

Memories of Universal Victimhood

The Case of Ethnic German Expellees

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Remembering Past Injustices

Images of German victims have become a ubiquitous feature of political debates and mass-mediated cultural events in recent years. This paper argues that changing representations of the Holocaust have served as a political cultural prism through which histories of German victimhood can be renegotiated. More specifically, we explore how the centrality of the Holocaust in Germany informs how the postwar expulsion of twelve million ethnic Germans has been remembered during the last sixty years. Most interpretations of the destruction of European Jewry and the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia and their corresponding memory cultures treat these memories as mutually exclusive manifestations of competing perceptions of national self understanding.¹ We suggest that memories of both the Holocaust and expulsions are entwined. The Holocaust remains a specific event but also spans a universalizing human rights discourse that conceals the magnitude of the Holocaust as a particular historical occurrence; at the same time, the expulsion stops being a particular event and is being reframed as a universal evil called “ethnic cleansing.” Examining recent political and public debates about how the expulsions of ethnic Germans are politicized and remembered reveals how comparisons to other incidents of state sanctioned violence and claims of singularity shape the balance of universal and particular modes of commemoration.

Moreover, these debates shed light on how memories of past injustices shape an emerging global discourse that revolves around the denationalization of historical memories and attempts to renationalize Germany's political culture. Representations of the Holocaust are no longer confined to particular national histories. Elsewhere we have elaborated on how the assumed link between collective memory and nationhood is modified in the context of globalization. Changing memories of the Holocaust, we argued, have led to the denationalization of memory cultures and have contributed to the emergence of "cosmopolitanized memories."² This refers to processes of "internal(ized) globalization" through which global concerns become part of the local experiences of an increasing number of people.³ Not only are memory cultures no longer confined exclusively to national boundaries, but they are also negotiated with reference to narratives generated outside the nation. Collective memories of the Holocaust in Europe serve as an admonition that when modernity develops exclusively within the nation state, it builds the potential for moral, political, economic, and technological catastrophe. Recent scholarship on what is now called "ethnic cleansing" frequently espouses the same view. It is the connection to the modern nation state and its radical exclusionary forms that pushes the Holocaust to the forefront in discussions of "ethnic cleansing" and, consequently, informs debates on expulsions.⁴

Accordingly, we analyze how the tension between universal and particular readings of past injustices informs the ways in which representations of German victimhood (and expulsions in particular) have been transformed during the last six decades. The Holocaust simultaneously can be constitutive for a European outlook as well as for a more nationalistic perspective. The Europeanization of the Holocaust in Germany reveals a double bind. On the one hand, it serves as an attempt to universalize while retaining the *Sonderweg* perspective, that implies Germany's unique trajectory to and responsibility for the Holocaust. On the other hand, the same process of Europeanization also serves as a mechanism to depart from this *Sonderweg*, and, paradoxically leads to a re-nationalization of Germany through the discourse of Europeanization. Debates about expulsion and expellees in Germany serve as an illustration of how national and cosmopolitan memories are linked. Recent controversies about museal representa-

tions of forced migrations after World War II and the location of a "Center against Expulsions" (*Zentrum gegen Vertreibung*, from hereon the Center), provide us with an opportunity to explore how the Europeanization of the Holocaust and the discourse about expulsions inform the balance of cosmopolitan and national orientations.

The inscription of historical memories has become an integral part of public discourse and the memories themselves are subject to self-conscious political appropriations. A central aspect of the politics of memory revolves around controversies about the validity of historical comparisons.⁵ At first sight, comparisons might appear as a neutral methodological device. However, they also set moral-political standards and shape the balance between national and cosmopolitanized forms of memory. Debates about the uniqueness or comparability of a historical phenomenon reveal a contest over whether the nation should articulate itself through universal criteria (civic) or a particularistic vocabulary (ethnic). But, there is more at stake. Comparisons can "normalize" events, so that the major significance of historical comparisons is thus of a moral and political quality.⁶ An important site for the organization of collective memory relates to debates about the perceived victim status of a group. The universal idea of victimhood begins with the idea that modern warfare made everyone victims. It does not matter if you start, win, or lose the war because war is a human tragedy affecting all. This is why in the universalized discourse on victimhood, war is seen as a tragedy and as an aberration from the cosmopolitan path to peace. In universalized victimhood, there is no ultimate difference between victors and vanquished—WWII has made victims of them all—whereas in Jewish Holocaust victim consciousness, there is an essential divide between victims and perpetrators. In short, war makes everyone a victim, while genocide and ethnic cleansing implies a focus on a perpetrator and a victim.

We perceive, therefore, two parallel and somewhat incompatible conceptions of victim consciousness—one universal and one particular. The particular highlights the crimes of the aggressor and the universal downplays the crimes through the very idea that we are all victims. The particular form of victim consciousness depends on the distinction between perpetrator and victim. In contrast, under the particular system, there can be no victim without a perpetrator, and,

conversely, to call someone a victim is instantly to accuse someone else of being a perpetrator. In this view, there are deserving and undeserving victims. Particularism concentrates on the aggressors and justifies war and revenge as the means by which victims cease to be victims and become aggressors, thereby achieving justice. For the universal conception, where the ultimate goal is the creation of a world without war, the concentration on perpetrators undercuts the whole idea of victim consciousness. All victims are deserving. This has been evident not only in the debates about the suffering of the German expellees, but also in the recent renewed attention to the memory of German suffering resulting from the Allied bombing campaign.⁷ Here too, questions of universality vs. particularity come to the fore. Are victims members of a specific group (belonging to a former collective of perpetrators) or are they individuals as in victims of crimes against humanity? Given that representations of expulsion are located in the contentious field of cosmopolitanizing and renationalizing forms of remembrance, what is the role of global and other nation-transcending ideals for national modes of legitimacy? How is the national reconfigured against the backdrop of Europeanized memories?

In the first part of this article we develop the idea that Holocaust memory is central to a cosmopolitanized form of remembrance that stands at the center of attempts to create a European mode of collective identification. We then show how a comparable process manifests itself in Germany's political culture, where recent references to the memory of the Holocaust have served to confirm both Germany's special path as well as a more universal reading of history that renounces this exceptionalism. The second section provides a brief historical overview of changing representations of German expellees. This serves as background to our analysis of the more recent debate concerning attempts to exhibit a history of German expellees in the aforementioned "Center Against Expulsion." The historical perspective is also indispensable for an understanding of how different collective memories are appropriated over time. Both governmental and public controversies surrounding the conception and location of the museum serve as a paradigmatic case study for the cosmopolitanization of memories in general, and different mnemonic strategies involving comparisons of the expulsion and the

Holocaust, in particular. We conduct a content analysis of official parliamentary debates pertaining to the Center and we analyze public discourse as expressed in the feuilleton pages of two major German newspapers (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, FAZ and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, SZ).⁸ In the last section we draw some broader conceptual conclusions about the particular balance of national and cosmopolitan modes of remembering.

The Europeanization of Holocaust Memories

Reactions to the Holocaust were prominent in postwar Europe, exemplified in a negative disposition toward nationalism and a corresponding willingness to let a set of transnational ideas and institutions take over many policy areas that were previously under the firm sovereignty of the nation state. By the 1990s, the Holocaust had been reconfigured as a decontextualized event oriented toward nation-transcending symbols and meaning systems, such as the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." While memories of the Holocaust helped to shape the articulation of a new rights culture, once it was in place, it no longer needed to rely on its original articulation to assume strong normative powers. Jeffrey Alexander has referred to it as the dominant symbolic representation of evil in the late twentieth century and a foundation for a supranational moral universalism.⁹ Indeed, Holocaust memory and the new rights culture have been mutually constitutive. Perceived moral and political interdependencies are informed by a growing rejection of state sanctioned mass atrocities and are being institutionalized through emerging transnational legal institutions and politically consequential human rights idioms.¹⁰ It is precisely the abstract nature of "good and evil" that symbolizes the Holocaust, contributing to the extra-territorial quality of nation-transcending memories. The Holocaust is now a concept that has been dislocated from space and time resulting in its inscription into other acts of injustice and traumatic national memories across the globe.¹¹

After the Cold War the Holocaust has become an official part of European memory and is a new founding moment for the idea of a European civilization. January 27th, a day that serves as a reminder

for the liberation of Auschwitz, has become the first (official) European commemoration of the third millennium. In an emerging European “cosmopolitan” memory, the future of the Holocaust (and not the past) is now considered in absolutely universal terms: it can happen to anyone, at anytime, and everyone is responsible. The Holocaust is no longer about the Jews being exterminated by the Germans. Rather, it is about human beings and the brutal and most extreme violation of their human rights. The Holocaust is turned into a holocaust and becomes a decontextualized symbol. Genocide, ethnic cleansing and the Holocaust are becoming blurred into an apolitical and ahistorical event circumscribed by human rights as the positive force, and nationalism, as the negative one.

The post-Cold War era and the aftermath of reunification also compelled Germany to find a new political and cultural place in Europe. It did so by pursuing a dual strategy centering the Holocaust as an integral part of national history (e.g., the decade-long debate regarding the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin), and simultaneously decentering it by turning the Holocaust into an European event (e.g., arguments for German participation in Kosovo discussed below). This duality is echoed in an ongoing historiographical debate about the origins of the Holocaust. One perspective explains the rise of Nazism in terms of Germany’s exceptional national development,¹² whereas the other situates the Holocaust in a broader context of modernity. In this view, Germany ceases to be the exception to the standard path of European national development and becomes instead the exemplification of a common modernity.¹³

All of this, of course, is not a linear or a necessary process, but one that emerges at particular historical junctures. Military interventions during the Kosovo conflict constituted such a decisive moment. Indeed, the Balkan wars of the 1990s are a salient example for how Holocaust memories are inscribed into other histories of mass atrocity. Through the war in the Balkans a new risk surfaced: genocide. Historical memories of the Holocaust were rhetorically connected with the televised representations of what would soon come to be referred to as “ethnic cleansing.” Even though today, the term is associated with various ethnic conflicts in past and present, its “origin” lay in the first stage of war in Bosnia in 1992.¹⁴ The Holocaust entered through the comparison of the Serbs with Nazis. Crucial in

this process was an award-winning news photo of a terribly thin old man seen through a fence, which coupled with pervasive images of Serb “camps,” seemed to have been a turning point. Since the Holocaust was identified in Germany with German militarism, it followed that German intervention should be opposed, and by analogy, so should all intervention by Germany’s allies. When the war in Kosovo broke out in 1999, the position of the Left in Germany changed 180 degrees. Suddenly it claimed it was intervening to stop new Auschwitzes. Clearly, this had a lot to do with the international pressures and opportunities the war presented, and with the fact that the Left was now in government for the first time in eighteen years.

But even in this drastically changed and globalized form, there was a national distinctiveness to the German understanding of the Holocaust. Foreign Minister Josef Fischer emphasized that expulsion of the Albanians was itself a form of genocide, as defined by the original genocide conventions. This stance also resonated through the minister’s own biographical “expellee” history—a charged, but long-forgotten issue in Germany. All of this changed with the Kosovo War and the televised stream of refugees. Images of the refugees blurred. Serbs were compared to Nazis. They were expellers, perpetrators, and violators of human rights. Kosovar refugees were not merely compared to Jews, but they were also victims, like Germans being expelled from the homeland. After many years, Germans could join the universal brotherhood of victims through the prism of “ethnic cleansing.” One European tradition was played out against another. However, more was at stake, because by bringing Germany in on the side of the US, Fischer changed the political parameters. This shift was facilitated through a cautious ideological change in Germany’s perception of the Holocaust. Before Kosovo, only German Conservatives wanted to universalize the Holocaust. Leftists were dedicated to defending its uniqueness—any assault on that uniqueness, including any form of comparison, was perceived as a diminishment of German war guilt and collective responsibility for the Holocaust. Now Fischer was doing exactly that. Germany’s involvement was predicated precisely on the comparative admonition that because of the Holocaust Germany had to intervene and stop genocide. Memories of Wehrmacht activities in the Balkans were replaced with a humanitarian imagery of the Bundeswehr.

Fischer also reiterated that because of his own biography as the son of expellees, he could identify with the plight of the expelled—a point that did not go unnoticed among German Conservatives. He was essentially combining the old frameworks of Left and Right into a new unity, by championing humanitarian intervention, in part based on the recognition that Germany was rediscovering its fate of expulsion and suffering. The hugely successful publication of Günther Grass' *Crabwalk*, as well as the subsequent media attention to the subject of German wartime suffering, are part of the same development. In a way, it brought the Left back into the fold of the nation by lending legitimacy to mourn German victims. Arguably, it was at that moment that the expellee issue shifted from a rather marginal preoccupation among expellee organizations with their frequently discredited, anachronistic demands into a respectable topic of discussion, as evidenced by the ongoing discussion about the Center. As the Left reopened the national floodgates, distinctions between Left and Right started to blur. However, upon closer inspection, we can see that the Center controversy also has been an opportunity to relegate a conventional national narrative back to the margins.

In contrast to genocidal activities in Rwanda, interethnic warfare in Kosovo with its European setting and its televised images resonated with Holocaust iconography.¹⁵ Military involvement in Kosovo was primarily framed as a moral obligation largely in response to previous failures to intervene on behalf of innocent civilians. The slogan “Never again Auschwitz” was frequently invoked, but it was no longer considered only the failure to stop the Holocaust. “Never Again” was now simultaneously a reminder of World War II and the delayed involvement in Bosnia. This transposition of Holocaust memory into contemporary sensibilities about genocide provided the foundation to push the Nuremberg concept of “crimes against humanity” into a global arena.

Remembering German Expulsions

Questions about how to balance the subject of expulsion and the particular fate of German expellees, on the one hand, and those expelled (and exterminated) by Germans, on the other, have become a central

theme in public and political discourse. Our main empirical focus in this section centers on public controversies that emerged at the beginning of the 21st century. First, a brief historical overview of previous representations of German expellees provides the backdrop against which historical perceptions of expulsion have been transformed during the last fifty years. Collective memories do not operate in a vacuum, but draw selectively upon particular memory traditions that characterize specific periods. Based on the political expediencies of the day, older narratives are reinscribed into emerging historical memories. Accordingly, German memoryscapes always have been a contingent and political creation. Representations of ethnic Germans' expulsion during these postwar years reflect the changing relationship between national and cosmopolitanized frames of commemoration. Three distinctive periods characterize this transformation: during the first postwar decade, memories of expulsion occupied center stage; between the 1960s and 1980s, those memories are relegated and eventually made taboo;¹⁶ since the 1990s there is a resurgent, if controversial, interest in the commemoration of expulsions. We start with the crucial postwar period as it sets the central terms and memories with which subsequent narratives engage.

The Post-War Period

The Potsdam Treaty sanctioned large population transfers after the Second World War that resulted in the flight and expulsion of about twelve million ethnic Germans from Eastern and Central Europe. They are now commonly referred to as expellees (*Vertriebene*).¹⁷ It should be noted that the term introduced along with the “Federal Expellee Law” in 1953, is a charged concept connoting a certain notion of victimhood. Before that, ethnic Germans were referred to as “refugees,” a reference that situated their history in a broader migratory context. While the term expellees is well-entrenched in German discourse, some scholars have recently suggested situating the history of ethnic German expulsion within a more universal context of “forced migration” that addresses matters in a European or even global history of migrations.¹⁸ After World War II, West Germany faced the problem of salvaging aspects of German nationhood not tainted or defined by the Nazi regime. Rather than focus on the active participation and widespread consent of the German popula-

tion in the Nazi regime, Germans portrayed themselves as victims.¹⁹ This image of victimization dominated the first postwar decade. The expulsion of Germans from territories east of the Oder-Neisse line was a major basis for the collective claim to victim status. Among other things, victimhood was constructed in opposition to the often-violent large-scale expulsions from states under Soviet influence in Central and Eastern Europe. The Western Allies as well as Konrad Adenauer, the Federal Republic's first Chancellor, perceived the expellees as a bulwark of anticommunism and were eager to exploit their expulsion as a reminder of Soviet aggression and the advantages and superiority of a free West.

The beginning of the Cold War and the emergence of a bipolar world thus provided the geopolitical context within which a perception of German victimhood could thrive. Through the comparison with communism, Nazism was part of the totalitarian experience, and, as such, it no longer seemed to be a uniquely German project. On the other hand, theories of totalitarianism, placing the liberal system vis-à-vis European political experiences of fascism and communism, were a significant building block in the postwar West European experience. It created the basis for a new (West) European identity and served, therefore, also as the basis for a transnational delegation of sovereignty expressed in the European Convention on Human Rights, which was expressively created to counter a fall into totalitarianism.

Thus, a European consciousness of its totalitarian potential together with perceptions of ethnic Germans' suffering—sustained through social memories and promoted by published autobiographies and official commemorative occasions—played a significant role in the rehabilitation of German national identity. The cultivation of victimhood was not confined to the political realm and legislative measures alone. For example, the state sponsored a large-scale project, "Documentation of the Expulsion of Germans from East-Central Europe," the political purpose of which was unmistakable.²⁰ It created awareness of the suffering of ethnic Germans and established factual foundations for the return of property. Moreover, it could place state communism as a force of evil, an important trope in Cold War Europe.

A few examples of how German victimhood was inscribed into public memory underscore how an equivalence of suffering was established. Aside from the aforementioned anticommunism, two

main discursive strategies of comparison dominated the postwar period. One compared the injustice committed by Germans with injustices committed by the victorious powers. Politicians from the Right and Left compared Nazi atrocities with the expulsions by the Red Army and the Allied decisions in Potsdam that had sanctioned the expulsions. The fate of expellees and German victims was frequently invoked to establish that Germans suffered from the war no less than those attacked by Germany. In one of the earlier parliamentary sessions dedicated to the integration of expellees, Richard Reitzner (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD) declared that "the denazification of Germans also requires the depotsdamization of the victors."²¹ Another parliamentarian, Günter Götzendorff, from the right-wing Party for Economic Reconstruction (*Wirtschaftliche Aufbau-Vereinigung*, WAV) referred to "the tragic policy of the victorious powers, who have signed the *Schanddiktat* [edict of disgrace] at Potsdam."²² This language was reminiscent of critics of the Weimar Republic who referred to the Treaty of Versailles as an unjust and disproportionate imposition by the victors of the First World War. Comparisons of this sort were made as late as 1951. During a debate on the federal budget for expellees, Konrad Wittmann, another member of the WAV asked: "were the victors obliged to match the crimes Hitler committed with new crimes?"²³

A second strategy that foreshadows the politics of competing victimhood, was to recount the fate of the expellees in order to establish an equivalence of victimhood with Holocaust victims. The uniqueness of the Holocaust and the discrediting of comparisons would only later become a dominant feature of Germany's political culture. The Social Democrat Richard Reitzner declared in parliament: "Europe has had the opportunity to witness catastrophes of similar proportion, but no catastrophe was as influential as the catastrophe of the year 1945 [i.e., expulsion]."²⁴ Hans Tichi, a parliamentarian from the Expellee Party (BHE) seconded this sentiment, stating that "we cannot remind the West often enough of its collective guilt regarding the great misery of the refugees in Germany."²⁵ In the first postwar decade, comparisons of the Red Army and Nazism or the fate of expellees and Holocaust victims were abundant.

A third strategy that characterized the postwar period and would reemerge during the 1990s relates to the Europeanization of the

expellee theme. This process of Europeanizing the phenomenon of expulsions, which indeed spanned large parts of the continent for the first half of the 20th century, was at once a West German attempt to establish its democratic credentials and to return to the family of nations, but it was also a rhetorical strategy to rehabilitate a proud national narrative. During the 1950s, the European idea—that is, the formation of a transnational Western alliance opposing Eastern Europe—was also employed to internationalize Germany's problems and repeatedly point to the human and political costs involved. During parliamentary debates on the fate of expellees in 1951 Hans Tichi (BHE) praised those who defined the solution to the German refugee problem not exclusively as a German, but as an international problem. He was seconded by Josef Trischler (Free Democratic Party, FDP), who wished to “internationalize our refugee problem and encourage the flow of resources from abroad for this problem.”²⁶

It was part of Adenauer's policy to legitimize German politics by presenting them as intricately linked to the new idea of a united Europe. Representations of expellees' fate thus served two purposes: they were aimed to assuage the moral responsibility for the Holocaust by showing that it had been part of a war in which ethnic cleansing existed on both sides; and they served as a reminder that Germany's integration into the West required continuous attention.

From Social Memories of Expulsion to Historical Memories of the Holocaust

The second historical turning point emerged during the 1960s against the backdrop of new foreign policy considerations (Cold War détente) and Willy Brandt's reconciliatory Ostpolitik (politics toward Central and Eastern Europe). Expellee organizations, a resource during the earlier phases of the Cold War, objected to these changes and their rhetoric against the East now appeared retrograde and disruptive. Brandt marked them as radical and dangerous. Moreover, negative public perceptions of expellees were intensified in the conflict between Germany's first postwar generation and its predecessors. The outcome was a reevaluation of Germany's national past, resulting in public and official representations that increasingly associated expellee organizations with outdated traditions, historical revisionism and the legacies of the Nazi past.

A new political culture was in the making, mostly propelled by the student revolution of 1968, a time when Germany's first postwar generation came to political maturity. The social memories of this generation were no longer related to the experience of the war. Rather, it perceived the war and nationhood through the growing public prominence of the Holocaust (from the background of widely publicized Nazi trials). Accordingly, this generation shifted public memories from German victims to victims of Germans. Overall, social memories of expulsion were gradually replaced by historical memories of a generalized conception of German responsibility for both the war and the Holocaust. The division of Germany now came to be perceived as just punishment for Auschwitz, but Auschwitz stood primarily as a code for German fascism rather than as a source of identification with Jewish victims.

The accusation that the war generation had refused to recognize its role as perpetrators and to commemorate the fate of its victims would become the dominant official narrative of remembrance. Helmut Kohl's chancellorship after 1982 provided a public arena for an attempted recovery of memory tropes from the 1950s, when the suffering of expellees dominated Germany's memory culture. Memories of ethnic Germans played an important part in what Kohl termed *Geschichtspolitik* (politics of history). This conception was based on the assumption that “whoever controls images of the past controls the future.” However, Kohl's efforts met with great resistance, exemplified by the Bitburg affair, his pleading for the “grace of late birth,” and other occasions, and the outcomes of the debates essentially reinforced the officially sanctioned postnational ethos.²⁷

Post-Cold War Period

This is the political cultural background for most of the debates since the end of the bipolar world. Two central motives characterize the debates about expulsion since the late 1990s. Earlier tropes of competing victimhood have been revived, albeit under different geopolitical and normative circumstances. Memories of expulsion and self-conscious debates about how to commemorate them are now taking place within the context of an expanding European Union. Different mnemonic entrepreneurs are trying to Europeanize the theme of expulsion. Of particular interest is the fact that these attempts are

simultaneously driven by those who seek to denationalize collective memories as well as by groups, usually on the right side of the political spectrum in Germany, that employ narratives of European victimhood as a way to renationalize memories. We pay particular attention to a recent debate about attempts to create a museum about the history of German expellees in a “Center against Expulsion.” The controversies surrounding the conception and location of the museum serve as a paradigmatic case study for both the cosmopolitanization of memories and how comparisons of expulsion and the Holocaust are invoked in order to renationalize collective memory.

In September 2000, Erika Steinbach, a member of the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and head of the *Bund der Vertriebenen* (Federation of Expellees), joined with Peter Glotz, a Social Democrat, to seek political and financial support for a “Center against Expulsion” to be located in Berlin. The desire to build such a place in Germany’s capital created an outcry from those suspecting that it would re-nationalize Germany’s memory culture, once again privileging German suffering at the expense of recognizing “others”. Adam Michnik and Adam Krzeminski, two influential Polish intellectuals, welcomed the idea of a Center but objected to Berlin as the chosen site. Arguing that at the beginning of the 21st century “national memories should be Europeanized,” they suggested the former German Breslau, now the city of Wrocław in Poland, one of the epicenters of the expulsion, as a better location for such a museum. Prominent German intellectuals, scholars and a significant portion of the political class in Germany echoed this view.

The dispute about Berlin or Wrocław occupied the feuilleton pages of leading German newspapers and was also the subject of several dedicated sessions in parliament. The ensuing debates revolved around the question of the proper place for such a museum and the extent to which references to expulsion should remain within the confines of national memories or whether the complicated relationship of victims and perpetrators should/could be Europeanized. The following analysis shows how collective memories of national suffering are circumscribed by new legitimating frames attached to a transnational European idea. This, in turn, is supported by the emergence of a human rights frame, serving many of the protagonists in those debates as a constitutive moment of a cosmopoli-

tanized memoryscape. However, this universal frame of reference does not necessarily imply a denationalization of memory politics, but as we will demonstrate, frequently facilitates a re-nationalization. A brief glance at the parliamentary sessions dedicated to the questions of whether and where to build the Center shows that both sides of the political spectrum (the center-left Social Democratic and Green government, with the tacit support of the Free Democrats and the center-right Christian Democratic opposition) see the debate as an opportunity to impose their vision of *Erinnerungspolitik* (memory politics). A central theme revolves around the role of German victims, with opinions oscillating between public recognition and neglect. The government’s objection to Berlin is justified in terms of a transnational European framework, frequently identifying expulsions as crimes against humanity. The CDU, on the other hand, sees the Center as an opportunity to renationalize memories of expulsion, given that the topic of German suffering largely had been made taboo in official discourse since the 1970s.²⁸ These positions are best illustrated by analyzing the respective arguments for Berlin or Wrocław and the different hierarchies of victimhood with which each side operates.

The government envisions a “boundary-free European” (*grenzenloses Europa*) Center, recognizing all victims without privileging German suffering. The CDU (along with their conservative Bavarian sister party the Christian Social Union, CSU) insists on emphasizing German victims and stresses a vision of Europe of nation states. The idea of Europe and its rhetorical deployment thus indicate the possibility for transcending a national point of view as well as the means through which public discourse is renationalized. Particularly the CDU/CSU invokes the European ideal to simultaneously obscure the national as well as to rehabilitate memories of national suffering. According to Erika Steinbach, the Europeanization of the expulsion theme would be akin to denying responsibility for expulsions. Given the global scope of expulsions, Steinbach concludes: “expulsion is a political method that still enjoys worldwide attention. Together we have to work against that.”²⁹ In other words, expulsions simply threaten too many nations to subsume it under one framework. Following this logic, it is precisely the European, or rather, global dimension of expulsion that necessitates a renationalization of mem-

ory and memory politics. This understanding is not shared by the governing parties and the Free Democratic Party.

Leading the parliamentary charge against the location of the center in Berlin is Markus Meckel (SPD) who stated: “from the very beginning we have to consider the European dimension.... You [CDU/CSU] suggest a national project with a possible European addition. I do not believe that this is sufficient ... We would like to issue an invitation today to other Europeans to participate in developing a shared conception for such a center.”³⁰

It is important to pursue a European solution that transcends national boundaries. In the middle of Europe our respective national histories are tightly interwoven. National projects alone harbor the danger to create upheaval and insecurity among neighbors. We would have to worry that such a national project would be perceived as being directed against someone else. Furthermore, our neighbors would ask why we are discussing a topic that also pertains to their national history, without consulting them. It cannot and should not be a case where the suffering of one’s own people is assessed and used against the suffering of another. The respective historical backgrounds and connections of expulsions and forced resettling were very different. The suffering of the affected people, however, was very similar.³¹

This view is echoed in a speech by Hans Joachim Otto from the oppositional FDP: “The creation of a European Center against expulsions is a symbol for a new beginning in a common Europe. Nothing illustrates this better than the fact that recently two of the most prominent Polish publicists, namely Adam Krzeminski and Adam Michnik, expressed their support for such a Center in Wrocław. It is a European starting signal, so to speak, that the creation of such a Center is no longer perceived by our neighbors in the East and also here in the West, as a sign of German revenge, as it has been in the past, but as a European opportunity.”³² Here the cosmopolitan potential of the expulsion theme is based on two dimensions. For one, the historical links of European nation states potentially create a disposition that would have a negative view of a nation-centered museum. Shared historical experiences are now situated in a transnational container where an equivalence of suffering appears more important than the different causal constellations that explain particular episodes of victimhood and their perpetrators. It is the emphasis on a shared notion of suffering and injustice that transforms the theme of expulsions from a nation-centric source into a

new foundation for a European form of cosmopolitanized memory. “It is this act of reconciliation, which becomes the central mnemonic event. Half a century after the Holocaust, it is no longer the atrocities themselves that are at the center of attention (especially in light of the fact that the majority of surviving victims have died), but how the heirs of the victims, perpetrators and bystanders are coping with these stories and the evolving memories.”³³

We also discern that this cosmopolitanization entails a distinctive future-oriented dimension. It is not a memory that is solely looking toward the past to produce a new formative myth. Discussions about postnational collectivities are focused mostly on the future. Cosmopolitanized memories are based largely on the recognition and the desire to prevent or limit future suffering. The theme of expulsion becomes a constitutive moment for a common European past that is envisioned as a possible foundation for a shared European system of values, predicated on a human rights discourse and a deterritorialized memory of the fate of all victims. Memory here becomes synonymous with the idea of a shared culture and becomes the main reason to remind people of the expulsions. As Markus Meckel (SPD) put it during a parliamentary session, “and we are doing it in a European context; because we are living in a Europe that is growing together and especially the history of expulsions is part of a European history and cannot be grasped as a singular event.”³⁴ This view is seconded by Julian Nida-Rümelin (SPD), the then-Minister of Cultural Affairs.

An enlightened German national identity demands an open treatment of the expulsion theme, also with regards to the expulsion of the Germans in the East. We should conduct the dialogue about the erection of a Center against Expulsion on a European plane – considering the fact that the former settler regions of Germans in the East were shaped by a rich cultural mixture that was the product of many influences: Jewish, Polish, Czech, German, to name but a few. This shared European heritage must be preserved and developed. A European oriented Center against Expulsion would be a path-finding contribution.³⁵

This European approach was subsequently sanctioned when the presidents of Germany and Poland issued a joined statement in Polish Gdansk (the formerly German Danzig) in October 2003, putting their weight behind a transnational solution. Johannes Rau and Aleksander Kwasniewski encouraged all Europeans to document

and reassess all cases of resettlement, flight and expulsion that had taken place during the 20th century. They called on important personalities and politicians to articulate recommendations as to how this European documentation could be constructed. Their joint declaration stresses that resettlement, flight and expulsion are part of the history and identity of Europe and that this abyss must be reevaluated for a shared future, echoing a trend that started a few years earlier. In October 2000, Günther Grass, Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska, and Thomas Venclova, were invited by the Goethe Institute in Poland, where they discussed the trauma of expulsion and the dangers of nationalism. That meeting resulted in a publication entitled *Die Zukunft der Erinnerung* (The Future of Memory), essentially prefiguring many of the positions that would come to characterize the objections to the Center in Berlin.

A comparable dynamic characterizes the ensuing exchanges in the German media, where the subject of the Center has attracted considerable attention in the feuilleton sections of major newspapers. In January of 2004, Markus Meckel, who had initiated the debate against Berlin as the site for the Center, summarized the “European” approach in a feuilleton contribution in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* by saying: “World War II and its crimes, but also its consequences, like expulsions and deportations, have produced a great deal of suffering in 20th century Europe. This difficult past binds us today in a shared responsibility. If we were to succeed to address not only wars—in particular World War II and the mass extermination of National Socialism—but also to work through the expulsion history of Europe, without using it against one another, it would be a great step toward a shared future.”³⁶ It is this twinning of Europeanizing what was previously confined to national suffering and a self-conscious decision to redirect memories away from the past toward the future that characterizes the debate. To be sure, this view continues to compete with a more conventional national narrative that, while no longer dominant, is still occasionally featured. Thus writes Peter Becher under the headline “To not forget the suffering of the victims:” “Many of the critics of the Center apparently have no access to the view that the commemoration of victimhood is a pious desire of our nation. This is not just about overcoming the lack of compassion toward German victims, which Antje Vollmer already in a discussion in Munich dur-

ing the mid 1990s bemoaned as a deficit of the old left. This is also about the final end of a social stigmatization of expellees and their institutions which they experienced in past decades.”³⁷

This tendency to view the European framework as a means to address national issues is not confined to Germany. Other states are equally protective of which past they want to commemorate and there is hardly a consensus. Thus Daniel Brösler writes that reactions in East Europe indicate a strong preference to address their own victimhood under communism: “For Paweł Machcewicz from the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Warsaw, for instance, ‘expulsions are merely a fragment of 20th century history.’ If already a network, then it should focus on ‘Totalitarianism, World War II, Expulsion, and Forced Resettlements.’”³⁸ Underlying this debate is a continuous balancing of competing conceptions of victimhood. National memories tend to privilege their own victims. However, due to the aforementioned transformations, cosmopolitanized memories complicate matters, insofar as they contribute to an emerging duality, because nations have to engage with both their status as victims and their role as perpetrators. Competing conceptions of victimhood are thrust into a dynamic that oscillates between denationalization and renationalization, comparable to the tension between universal human rights and specific privileges. The dispute that erupted between Germany and Poland about the location of the Center is emblematic of how precarious the balance of victimhood and perpetrators is. It also shows the paradoxical effect Europeanization can have. On the one hand, the European gaze rejects clear-cut perpetrator-victim distinctions and any hierarchy of victimhood, stressing the virtues of dialogue among the different parties. On the other hand, it is precisely this absence of a hierarchy of victims that decontextualizes (and at times even dehistoricizes) the actual deeds of expulsions. We are not supposed to distinguish between the respective sufferings of groups and every attempt to privilege one group over another is met with strong resistance. However, leveling the field of suffering, also has unintended consequences, as it challenges existing beliefs about who the perpetrators and who the victims are.

This paradox finds a representative expression in Antje Vollmer’s (Green Party) statement before parliament: “the bad spirit of expulsions is part of what has always threatened Europe. We have all

shared in the consternation that has resulted from the bitter experiences of so many people, convinced that there would be no more expulsions. You [Erika Steinbach] said correctly: At least ten European nations have been victims as well as perpetrators of expulsions.”³⁹ This well-intentioned European perspective speaks out against the instrumentalization and hierarchization of victims, but ultimately obfuscates clear distinctions between victims and perpetrators. The effects of this conflation vary, depending on how entrenched previous narratives of suffering are.

Writing in the *FAZ* in early 2004, Norman Naimark, a noted historian of “ethnic cleansing,” distinguishes between Germany’s reaction and those Eastern European neighbors that expelled ethnic Germans from their territories. “In contrast to all the other case of ethnic cleansing ... the expulsion of Germans retains a sense of ambivalence about who was a victim and who a perpetrator. There a Center against Expulsions—no matter how carefully it is conceived—should not place the expulsion of German as the central paradigm or as structured motive. ... No victim group ... likes to see itself simultaneously as victims and as perpetrators. Therefore, Poles and Czechs are upset about the accusation that they have committed atrocities against others, since they were, after all, clearly victims themselves.”⁴⁰

Germany’s official political culture since the early 1970s has created a public discourse in which stories about German suffering cannot be voiced without a direct causal reference to German crimes coming before the expulsions. Here lies one crucial difference to the postwar commemoration of expulsion. During the first two postwar decades, Germany’s official discourse would emphasize the suffering of Germans without any reference to the aggression that preceded and ultimately caused retributions against Germans. Hence, the question about commemorating German victims remains a charged issue, for it has always contained the potential to come at the expense of a full recognition of the deeds perpetrated by Germans during World War II. Accordingly, every time German victimhood is thematized, it is accompanied by the insistence that it is not intended to relativize Germany’s role as perpetrator.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the tension between historically specific events and the general phenomenon of expulsion continuously circumscribes the debates about the Center. Is it about the recognition of German

victims who simultaneously belong to the side of the perpetrators? Or is it about directing responsibility toward Eastern European countries? Is the expulsion of German victims a direct consequence of their own role as perpetrators or are we to remember expulsions as isolated acts of injustice? It is here that we observe repeated invocations of a human rights frame. The fact that there is a near consensus on the European idea is articulated by Michael Jeismann writing in the *FAZ*:

Remembering together and not against each other, is the appeal of the shared ‘Danzig Declaration’ by president Johannes Rau and the Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski from October 2003. Nations are supposed to remember in such a way that the political Europe is not weakened but strengthened. All the demands together are so different and in part contradictory, that it is difficult to imagine how they could all be satisfied. In the long run though, at least based on the experience with national memory cultures, those memories that are politically the most usable, become dominant. The framework for a politically useful memory, it can be assumed, will be a European reference to human rights, to which the memory of the murder of European Jews is already attuned to.⁴²

Expulsions are increasingly decontextualized and subsumed under a broader human rights category, which, as we have indicated above, owes its recent prominence to the iconographic status of Holocaust memories.⁴³ This is also echoed in the aforementioned open letter that Michnik and Krezminski wrote to the German and Polish presidents. Defending Wrocław as the ideal location for a Center they write: “it would be neither a museum exclusively focusing on German suffering and German accusations, that would transform perpetrators into victims, nor would it be a museum of Polish martyrdom and colonization, but a museum of catastrophe and a sign for the renewal of our common Europe ... with all the suffering that we have inflicted upon each other—if in an asymmetric fashion—it is precisely this tragedy which has again bound us together.” Typical for many of the positions regarding the Center is that expulsion is recognized as a crime against human rights, pointing to the centrality of transnational modes of legitimation. Markus Meckel pursues this kind of argument and recognizes that it has evolved historically: “during the last century it was not only Hitler and Stalin, who caused expulsions. But, we have to admit, also democrats like Churchill, Roosevelt and Truman accepted expulsions when they

perceived of forced resettlements as a part of a politics to ensure stability. Today we object to that, because it is unjust. It cannot happen, because it is always predicated on the idea of a collective guilt. Nobody can justify such actions; such violations of human rights we cannot accept.”⁴⁴ The human rights frame also typifies a third position that proposes a network approach to the Center rather than a decision for a particular location.

To underscore the universal character of these violations, references are made to the “century of expulsions” and genocidal events predating the Holocaust, such as the Armenian case. Expulsions are increasingly perceived as a global theme that must be addressed and remembered outside the parameters of national commemoration. Most of the newspaper articles and the parliamentary sessions we analyzed see the debate about the Center as a trigger for a denationalized orientation toward human rights. Despite, or possibly precisely because the controversy originally revolved around the bilateral relations of Germany and Poland, a majority favoring the cosmopolitanization of the project argues for a nation-transcending narrative as a foundational moment for a European memoryscape. However, it should be reiterated that the adherence to a European framework and other nation-transcending modes of legitimation can also operate as a means to renationalize memory. The German controversy about expulsions is closely tied with how the Holocaust is remembered. Those who wish to understand the Holocaust in a comparative perspective often regard the widespread claim of its singularity as constraining the return to a self-confident nation. The revisionist right seeks to reverse this by situating the German experience in a comparative framework that revives the Cold War vocabulary of totalitarianism, aiming to shift attention from the Holocaust as a unique event that led to the discrediting of the nation in Germany to one amenable to comparisons. Some of these positions find their expression in the emblematic statements that Erika Steinbach and Markus Meckel advance in the controversy around the location of the Center. Steinbach views a German laboring through the past as the starting point for a European memoryscape. But ultimately, the thematization of the role of German victims takes center stage. Europe essentially serves as a segueway to rehabilitate memories of German suffering. Her approach underscores the dialectic between

de- and renationalization. In contrast, Meckel’s support for a Center in Wrocław, underscores a deterritorialized and cosmopolitanized form of memory. For him, Europe serves as a vehicle toward the denationalization of memories.

Conclusions

Today it almost seems natural and right that the formation of collective memory should be an arena of political contestation. Groups emphasize different narratives and compete over what should be a nation’s central symbols. In this article we have shown how the campaigns to connect the Holocaust to “ethnic cleansing,” and by extension to genocide, have been related to the changing status of victimhood, and vice versa. Historically, this development is tied to the attempted formation of a nation-transcending European memory sphere. This is not a linear process, but one of shifting foci: with a political rhetoric that expressed universal concerns for a brief period in the postwar period, quickly moving back to the particularistic claims of national, and, finally, toward cosmopolitan concerns. At first, one might interpret these moments as mutually exclusive. However, one of the central findings in our study indicates a certain simultaneity, where Europeanization and nationalization do not contradict each other. Some of this can already be observed at the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War. A former ally of the U.S., the Soviet Union, became the enemy and the former enemy, Germany, became an ally. The galvanizing evil was no longer “Nazism” but “totalitarianism,” a theory that argued that the essence of Nazism lived on in the Soviet Union and that would have been undermined to the extent that the essence of Nazism came to be seen as German hatred of Jews. Comparisons (including analogies and metaphors) are not merely neutral devices but also ideological vehicles the meanings of which meanings can be transformed. Thus, a universal framework situating memories of the Holocaust on the same level as the remembrance of German expellees has multiple meanings that are determined within the parameters of cosmopolitanization and renationalization. Accordingly, most of the historiographical disputes in Germany have revolved around the

issue of uniqueness and comparability. With the end of the Cold War, renewed efforts to subsume both the extermination of European Jewry and the expulsion of ethnic Germans are now part of a pervasive human rights discourse.

This is a double-edged sword, one in which representations of the Holocaust carry dual meanings. On the one hand, the new understanding of ethnic cleansing, including Germans as victims trying to memorialize their victimhood, is a cosmopolitan history of multiplicities insofar as it encompasses the suffering of others in universal terms. This becomes especially true when the Holocaust is recounted as one part of a broader narrative about ethnic cleansing.⁴⁵ Much of this relates to a broader debate about modernity and the idea of the ethnically homogenous nation state. In this view, the Holocaust loses its German specificity and is reset into the context of modernity.⁴⁶ Germany ceases to be the exception to the standard path of European national development. What distinguished the Third Reich was its extremity, but not its uniqueness. It is the ethnic nation state that is now perceived as the quintessential evil in history. The Holocaust is subsumed under the broader category of the “Century of Expulsions” and, as such, is merely another, even if more extreme, incident of ethnic cleansing or genocide. Here the Second World War becomes a big “European Civil War,” a term that, among other things, ignited the “Historians Dispute” during the 1980s, but now barely registers as something extraordinary. Thus, we see how, depending on the particular political cultural and geopolitical context, Holocaust representations become a source for both cosmopolitan and particularistic national outlooks. In both instances the European context informs the extent to which self-conscious *Geschichtspolitik* is deployed. Accordingly, every decontextualization involves a recontextualization.

Notes

1. We would like to thank the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) for its support of this study as part of the Sonderforschungsbereich 536. We are particularly grateful for the research assistance of Michael Heinlein and Benedikt Köhler. Thanks also to the two anonymous referees, whose comments also helped us improve the manuscript. For a good overview of this relationship see Eric Langenbacher, “Changing Memory Regimes in Contemporary Germany?” *German Politics and Society* Vol. 21 (1) 2003: 46-68.
2. For a detailed discussion of the concept of ‘cosmopolitan memories’ see Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider *Erinnerung im Globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust* (Frankfurt, 2001) For a revised English translation see *Memory in the Global Age: The Holocaust* (Philadelphia, 2005).
3. Ulrich Beck. “The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies” in *Theory, Culture & Society* 19 (1-2) 2002: 17-44.
4. Recent examples include Norman Naimark *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in 20th Century Europe* (Cambridge, 2002); Mark Mazower. *Dark Continent: Europe’s 20th Century*. Knopf: (New York, 1998); Jennifer Jackson Preece. “Ethnic Cleansing as an Instrument of Nation-State Creation: Changing State Practices and Evolving Norms”, in *Human Rights Quarterly*, 20 1998: 817-842.
5. For a conceptual discussion see Daniel Levy “The Future of the Past: Historiographical Disputes and Competing Memories in Germany and Israel” in *History and Theory* Vol. 38(1) 1999: 51-66.
6. The *Historikerstreit* (Historians’ Dispute) of the late 1980s is a formidable example for how historical narratives of uniqueness or comparability inform possible forms of collective identification. See Charles Maier. *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (Cambridge, 1988).
7. See especially Jörg Friedrich, *Der Brand: Deutschland im Bombenkrieg 1940-1945* (München, 2002); see also Lothar Kettenacker, ed., *Ein Volk von Opfern? Die neue Debatte um den Bombenkrieg 1940-45* (Berlin, 2003).
8. The choice of these two newspapers is not arbitrary. Especially their cultural sections (feuilleton) do not only follow public debates, but frequently set the agenda for them. The *FAZ* is considered a newspaper with a more national and conservative agenda, while the *SZ* represents a more left-liberal view. Together, they reflect a reliable picture of German intellectual public discourse.
9. Jeffrey Alexander “On the Social Construction of Moral Universals: The ‘Holocaust’ from War Crime to Trauma Drama.” In *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1) 2002: 5-85.
10. For a detailed historical analysis see Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider. “The Institutionalization of Cosmopolitan Morality: The Holocaust and Human Rights.” in *Journal of Human Rights* 3(2) 2004: 143-157.
11. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider. “Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory.” in *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1) 2002: 87-106.
12. The most controversial exponent of this approach is Daniel Goldhagen. For a good overview of the controversy, see Geoffrey Eley, ed., *The “Goldhagen Effect”: History, Memory, Nazism-Past* (Ann Arbor, 2000).

13. For the seminal statement in this approach see Zygmunt Bauman's *Holocaust and Modernity* (Cambridge, 1999).
14. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, 2001.
15. For that matter the state tolerated ethnic cleansing in Sudan in 2004 is another example for both the ongoing passivity of the international community and its own discomfort with being a bystander, as evidenced in the urgent appeals of Colin Powell and Kofi Annan in July 2004, as well as Powell's subsequent explicit reference to the genocidal features of the Darfur events.
16. For a detailed discussion of how taboos circumscribe the shape of memory cultures, see Jeffrey Olick and Daniel Levy "Mechanisms of Cultural Constraint: Holocaust Myth and Rationality in German Politics" in *American Sociological Review* 62 1997: 921-936.
17. Two million ethnic Germans followed between 1950 and 1988, referred to as *Aussiedler* (literally late resettlers or ethnic German immigrants). The term *Aussiedler* is also politically charged. It literally means "outsettlers." However, the notion of outsettling is misleading since it implies that ethnic Germans were forced to leave their original homes, which was not the case for most of those who immigrated after 1950. They should rather be considered as "resettlers" to the country of their ancestors.
18. Götz Aly. *Endlösung. Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt, 1995). Karl Schlögel. "Tragödie der Vertreibungen. Über das Erfordernis, ein europäisches Ereignis neu zu erzählen." *Lette* 79 2003: 78-83.
19. Robert Moeller has provided ample evidence for this trend. See his. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley, 2001). See also Robert Moeller. "What was „Coming to Terms with the Past“ meant in Post-World War II Germany? From History of Memory to the "History of Memory" in *Central European History* 35 2002: 223-256.
20. Mathias Beer. "Im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Das Grossforschungsprojekt 'Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa'" *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 3 1998: 345-391.
21. Deutscher Bundestag (BT from now on), 10/20/1949.
22. BT, 1/18/1950.
23. BT, 4/19/1951.
24. BT, 4/19/1951.
25. BT, 4/19/1951.
26. BT, 4/19/1951.
27. Geoffrey Hartman (ed.) *Bitburg in Moral and Historical Perspective* (Bloomington, 1985).
28. Among conservatives and the CDU there is also the occasional attempt to retain a conventional national focus by bracketing the European framework. As Erika Reinhardt, speaking on behalf of the CDU/CSU states: "Our historical amnesia—*Geschichtsvergessenheit*—does not do us any good, as Professor Arnulf Baring has pointed out so well. It is therefore important that Germans know their own suffering and allow for their own mourning. This is also about an inner balance of the nation coping with history. This will only succeed if the Center against Expulsions is at a location that is not on the margins but in the center. This location is in Berlin, Germany's capital." BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23589C) However, this position, fairly standard fare during the 1980s, by now is more of an exception.
29. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23592C
30. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23590C/D.
31. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 248. Sitzung: 25235D/25236A.
32. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23591 B/C.
33. Levy and Sznaider 2002, 103
34. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23590B.
35. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 248. Sitzung: 23626C/D.
36. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 23 January 2004, 2.
37. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 30 October 2003, 2.
38. Süddeutsche Zeitung (March 16, 2004: 16).
39. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23592D.
40. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 21 January 2004, 7.
41. Not unlike the discursive parallels between post-war reactions and attempts during the 1980s to revive certain conceptions of victimhood, the last few years have shifted renewed attention to the comparison of perpetrators. A good example is the recent study by Wilhelm Heitmeyer (2004). *Deutsche Zustände, Folge 3*. Frankfurt a. Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, according to which in a recent survey 51% of respondents said that there is not much of a difference between what Israel is doing to the Palestinians today and what the Nazis did to the Jews during the Holocaust. And 68% believe that Israel is waging a 'war of extermination' against the Palestinians.
42. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 15 March 2004, 41.
43. Levy and Sznaider (2004).
44. BT, Stenographischer Bericht 236. Sitzung: 23590C.
45. See Aly (1995) and Schlögel (2003).
46. See Bauman (1999).