, Bonn–Jerusalem military cooperation played an important role in Pankow’s propaganda efforts directed at the Arab states and the Third World. This cooperation led to a crisis in the spring and summer of 1965. East German leader Walter Ulbricht then visited Egypt, West Germany established diplomatic relations with Israel, and the Arab states broke off their diplomatic ties with Bonn in the summer of that year. West-German–Israeli cooperation played into the hands of East Germany, and contributed to the gains it made on the

international scene. Whereas the Ministries of Finance and Economy of West Germany could at times make favorable moves towards Israel, sometimes without the knowledge of the Foreign Ministry, the watchful East German intelligence and propaganda mechanisms would frequently alert the Arabs of the latest developments in cooperation between Israel and West Germany.

The West German public and press, and particularly the involved economic sectors such as firms engaging in export, trade, and industry, were well aware of the advantage to be gained by showing preference for the Arab side. We are discussing the development of West German Middle East policies that did not depend directly on the Arab-Israeli conflict, or were even independent of it, and thus of the competition between the two Germanies. Such new policies could already be discerned from the late 1950s onwards. Economic and financial circles in Bonn, as well as powerful sectors of public opinion, learned that cooperation with the Arabs was more productive for the well-being of West Germany than a tendency towards Israel. Abstention from establishing diplomatic relations with Israel would be profitable for the FRG even disregarding its effect on the standing of East Germany. These circles argued that West Germany needed no closer relations with Israel than those already existing. Israel maintained a trade mission in Cologne which also served as a diplomatic representation, supplying all of Israel's needs in this sphere. Cooperation between the two states was firmly based, and the Palais Schaumburg often supplied what was withheld by the Foreign Ministry. There was economic cooperation between the two states, and mutual trade was on the increase. Political and economic circles expressed doubt as to whether West Germany would profit more from the establishment of full and direct diplomatic relations with Israel; consequently, they argued, these were unnecessary.

It was believed that the development of attitudes within West German society that called for Bonn to refrain from establishing closer ties with Israel could lead to improved relations with the Arab states at the expense of East Germany. If West Germany could strengthen its ties with the Arabs while weakening (or at least not widening) those with Israel, there was less need to fear pro-East German action on the part of the Arab states. Such indeed was the policy adopted by Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder, who replaced Heinrich von Brentano in the early 1960s. He intended to stabilize and normalize relations with Eastern Europe (his "Ostpolitik"), relations that would affect the Middle East as well.

Simultaneously with Schröder's policy of establishing trade missions in Eastern Europe, the Foreign Ministry applied a similar policy towards Israel. The intention was to open a West German trade mission in Israel and to extend the term of the Israeli mission in Cologne *ad infinitum* (it was scheduled to close down in 1965). Thus, East Germany would no longer play a role in the calculations of West Germany's Middle East policy. Schröder would have gladly ridden himself of the Hallstein Doctrine, and would be happy to relate to Israel as just one more small state in the community of nations. He would have been happy to bring the Second World War to a close, as well as to put an end to the Luxembourg Agreement.

The East Germans were well aware that such a policy would be to their disadvantage. The GDR could, and did, efficiently exploit the armaments agreement between West Germany and Israel. This step on the part of West Germany provided its East German adversary with an opportunity that it did not miss to advance its standing not only in the Middle East, but with all Third World countries. Evidently, any improvement of relations between the FRG and the Arab states, particularly if it came at Israel's expense, would not be in the interest of East Germany. The GDR needed and preferred a West Germany that was friendly towards Israel, and Arab states that were suspicious of West German policies. These two elements would solidify the status of East Germany in the Middle East and promote its interests. West German policymakers were aware of this, and tried to overcome it.

From the outset, Israel was well aware of the dangers posed by Communist Germany. This was first noticed in relation to the reparations – during the negotiations and the vote on this issue, East German intervention and an attempt to exploit the Arab–Israeli conflict could already be perceived. The appearance of an East German trade mission in Cairo early in the spring of 1953, on the eve of the vote in the German Bundestag on the Reparations Agreement, was the GDR's first attempt to fish in troubled waters. Actually, that attempt backfired: it angered the FRG which speeded up the ratification process. Israel, however, was not always so fortunate.

East Germany opposed the payment of reparations, and publicly announced that upon the future unification of Germany, it would not honor treaties "harmful" to the well-being of the German people. Israel, therefore, took steps to influence in some manner international conferences that were convened to discuss the future of Germany, this in order to sustain the

Luxembourg Agreement. Such opportunities came when the “Big Four” foreign ministers met in Berlin early in 1954 to discuss the future of divided Germany, or at the “Big Four” conference convened in Geneva in 1955. Israel’s fears, however, were uncalled for, since the Powers did not reach any agreement.

Jerusalem disregarded Bonn’s *Alleinsvertretungsanspruch* (demand for sole representation), did not hesitate to act contrary to its spirit, and tried to enter into negotiations with the East German authorities. The topic on the agenda was reparations payments from the GDR. Israel sent feelers towards Pankow on the eve of the declaration of the Hallstein Doctrine in the fall of 1955, and also continued to do so after its proclamation. This was done without publicity, in order to circumvent Bonn and evade its anger. Israel was fully aware that West Germany would object to its conducting any talks with East Germany, but chose to disregard these possible objections. At a later stage, when Bonn continuously refused Jerusalem’s bid to establish relations, some Israeli diplomats suggested opening a dialogue with East Germany in order to demonstrate Israel’s disappointment at the FRG’s behavior – this despite the evidently pro-Arab bias of the GDR.

Despite Israel’s great anger at East Germany’s refusal to pay indemnities to individual victims of the Nazis and *Shilumim* to the State of Israel, it was apparently willing to embark upon a dialogue with the GDR, would that state take steps to placate Israel, and this despite Bonn’s expected angry reaction to such a step. However, until the late 1980s a “Cold War” atmosphere prevailed between Israel and East Germany. The East Germans lent their support to Arab terrorist organizations and displayed hostility in every field towards the Jewish state, which repaid in kind. All this notwithstanding, it is interesting to note that Jerusalem officially recognized the border between East Germany and Poland in 1966, disregarding West German anger over this step. The Israeli move was above all a gesture towards Poland, and indirectly towards the USSR. Yet the East Germans were no doubt pleased by the Israeli step, which negated West German policy towards Poland and the GDR. Indirectly, Israel lent a hand to strengthening the international standing of East Germany.

Israeli diplomats in Eastern Europe did not boycott their East German counterparts, and in a few cases – when the East German diplomats were Jewish – even displayed open friendliness. In conclusion it may be said that Israel did not adopt a completely pro-West German stand in its policy

towards East Germany. By its measured coolness in return for East Germany's open hostility and pro-Arab policy, as expressed during the last thirty years of the GDR's existence, Israel exhibited a willingness for a thaw in relations. However, the one-sided position adopted by East Germany in the Middle East conflict precluded any developments in this direction.

What emerges from this analysis of a decade and a half of German Middle East politics is the realization that both German states took advantage of Israel's difficulties to further their own interests. East Germany was the more opportunistic of the two, cynically exploiting the problems faced by Israel to its own advantage. But West Germany, too, advanced its own interests at the expense of Israel. Both of them courted the Arab states, conducted a foreign policy that favored hostility towards Israel, and bribed Arab states and politicians by showering them with loans and gifts.

In this game, Israel was the obvious loser, without any prospect of gaining from either side. The Arabs, for their part, suffered no harm – no punishment for their behavior towards Israel and not even for their behavior towards East or West Germany. The two German states always looked the other way when the Arabs adopted steps that were opposed or harmful to their interests. Since the Arab states were fully aware of the German *modus operandi*, they took every advantage of it to gain benefits for themselves. In this game the Arabs owned the playing field, and Israel was the ball, to be kicked by both Germanies.

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COMMUNICATING INTERESTS ACROSS HISTORY: GERMAN-ISRAELI SECURITY COOPERATION

SHLOMO SHPIRO

Introduction – One-Way Street or Reciprocal Interests

In the 1950s, both West Germany and Israel were engaged in a process of building up their military and intelligence capabilities. As a key member of NATO, West Germany sought to make a significant contribution to the Western alliance's defense in the central European front. Israel was fighting to establish itself as an independent entity in a hostile Middle East. The painful memories of the Holocaust left their mark on the development of open diplomatic and economic relations between nations which were torn apart by an historical legacy of unprecedented magnitude. As the two governments sought to overcome the past and develop bilateral relations based on mutual interests, they had to face two major impediments: German political reluctance to support Israel openly and thus antagonize the Arab states; and Israeli public opinion which rejected relations with Germany on the moral grounds of the Holocaust. Global political calculations and public opinion impeded any form of open relations between the two countries for over two decades.

Security interests, however, proved stronger than public opinion or international pressure in bringing the two countries together into cooperation. Israel, threatened by its more powerful Arab neighbors, sought German assistance in improving its military capabilities. West Germany, facing an increasingly hostile Warsaw Pact across its eastern borders, required extensive intelligence capabilities in Eastern Europe. These security needs resulted in the creation of a network of covert relations

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between the military and intelligence communities of Israel and Germany, conducted under a heavy curtain of secrecy and thus isolated from adverse public opinion or external pressures.

German–Israeli security cooperation considerably enhanced the overall security posture and military capabilities of both countries. This secret cooperation also contributed significantly to normalization of relations in other fields. This article examines the development of covert German–Israeli security relations and analyzes the interests that motivated both countries to undertake considerable political risks in promoting bilateral security cooperation. It argues that, beyond the need for historical reconciliation, both the Federal Republic and Israel developed these bilateral relations out of everyday security needs. History stood in the background, but it was immediate security needs on both sides that made the German–Israeli relations so close and resilient, providing solutions to present and future security threats.

Contemporary analysis often presents German–Israeli bilateral relations through perspectives that emphasize the historical legacy of the Third Reich and the Holocaust. German–Israeli relations are often analyzed in terms such as “morality,” “special relations,” and “coming to terms with the past” (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). Numerous authors, including Vogel, Wolffsohn, and Lavy, portray these relations as a one-way street, with the German side giving and the Israelis receiving. This concept argues that throughout decades of cooperation, Germany had a moral obligation to support Israel, even though this support often conflicted with its everyday political interests. Rolf Vogel presents German support to Israel as generosity motivated by the need to reconcile with the Jewish people.¹ George Lavy argues that German support to Israel was based on a moral debt, and as such it declined as the political status of West Germany increased in the 1970s and 1980s.² Michael Wolffsohn explores how German–Israeli official interaction still remains bound by collective images and memories of the past.³ Many of these arguments, however, ignore the direct benefits to Germany gained by its security cooperation with Israel.

Lily Gardner–Feldman’s extensive work in the late 1970s on German–Israeli relations is the only one to incorporate the security issue as an

¹ R. Vogel, *The German Path to Israel*, London 1969.

² G. Lavy, *Germany and Israel*, London 1996.

³ M. Wolffsohn, *Eternal Guilt? Forty Years of German–Jewish–Israeli Relations*, New York 1993.

inherent and principal component in the analysis of the "special relations."⁴ Gardner-Feldman was the first to appreciate the political impact of the security cooperation between the two countries. Indeed, while noting that Chancellor Erhard compared the practical details of this secret cooperation to a detective novel,⁵ she emphasizes the role of this area within the overall bilateral relations. She notes that "in military exchange, Germany mostly gave and Israel mostly received,"⁶ but could not incorporate information about the extent of the intelligence ties, being top secret at the time she conducted her research.

Yet historical analysis of German-Israeli relations is far from complete without fully appreciating not only Germany's military aid to Israel but also the benefits that Germany derived from its security cooperation with Israel. The political risks undertaken by consecutive German governments in concealing this cooperation well illustrate how important these covert relations were perceived in Bonn as well as in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. While many elements of the military aid Israel received from Germany are well documented, little is known about the benefits Germany derived from its cooperation with Israel, especially since most were manifested in the field of security and were therefore rarely made public. By examining the development of German-Israeli security relations, this article analyses the security benefits to Germany and their political context.

Covert Security Relations

From the mid 1950s, a complex network of contacts and cooperation developed between the German and Israel intelligence services, ministries of defense, and armed forces. These relations involved considerable cooperation and joint operations across a wide spectrum of intelligence and military issues. German-Israeli security relations were based on two distinctly separate pillars – the intelligence pillar and the military pillar, often converging but not essentially parallel. In the intelligence co-operation pillar, the main actors were the Mossad, on the Israeli side, and the Federal German Intelligence Service – Bundesnachrichtendienst

⁴ L. Gardner-Feldman, *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel*, Boston 1984 (henceforth: Gardner-Feldman, *Special Relationship*).

⁵ Ibid, p. 138, n. 1.

⁶ Ibid, p. 136.

(BND), on the German side. Later this cooperation also extended to the Israeli Military Intelligence (AMAN) and the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV). The military cooperation pillar was conducted through the Israeli Ministry of Defense (IMoD), the German Defense Ministry (BMVg), and often also directly the relevant commands within the Bundeswehr.

The division between the intelligence and military pillars was not necessarily one of different issues or targets. On the contrary, often the lines dividing the responsibilities of the military services from their civilian intelligence counterparts were blurred at best, or even intentionally transgressed. During other times, however, the distinction was more clearly maintained. The level of division between intelligence and military cooperation depended on three elements: the personal authority and political standing of the heads of the respective services; institutional restrictions on the activities of military intelligence in Germany; and the development of long-term personal contacts between mid-level intelligence executives responsible for particular operational issues.

When the heads of the civilian intelligence services in both countries carried enough political influence to ensure their services' independence from the military, they could also develop closer bilateral relations. Such was the case, for example, in the late 1960s when Mossad Head Meir Amit developed excellent working relations with General Reinhard Gehlen, then president of the BND. During other times, the military establishments could flex their political muscles and ensure a more direct bilateral access, circumventing the civilian intelligence services. Such was the case in the 1950s, when the Mossad was kept in the dark over arms deals made by the IMoD with Germany, and in the 1990s, when direct cooperation developed between the Israeli military intelligence (AMAN) and its German military counterparts.

Following the creation of the Bundeswehr in 1955, Germany integrated its military command and control structures fully within NATO. Germany did not possess a General Staff organization, and therefore did not have its own military intelligence service. This full NATO integration was mainly aimed at allaying French fears about a rearmed Germany. Throughout the Cold War, the Bundeswehr depended on intelligence information it received either via NATO or from the BND. While the BND was developed as essentially a civilian service, it had to develop military intelligence capabilities due to institutional restrictions on the Bundeswehr. These restrictions

ensured the primacy of the BND not only in political but also in military intelligence matters relating to cooperation with Israel.

Much of the success of the German-Israeli security cooperation was due to the development of long-term personal relations between mid-level intelligence and military officials on both sides. These relations enabled much of this cooperation to proceed despite the lack of clear instructions from above. Indeed, some joint operations were carried out despite orders in Germany to the contrary. German mid-level executives, such as BND department or section heads, relied on traditional intelligence secrecy to prevent close scrutiny of their cooperation with Israel. During times when the president of the BND was hostile or less than sympathetic towards Israel, such as General Wessel (1968–79), cooperation with Israel was maintained by lower officials who were convinced of the value of working closely together with their Israeli counterparts.

Two Stages of Cooperation

Two distinct stages in the German-Israeli security relations may be discerned. During the first stage, from 1956 until the late 1960s, these relations ran along two separate tracks. The first track consisted of a direct Mossad-BND intelligence cooperation channel, which involved the collection and analysis of information, mainly in Eastern Europe, the Arab countries, and Africa. The second track was direct cooperation between the Israeli Ministry of Defence (IMoD), on the Israeli side, and the Federal German Defense Ministry (BMVg) and Bundeswehr, on the German side. This state of affairs meant that both the Mossad and the IMoD maintained separate representatives in Germany, who often knew little about the activities of one another. This situation of parallel, competitive interests reached its peak in the very late 1950s, when the IMoD was trying to conceal the extent of its arms deals with Germany from the Mossad, fearing that Mossad Head Isser Harel might use this information as a political tool within the Israeli Labor ruling party.⁷

⁷ Since the Israel Labor Party (MAPAI) enjoyed an overall majority in the government and Knesset coalition, it was often hard to discern the difference between official Israeli interests and MAPAI interests. An ardent MAPAI member, Harel was allied to a faction headed by Golda Meir and a strong opposition to Shimon Peres.

The second stage began in the late 1960s, after a short lull in military relations following the events that led to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965, and was strengthened after the CERBERUS project took off in 1972. This stage was characterized by the foreign intelligence services of both countries acting as service-providers for their respective military establishments. The Mossad and BND were handling different aspects of the secret military relations, which by their operational nature required the use of intelligence methods for camouflage, secret transfer of funds and the provision of secure civilian services. Thus the foreign intelligence services became, in reality if not in policy, an integral part of the military relations. This integration eliminated much of the internal competition on the national level between the intelligence services and the military establishment over reaping the benefits of the German-Israeli cooperation.

German-Israeli security cooperation significantly enhanced the military capabilities of both countries, as well as providing them with a larger degree of independence in the design and manufacture of weapon systems, with its economic export and technological benefits. On the Israeli side, cooperation with Germany gave Israel the technological and military means that made a considerable contribution to its military victories of 1967, 1973, and 1982. It also contributed greatly to the development of Israel's military high-tech industries and thus to the country's economic growth on the whole.⁸ On the German side, cooperation with Israel significantly enhanced the Bundeswehr's main land and air weapon systems in the 1970s and 1980s. It enabled Germany to produce and procure systems especially designed with the Bundeswehr's requirements in mind,⁹ as well as diversify its weapon supply and become less dependent on the US as a main supplier. It also made a distinct contribution to German military capabilities within NATO's overall strategy against a possible Soviet Union invasion of Western Europe. Details of these military achievements are discussed later in the article.

The element of secrecy played a crucial role in security relations. Firstly, the strategic superiority of jointly developed systems depended on the

⁸ For the economic impact of military industries on the Israeli economy see Y. Evron, *The Defense Industries of Israel* (Heb.), Tel Aviv 1980, pp. 184–194, 227–233 (henceforth: Evron, *Defense Industries*).

⁹ The TORNADO was a tri-national project with Britain, Germany, and Italy contributing to its development. However, the German Luftwaffe required a particular electronic system – the CERBERUS – that was tailor-made for the problems it faced on NATO's Central Front.

enemy being kept ignorant of their capabilities. This ensured that the enemy would be unable to develop appropriate counter-measures. Secondly, and more importantly, were the political risks of exposure. The political risks Germany faced from its military cooperation with Israel became even higher after the 1973 Arab oil embargo. However, the risks were not always one-sided. It should be noted that earlier Israeli governments faced internal political risks in military cooperation with Germany at a time when Israeli public opinion was strongly against any form of relations with the Federal Republic, let alone supplying it with arms. However, throughout four decades of close and expanding cooperation, both the Israeli and German governments perceived the benefits of this cooperation to be greater than the risks of possible exposure. Both sides went to great lengths to hide or camouflage their cooperation. But even in the few instances when these relations were discovered they were not abandoned – they merely changed their appearance, and like a military chameleon resurfaced quickly in parallel fields. This well illustrates the importance attached by both sides to this cooperation, as well as the success of the intelligence communities in developing resilient interpersonal relations between key officials. During times of crisis it was often this personal element, rather than firm policies dictated from above, which made the difference between success and failure and contributed to the attainment of many of the common goals of this cooperation.

“Here the Arabs, There North Vietnam!”

Throughout the Cold War and even later, Israel and Germany shared strong common military interests. Although both countries never faced the same military enemy in the field¹⁰ (East German assistance to Syria during the 1973 war notwithstanding), they did face on their immediate borders similar Soviet-made weapon systems, ranging from tanks and armored vehicles to sophisticated missiles, radar, and aircraft. Both countries possessed, or acquired over time, specific knowledge or technologies that the other desired. Thus the three main prerequisites for effective military cooperation – common interests, common threats, and specialist knowledge or technologies – were fulfilled. Common interests enabled joint

¹⁰ Although in the late 1960s and early 1970s there were indications of the presence of East German military instructors in Egypt, especially pilots and aviation instructors.

work towards achieving targets that would provide benefits or advance these interests. Common threats in this regard meant being faced with similar military, technical, or ideological threats. Specialist knowledge or technologies were the “coins” or substance that were exchanged between the two sides.

Kurt Birrenbach, the architect of German–Israeli diplomatic relations, emphasized at an open lecture in 1967: “Here the Arabs – There North Vietnam!”¹¹ This equation reflected the opinion of many German decision-makers, on both sides of the political spectrum, who perceived Israel as an integral part of the Western alliance in the Cold War. They considered Israel’s defense not only a moral obligation but also a strategic bulwark against the expanding Soviet influence in the Middle East. Such political figures as CSU leader Franz-Josef Strauss, SPD security expert Fritz Erler, and the Free Democratic leader Erich Mende lent their support, openly or covertly, to the security relations with Israel not only due to a historical commitment but because of the role they perceived this cooperation played in enhancing German and western defense potential.

German–Israeli military cooperation was aimed at achieving four targets: Improving military capabilities; saving time and money in research and development of military projects; enhancing indigenous military industries and manufacturing capacities; and maintaining the relations for their own sake, often referred to as relational dynamics. Many of the joint initiatives and projects were aimed at improving the military capabilities of both countries. The acquisition of Soviet military technologies, the development of electronic countermeasures, ships and submarines, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and ammunition all affected significantly the military capabilities of the Bundeswehr and the IDF, respectively. The acquisition of Soviet military technologies enabled a significant reduction in the time needed for research and development of major weapon systems. This element of arms manufacturing is of critical importance for the usefulness and life span of the system – a system that is too late in the making will only be effective against older enemy designs. Military technology advances at a rapid pace, and any advantage in product development times can improve not only its military value but also its export marketability.¹²

¹¹ Kurt Birrenbach in a speech at Cologne University, 9 June 1967. Christian Democratic Archives (CDA), Sankt Augustin, I-433, 162/2.

¹² For the development of the German military industries and their world-wide exports see H. J. Bontrup, *Die deutsche Ruestungsindustrie*, Heilbronn 1988.

Most of the German-Israeli military cooperation in the area of military hardware involved, exclusively, indigenous industries cooperating bilaterally. Unlike the growing trend of multinational cooperation in the arms world, there was very little cooperation with third countries. The technological work involved enhanced the research and design capacity of both countries in the field of military technologies. Many of the joint projects also had an impact on the arms exports of both countries. Military systems designed in Germany for Israel, such as the Luerssen boats, the "Gal" and "Dolphin" class submarines, or systems designed in Israel for Germany, such as CERBERUS, tank munitions, and aviation systems, involved technological breakthroughs. These exports, in turn, also improved the employment situation in industries that supplied sub-assemblies and parts for those programs.¹³

Last but not least, military and intelligence cooperation developed its own institutional momentum. As one former head of the Mossad noted, "You know who your friends are today, but you can't know who you will need as friends tomorrow...."¹⁴ Cooperation was also enhanced by the development of a multitude of personal relations among critical decision-makers, often mid-level defense or intelligence executives, and by long-term institutional interests. Even in issues where there seemed to be no apparent immediate benefit, intelligence services and defense establishments seemed ready to assist their bilateral partners abroad because of standing patterns of cooperation.¹⁵

Intelligence Cooperation

Intelligence cooperation between the BND and the Israeli Mossad was initiated by BND president General Reinhard Gehlen. In 1956, Gehlen

¹³ For a discussion on the unemployment and arms production issue see U. Albrecht and P. Lock, *Mit Ruestung gegen Arbeitslosigkeit?* Rheinbek 1982.

¹⁴ In an interview with the author.

¹⁵ This was noted in several of the interviews conducted by the author with former defense and intelligence officials in both countries. Individual relations, even friendships, played a role in assuring direct access to key decision-makers. For example, after the 1991 discovery in Hamburg of arms smuggled to Israel by the BMVg and BND, German officials complained of the free access the Israeli military attaché enjoyed at the BMVg. The Israeli attaché was apparently the only one of over 100 such attachés posted in Bonn who did not coordinate his visits through the official channels and was not accompanied by the attaché referent.

dispatched one of his close confidants, known under the cover name of "Dr. Schmidt," to the Mossad with the request to cooperate over issues of common interest to both services. Until 1955 the BND was run as a semi-private organization, funded and controlled by the CIA. Gehlen wanted to expand his service's worldwide connections independently from the Americans. He was also concerned about his declining ability to provide information gained behind the Iron Curtain.

During the Second World War, Gehlen had been the intelligence chief of the Third Reich's Eastern Front and was very successful in developing agent networks all over Eastern Europe and inside the Soviet Union. In early 1945, knowing the war was lost, he arranged to hide copies of his extensive archives in the western part of Germany, which he knew would be occupied by US forces. After the collapse of Nazi Germany, Gehlen surrendered to the Americans and offered his services to the US Army intelligence, later the CIA. The Americans, lacking all but the very basic information on their wartime allies, the Russians, welcomed the former enemy who could keep running his networks behind the Iron Curtain. Gehlen quickly developed an impressive organization based in Pullach, south of Munich. However, by the mid 1950s the intelligence capabilities of many of his networks were declining, due to age and operational fatigue.

Initial Mossad reactions to the German offer were cool. It was known that Gehlen employed a large number of former Nazi criminals and members of the SS in his organization. But the need for operational freedom in Germany and the German-speaking origins of many Mossad officers made a decision to cooperate with the BND inevitable. The head of the Mossad, Isser Harel, ordered a meeting between senior Mossad operatives in Europe and the BND chief. The successful meeting resulted in a firm decision on behalf of both services to create a framework for cooperation which would benefit both of them.¹⁶ The BND had much it could offer Israel, especially as it was actively developing relations with Arab countries, particularly Egypt. BND representatives, many of whom were former ardent Nazis, proved to be welcome guests in many Arab capitals, and through their activities the BND could offer the Mossad information it required. In return, Gehlen needed information on Eastern Europe, which the Mossad could amply supply through its extensive sources.

¹⁶ Author's interviews with Isser Harel.

Gehlen entrusted one of his close confidants, General Wolfgang Langkau, often known to his Israeli partners under the cover-names Langendorf or Holten, to be the liaison officer with the Mossad.¹⁷ Langkau was an experienced intelligence officer who headed the "Strategic Service," a small independent group within the BND which was answerable directly to the BND president.¹⁸ Langkau came to respect the Mossad's professionalism and its constant flow of reliable information, and became one of the Mossad's strongest supporters in Pullach. He developed good relations with Mossad head Meir Amit, who took over from Harel in 1962, and with the Mossad liaison officers to the BND.

The BND need for closer cooperation with the Mossad became paramount after the arrest, in November 1961, of Heinz Felfe, a senior BND official who had for many years been a mole for the Soviets.¹⁹ Felfe's treachery inflicted severe damage on the BND and its operations in Eastern Europe by betraying to the Soviets most of the BND networks behind the Iron Curtain, developed and nurtured over more than fifteen years. Felfe passed on to his KGB controllers tens-of-thousands of secretly copied documents detailing BND plans, structure, personnel, agents, and communications. After his arrest, the Soviet security services rounded up dozens of BND agents, many of whom were tried and executed. It is estimated that as a result of Felfe's work at least sixty people lost their lives, and he betrayed virtually every ongoing BND operation in Eastern Europe.²⁰ Almost overnight the BND had lost most of its important sources of information and its political survival was at stake.

¹⁷ BND personnel are assigned cover-names for operational use. These cover-names often begin with the same letter as the person's real surname. Many of the Mossad officers never knew the real names of their BND counterparts since cover-names were used even on social occasions. For "Holten," see F. P. Heigl and J. Saupe, *Operation EVA: die Affäre Langemann – eine Dokumentation*, [Hamburg] 1982, p. 81 (henceforth: Heigl and Saupe, *Operation EVA*).

¹⁸ Langkau, born in 1903, served during the Third Reich as an artillery officer, and after the end of the war joined the OG. In 1957, he was appointed to head the "Strategic Office," which he headed until his retirement in 1968. Partially as a mark of success of his relations with Israel, he was appointed in 1962 to the rank of Brigadegeneral. See H. Hoehne and H. Zolling, *Pullach intern: General Gehlen und die Geschichte des Bundesnachrichtendienstes*, Hamburg 1971, p. 207, and author's interviews with former intelligence officials.

¹⁹ Felfe, born in 1918, served during WWII in the RSHA and the Gestapo. After the war, a former SS colleague introduced him into the BND. For an account of Felfe's exposure and arrest see *ibid.*, pp. 221–240.

²⁰ On 22 July 1963, Felfe was sentenced to fourteen years imprisonment but was released, as part of a spy exchange deal, as early as 1969. See J. Piekalkiewicz, *Weltgeschichte der Spionage*, Munich 1988, p. 465.

Personally shocked by the disastrous treachery of such a close friend and colleague, Gehlen entrusted the rebuilding of the BND almost from scratch to General Langkau.²¹ Gehlen and Langkau realized that for keeping even some semblance of effective collection in Eastern Europe the BND had to rely on extensive cooperation with an external foreign intelligence service, which could provide up-to-date information that in turn the BND could present as its own. This at least as a temporary measure, until new agent networks could be developed over a period of several years. Both men did not trust either the British nor the French intelligence services. The French services were at the time preoccupied with the conflict in Algeria, while the British were busily pulling back from their former colonies and not enthusiastic to share any information with Gehlen, whom they considered to be "as leaky as a sieve."²² Another reason which made Gehlen reluctant to count on the British or French was their wish to keep exclusive control of intelligence relations with the newly-independent African states, an area in which Gehlen and many German politicians wanted to expand their activities and which was fast becoming another arena in the East–West bipolar conflict. Neither did Gehlen want to return to a total dependency on the CIA, having gained independence from the Americans only six years previously. The BND was, therefore, pushing for even closer cooperation with Israel.

In the 1960s, BND–Mossad cooperation was focused on the collection of military and political information. The Mossad was able to supply the Germans with a wide range of information on the GDR and eastern Europe, enabling the BND leadership to present the German government with extensive reports on the situation behind the Iron Curtain. In 1968, for example, the Mossad delivered to the BND a coup which was used by the German service to enhance its prestige and reliability with the Federal Government: the Mossad provided the BND with details on the impending Soviet military action in Czechoslovakia to crush the so-called "Prague Spring." This early warning was presented to the German government as having come from the BND's own sources and made a great impression on members of the great coalition.²³

²¹ Heigl and Saupe, *Operation EVA*, p. 81.

²² Author's interview with former intelligence officials.

²³ The author has confirmed this with a former senior German politician who received this information at first hand.

In the 1970s, German-Israeli intelligence cooperation, previously directed mainly against the Soviet Union, took a new turn. The expanding activities of international terrorism presented both Germany and Israel with a new form of security threat, one that could not be countered by simply having more tanks or combat aircraft. Effective counter-terrorist measures required precise intelligence on a myriad of targets. The massacre of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, as well as the ignominious failure of the German police to rescue the hostages, presented the German authorities with an urgent need to learn from other countries' anti-terror experience. Israel stood at the forefront of counter-terrorist warfare and provided the German intelligence services with extensive support in the fight against German urban terrorist groups, including the "Red Army Faction" and the "Revolutionary Cells."

German-Israeli anti-terror cooperation further strengthened following the participation of German terrorists in Palestinian attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets, notably the kidnapping of an Air France flight to Entebbe in 1976. The Mossad offered its German counterparts assistance in establishing a special anti-terror police unit, the GSG-9, which proved its capabilities in a daring rescue in Mogadishu in 1977. The GSG-9 was modeled after an Israeli unit, the YAMAM special police anti-terror group. Following the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Israel was able to supply the German security services with extensive information on the activities and identities of German terrorists who trained at PLO camps in Lebanon. Intelligence cooperation was extended in the 1990s against radical Islamic terror groups emanating from Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Chechnya.

Military Cooperation

Initial military contacts between Germany and Israel can be traced to the early 1950s, when representatives of the Israeli Ministry of Defense were scouring Western Europe for arms and munitions for their new state, which was under a US and British regional arms embargo. ImoD representatives in Germany, based at the Israel Mission in Cologne, built up a network of contacts among industrialists and businessmen involved in rebuilding Germany's war-ruined economy. Their main aim was to locate new sources of weapons for Israel, mainly German wartime surplus arms not required by the US-armed Bundeswehr, such as bolt-action rifles, light

machine guns, and ammunition.²⁴ Such arms were purchased and shipped to Israel via France or Belgium, in order to camouflage the origins of the weapons.²⁵ These deals were not on a government-to-government basis but conducted through individual dealers and contacts. The IMoD representatives were also responsible for promoting the products of the newly established Israeli Military Industries throughout Europe.

The first major German-Israeli arms deal involved providing vessels for the Israeli navy, which in the early 1950s was equipped with a motley collection of ancient vessels, most of which were used to transport illegal immigrants to Palestine, captured by the British and left to rust for years in the port of Haifa.²⁶ These old vessels were totally unfit for defending Israel's long Mediterranean coastline against the vastly superior Egyptian navy. Germany, with its long expertise in building military ships and its shipyards eager for new orders, was the ideal place for purchasing new boats for Israel.

In July 1956 and July 1957, respectively, two motor patrol boats were delivered to the Israel Navy by the "Jachts & Bootswerft Burmester" in Bremen.²⁷ The boats were commissioned in the Israeli navy under the names "Yarden" and "Yarkon." Often referred to as the "Y-Class," each ship carried an armament of two 20mm cannon and a crew of sixteen, with an impressive speed of 22 knots. They were later presented to the Israeli public as having been built in Israel, a weak cover story since in 1956 Israel possessed neither an indigenous shipbuilding industry nor the required design skills and expertise.²⁸ The delivery of the second boat was not affected by the October 1956 Suez war.²⁹ These boats served for several decades with the Israeli navy, first as combat patrol ships and later converted into training ships for new crews. The "Yarden" was renovated in 1976 by Israel Ship-

²⁴ The standard infantry weapons of the IDF for its first decade were WWII German-made 7.92mm bolt-action rifle and machine-gun.

²⁵ Some of these weapon shipments were flown by Leo Gardner, a veteran covert operations pilot for the Israeli arms procurement. Two years later Gardner made an emergency landing in a small Algerian city with his plane full of bazookas, headed for the Dominican Republic dictator, Rafael Trujillo. See A. and L. Cockburn, *Dangerous Liaison*, New York 1991, p. 161 (henceforth: Cockburn, *Dangerous Liaison*).

²⁶ For the early development of the Israeli navy see I. Shoshan, *The Last Battle of I.N.S. "Eilat"* (Heb.), Tel Aviv 1993, pp. 65–69 (henceforth: Shoshan, *Last Battle*).

²⁷ U. Albrecht, *Politik und Waffengeschäfte*, Munich 1972, p. 36.

²⁸ See the Israel Navy volume of the *IDF Encyclopaedia* (Heb.), Tel Aviv 1982, p. 180.

²⁹ See *Janes Fighting Ships 1971–72*, Coulsdon 1971, p. 178.

yards Ltd. and turned into a training ship for new navy recruits.³⁰ The two were only decommissioned in the 1980s, a witness to the rugged original design.

The Israeli military success of the 1956 Suez campaign did not blind Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and the IMoD to Israel's dire inferiority in all weapon systems against the Arab armies.³¹ The success of the Suez campaign itself depended to a large degree on arms shipments rushed from France virtually on the eve of battle.³² Even for its anti-aircraft defenses Israel had to rely on French naval ships stationed off its coast.³³ The war demonstrated the capabilities of Israeli military commanders in successfully conducting large-scale ground battles, but also demonstrated the military lack of almost all types of weapons and ammunition. Moreover, the political defeat of the British and French forces, forced to withdraw from Egypt under American pressure, drove a hard lesson home to Israeli strategic decision-makers. The country now had to develop and diversify its arms supplies.³⁴ An arms embargo or a protracted war could bring an end to the young Israeli state. Ben-Gurion therefore embarked on a policy of trying to obtain arms from Germany, at any price. The resulting arms deliveries from Germany to Israel are well detailed in existing literature. However, what was not known so far is that beyond the covert German deliveries, much of the weapons considered by conventional wisdom to be French deliveries were actually financed by Germany, who paid directly to the French government for deliveries to Israel. These included Fouga-Magister and Nordatlas aircraft, Sikorski helicopters, and equipment for the Israeli paratroopers.

In the wake of secret understandings concluded between Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Peres and German Defense Minister Strauss, a series of

³⁰ H. Fock, *Schnellboote – Die Entwicklung von 1974 bis Heute*, Hereford 1986, p. 113.

³¹ For accounts of the Israeli military operations during the Suez campaign see the relevant chapters in A. J. Barker, *Arab-Israeli Wars*, Shepperton 1980; S. Bailey, *Four Arab-Israeli Wars and the Peace Process*, London 1990.

³² To preserve secrecy, French ships transported tanks, military vehicles and ammunition across the Mediterranean. The supplies were then covertly loaded unto small landing craft which put ashore in secluded places in the north of Israel at night-time. See D. Shaham, *Israel – 40 Years* (Heb.), Tel Aviv 1991, p. 129 (henceforth: Shaham, *Israel*); see also Shoshan, *Last Battle*, pp. 109–113.

³³ Israeli forces experienced shortages in all forms of artillery. French warships even had to assist with their cannon Israeli ground forces during the fighting in Gaza. Shoshan, *Last Battle*, pp. 113–118.

³⁴ Shaham, *Israel*, pp. 166–171.

arms deliveries took place from Germany to Israel in the years 1960–1964.³⁵ These deliveries were camouflaged and were routed through a series of cutouts, so as not to be recognizable as having come from German stocks.³⁶ German markings were removed from the weapons before shipment, and Israeli crews were told these weapons came from France.³⁷ These deliveries, which included tanks, anti-tank weapons and infantry systems, markedly improved the fighting capabilities of the IDF.

At the same time, Israel began selling to Germany its newly developed Uzi submachine-gun, a weapon which would gain world fame for its reliability and ruggedness. The Uzi submachine-gun was invented by Israeli Colonel Uziel Gal in the early 1950s and produced at Israel's fledgling military industries.³⁸ Gal, son of a German Imperial Army veteran who fought as an aerial gunner in the First World War, designed the weapon as a cheap and rugged infantry gun, impervious to dirt or sand. The Uzi design proved extremely robust, with guns having a life cycle of over 30 years.³⁹ As the German Bundeswehr was created in 1955, its armaments experts searched for a submachine-gun to equip tank corps and artillery soldiers. In a grueling competition, the Uzi design had proved its battle worthiness over similar guns from other countries. German adoption of the Uzi as a standard weapon for the Bundeswehr kept Israel's military industries going at a time of drastic reductions in local purchases, following the 1956 Suez campaign. It also turned the Uzi, a virtually unknown weapon, into an export success, with millions of units being exported all over the world. Media revelations of the deal, published in June 1959, caused a public uproar in Israel which resulted in the resignation of Ben-Gurion's government. But military Israeli exports to Germany were only beginning.

Five years later, it was again the media which reported about German arms transfers to Israel, revelations that brought about the Birrenbach

³⁵ These are best termed "understandings" since they were no written agreements. As Peres explained many years later, "We worked out nothing which can be described as formal agreement. However, we reached a considerable degree of understanding. We did not bother ourselves too much with putting things in writing..." Gardner-Feldman, *Special Relationship*, p. 124.

³⁶ Some weapons were shipped via Amsterdam, others via Italy. See various documents dealing with the arms transfers at CDA I-433, 133/2, and 088/1.

³⁷ Often weapons were described as having come from Austria or Switzerland so as to explain any German-language markings or instructions, since it was technically impossible to completely remove all markings. Author's interview with former Israeli intelligence officials and diplomats.

³⁸ For the development of the Uzi see J. Evron, *Israel's Military Industries* (Heb.), Tel Aviv 1980, pp. 161–162.

³⁹ See Cockburn, *Dangerous Liaison*, p. 156.

missions and the initiation of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel. However, despite declarations made by successive German governments that no weapons were sold to Israel, military cooperation which did not involve actual arms transfers to Israel continued at even a higher pace. This cooperation took the form of joint arms design and development, the evaluation of enemy weapon systems, and the exchange of technologies and training skills.

In the late 1960s the French wharf *Constructions Mécaniques de Normandie* (CMN) at Cherbourg produced for Israel a revolutionary new type of missile boat, designed by the German firm Luerssen. These boats later gained fame as they were smuggled out of France by the Mossad in 1969, following a French arms embargo on Israel.⁴⁰ The Cherbourg boats formed the backbone of the astounding Israeli naval successes in the 1973 war.

The assistance Israel provided to Germany in developing its major weapon systems, including the LEOPARD II main battle tank, enhanced the Bundeswehr's military capabilities and thus contributed directly to NATO's military position on its central front. The indigenous development and production of tanks in post-war Germany began in 1957 with the first studies of the Bundeswehr's requirements for tank warfare. These resulted in the LEOPARD I design, a light tank which entered service with the Bundeswehr in 1965.⁴¹ It was armed with a NATO-standard 105mm cannon. The LEOPARD I was exported widely and used by Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, and Norway. However, the lightly armored LEOPARD I was deemed unsuitable against the new generation of Soviet tanks deployed on Germany's eastern border in the late 1960s, and a replacement design was urgently required.

After a failed attempt by the German government to develop a new tank jointly with the USA, mainly due to lack of agreement over the main armament,⁴² the Bundeswehr issued requirements for a new German design.

⁴⁰ It seems that Peres, estimating that the Germans would not budge in 1965 on the boats issue, already contacted the Cherbourg wharf beforehand to be sure it could and was willing to carry out such an order. The owner of the Cherbourg wharf, Felix Amio, visited Israel together with a former French vice-admiral and discussed the issue in detail with the IMoD and senior naval officers. The author was not able to verify, however, whether this visit took place before or after the Birrenbach missions. See Shoshan, *Last Battle*, pp. 171–172.

⁴¹ R. Ogorkiewicz, *Technologies of Tanks*, London 1991, pp. 53–56.

⁴² The Americans demanded the use of missiles, the Germans preferred the more conservative approach of using traditional cannon as main armament.

The resulting product, designated LEOPARD II Main Battle Tank (MBT), was Germany's second largest-ever armaments project.⁴³ In accordance with NATO STANAG agreements, the new tank should have carried NATO's standard 105mm cannon, an American design adopted by all NATO member states. But during the development phase, German designers became doubtful of this cannon's ability against the armor of the main Soviet adversary, the modified T-62. The Bundeswehr turned to the BND asking for assistance in evaluating its new requirements against real-life Soviet armor, rather than relying on American theoretical designs.⁴⁴

At the time, Israel already possessed data on older Soviet tank designs, captured from Arab armies in the 1956 and 1967 wars. But it was only during the October 1973 Yom Kippur war that a number of the newer T-62 models fell intact into Israeli hands. An urgent BND request was made to the Mossad asking for parts of the T-62 armor, to be used for evaluation for the LEOPARD II program. Early in 1974, BND officials made arrangements to have several T-62s delivered in complete secrecy to Germany. The tanks were shipped in a Czechoslovakian-registered ship from Israel to an unknown destination and from there to the port of Wilhelmshaven. Bundeswehr soldiers, assigned to the BND and made to sign special secrecy declarations, unloaded the tanks at Wilhelmshaven. The shipment, camouflaged inside wooden containers, comprised two complete T-62s, two T-62 armored hulls without the turrets showing battle damage, and two other tanks. A special heavily guarded freight train took the tanks to the Bundeswehr's testing grounds at Meppen. The soldiers were ordered to keep the entire operation secret under the highest security classification.⁴⁵

German experts at Meppen carried out extensive evaluations of the Soviet tanks. The different hits, by Israeli weapons on the captured hulls, enabled analysis of the penetrating capability of the NATO standard 105mm cannon, also used by Israel, against the Soviet armor. Firing tests were also carried out against the armor plates supplied. The result of these tests were conclusive – they showed that the NATO 105mm cannon was not

⁴³ The biggest was the TORNADO, in which, as will be discussed below, Israel was also deeply involved. For analysis of the LEOPARD program and its costs see *Die konventionelle Aufrüstung für die 90er Jahre: aus den Schubladen des Bundesverteidigungsministeriums: Analysen und Dokumente*, ed. Annemarie Borgmann et al., Kassel-Bettenhausen 1984, pp. 35–41.

⁴⁴ The role of Israel in the development of the LEOPARD II was reconstructed from several interviews made by the author.

⁴⁵ The author was able to interview one of the officers who led that unit.

sufficiently powered to effectively attack modern Soviet tanks. This led the Bundeswehr to take the unusual step of requiring that the new LEOPARD II be equipped with a non-NATO-standard 120mm smooth-bore cannon. This requirement, which caused grave consternation at NATO headquarters and was protested by the US, was a direct result of the technical evaluations of the Soviet armor provided by Israel.⁴⁶

The LEOPARD II entered service with the Bundeswehr in the early 1980s. The BND-Mossad cooperation over its design led to closer contacts and cooperation between German and Israeli tank designers and manufacturing firms. Further cooperation was made in the design of tank ammunition and tracks.⁴⁷ The other side of this joint development work was the incorporation of the very same 120mm cannon into the Israeli MERKAVA III tank, a decade after its introduction in the LEOPARD II.⁴⁸ Thus a circle was closed, in which Israeli designers, who assisted Germany in the development of its main battle tank, adopted the German gun design into their state-of-the-art armor system.

Israel, Germany, and NATO

The German Bundeswehr was created as a military force fully integrated within NATO's command and control structures. It was the strongest European army in NATO, and its capabilities, though augmented by US and British forces stationed in West Germany, played a major part in NATO military planning against a possible Soviet invasion of western Europe.

In the 1970s, Germany's most secret military project ever, code-named CERBERUS, led the way for the development of the European fighter-bomber aircraft TORNADO, characterized by German Chancellor Schmidt as "the biggest armaments project since the birth of Christ."⁴⁹ CERBERUS, a system of electronic counter-measures still secret even today, gave the Luftwaffe the ability to attack targets deep behind the Iron Curtain, gaining

⁴⁶ This point was clearly made in interviews, including one with a former member of the LEOPARD II design team.

⁴⁷ *Wehrtechnik*, August 1986, p.38.

⁴⁸ The MERKAVA III was first publicly revealed in 1989. Its 120mm cannon, made by Israel Military Industries (IMI), is similar in design and ballistics to the German design.

⁴⁹ Helmut Schmidt on the TORNADO project during a Bundestag debate. Quoted in the *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 24 December 1988.

a decisive advantage against the Warsaw Pact anti-aircraft missile systems. The system was secretly developed by Israeli firms for Germany. To preserve secrecy, the running of the project was entrusted to the intelligence services on both sides. Germany paid over DM 1.6 billion over the course of twelve years for this project, and these payments were kept so secret that even the Bundestag Defense Committee was kept in the dark. Only in the early 1990s was the German parliament informed of the true extent of secret cooperation with Israel over the CERBERUS project.⁵⁰

The security significance of the CERBERUS project can only be fully understood when examined within the context of NATO's overall strategy for a possible major war in Europe against the Warsaw Pact powers. While the CERBERUS program in itself involved considerable technical innovation and cooperation, it was the place of the CERBERUS technology within the Luftwaffe's overall strategy that made its success a major linchpin in Germany's performance in an all-out European war. NATO's move from a strategy based on nuclear "massive retaliation"⁵¹ to that of "flexible response"⁵² in 1967/68 depended on having the capabilities to accurately deliver tactical nuclear weapons over targets in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.⁵³ This ability, in which the TORNADO aircraft played a major role as a carrier of tactical nuclear weapons, had to be maintained if a strong deterrence posture was to deter the Soviet Union from undertaking military action against Western Europe.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ A Bundestag Committee of Investigation was instituted to investigate the CERBERUS project after allegations of mismanagement and lack of reporting were brought by the parliamentary opposition.

⁵¹ A concept denoting retaliation by all available nuclear weapons, the aim being that the potential damage to the enemy from such an all-out strike would be so great as to deter in advance any move towards war.

⁵² Whereby NATO has the capability to respond with nuclear weapons in proportion to the attack launched against it. This requires, of course, more diverse delivery methods that would survive a nuclear attack and still maintain such an effective response as to deter attack in the first place. See K.-H. Kamp, *Die Nuklearen Kurzstreckenwaffen der NATO 1945–1991: Strategie und Politik*, Sankt Augustin 1993, pp. 121–184 (henceforth: Kamp, *Die Nuklearen Kurzstreckenwaffen*).

⁵³ There is an extensive body of literature on NATO nuclear strategy. A good summary of its pros and cons can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 15–31; for the move from "massive retaliation" to "flexible response" see pp. 98–110. For more detailed analyses see J. Baylis and J. Garnett, *Makers of Nuclear Strategy*, London 1991; D. Charles, *Nuclear Planning in NATO*, Cambridge 1987; D. Cotter, *The Nuclear Balance in Europe*, Washington 1987; M. Legge, *Theater Nuclear Weapons and NATO Strategy of Flexible Response*, Santa Monica 1983.

⁵⁴ A. Mechttersheimer, *MRCA TORNADO – Ruestung und Politik in der Bundesrepublik*, Bad Honnef 1977, pp. 99–108 (henceforth: Mechttersheimer, *MRCA TORNADO*).

Against the strategic threat of a massive conventional Warsaw Pact attack, the Bundeswehr, as part of NATO's defenses in central Europe, relied on response with tactical nuclear weapons. And since Germany, unlike France and Britain, did not possess any strategic nuclear missiles, its reliance on air-delivered tactical nuclear warheads was greater than any other NATO country. As Germany was not allowed to have its own nuclear weapons, these warheads were jointly controlled by the US and German forces.⁵⁵ The capability to deliver these weapons effectively despite strong Soviet air defenses was perceived by German strategic planners as a major contribution to NATO's overall nuclear strategy.⁵⁶ This contribution depended on the success of CERBERUS to enable the nuclear-carrying TORNADOs to penetrate Soviet airspace with minimal losses and deliver the nuclear weapons over their target.

The technological advances of Project CERBERUS later formed the basis for Israeli airforce successes against the Syrians during the 1982 Lebanon campaign, when sixteen Syrian missile batteries were destroyed on one day and over 120 Syrian aircraft shot down without a single Israeli loss. The sphere of electronic warfare and electronic counter-measures remained one of close cooperation between Israel and Germany. As Federal German forces went into combat action for the first time, flying air missions over the former Yugoslavia in the mid 1990s, they chose Israeli electronic warfare systems for protection against Serbian missiles.⁵⁷ During the 1999 Kosovo campaign, German forces used Israeli counter-radar systems and German tanks carried Israeli-designed ammunition, manufactured under license in Germany.

Post-Unification Security Cooperation

Following the German unification, Israel received from Germany, through its cooperation with the BND and BMVg, numerous Soviet weapon systems of the former East German Army (NVA), now incorporated into the Bundeswehr. Similar weapons were also being used by Iraq, and their

⁵⁵ For the issue of US-German command sharing arrangements over nuclear weapons, often referred to as "dual-key systems," see Kamp, *Die Nuklearen Kurzstreckenwaffen*, pp. 200–233.

⁵⁶ For the strategic and tactical deployment of Soviet air defenses in the Warsaw Pact countries see Mechttersheimer, *MRCA TORNADO*, p. 50.

⁵⁷ Shlomo Shpiro, "German-Israeli Strategic Partnership," *Internationale Politik*, 55, no. 9 (September 2000), p. 43.

evaluation became critical for Israel following Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and threats to attack Israel. For security reasons, as well as the restrictive German military export controls, arms shipments to Israel were camouflaged by the BND as civilian goods.

In October 1991, police at the port of Hamburg discovered a shipment comprising fourteen containers full of arms from the former NVA which were to be loaded on an Israeli ship. The weapons, including heavy tracked vehicles, were camouflaged and marked as agricultural machinery. This discovery caused a media and political furor. The arms were confiscated by port customs as illegal deliveries and an official investigation was set up to examine the issue of arms transfers to Israel. Two senior BND officers were put on trial for offences against Germany's export laws. Both were later acquitted.⁵⁸ The intercepted shipment, however, was preceded by no less than fourteen successful ones containing dozens of arms and vehicles. An illustration to the resilience of German-Israeli military cooperation can be seen by the fact that, despite a public outcry and the political scandal that ensued, the very same arms confiscated by the police in Hamburg were later still delivered, through another way, to Israel. In addition to the delivery of NVA weapons, Israeli airforce personnel were covertly invited to participate in the technical trials of MiG-29 fighter aircraft conducted by the Luftwaffe.

Media and public opinion outcry over the massive involvement of German firms in Saddam Hussein's program for weapons of mass destruction set the stage for a further German-Israeli military project, the design and construction of the "Dolphin Class" submarine. German wharves had a long tradition of leading submarine design and construction skills. However, by the early 1990s, the end of the Cold War signaled a decline in the demand for diesel submarines worldwide. The Israel Navy was keen to have German-built submarines to replace its old fleet, but their enormous cost far exceeded Israel's defense budget capacity. An attempt was even made to use US military assistance funds for submarine construction in Germany, but that did not come to fruition.

The financial breakthrough came during the early stage of the Gulf War in January 1991. German policymakers, hard-pressed by revelations in the international media over the role of German firms in arming Iraq, and especially in providing Saddam Hussein with chemical and biological

⁵⁸ Author's interview with a former intelligence official closely involved in this affair.

weapons capabilities, searched for a suitable gesture to pacify the ensuing Israeli and American outcries. They looked into Israeli military requirements and the issue of submarines re-surfaced immediately. After Iraqi missile attacks on Israel, the German government announced that it would pay for the construction of two submarines in German shipyards as part of the emergency package of assistance it was offering Israel.⁵⁹

While in itself undoubtably a major contribution to Israel's maritime security, German generosity in funding the project combined the political need to counter Israeli complaints with the military need to preserve design and manufacturing capabilities for the German Navy. In the 1980s, the German Navy was deploying a fleet of twenty four submarines, some almost twenty years old.⁶⁰ The Bundesmarine planned to modernize its submarine fleet by introducing new boats, the "Class 212," in the early 1990s.⁶¹ However, the declining military threat in the Baltic area and the collapse of the Soviet Union brought these plans to a halt and the new submarines, planned to go into service in 1992, remained only on the drawing board. The German Ministry of Defense, therefore, had a strong interest in having a "bridging" project to keep German submarine manufacturing capabilities intact until funding could be found for a new generation of submarines for the Bundesmarine. It also meant that new submarines for the Bundesmarine would be cheaper, since much of the research and development costs were already absorbed in the Israeli project.

The submarines constructed for Israel represented the most advanced technology of underwater warfare. They entered service with the Israeli navy in 1999 and 2000, significantly expanding Israel's strategic naval forces. Foreign sources speculated over the capability of these submarines to launch long-range weapons such as cruise missiles.⁶² If this be the case, it would significantly enhance Israel's deterrence against "second tier" states such as Iraq and Iran.

⁵⁹ This part of the "immediate" assistance may have baffled experts, who realized that it would be many years before these submarines would be ready and therefore had no bearing on the conflict at hand, but was accepted at face value by the Israeli media as a significant contribution to Israel's defense. See, for example, *Ha'aretz*, 3 April 1992 (Heb.); *Hadashot*, 16 September 1992 (Heb.).

⁶⁰ *Jane's Fighting Ships 1984/85*, pp. 193–206.

⁶¹ *Wehrtechnik*, November 1986, p. 21.

⁶² In June 2000 there were media reports, later denied by the Israeli government, about an Israeli test-launch of a submarine cruise missile in the Indian Ocean. See *Focus*, no. 27 (3 July 2000), pp. 30–32.

Conclusions

The influence of German-Israeli military cooperation had been very significant on Israel's military victories. Security cooperation with Germany gained for Israel distinct advantages in the three major campaigns fought by the Israeli army since its independence, in the field of land power in the 1967 Six-Day War, naval power in the 1973 Yom-Kippur War, and air power in the 1982 Lebanon war. Due to the absence of German military operations during the same period, it is difficult to make a similar "tactical" appraisal of the Israeli contribution to German military strength. It was only in 1995, when German forces joined the UNPROFOR multinational force dispatched to the former Yugoslavia, that German army units began using Israeli military systems under combat conditions. However, the Israeli contribution to the design of major German weapon systems greatly enhanced Germany's military capabilities. Many indicators point to Israel's part being of major importance to indigenous German arms development. The political willingness on behalf of consecutive German governments to undertake major risks points to the perceived value of the military and intelligence relations at the German end. Most German former military and intelligence officials interviewed for this research agree that the Israeli input into German arms design had significantly improved the Bundeswehr's overall battlefield capabilities and thus contributed to the security of not only Germany but also of NATO as a whole.

While many of the details still remain classified, this article has charted the overall development of German-Israeli security relations and the interests that motivated them. When examining not only the overt German-Israeli relations but also the covert intelligence and military relations, German interests must be defined as twofold, a combination of *Realpolitik* daily needs and of long-term historical perception. It is undeniable that the historical need to come to terms with the Nazi past, not only within German internal politics but also as part of Germany's international acceptance, led to a general policy of support of Israel in the 1950s and 1960s. But as Germany established itself again as a leading economic and military power in Europe, it could allow itself to decrease the intensity of its relations with Israel. What actually happened was not a decrease but indeed an increase, on the covert level. History began to give way to contemporary security requirements, in enhancing Bundeswehr capabilities, preventing

terrorist activities, or developing military exports. The relations between both countries, while still paying passive lip service to their common historical past, had thus moved to a new "special" mode, that of active relations in the security sphere. These relations filled the current needs of both states and came to be considered indispensable for the security of both countries. Secrecy was the prime consideration in preventing a slip into worn historical traps and animosities, as happened in 1964 and again in 1991 when arms shipments from Germany to Israel were revealed in the media. But the value of the covert relations to both sides was so high that these crises could be overcome relatively quickly by finding "technical," not political, solutions. The ways or means changed, but the interests and cooperation targets remained the same.

Military cooperation between Germany and Israel continues through to the present day. In Germany, the Bundeswehr is still in the process of being structurally adapted to meet the needs of future military actions, mainly small-scale peacekeeping operations, far away from NATO's well-stocked supply bases and routes. In Israel, the armed forces are constantly modernizing and adapting their systems in response to new security threats. These threats, emanating not only from immediate neighbors but also from "second tier" states such as Iraq and Iran, require long-range weapons to respond against possible attacks by weapons of mass destruction. The fourth generation of the CERBERUS electronic counter-measures system has recently entered service with the German Luftwaffe, under a new name.⁶³ There are indications suggesting that, during the Gulf War, Germany supplied the British Royal Air Force with CERBERUS devices for use by the RAF TORNADO aircraft operating against Iraq.⁶⁴ Tactical lessons of the Gulf War are being incorporated in both countries into development programs on new generations of main battle tanks.

Current setbacks in the Middle-East peace dialogue notwithstanding, security problems will continue to plague this region for many years to come. While Germany does not face any immediate military threat in Europe, its wish for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council and thus

⁶³ The new generation CERBERUS is now known as the TSPI (Tornado Self Protection Jammer), and was scheduled to go into service in 1999. See German government report to the Bundestag on the CERBERUS program for the years 1994/95, dated 2 November 1995.

⁶⁴ It is unclear whether one or six CERBERUS devices were delivered to the RAF. See M. Inacker, *Unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit? Die Deutschen in der Golfallianz*, Bonn 1991, pp. 95–96.

its growing willingness to actively participate in multinational peace-keeping operations will maintain the Bundeswehr's need for up-to-date weapon systems and intelligence. As military technologies become ever more expensive, the incentives to combine expertise and financing with combat experience and expedient ingenuity will keep German-Israeli security cooperation on the leading edge of technology. The global threat of Islamic radical terrorism, so apparent after the events of 11 September 2001, coupled with the increased international role of Germany, will keep German-Israeli security cooperation thriving in the years to come.

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GENERAL INDEX

- Admiralty Hydrographical Service
(England) 43
- Amsterdam treaty 109
- Anatolian Railway Co. 237
- Anglican Church 18, 19
- Anglican-Prussian Bishopric (Jerusalem)
19-24, 29
- Anglo-Egyptian agreement (1953)
171, 172
- Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC)
76
- Anti-Imperialist Front (AIF; Sudan)
174, 180
- Apostelstrasse (trade route) 197
- Appeal for an Israeli Withdrawal from
Lebanon 154
- Appeal for Peace and a Free Lebanon
154
- Arab League 123, 147, 177, 282 n. 67
Summit (Khartoum, 1967) 141
- Arab national movement 247
- Arab Revolt (in Palestine, 1936) 79
- Aref Doctrine 294
- Association of Jewish Communities in
the GDR 260
- Auguste Victoria Foundation on the
Mount of Olives 27, 28, 35, 36-39
- Auswärtiges Amt (in 1932; Foreign
Ministry, Germany) 75
- Baghdad Pact 252, 277
- Baghdadbahn (Baghdad Railway)
71-77, 225, 226, 237-240
- Aleppo 237, 239
- Katma 239
- Qayyarah-Baiji 242
- Tripoli-Homs line 239
- Baghdadbahnbaugesellschaft (Frankfurt)
241
- Baghdad-Helif railway line 240
- Balfour Declaration 68
- Barcelona Conference (1995) 161
- Barcelona process 166
- Basic Law (Grundgesetz) of the FRG
119, 127
- Baume et Mercier (firm) 232, 233
- Beirut-Damascus railway 231
- Berlin Conference (Jan.-Feb. 1954)
273 n. 35
- Beyer, Peacock Ltd. 242
- Borsig (firm) 231, 232
- British Oil Development Company
(BOD) 75-77
- Brussels Declaration (Nov. 1973) 147
- Bundesmarine 327
- Bundeswehr 274, 308, 309, 310, 312,
317, 320, 321, 323, 325, 328
- Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 106, 108
- Camp David Accords 148, 152, 256
- Camp David process 150
- Catholic Church (Sudan) 173

- CERBERUS (project; system)** 310, 310 n. 9, 313, 323–325, 329
- Christian Democratic Union (CDU)** 92, 103, 125, 154, 273 n. 33, 283
- Christian Social Union (CSU)** 125
- Church of England** 21
- Church of the Ascension (Jerusalem)** 27, 36, 39, 40
- Church of the Holy Sepulchre** 17 n. 11
- Church of the Redeemer** 24, 27, 28, 29–33, 39, 40
- CIA** 314, 316
- Comité des Travaux Historiques** 42
- Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany (Claims Conference)** 120, 250, 258, 261, 266, 274
- Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)** 143
- Congress of Berlin** 7
- Constantinople accords (1888)** 278
- Council of Ministers of the European Community for Coal and Steel (MontanUnion)** 122
- Custodia terrae sanctae** 56
- Damas-Hamas et Prolongements company** 239
- Dampfmuehlen Genossenschaft Jaffa GmbH** 222
- Deaconesses' Hospital (Jerusalem)** 29
- Declaration of Principles (Israel–Palestinians)** 89, 90
- Department of Religious Affairs, Prussian** 20
- Desert Shield** 156
- Desert Storm** 156
- Deutsche Bank** 227, 242
- Deutsche Levant Linie** 239
- Deutscher Palästinaverein** 186, 195
- Deutscher Verein vom Heiligen Lande** 38, 186
- Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas** 33, 60, 186
- Dormition Church and Abbey** 27, 38
- Dortmunder Union (firm)** 231
- East German Army (NVA)** 325, 326
- Economic Affairs Board (AA)** 281
- Egyptian–Israeli Peace Treaty** 148, 150, 256
- Eisenhower Doctrine** 177, 178, 180, 181, 287
- Euro–Arab Dialogue (EAD)** 147–148, 149
- Euro–Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, Third** 167
- Euro–Mediterranean Free Trade Zone** 166
- Euro–Mediterranean Partnership (EMP)** 165–166
- Europäische Volkspartei (EVP)** 104
- European Commission** 161
- European Community (EC)** 143, 145, 146–149, 155–156
- Declarations** 152
- European Council (1997)** 103
- European Defense Community** 286
- European Economic Community (EEC)** 122, 131
- European Political Cooperation (EPC).** *See* European Union: Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
- European Reconstruction Program**

- (Marshall Plan) 119, 264
- European Union (EU) 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 96, 102, 103, 104, 106, 108, 110, 113, 156, 158, 161–170
- Berlin summit (1999) 110
- Cologne summit (1999) 109
- Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) 116, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150, 156, 161, 162–163, 167
- Helsinki summit (1999) 105, 109
- Luxembourg summit (1997) 108, 109
- Third Meeting of Foreign Ministers (1999) 106
- Fa. Spittler & Co. 197
- Federal German Intelligence Service – Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) 307–309, 310, 313–316, 313 n. 15, 315 n. 17, 322, 323, 325
- Federal Law of Restitution and Indemnification (Bundesentschädigungsgesetz, 1953) 121
- Forum Algéro-Allemand des Affaires 95 n. 27
- Free Democratic Party (FDP) 116, 125, 142, 146, 154, 159, 283
- Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung 169 n. 8
- Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation 257
- Gaza-Jericho Agreement (1994) 156
- General Syrian Congress (1919) 82
- Geneva Conference (Big Four, 1955) 273 n. 35, 300
- German Institute for the Modern Middle East 157
- German Party (Deutsche Partei, DP) 125
- German Society for Palestine Exploration. *See* Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas
- German Transport Company (Jaffa) 213
- German–Arab Society 93
- German–French Armistice Commission 82
- German–Tunisian Society 94
- Gesellschaft für den Bau der Eisenbahnen in der Türkei 237
- Gezira Project 182
- Gothaer Maschinen- und Waggonfabrik (firm) 231, 233
- Guidelines for a Euro–Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Security 167
- Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) 149
- Gulf War 100, 326
second 156
- Ha'avara (Transfer) Agreement 80, 81
- Haifa–Baghdad (railway scheme) 227 n. 1
- Halayib Triangle 181
- Hallstein Doctrine 115–116, 127, 129, 134, 246, 254, 273, 273 n. 34, 275, 293, 299, 300
- Hanomag (firm) 232
- Hartmann (firm) 231, 232
- Hedjaz Railway (Hedjazbahn) 225, 229–235
- Der'a–Bosra–Eski Scham 236
n. 16
- Haifa–Acre 236 n. 16
- Ma'an–Aqaba 236

- Ma'an-El-'Ula 235 n. 14
 Ma'an-Mudawwara 234
 Mudawwara-Tabuk 234
 Qatrana-Ma'an 234
 Zarka-Qatrana 234
 Heinrich Böll Foundation 108
 Henschel (firm) 231, 232, 242
 Hohenzollern (firm) 231, 232
 Holocaust 122, 124, 144, 158, 159,
 249, 250, 253, 305
 International Security Aid Force (ISAF)
 112
 Intifada (1987) 155, 156
 Intifada al-Aqsa 110, 157
 Israel Agreement 125, 126
 Israel Defense Forces 312, 320
 Israel Labor Party (Mapai) 309,
 309 n. 7
 Israel Shipping Yards 318-319
 Israeli Military Industries 318
 Istanbul Conference (April 1956)
 276 n. 45
 Jaffa-Jerusalem road 213
 Jerusalemverein 186
 Jewish Telegraphic Agency 260
 Jordanian-Israeli River Jordan project
 169 n. 8
 Jung (firm) 231, 232
 Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Stiftung auf
 dem Oelberge. *See* Auguste Victoria
 Foundation on the Mount of Olives
 Kelsterbach (firm) 231
 Khatmiyya 177
 Kirchenbau-Verein 37
 Konrad Adenauer Foundation
 169 n. 8
 Koppel (firm) 231
 Körting (firm) 231
 Kosovo war 165
 Krauss (firm) 231, 232, 242
 Krauss Maffei (firm) 242
 Kristallnacht 258
 League of Nations Permanent Mandates
 Commission 75
 Lebanon War 257, 328
 Leopard tanks 109, 321, 322, 323
 London Conference
 1952 266
 1956 278, 284, 287
 London Debt Conference 121, 122
 Luerssen (German firm) 321
 Lutheran Church 20
 Lutheran World Federation 39
 Luxembourg Agreement 275, 294, 295,
 297, 299, 300
 Luxembourg Treaty (10 Sept. 1952)
 120-122, 250, 266, 267, 270, 277
 MaK (firm) 242
 Maki (Israeli Communist Party) 254
 MERKAVA III tank 323, 323 n. 48
 Messine Conference 286
 Military Intelligence (AMAN), Israeli
 308
 Ministries, GDR
 Council of Ministers 260-261
 Foreign Ministry 258
 Ministries, FRG
 Foreign Office 86, 275, 296, 297,
 299
 Ministry of Defense 297, 307, 309,
 313 n. 15, 325, 327

- Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development 86, 132
 Ministry of Economy 123, 297
 Ministry of Finance 297
 Ministry of Defense (IMoD), Israeli 308, 309, 317, 318, 319
 Mossad 307, 308, 310, 313–317, 321, 323
 Munich Olympic Games (1972) 150, 317
 Mykonos case 98

 National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) 130
 National People's Army (National Volksarmee) 105
 National Unionist Party (NUP, Sudan) 178
 NATO 252, 274, 308, 310, 310 n. 9, 321, 323–325, 324 n. 52, 328, 329
 Nazis 119, 130, 135, 140, 154, 159
 Nuremberg Race Laws 81, 131

 October War. *See* Yom Kippur War
 Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), German 307
 Organization of African Unity 296
 Organization of the Islamic Conference 100
 Oslo Declaration of Principles (1993) 156
 Otto Wolf (firm) 76

 Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) 35 n. 2, 43–44
 Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) 89, 140, 147, 148, 149, 151, 156, 247, 255–256, 259, 261
 Palestinian National Council (Algiers, Nov. 1988) 155
 Palestinians 111, 140, 152, 157, 168
 Authority 92, 109, 156
 entity 167
 people 146–147
 refugees 144
 Paris Agreement (Oct. 1954) 263, 272
 Peace Now 155
 Peace of Karlowitz 3
 Peel Commission 81
 Peloponnese Railway 232
 Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP, Sudan) 177, 178, 180
 Petersberg agreement (Nov. 1949) 265
 Petersberg missions 163
 Philipp Holzmann GmbH 237
 Pilgrims Mission
 Jerusalem 194
 Switzerland 196
 Potsdam Agreement 246
 Propstei (of the German Protestant congregation) 29
 Protestant Institute of Archaeology 27, 28, 33–36
 Protestant Jerusalem Stiftung (Jerusalem Fund) 31, 32
 Prussian Academy of Sciences 47

 Radford Plan 286
 Red Army Faction 317
 Reform Church 20
 Reinsch (firm) 231
 Restitution Agreement 120, 121
 Revolutionary Cells 317
 Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF) 139, 140

- Rothschild winery (Zikhron Ya'akov) 209
 St. Paul's Hospice (Schmidt's Girls College) 27, 38
 Salonica–Dedeagatsch railway line 229
 Salonica–Monsastir railway 229
 Schengen agreement (1985) 163–167, 163 n. 4
 Schleicher & Schull (firm) 231
 Schmidt's Girls College. *See* St. Paul's Hospice
 Schumann Paper 143–144, 150
 Schweizerische Lokomotivfabrik (firm) 232
 Service des Missions 42
 Sinai Campaign 288
 Six-Day War 116, 134, 135–141, 255, 328
 Slansky trial 249–251
 Social Democratic Party (SPD) 106, 108, 116, 125, 146, 154, 283
 Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) 246, 248, 250, 253, 255
 Central Committee 248
 Politburo 258–259
 South Lebanese Army (SLA) 99
 Southern Sudan Political Emergency Committee 172
 STANAG agreements (NATO) 322
 State Department, United States 269
 Stein Company (Jaffa) 205
 Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) 143
 Strategic Office (FRG) 315 n. 18
 Süddeutsche Wagon Fabrik–Kelsterbach (firm) 233
 Suez Campaign (1956) 253, 263, 318, 319
 Suez Canal Company 278
 Suez Crisis 277–289
 Swastika campaign 296–297
 Templers 186, 193, 197–198, 201–224
 Haifa Colony 209, 210
 Jaffa Colony 209
 Jerusalem Colony 195, 209
 Thomas Cook (travel agency) 211
 TORNADO aircraft 310 n. 9, 323, 325, 329
 Treaty of Amsterdam (ratified 1999) 163
 Treaty of London 16, 17
 Treaty of Westphalia 20
 Turkish Petroleum Company 75
 Umma Party (Sudan) 177
 Union de Maghreb Arabe 95
 United Arab Republic 254
 United Nations 101, 128, 175, 281, 296
 Charter 287
 General Assembly 140 (1975), 92 (1997)
 Palestine partition resolution 248
 Resolution 242 142, 144, 156
 Resolution 338 156
 Resolution, 5 Nov. 1956 284
 Secretary General 157
 Security Council 89, 107, 145, 279, 329
 UNPROFOR 328
 UNRWA 129

- Venice Declaration (EPC, 1980)** 147,
147 n. 89, 148, 150, 152, 155
- Versailles Treaty** 72, 120
- Vulcan Foundry** 242
- Wagner Brothers (company, Jaffa)**
205
- War of Independence, Israel** 249
- Warsaw Pact** 245, 305, 325
- Warsaw Treaty** 252
- Weimar Republic** 120
- World Jewish Congress** 258, 259, 274
- World War I** 8–13
- Yad Vashem** 169 n. 8
- YAMAM (special Israeli police unit)**
317
- Yom Kippur War** 145, 255, 328
- Zentralanstalt für Meteorologies und
Geodynamik (Vienna)** 196
- Zionism** 61–68, 140, 246, 247

INDEX OF PERSONS

- 'Abbud, Ibrahim 179, 180, 182
 Abdul Hamid II 62, 227
 Abeken, Heinrich Johann Wilhelm
 Rudolf 51, 53, 58
 Abs, Hermann Josef 122, 266 n. 9
 Acheson, Dean 269 n. 22
 Adas, Michael 202
 Adenauer, Konrad 117–118, 119, 122,
 124–125, 131, 132, 135, 141, 156,
 265, 265 nn. 4, 5, 266, 267–268, 269,
 270, 270 n. 24, 272, 272 n. 30, 273,
 277, 279, 283, 284–285, 284 n. 75,
 286–287, 287 n. 86, 288, 289, 296–
 297
 Adler, Friedrich 30, 30 n. 4, 31
 d'Albert, Honoré Théodoric Paul
 Joseph, Duc de Luynes. *See* Luynes,
 Duc de
 Alexander (czar) 4, 9
 Alexander, Michael Solomon 23, 53
 Alt, Albrecht 40
 Améry, Carl 140
 Amio, Felix 321 n. 40
 Amit, Meir 307, 315
 Appinger (family) 223
 Arad, Ron 99–100
 Arad, Yitzhak 258
 Arafat, Yassir 90, 93, 111, 147 n. 88,
 151, 156, 157, 256, 259
 Assad, Hafez el- 256
 Auler Pascha 234 n. 14
 al-Azhari, Isma'il 173, 173 n. 7,
 174 n. 10, 176, 181
 Aziz, Tarek 101
 Baden, Grand Duke, of. *See* Friedrich
 I, Duke of Baden
 Barclay, Joseph 23
 Barkhausen, Friedrich Wilhelm 33–
 34
 Barou, Noah 265 n. 4
 Bauer (teacher in Rephaim) 195
 Begin, Menachem 148, 153
 Beilharz, Fritz 210, 222
 Beilharz, Georg 210, 222
 Ben-Ari, Yitzhak 154, 212, 214
 Ben-Artzi, Yossi 209
 Ben-Gurion, David 131, 132, 133,
 156, 279–280, 282, 284, 288, 296–
 297, 319, 320
 Benzinger, Immanuel 195
 Bergmann-Pohl, Sabine 261
 Birrenbach, Kurt 312, 320
 Bismarck, Otto Eduard Leopold, Fürst
 von 6–7, 23, 51, 58
 Blankenhorn, Herbert 265 n. 4, 282
 Blankenhorn, Max 195, 196
 Bleichröder, Gerson 7
 Böhm, Franz 266 n. 9, 272, 285 n. 80
 Bohnenberger, Karl 223
 Böll, Heinrich 140
 Bolz, Lothar 253

- Borde, Heinrich 66
 Brandt, Willy 116, 117, 136, 141, 142, 143, 146, 151
 Brauer, Max 266
 Breisch, Paul 210, 221
 Brentano, Heinrich von 276 n. 47, 282 n. 67, 285 n. 80, 289, 298
 Brezhnev, Leonid 256
 Brockdorff-Rantzau, Ulrich von 67
 Bronfman, Edgar 258
 Bülow, Heinrich von 17, 17 n. 11, 30 n. 1
 Bunsen, Karl Christian Josias Freiherr von 19–22, 23, 25, 30 n. 1, 48–50, 51, 53, 55
 Burg, Yosef 258
 Bush, George W. 107

 Canaris, Wilhelm, Admiral 79
 Carl (son of Friedrich Wilhelm III) 46
 Champollion, Jean François 50
 Chapman-Andrews (British ambassador, Sudan) 181
 Churchill, Winston 9
 Couve de Merville, Maurice 289 n. 97
 Cycon, Dieter 139

 Dahrendorf, Ralf 136
 Dalman, Gustaf 35, 35 n. 22, 37, 40
 Dayan, Moshe 137, 139, 151
 Diamond, Jared 201
 Dieckmann, P. 234
 Doergens, Richard 55
 Dück, Abraham 210, 222
 Dück, Gerhard 195
 Dulles, John Foster 273 n. 33, 274, 289
 Eban, Abba 138
 Ecevit, Bülent 108, 109
 Ehrenberg, Christian G. 47
 Eichhorn, Johann Albrecht Friedrich 17 n. 11
 Eichmann, Adolf 130–131, 133
 Eitel Friedrich, Prince of Prussia 39
 Emil-Leopold August, duke of Sachsen-Gotha and Altenburg 46
 Enver Pasha 66–67
 Erhard, Ludwig 134, 135, 141, 254, 307
 Erler, Fritz 313
 Eulenburg, Philipp, Graf zu 61
 Exner, Felix M. 196

 Fakoussa, H. A. 282 n. 67
 Falkenhayn, Erich von 9, 11, 67
 Felfe, Heinz 315, 315 nn. 19, 20
 Feller, Erwin 283 n. 74
 Ferdinand I (Austrian Kaiser) 56
 Finklestein, Norman G. 159
 Fischer, Friedrich Leopold 48
 Fischer, Joschka 107, 108, 109, 111, 157, 158, 163, 168
 Fischer, Oskar 260
 Fleischer, Heinrich Lebrecht 55
 Fliedner, Theodore 29, 30
 Föllner (engineer) 239
 Frank, Matthaeus 222
 Friedrich I “Barbarossa” 58
 Friedrich I, Duke of Baden 61
 Friedrich III 17 n. 9, 30, 31, 47
 Friedrich Wilhelm III 20, 46
 Friedrich Wilhelm IV 15, 16 n. 4, 17, 18, 19–21, 23, 25, 29, 32, 47, 48, 50
 Gal, Uziel 320

- Gardner-Feldman, Lily 706–707
 Garner, Leo 318 n. 25
 Gaudin (director of railway works)
 235 n. 14
 Gehlen, Reinhard 307, 313–314
 Geldbach, Erich 23
 Genscher, Hans-Dietrich 146, 150, 151,
 152, 155
 George, Manfred 274 n. 37
 Globke, Hans 131
 Gobat, Samuel 23, 30 n. 1
 Goebbels, Joseph 138
 Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah 159
 Goldmann, Nahum 265 n. 4, 269–
 270, 274, 274. n. 38
 Goltz-Pasha, Colmar von der 11, 12,
 235
 Gorbachev, Mikhail 257
 Gossler, Gustav von 24
 Grass, Günter 140
 Graubard, Stephen R. 201
 Griebe, von 234 n. 13
 Grobba, Fritz 77, 78, 80, 82
 Grossman, Kurt 274 n. 37
 Grotewohl, Otto 248–249, 252

 Habsburgs 6
 Hacker, Friedrich 137
 Haddad, Daud 24
 Haddad, Kamel Osman 79
 Hägerstrand (historico-geographical
 researcher) 192
 Haikal, Muhammad H. 133
 Hallstein, Walter 246, 267
 Hammer, Zevulun 258
 Haneche, Mohammed 95 n. 27
 Hardegg, Ernst 223
 Harel, Isser 309, 314
 Hasan Pasha 234
 Headrick, Daniel 202, 215
 Heffernan, Michael 41
 Hemprich, Wilhelm F. 47
 Henkel, Reinhard 214
 Hentig, Werner Otto von 8, 77, 78,
 79–80, 82–83
 Herzl, Theodor 61
 Herzog, Roman 87, 91
 Heuss, Theodor 125
 Hitler, Adolf 75–76, 81, 122, 126,
 127
 Holten. *See* Langkau
 Honecker, Erich 256, 257, 258, 273
 Horowitz, David 265 n. 5
 Hoyer, Werner 95
 Humboldt, Alexander von 50
 Hussein, Saddam 102, 107, 326
 al-Husseini, Haj Amin 79, 81–82

 Ibn Saud 78, 79, 82
 Ibrahim Pasha 15–16
 Izzet Pasha 234, 236 n. 16

 Jemal Bey 240
 Jemal Pasha, Ahmet 64, 66, 241
 Jena, Kai von 270
 Jeremias, Friedrich 39, 40

 al-Kailani, Rashid 'Ali 79
 Kark, Ruth 192, 212, 214
 Keller, Fritz 218, 221
 Kennedy, John F. 133
 Kersten, Otto 195–196
 Khalil, 'Abdallah 174, 174 n. 10, 176,
 178–179, 181
 Khamenei, Ali 98
 Kharrazi (for. min., Iran) 108

- Khatami (pres., Iran) 100, 107
 Kiasim Pasha 235 n. 14
 Kiepert, Heinrich 48, 60
 Kiesewetter, Wolfgang 254
 Kiesinger, Kurt Georg 141
 Kinkel, Klaus 87, 90, 92, 93 n. 21, 95, 100, 156
 Klein, Julius 269, 269 n. 20
 Klose, Hans-Ulrich 157–158
 Klöveborn (engineer) 239
 Kohl, Helmut 90, 92, 93 n. 21, 102, 149, 153, 169 n. 8
 Kohl, Johann Georg 191
 Königsmarck, Graf von 53
 Kreisky, Bruno 151
 Kress von Kressenstein, Friedrich Freiherr 9, 66
 Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach (family) 35
 Kurtz (engineer) 234 n. 13
 Külster, Otto 266 n. 9

 Labella (engineer) 229
 Laemmle, Friedrich 219
 Laemmle, Johannes 219
 Landes, David 201
 Langendorf. *See* Langkau
 Langkau, Wolfgang 315–316, 315 n. 18
 Lavy, George 306
 Leibnitz, Robert 38
 Lepsius, Karl Richard 48, 50–51, 53, 58
 Lichtheim, Richard 63
 Lilienfeld 274 n. 39
 Liman (architect) 47
 Liman von Sanders, Otto 10
 Loeffler, Kurt 258

 Ludwig I 56
 Luncz, Avraham Moshe 210
 Luynes, Duc de 43
 Lwoki, Benjamin 172

 Maarouf, Taha Muhiyiddin 256
 al-Mahdi, al-Saddiq 175
 al-Mahdi, Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman 175, 178
 Mahgoub, Muhammad Ahmad 172, 175, 176
 Maizière, Lothar de 259, 261
 Mankiewitz (engineer) 239
 McCloy, John 264 n. 1, 265
 Meinhof, Ulrike 139
 Meir, Golda 146, 309 n. 7
 Meissner, Heinrich August 225–242
 Mende, Erich 312
 Merker, Paul 248, 250
 Metternich, Klemens Lothar Wenzel, Fürst von 56, 58
 Metzler, Peter Martin 197, 208–209
 Michaelis, Johann David 190
 Minutoli, Heinrich von 46–47
 al-Mirghani, Sayyid 'Ali 177, 180
 Mitterand, François 149
 Modrow, Hans 259, 260, 261
 Möllemann, Jürgen 93
 Moltke, Helmuth Karl Bernhard, Graf 5–6, 7, 17, 17 n. 11, 48
 Mosetizh, Johann 56, 58
 Muchtar Bey (railway engineer) 234 n. 14
 Muhammad 'Ali 15, 16, 51, 57
 Muhammad, Ali Naser 256
 Müller, Samuel 194
 Mussolini 71, 76

- Napoleon 4, 5, 9, 41
 Nasser, Gamal Abdul 133, 134, 135,
 138, 175, 178, 181, 252, 254, 278,
 279, 296
 Nehru, Jawaharlal 252
 Netanyahu, Benjamin 91, 92, 109
 Niebuhr, Carsten 190
 Nixon, Richard 177–178
 Noelle (diplomat, Sudan) 176, 178,
 179, 182
 Nötel (director of railway works)
 235 n. 14

 Ollenhauer, Erich 285 n. 80
 Oppenheim, Maximilian von 8
 Orr, Ori 99

 Palmerston, Henry John Temple, Lord
 21
 Papen, Franz von 79
 Park, Chris 214
 Paulus, Christian 195
 Peres, Shimon 91, 132, 309 n. 7, 319,
 321 n. 40
 Petermann, Julius Heinrich 55
 Peters (head of the GDR water-
 management delegation, Sudan)
 173
 Pferdmenges, Rofert 282
 Pius IX 22
 Plugfelder, Christian 223
 Pöhr, Michael 95 n. 27
 Pönicke (researcher) 229
 Poppinga, Anneliese 272
 Primor, Avi 93
 Prinz, Joachim 130
 Prüfer, Curt 75
 Pruner, Franz 57

 Prutz, Hans 58

 al-Qaddafi, Muammar 256

 Rabin, Yitzhak 91, 100, 138 n. 67
 Radowitz, Joseph Maria von 18
 Rafsanjani, Hashemi 98
 al-Rahman, 'Ali 'Abd 180, 181
 Rau, Johannes 108, 110, 118, 168
 Renan, Ernest 43
 Richards (US ambassador, Sudan)
 178
 Riese, Otto 237
 Ritter, Carl 48, 191
 Riza Pasha 235 n. 14
 Rohrbach, Paul 65
 Rommel, Erwin 9, 137, 138
 Rosen, Georg 55
 Rosenberg, Alfred 77, 80
 Ruppin, Arthur 213
 Rushdie, Salman 98

 al-Sa'id, Nuri 177, 181
 Sachsen-Gotha and Altenburg, duke of.
See Emil-Leopold August
 Sacy, Antoine Isaac, Baron Sylvestre
 de 53
 el-Sadat, Anwar 148, 149
 Salim, Salah 173 n. 7
 Sandel, Theodor 209
 Sandreczki, Carl 195
 Saulcy, Louis Félicien Joseph Caignart,
 Baron de 43
 Schäfer, Helmut 93, 94
 Schäffer, Fritz 122, 266 n. 9
 Scheel, Walter 115, 118, 143, 144,
 146, 150
 Scheerer, Georg 222

- Schlicht, Carl 30
 Schmidt, Helmut 146, 153, 323
 Schneider, Alexander von 33
 Scholtz, Johann Martin Augustin 47
 Schröder, Gerhardt 106, 107, 108,
 109, 110, 168, 298–299
 Schultz, Ernst Gustav 51–54
 Schumacher, Gottlieb 209
 Schumacher, Kurt 125
 Schwartzberg, Felix, Count 6
 Schwarz, Hans-Peter 270
 Seetzen, Ulrich Jasper 46
 Sepp, Bernard 58
 Sepp, Johannes Nepomuk 56, 58
 Shamir, Yitzhak 259, 260
 Sharon, Ariel 157
 Shinnar, Felix 272 n. 30, 276 n. 47
 Shumacher, Gottlieb 195
 Sophie Charlotte (von Oldenburgh)
 39
 Spittler, Christian Friedrich 194, 196–197
 Stalin, Josef 248
 Steinbach, Udo 157
 Strauss, Franz-Josef 132, 135, 153,
 312, 319
 Struve (family) 208
 Struve, Andreas 222
 Sukarno, Ahmed 252
 Szekely, Yaffa 214

 Ta'aishi, 'Abdullahi 178
 Tal'at Bey 64
 Tempel, Sylke 289
 Tevfik, Ahmet 62
 Thalmann, Naftali 203, 213
 Thatcher, Margaret 149

 Thon, Jacob 67
 Turret (researcher) 234
 Trujillo, Rafael 318 n. 25
 Trummler, Conrad 63

 Ulbricht, Walter 133, 134, 250, 251,
 254, 256, 297

 Velayeti (for. min., Iran) 100
 Vincke-Olbendorf, Karl von 48
 Vogel, Rolf 306

 Wagner, Georg and Adolf (brothers)
 209
 Walser, Martin 158
 Wangenheim, Conrad Freiherr von
 63–64
 Wassmuss, Wilhelm 8
 Wechmar, Rüdiger 147 n. 88
 Welck, von 276 n. 46
 Wessel (general) 308
 Wetzstein, Johann Gottfried 55–56
 Wieland (family) 210, 223
 Wieland, Hugo 209
 Wildenbruch, Anton Albert Heinrich
 Louis von 53
 Wilhelm I 30, 31, 55
 Wilhelm II 7, 23, 27–40, 44, 61–62
 Wolfer, Theodor 195
 Wolffsohn, Michael 270–271, 306

 Yahil, Chaim 248

 Zach, Franz Xaver von 46
 Zimmermann, Alfred 63, 64, 66

INDEX OF PLACES

- Abuquir 4, 151
Abyssinia. *See* Ethiopia
Acre 210
Adana 227, 237
Aden 175
Afghanistan 106, 111, 148, 317
Afula 225, 236, 236 n. 16
'Ain Tabigha 196
Albania 165, 241
Aleppo 237, 239, 240
Alexandretta 76
Alexandria 197
Algeria 42, 93, 94, 95, 96, 143, 164, 166, 256, 257, 316
Algiers 155
Amanus mountain range 227, 240
Amman 101
Ammendorf 233
Amsterdam 320 n. 36
Anatolia 227
Ankara 79, 227, 236
Aqaba 236, 240
Arabia 47
Argentina 130
Aswan 197
El Auja 241
Auschwitz 159
Australia 10, 82
Austria 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 22, 95, 320 n. 37
Baalbek 7, 53
Baghdad 79, 82, 101, 227, 239, 240, 252
Balaclava 6
Balkans 7, 8, 10, 11, 104
Baniyas 56
al-Baqura 90-91
Barcelona 96
Basra 8, 12, 227, 240
Beersheba 241
Beirut 53, 239
Belgium 232, 318, 321
Benelux countries 144
Berber 197
Berlin 47, 50, 51, 98, 157, 232, 300
Bethlehem 196
Bethlehem in the Galilee 202
Bombay 240
Bonn 90, 92, 99, 101, 111, 141, 151, 152, 268
Bosnia 165
Bremen 318
Bremerhaven 145
Brussels 43, 108, 143
Budapest 251
Bulgaria 10, 11
Cairo 15, 180, 197, 252, 279 n. 52, 299
Cannes 161
Caucasus 104

- Chaldaea** 22
Chechnya 317
Chemnitz 232, 235 n. 14
Cherbourg 321
China 107
Cologne 58, 283, 296, 298, 299, 317
Constantinople 226, 234, 236
Copenhagen 109, 260
Czechoslovakia 252, 316
- Damascus** 53, 229, 231, 234, 235
Darfur (Sudan) 178
Dardanelles 9, 10, 11
Dead Sea 43
Denmark 145, 321
Der'a 225, 231
Dresden 226, 241, 242
Düsseldorf 232
- East Berlin** 129, 251, 252, 256, 258
East Germany. See German Democratic Republic
Egypt 4, 16, 22, 41, 43, 45, 47, 50–51, 57, 60, 94, 110, 133, 141, 149, 151, 171, 173 n. 7, 174, 177, 178–179, 180–181, 205, 249, 252, 253, 255, 275 n. 42, 278, 280, 284 n. 77, 295, 311 n. 10, 314, 318, 319. *See also* Suez Campaign; Suez Canal
Entebbe 317
Erserum 236
Eskishehir 227
Essen 35, 91, 96
Ethiopia 22, 51, 175, 178, 197
Euphrates 104, 227
- France** 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 22, 41, 63, 76, 79, 83, 101, 105, 107, 144, 145, 149, 150, 162, 163, 164, 168, 175, 219, 227, 239, 278, 284, 284 n. 77, 286, 287, 289, 316, 318, 319, 320, 321, 325
Frankfurt am Main 232, 237, 239
- Galla** 197
Gallipoli 10–13, 71
Gaza 90, 196
Geneva 77
German Democratic Republic (GDR) 89, 115–116, 127, 134, 136, 141, 142, 171–182, 245–262, 275–276, 278, 286, 291, 293, 294, 295, 296, 299, 301, 311, 316
Golgotha 32
Gotha 232
Great Britain 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21–22, 41, 42, 43, 68, 75, 76, 79, 95, 102, 107, 145, 149, 162, 168, 173 n. 7, 174, 175, 179, 180, 192, 194, 222, 227, 242, 275 n. 42, 278, 284, 284 n. 77, 287, 289, 310 n. 9, 316, 317, 325
Greece 10, 42, 149, 229, 232
- Haifa** 7, 195, 196, 197, 202, 204, 208, 209, 210, 214, 217, 218, 219, 222, 223, 224, 225, 231, 236, 318
Hamburg 157, 313 n. 15, 326
Hanover 232
Hebron 219
Helsinki 105, 143
Hungary 219, 259
- Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)** 85–114, 115, 119, 154, 179, 180, 246,

- India** 18, 71, 172, 227
Iran 86, 97, 98, 100, 101, 107, 149, 257, 327, 329
Iraq 71, 72, 79, 80, 82, 83, 97, 98, 101, 107, 141, 149, 181, 225, 227, 242, 247, 253, 255, 257, 277, 325, 326, 327, 329
Ireland 145
Islahiye 237
Israel 86, 89, 91, 93, 96, 99, 103, 109, 110, 111, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126, 129–141, 143–146, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154–155, 156, 157, 158, 166, 167–170, 192, 242, 245, 246, 247, 248, 250, 252, 254, 257, 263, 270, 273–277, 278, 279–280, 281, 283–284, 284 nn. 75, 77, 286, 287, 288, 289, 291–301, 305–330
Istanbul 16, 53, 227, 242, 293
Italy 10, 11, 75, 76–77, 82, 144, 164, 229, 310 n. 9, 320 n. 36, 321
Izmit 227
Jaffa 195, 197, 202, 204, 205, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 220, 221, 222, 224, 241
Walhalla 223
Jenin 236
Jericho 90, 156
Jerusalem 7, 17, 23, 18, 27–40, 55, 56, 66, 130, 131, 144, 186, 194–195, 196, 197, 202, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 219, 221, 222, 236, 236 n. 16, 258
East (Arab) 141
Jezreel Valley 231
Jidda 79
Jordan 90, 141, 156, 170, 242, 249
Juba (Sudan) 173
Kabul 112
Karapounar 240
Kassel 242
Kenya 173, 175
Khartoum 173, 175, 177, 178, 181, 197
al-Khiam 99
Konia 236
Kordofan 176, 178
Kosti (Sudan) 175, 182
Kotchek, Tel 226
Kurdistan 104, 105
Kut al-Amara 71
Kuwait 97, 100, 156, 257, 326
Lebanon 7, 42, 79, 99, 140, 149, 154, 164, 205, 220, 252, 255, 282 n. 67
Leipzig 226
Libya 145, 150, 164, 166, 256
Lod 241
London 21, 50, 51, 55, 269
Luxembourg 95, 103, 104
Ma'an 196, 235
Macedonia 165
Madagascar 82
Maghreb 94, 96, 106
Matammah 197
Mecca 229, 235, 236 n. 16
Medina 229, 231, 232, 234, 235
Melhamia 196
Meppen 322
Mersin 210, 221
Mesha 196

- Mesopotamia** 6, 8
Mexico 42
Morocco 83, 94, 165
Moscow 251, 252
Mosul 240
Mount of Olives (Jerusalem) 27, 37
Mount Zion (Jerusalem) 18
Munich 232, 242
Muristan 33, 56
Muslimiye 240
Muzeirib 229

Nablus 225, 236, 236 n. 16, 241
Nazareth 58, 196, 210
Neckar valley 219
Netherlands 3, 6, 321
New York 111, 274 n. 37
New Zealand 10
Nile River 174, 178, 179, 180
Norway 321
Nürnberg 232, 235 n. 14
Nusaybin 226, 237

Odessa 11
Oslo 89
Ottoman Empire 4, 6, 7, 17. *See also*
 Turkey

Palestine [historic] 6, 7, 16, 17, 18,
 22–24, 32, 36, 40, 41, 42, 44, 47, 56,
 60, 62–63, 65, 66, 80, 81, 82–83,
 188–193
 nineteenth century 186, 187–188,
 194–199, 201–224, 225
 partition 118, 124, 248
 post-1948 129, 179
 pre-1948 248, 249
 State of 259

Paris 53, 55, 101
Persian Gulf 87, 97–102, 112, 148
Poland 4, 9, 64, 79, 246, 259, 300
Portugal 6, 149
Potsdam 128, 171
Prague 249, 251
Prussia 5, 6, 7, 11, 15–25
Pullach 314, 315

Ramle 208, 223
Red Sea 236, 241
Rems valley 219
Rephaim 195
Romania 10, 11, 255
Rome 50
Russia 5, 7, 9–10, 12, 16, 18, 22, 101,
 107, 157, 217, 227, 236

Safed 195
Salonica 11
Sarajevo 12
Sarona 195, 202, 208, 217, 218, 219,
 220, 223, 224
Saudi Arabia 151, 153, 177, 249, 296
Sebastopol 6
Serbia 10, 11
Sinai 225, 241, 247, 281, 286
Sivas 236
South Africa 247
South Yemen 254, 256
Soviet Union 143, 148, 245, 246,
 249, 259, 270, 277, 279, 300, 310,
 314, 324, 327. *See also* **Russia**
Spain 6, 149, 164
Stuttgart 106, 167
Sudan 143, 171–183, 252
Suez Canal 8, 9, 10, 83, 175, 242,
 284 n. 77

- Zone 287 n. 88
 Sweden 156
 Switzerland 320 n. 37
 Syria 15, 16, 22, 43, 44, 47, 63, 82,
 83, 141, 177, 205, 225, 227, 229,
 240, 245, 247, 252, 253, 255, 256,
 257, 282 n. 67, 295, 311
 Ta'anach, Tel 195
 Tâba 236
 Tanganika 174
 Taurus mountain range 227, 240
 Teheran 100
 Tel Aviv 66, 157, 258
 Thrace 11
 Tiberias 210
 Tigris 104
 Tigris Valley 227
 Torit 172–173
 Transjordan 205
 Trieste 210, 221
 Tripoli (Lebanon) 239
 Tulkarm 241
 Tunisia 94, 95, 96
 Turkey 3, 5, 8, 9–13, 15, 16, 61, 63–
 65, 81, 82, 102–106, 108, 109, 166,
 225, 226, 227–241. *See also* Ottoman
 Empire
 Tyre 58
 Uganda 173, 174
 Ukraine 4, 9
 al-Ula 234, 234 n. 14
 Ulm 203
 United States 12, 86, 99, 101, 106,
 107, 113, 129, 133, 140, 143, 144,
 145, 148, 150, 157, 168, 179, 180,
 192, 210, 211, 216, 217, 219, 250,
 258, 263–272, 270 n. 24, 273, 276,
 277, 279, 280, 281, 282, 287, 289,
 297, 317, 321, 325, 326
 Vienna 17 n. 11, 151, 226
 Vietnam 247
 Waldheim 202
 Washington 111, 283
 Wassenaar 122, 265, 266, 268, 269,
 275
 Wau (Sudan) 173
 Weimar 108
 Werden 233
 West Germany. *See* Federal Republic
 of Germany
 White Nile 197
 Wilhelma 196, 202, 218, 219, 220,
 221
 Wilhelmshaven 322
 Winterthur 232
 Württemberg 198
 Yalta 128
 Yemen 138, 141
 Yugoslavia 273 n. 34, 328
 Zikhron Ya'akov 196, 209