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Israel-criticism and modern anti-Semitism²

Abstract: After the Third Reich was defeated, the expression of openly anti-Semitic attitudes was, to be sure, discredited in the German public, but anti-Semitism did not, however, disappear entirely. It was instead camouflaged in various ways, and even found socially and politically compatible expression in the criticism of Israeli Palestine policy.

Previous research in this area gives evidence that modern anti-Semitism represents a complex formation constituted from a variety of facets which range from classical (manifest) anti-Semitism via latent anti-Semitism, secondary anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism to the use of Israel-criticism as a medium where anti-Semitic attitudes can be expressed in a seemingly unsuspecting way. However, it can be assumed that not all criticism of the Israeli Palestine policy is motivated by anti-Semitic attitudes. It may be motivated by pacifist attitudes and/or human rights considerations as well.

The present paper discusses some theoretical and methodological issues of a forthcoming research project, which aims to investigate how the various facets of anti-Semitism can be measured, how they combine in individual attitude patterns, how these patterns are disseminated, and how criticism of Israel motivated by anti-Semitism can be differentiated from other forms of criticizing Israel.

1. Modern anti-Semitism

1.1 Introduction

Rejection of and hostile attitudes toward Jews have a broad historical anchorage in various societies and have been continually expressed ever since early Christianity split off from Judaism in the first century AD, assuming very different forms until culminating in the unique exterminatory anti-Semitism of the National Socialist period (Bergmann, 2002). Although the open expression of anti-Semitic attitudes has continuously declined since 1945, above all current research has found evidence that many Germans still harbor latent anti-Semitic attitudes (Frindte, 2006). Open attacks on and the social exclusion of Jews are thus increasingly giving way to inner rejection, denial of responsibility and the feeling of being unable to speak openly about Jews or contemporary policy toward Israel, etc.

Not only the conceptual comprehension of anti-Semitism, but also its operationalization in empirical anti-Semitism research is, however, not completely uniform. The spectrum of definitions of anti-Semitism extends from an understanding of anti-Semitism as (mere) rejection and discrimination against Jews, who are marginalized from the in-group through the imposition of negative stereotypes (Heyder, Iser & Schmidt, 2005), to its understanding as the denial per se of the rights of Jews as members of social communities, on up to its definition as the organized effort to destroy Jews as Jews (Frindte, 2006).

1.2 Facets of anti-Semitism

In the newer literature various facets of anti-Semitism are distinguished that gain their dynamics, among other things, from the societal and political ways of dealing with the crimes committed against Jews during the National Socialist regime, but also from societal and political approaches to the decades-long Middle East conflict.

Manifest or classical anti-Semitism refers to defamation that is openly expressed and draws on traditional prejudices held against Jews as Jews by non-Jews (e.g., Heyder et al., 2005; Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006, Zick & Küpper, 2007). This can go as far as the equation of being Jewish with not being German. Some authors (e.g., Heyder et al., 2005; Zick & Küpper, 2007) regard this as a distinct facet of anti-Semitism, which they call *anti-Semitic separation*.

Secondary anti-Semitism (Schönbach, 1961) concerns how Germans deal with the Nazi past, the Holocaust and the question of guilt and responsibility (Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006). It consists in the relativization, trivialization and denial of the Holocaust, along with the demand to end the discussion of coming to terms with the German past (Heyder et al., 2005), and can go as far as the accusation that Jews were themselves to blame for provoking their persecution (Zick & Küpper, 2007).

Latent anti-Semitism (Bergmann & Erb, 1991a,b) is expressed in attempts to not publicly speak of intentionally committed discrimination against Jews as Jews (Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006).

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Anti-Zionism consists in rejecting the creation of Israel in the Middle East as the homeland of the Jews, and moreover denying the Jewish state of Israel the right to exist at all. It can go as far as demanding that the Jews should leave the Middle East (Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006) and redirecting anti-Semitic prejudices against the state of Israel. Zick & Küpper (2007) call this *Israel-related anti-Semitism*.

NS-comparative criticism of Israel (Heyder et al., 2005) equates Israeli policy toward the Palestinians with National Socialist persecutory policy toward the Jews and thereby involves not only the trivialization and relativization of the Holocaust (cf. secondary anti-Semitism), but also a reversal of the perpetrator-victim relationship. According to Holz (2001), this occupies a central position in justifying anti-Semitic attitudes, and also includes the insinuation that Jews *pursue advantages by instrumentalizing the Holocaust* (Zick & Küpper, 2007).

To be distinguished from the above forms are *anti-Semitic criticism of Israel* (Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006), which uses criticism of the policies of the state of Israel as a medium with which to express anti-Semitic contents in a socially correct manner, and *attitudes critical of Israel* (Heyder et al., 2005) as a non-anti-Semitic form of criticism of Israeli Palestine policy.

1.3 Media coverage of the Middle East conflict

Drawing on Bergmann & Erb's (1991a) concept of communicative latency, Heyder et al. (2005) explain the, in part, high agreement with anti-Semitic attitudes in terms of the dissemination of anti-Semitic stereotypes in European media discourse. Criticism of Israel offers a roundabout way to circumvent the taboo on expressing anti-Semitic attitudes.

Support for this thesis is provided by two discourse analyses that concluded that the representation of the Middle East conflict was increasingly characterized as anti-Israeli (Anti-Defamation League, 2002) and that following the second Intifada German reportage increasingly included anti-Jewish and NS-comparative stereotypes (Jäger & Jäger, 2003).

Wistrich (2004) also sees a reason for this "new" form of anti-Semitism, among others, in the manner, e.g., in which even the German media report on the Middle East conflict. Thus Israel was often portrayed as the aggressor, while Palestinian terrorism was minimized. This representation strengthened the old, already common prejudices and stereotypes against Jews and their (economic) influence on (German) society and furthered the frequent accusation that Jews use or rather misuse the tragedy of the Holocaust to support their current aims and justify their policies.

A recent study on the German press coverage of the Lebanon War does not fully support this assumption, however. In her quantitative content analysis of three major German newspapers, Oehmer (forthcoming) comes to the conclusion that there was no one-sided reporting to the disadvantage of Israel. Both, Israeli actors and the Hezbollah, were portrayed as aggressor *and* as victim.

- However, Israeli aggression was reported more often and the reported forms of Israeli violence (like air strikes) were more massive and devastating than the violence reported from Hezbollah (like missile attacks and abductions) which was more limited in scope.
- On the other hand, the Israelis were also most often portrayed in the role of victim, followed by Lebanese actors who were rarely portrayed as aggressor. Unlike Israeli victims, they were, however, mostly associated with dramatic damages like death, and destruction.

Even though this pattern of coverage may have amplified the perceived level of Israeli aggression and though it may have aroused more empathy with Lebanese victims than with Israeli ones (who suffered from lesser damages like imprisonment), this was rather due to the reported facts than to an anti-Semitic bias of news coverage.

2. Criticism of Israel

2.1 Societal beliefs and perceptual distortions

While a study by Kaplan and Small (2006) seems to show that there is in fact a connection between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism, Heyder et al. (2005) could find no, or at most insignificant, correlations between classical anti-Semitism and attitudes critical of Israel. Due to the scales and items they used, which do not do justice to the differences criticism of Israel motivated by anti-Semitism and other attitudes critical of Israel, these studies are only to a limited extent informative, however.

Although we cannot rule out that criticism of Israel's policy represents a medium in which anti-Semitic contents *can* be articulated in a socially- and politically correct manner, from a conflict-theoretical perspective we must assume that criticism of Israel could also derive from a variety of other sources.

Thus the psychic infrastructure which enables members of a society to endure long-term (intractable) conflicts contains, according to Bar-Tal (1998), societal beliefs which include, among others, the justness of one's cause, one's victim role, the delegitimation of the enemy and the defense of personal and national security through a policy of strength. The suspicion of anti-Semitism underlying criticism of Israeli Palestine policy can thus be justified, or also could be only an aspect of the perceptual distortions (Deutsch, 1973; Kempf, 2002a) that result from these societal beliefs and contribute to the delegitimation of not only the enemy, but also of neutral third parties and/or of minorities within one's society who do not share the basic societal consensus.

Such perceptual distortions are found on both sides; both sides seek supporters and try to build up coalitions (Glasl, 1992), and both sides take the risk that third parties might solidarize with the opponent. Even solidarizing with Palestine does not necessarily prove anti-Semitism, however. At least in some cases, it indicates 'only' *taking sides against Israel* (with the appropriate enemy image).

If we are working toward a peaceful solution, we must overcome these perceptual distortions and replace the above-named societal beliefs (*War Frame*) with a different interpretative frame (*Peace Frame*) that acknowledges the justification (of at least some) of the interests of the other side, recognizes the mutual victim roles, ends the delegitimation of the opponent and strives to achieve personal and national security through a peaceful solution. This of necessity implies *criticism of both sides*, and thus also criticism of Israel.

In addition, there is the tendency of highly escalated conflicts to have a polarizing effect: "Those who are not for us are against us." Therefore, even criticism of Israel which results from a Peace Frame runs the risk of being interpreted as anti-Semitic, or at least may appear to show a lack of solidarity.

2.2 Positioning toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

In the concrete case the situation is, however, more complicated (cf. Kempf, 2008): Israel has not only been engaged in a continuous state of war for several decades, but rather – despite all setbacks – also in a peace process for the past sixteen years. This has led to a weakening of the above-named societal beliefs in Israel. Both frames co-exist today in Israel (*War-* and *Peace Frames*), sometimes even within a single person, who vacillates back and forth between these frames, whereby both frames represent not only cognitive interpretative patterns, but are also emotionally bound in, indeed in an ambivalent manner, for both frames promise security and simultaneously create insecurity (cf. Table 1).

- The War Frame offers security, because tried-and-true action patterns can be continued, but it also creates insecurity because it poses the threat of continued violence.
- The Peace Frame also offers security, because it promises an end to violence, but at the same time it creates insecurity, because new behavioral patterns must be tried out whose effectiveness is still uncertain.

Criticism of Israel resulting from a Peace Frame thus does not necessarily mean *lack of solidarity* with Israel or even *anti-Semitism*, but rather can, to the contrary, arise from acting in the existential interest of Israel.

	Offers security	Creates insecurity
War Frame	Because tried-and-true action patterns can be continued	Because it poses the threat of continued violence
Peace Frame	Because it promises an end to violence	Because new behavioral patterns must be tried out whose effectiveness is still uncertain.

Table 1: The emotional ambivalence of the War and the Peace Frame.

No less ambivalent is the way people in Germany position themselves toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The World War II lesson of "never again fascism, never again war" implies a tendency toward the Peace Frame (never again war). However, it is ambivalent in regard to the human rights question (never again fascism), which can be interpreted in two ways:

1. Support for the *victims of National Socialism*, which implies a tendency toward unconditional solidarity with Israeli policy and a weakening of the Peace Frame.
This can go as far as turning into a War Frame: (never again fascism, *therefore war*), as was the case (in part) in the Gulf War discourse 1990/91 (Kempf, 1994).
2. Support *for human rights worldwide*, which implies a tendency to refrain from supporting at least some aspects of Israeli policy, and includes expressing solidarity with the Israeli peace movement and at least a certain degree of empathy with the Palestinian side.

Although this means, first, a strengthening of the Peace Frame, second, the danger is also created of turning into a War Frame and taking sides with the Palestinians.

With regard to positioning toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we thus can identify various positioning patterns which result from the two dimensions of War Frame vs. Peace Frame and taking sides with either of the two parties (cf. Table 2).

	Pro Israel	Neutral	Pro Palestine
War Frame	Uncritical support of the Israeli policy, delegitimation of the Palestinians and justification of Israeli violence		Criticism of the Israeli policy, delegitimation of the Israelis and justification of Palestinian violence
Peace Frame	Criticism of both sides' policy, accentuation of the vital needs of the Israelis and condemnation of violence on both sides	Criticism of both sides' policy, accentuation of the vital needs of both societies and condemnation of violence on both sides	Criticism of both sides' policy, accentuation of the vital needs of the Palestinians and condemnation of violence on both sides

Table 2: Patterns of positioning toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While only one of these patterns (pro Israeli War Frame) is uncritical of the Israeli policy, none of the critical patterns can *per se* be regarded as anti-Semitic. Even those patterns (pro Palestinian War Frame and pro Palestinian Peace Frame) which are biased toward solidarity with the Palestinians do not necessarily imply any anti-Semitic prejudices or motivations.

2.3 Legitimate vs. anti-Semitic criticism of Israel

Moshe Zimmermann (2002) has formulated a number of guidelines, how to identify anti-Semitic criticism of Israel in the political discourse. According to his considerations, any honest criticism which is based on know-how, which refrains from anti-Semitic stereotypes and blanket convictions and which does not aim at provoking anti-Semitic sentiments is not, and cannot be anti-Semitic and, therefore, is legitimate. Not only, when it is expressed in Israel, but also in Europe, even in Germany.

Anti-Semitic criticism of Israel can be detected from the associations which the critic evokes, from the targets he chooses and last not least from his purpose.

„Die Sprache ist ja die Mutter aller Assoziationen: Wird Shylock, Judas oder Der Stürmer im Zusammenhang mit dem Thema Israel erwähnt, wird von Deutschen vs. Juden gesprochen, wird hinter dem deutschen Juden der Auslandsisraeli vermutet, wird von „Auge um Auge“-Mentalität gesprochen, werden der stereotype „reiche Jude“, der „Kosmopolit“ oder das „Weltjudentum“ in die Diskussion hineingezogen, kommt in der Karikatur die „jüdische“ Nase oder der Hinweis auf Ritualmord zum Vorschein – dann befindet man sich bereits im Bereich des Antisemitismus, weil über die legitime Sharon- oder Israel-Kritik hinaus.

Zweitens geht es um die Gruppe, gegen die die Kritik geäußert wird: Wenn es sich nicht um den spezifischen Politiker (israelischen oder auch deutschen) oder um die spezifische Organisation (auch wenn sie „Jüdischer Weltkongreß“ heißt) handelt, sondern um den vermeintlichen Vertreter „des“ Judentums oder „der“ Juden, wenn nicht an israelische, sondern an jüdische Charakteristiken gedacht wird, sind wir bereits beim Antisemitismus angelangt.

Und drittens, vielleicht noch wichtiger: Auf die Absicht kommt es an. Ein und derselbe Satz oder Ausdruck können unterschiedliche Intentionen haben. Sogar Vergleiche mit dem Nationalsozialismus erhalten so eine unterschiedliche Bedeutung: Ein Vergleich kann auf die Unterschiede abzielen, er kann einer Mahnung dienen, er kann aber auch eine Verharmlosung oder Relativierung des Nationalsozialismus beabsichtigen oder die Delegitimierung des Judentums. Ob es sich um eine antisemitische Absicht eines Israel-Kritikers handelt, kann man meist nur indirekt erfahren, wenn man die Denkweise des Kritikers oder die Adressaten dieser Vergleiche und historischen Anspielungen kennt“ (Zimmermann, 2002, 2).

3. Measurement of anti-Semitic criticism of Israel

3.1 Multivalency of responses to questionnaire items

Building upon Zimmermann's arguments it becomes evident that the identification of anti-Semitic criticism of Israel does – necessarily - involve a hermeneutic process. While we can assume that we could directly operationalize the above-named facets of anti-Semitism using questionnaire items, this is not the case with anti-Semitic criticism of Israel (Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006) and its demarcation from other ways of criticizing Israel.

The questionnaire items which are usually employed in order to identify anti-Semitic criticism of Israel, are inappropriate to do so for a number of reasons, which we may illustrate with some examples from studies by Frindte et al. (1999) and Petzold (2004) (cf. Table 3).

No.	Statement
1	The Israelis are interested in a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict
2	The Israelis are occupiers and have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories
3	Israel is a state who sticks at nothing
4	Israel wages a just war against the Palestinians
5	Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the Middle East Conflict.
6	The Palestinian suicide attacks are an appropriate means to combat Israel
7	What the Israelis do to the Palestinians resembles what the Nazis did to the Jews
8	It would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East

Table 3: Questionnaire-items from the studies by Frindte et al. (1999) and Petzold (2004).

First: Blanket questions provoke blanket answers. This is even more the case, when the participants in a questionnaire study cannot formulate their own answers, but only can agree or disagree with ready-made statements, as is usually the case in questionnaire research. Accordingly, even the acceptance of statements which could be legitimate if they were formulated in a more differentiated way, evokes the impression of anti-Semitic prejudice. But since the participants do not have the opportunity to reformulate the statements, we cannot know whether they agree with their blanket phrasing or with some "rational kernel" which they associate with them.

Statements like the one in example No. 1 ("The Israelis are not interested in a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict") ignores the diversity of the Israeli society and - taken literally – its rejection, can therefore, be assumed to verbalize some anti-Semitic prejudice.

If a participant associates this statement with his well-founded doubt, whether a given Israeli government at a given point of time endorses the peace process, however, he may reject the statement even from the perspective of a pro Israeli Peace Frame.

The same holds for the statement in example No. 2 ("The Israelis are occupiers and have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories") which has its rational kernel in a multitude of UN-resolutions and/or for the statement in example No. 3 ("Israel is a state who sticks at nothing") which may be associated with problematic aspects of the Israeli military actions like the targeted killing of Palestinian leaders and/or the killing of hundreds of Palestinian civilians during the Gaza War.. While the acceptance of statements like these does for sure not express unconditional support of the Israeli policy (cf. pro Israeli War Frame), it is *not necessarily* an expression of anti-Semitism, however, and might be agreed with by members of the Israeli peace movement as well.

Second: As we have already seen with examples No. 2 and 3, critical statements about Israel or Israeli policy can be motivated by various reasons and, therefore, the mere acceptance or rejection of the statements has no distinct meaning.

Rejecting a statement like the one in example No. 4 ("Israel wages a just war against the Palestinians") *may* be motivated by anti-Semitic prejudice. But a participant's rejection of this statement does only indicate that he does not follow a pro Israeli War Frame. Whether he rejects the statement due to anti-Semitic prejudice, whether he rejects it due to a pro-Palestinian War Frame or whether he does so due to a Peace Frame remains open: Since – from a pacifist point of view – every war is evil there does not exist something like a "just" war and even from a pro Israeli Peace frame this statement would be accepted, therefore.

Similarly, the acceptance of a statement like the one in example No. 5 ("Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the Middle East Conflict") *may* be motivated by anti-Semitic prejudice. But a participant's acceptance of the statement might as well result from a pro Palestinian War Frame.

The same holds even for the statement in example No. 6 ("The Palestinian suicide attacks are an appropriate means to combat Israel"), which takes sides with the Palestinians and involves military logic, but as long as it is not associated with the denial of Israel's right of existence, its acceptance does *not necessarily* embody any anti-Semitic content.

Third: As Zimmermann (2002, 2) has pointed out, even NS-comparative criticism of Israel can gain different meaning, depending on the intention behind it.

A statement like in example No. 7 ("What the Israelis do to the Palestinians resembles what the Nazis did to the Jews") may either result from a Peace Frame and aim at warning Israel not to abandon the high moral standards of Jewish culture, or it may result from a pro Palestinian War Frame and aim at delegitimizing Israel, or it may result from secondary anti-Semitism and aim at trivializing the Holocaust.

Fourth: Also the response to statements which overtly contain anti-Semitic content and/or provoke anti-Semitic sentiments is often not unambiguous.

Although the acceptance of the statement in example No. 8 ("It would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East") implies the delegitimation of the Jews and the denial of Israel's right of existence, even a hard core Neo-Nazi, who fears that "the Jews" might return to Germany might reject it.

Fifth: Even in those cases where the response is more or less unambiguous, statements which overtly contain anti-Semitic content and/or provoke anti-Semitic sentiments are not appropriate to identify attempts at using the criticism of Israel as a medium to express anti-Semitic contents in a socially correct matter.

3.2 Principal Components Analysis and score distribution

Reanalyzing data from N = 411 participants of the study by Petzold (2004), Principal Components Analysis of the items in Table 3 identified two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.

The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 83 years (M = 40.28, SD = 16.55). 57.7% of the participants were female, 42.1% male. 25.1% of them were students, 15.3% academics, 13.1% retired, 12.2% service personnel, 8% civil servants, 8% social professions, 5.8% unemployed, 5.6% craftsmen and 6.9% other.

The "positive" items (No. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8) were scored on a five-point Likert scale from 1 = completely disagree via 2 = rather disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree and 4 rather agree until 5 = completely agree. The "negative" items (No. 1 and 4) were scored the other way round. Accordingly, the higher an item score is, the more did a participant agree with the anti-Israeli pole. Missing data were scored as 3 (neither agree nor disagree).

The two factors identified by Principal Components Analysis were VARIMAX rotated according to the Kaiser-criterion and account for a total of 55.986% of the total variance. The matrix of factor loadings is displayed in Table 4. Loadings larger than 0.447 which account for at least 20% of the variance of an item are bold printed.

Item		Factor	
No.	Statement	1	2
2	The Israelis are occupiers and have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories	0.728	-0.078
1	The Israelis are not interested in a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict	0.702	0.114
3	Israel is a state who sticks at nothing	0.701	0.137
7	What the Israelis do to the Palestinians resembles what the Nazis did to the Jews	0.683	0.224
5	Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the Middle East Conflict.	0.681	0.377
4	Israel does not wage a just war against the Palestinians	0.521	-0.687
8	It would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East	0.451	0.511
6	The Palestinian suicide attacks are an appropriate means to combat Israel	0.282	0.719

Table 4: VARIMAX rotated factor loadings.

The first factor accounts for 37.491 % of the total variance and displays an *Israel-critical attitude*. It forwards the opinion that the Israelis are occupiers who have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories (2), that the Israelis are not interested in a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict (1), that Israel is a state who sticks at nothing (3), that what the Israelis do to the Palestinians resembles what the Nazis did to the Jews (7) that Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the Middle East Conflict (5), that Israel does not wage a just war against the Palestinians (4), and that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East.

The second factor accounts for 18.495% of the total variance and displays the *support of violence and displacement*. It *derogates* the opinion that Israel does *not* wage a just war against the Palestinians (4) and it

forwards the opinion that the Palestinian suicide attacks are an appropriate means to combat Israel (6) and that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East (8).

Using the sum of the item scores as a measurement of anti-Israeli attitudes results in a scale with moderate internal consistency (Cronbach-Alpha = 0.778). The possible scale values (questionnaire scores) range from $x = 0$ (complete disagreement with the anti-Israeli propositions) to $x = 40$ (complete agreement with the anti-Israeli propositions), with $x = 24$ indicating neither agreement nor disagreement.

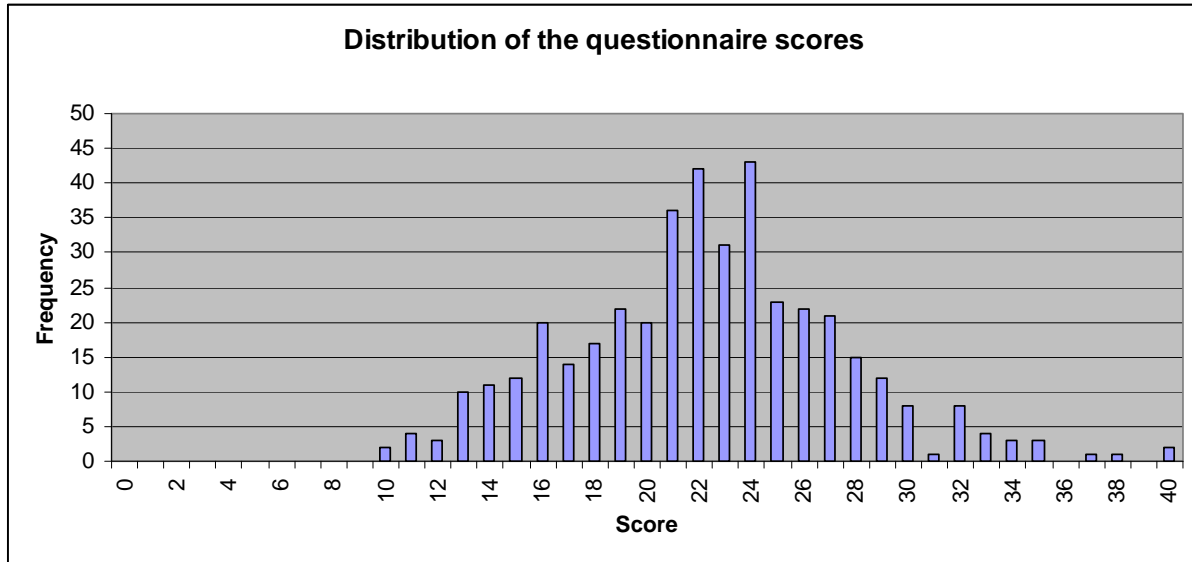


Figure 1: Distribution of the questionnaire Scores.

The empirical distribution of the questionnaire scores is displayed in Figure 1. Although very small scores (strong disagreement) are not present in the data which range only from 10 to 40, the mean score ($M = 22,32$; $SD = 5,214$) indicates a significant tendency towards the rejection of anti-Israeli propositions ($t = -6,532$, $df = 410$; $p < 0,0001$). On the other hand, however, at least 43 of the 411 participants (10.46%) have scores as high or higher than the critical score of $x = 29$, which indicates a significant ($p = 0,05$) agreement with the anti-Israeli propositions.³

3.3 Typical response patterns

Summarizing the results so far, the data give the impression that agreement vs. disagreement with anti-Israeli propositions is due to two factors: one that displays an attitude critical of Israel and another one that indicates support of violence. In the average, the participants of the study rather reject anti-Israeli propositions, but a relevant minority supports them to a significant degree.

However, none of these results tell whether there is a specific anti-Semitic motivation behind the participants' item responses and/or questionnaire scores. Moreover, due to the multivalency of the responses, also the questionnaire scores do not have a distinct meaning. As Kracauer has elaborated in the context of content analysis as early as in 1952 already, the mere frequency of textual elements (or the sum of item scores) does not have a unique interpretation. What counts, are the *patterns* to which the responses are combined.

According to the AIC criterion (cf. Table 5), the application of Latent Class Analysis to the present data⁴ identified seven classes which display typical response patterns, some which are critical of Israel (classes No. 1, 3, 5 and 6), some which refrain from criticising Israel (classes No. 4 and 7) and one which is supportive of Israel (class No. 2). Though none of the classes displays an unconditional solidarity with Israel (none of them agrees that Israel wages a just war against the Palestinians), the majority of the response patterns is obviously free of any anti-Semitic tendency.

³ Since Cronbach-Alpha is a lower boundary of the reliability only, and since the items are obviously not homogeneous, the critical score of $x = 29$ is over-estimated.

⁴ For Latent Class Analysis, missing data were scored as a response category of its own.

Number of classes	Log-Likelihood	Number of parameters	Degrees of freedom	Likelihood-Ratio	p	AIC
1	-4676,57	40	1679575	4501,00	> 0,9999	9433,14
2	-4370,69	81	1679534	3889,23	> 0,9999	8903,37
3	-4200,12	122	1679493	3548,09	> 0,9999	8644,24
4	-4022,92	163	1679452	3193,69	> 0,9999	8371,83
5	-3959,22	204	1679411	3066,29	> 0,9999	8326,44
6	-3904,31	245	1679234	2956,47	> 0,9999	8298,61
7	-3856,01	286	1679329	2859,88	> 0,9999	8284,02
8	-3834,38	327	1679288	2816,62	> 0,9999	8322,76
9	-3794,41	368	1679247	2736,68	> 0,9999	8324,83

Table 5: Goodness of fit statistics of the Latent Class Analysis.

The response pattern that is supportive of Israel is typical for 18.12% of the participants.

- Class 2 (18.12%, $M^5 = 15.089$) results from a Peace Frame which rejects both, the claim that Israel wages a just war against the Palestinians (item No. 4) and (even more so) the appreciation of the Palestinian suicide attacks (item No. 6). With respect to all other issues (items No. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8), it takes a clear position in favour of Israel (cf. Figure 2).

The two response patterns that refrain from criticising Israel are typical for 18.97 % of the participants.

- Class 4 (16.77%, $M = 22.047$) results from a Peace Frame as well (cf. items No. 4 and 6), but has no opinion whether the Israelis are interested in a peaceful conflict resolution (item No. 1), whether they are occupiers (item No. 2) and whether Israel is a state who sticks at nothing (item No. 3). The accusation according to which Israel is exclusively responsible for the conflict (item No. 5), the incrimination according to which the Israelis' treat the Palestinians the same way as the Nazis did with the Jews (item No. 7) and the assumption that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East (item No. 8) are rejected, however (cf. Figure 3).
- Class 7 (2.2%, $M = 21.250$) is a very small class of participants who obviously have little knowledge of Israeli-Palestinian affairs. Their response pattern is mainly made up of missing data (response category 0) and neither-nor responses (response category 3). It only shows a weak ambivalence with respect to NS-comparisons (item No. 7), some tendency to disapprove with the Palestinian suicide attacks (item No. 6) and a somewhat stronger tendency to reject the claim that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East (item No. 8) (cf. Figure 4).

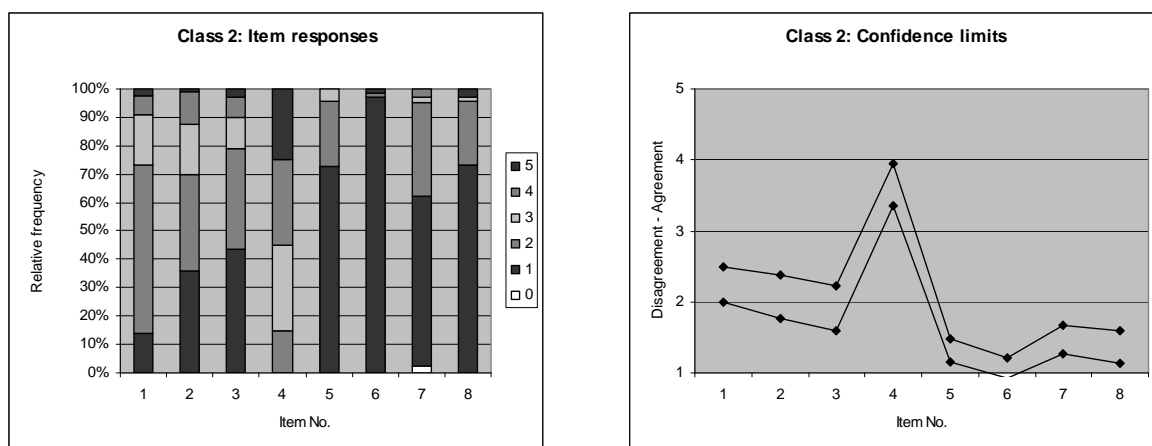


Figure 2: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 2.

⁵ Mean scores were computed from response categories 1 – 5 only, without category 0 (= no response).

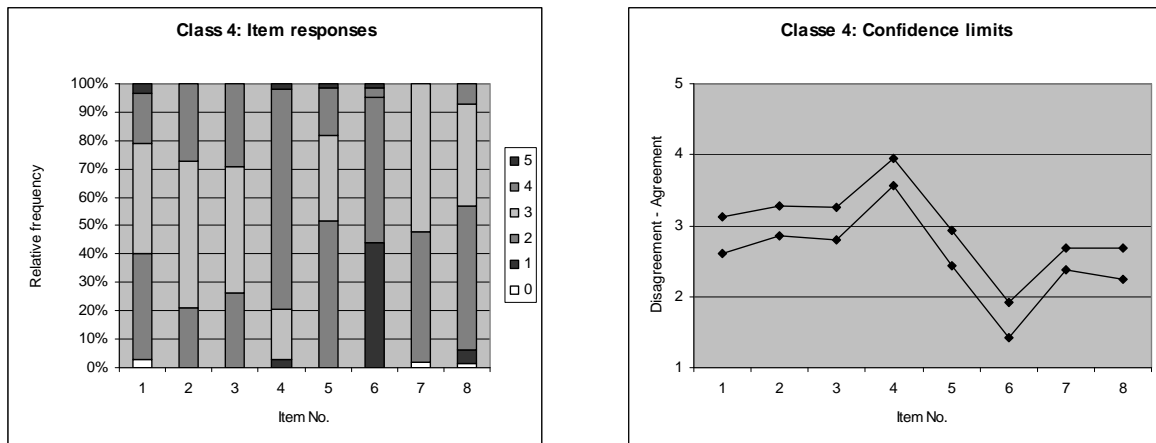


Figure 3: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 4.

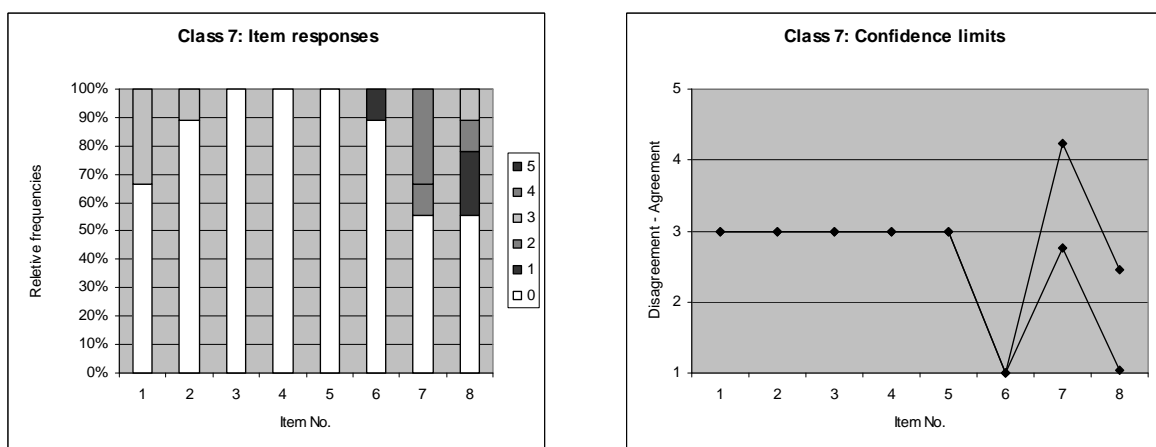


Figure 4: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 7.

Two of the response patterns criticise Israel without taking sides for the Palestinians. These patterns are typical for 38.23% of the participants.

- Class 1 (28.53%, M = 21.081) criticises Israel on the basis of a Peace Frame (cf. items No. 4 and 6) which is obviously free of any anti-Semitic tendencies. Although the participants in this class are ambiguous about the question whether Israel is a state who sticks at nothing (item No. 3), and although they agree that the Israelis are occupiers who have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories (item No. 2), they clearly reject the claim that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East (item No. 8), and they also refuse to make Israel exclusively responsible for the conflict (item No. 5), to accuse the Israelis of treating the Palestinians the same way as the Nazis did with the Jews (item No. 7) and/or to deny their interest in a peaceful conflict resolution (item No. 1) (cf. Figure 5).
- Class 5 (9.70%, M = 23.788) has no clear cut Peace Frame and – although this response pattern does not reveal any obviously ant-Semitic tendencies - the motivation behind it remains unclear.

The participants in this class refute both, the war against the Palestinians (item No. 4) and the Palestinian suicide attacks (item No. 6) to a much lesser degree than the classes discussed above.

Participants in this class tend to see the Israelis as occupiers who have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories (item No. 2) and to regard Israel as a state who sticks at nothing (item No. 3). However, they have no opinion whether the Israelis are interested in a peaceful conflict resolution (item No. 1), no opinion whether Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the conflict (item No. 5) and no opinion whether the way, how the Israelis treat the Palestinians is comparable to how the Nazis did with the Jews (item No. 7).

Nonetheless, they rather do not agree that it would be preferable if the Jews would leave the Middle East (item No. 8) (cf. Figure 6).

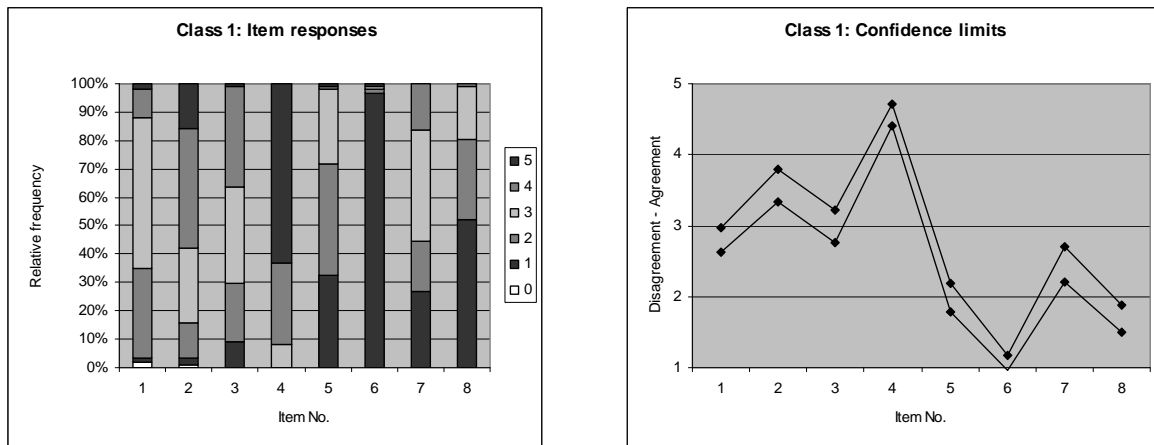


Figure 5: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 1.

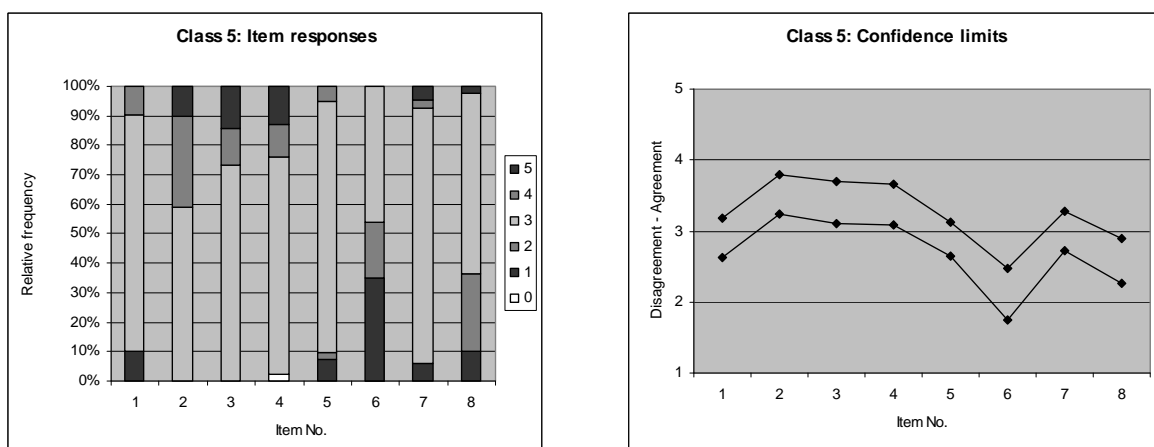


Figure 6: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 5.

The remaining two response patterns are critical of Israel and position themselves in favour of the Palestinians. Altogether they are typical for 24.98% of the participants.

At a first glance, these response patterns (cf. Figures 7 and 8) still look like a Peace Frame, but may as well result from a pro-Palestinian War Frame, which disguises itself as a Peace Frame: They condemn Israel's war against the Palestinians (item No. 4) to a higher degree than the other classes (despite class 1), and they reject the Palestinian suicide attacks (item No. 6) to a much lesser degree than the other ones (despite class 5).

In contrast to the other classes, these two are also the only response patterns which give support to comparing the Israelis with the Nazis (item No. 7) and thus do not refrain from provoking anti-Semitic sentiments.

- Although the participants in class 3 (17.953%, M = 26.929) do not have an opinion whether Israel is exclusively responsible for the emergence and perpetuation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (item No. 5), they regard Israel as a state who sticks at nothing (item No. 3) and the Israelis as occupiers who have no right to stay in the Palestinian territories (item No. 2), and who are rather not interested in a peaceful conflict resolution (item No. 1) (cf. Figure 7).
- Class 6 (7.03%, M = 32.528) shows much the same response pattern as class 2, but in a more radicalized way. Condemnation of Israel and the Israelis (items No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7) is much stronger and the refutation of the Palestinian suicide attacks is even weaker than in class 3. In contrast to class 3, the participants in this class also make Israel exclusively responsible for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (item No. 5) (cf. Figure 8).

Whether these two response patterns are motivated by anti-Semitic attitudes or whether they are motivated by taking sides for the Palestinians and “only” deteriorate into the use of anti-Semitic clichés (cf. item No. 7) cannot easily be decided, however.

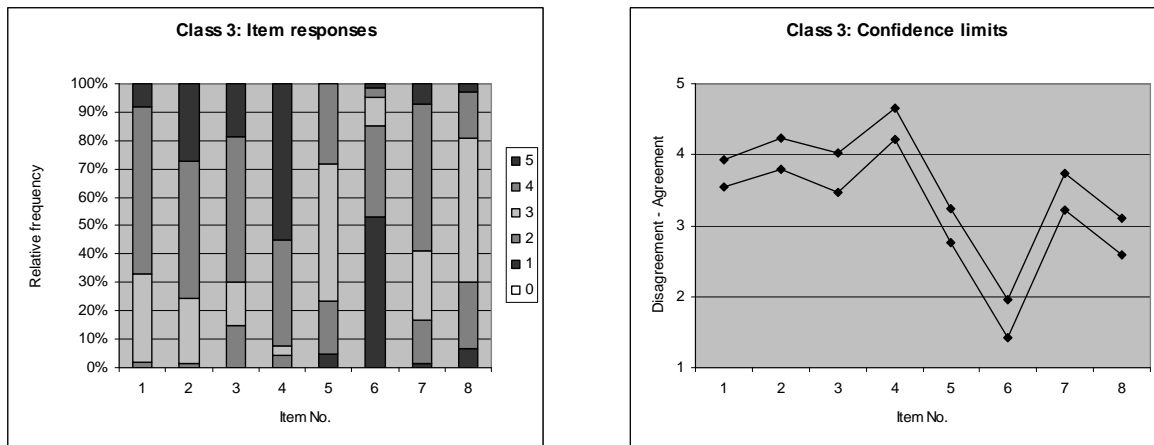


Figure 7: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 3.

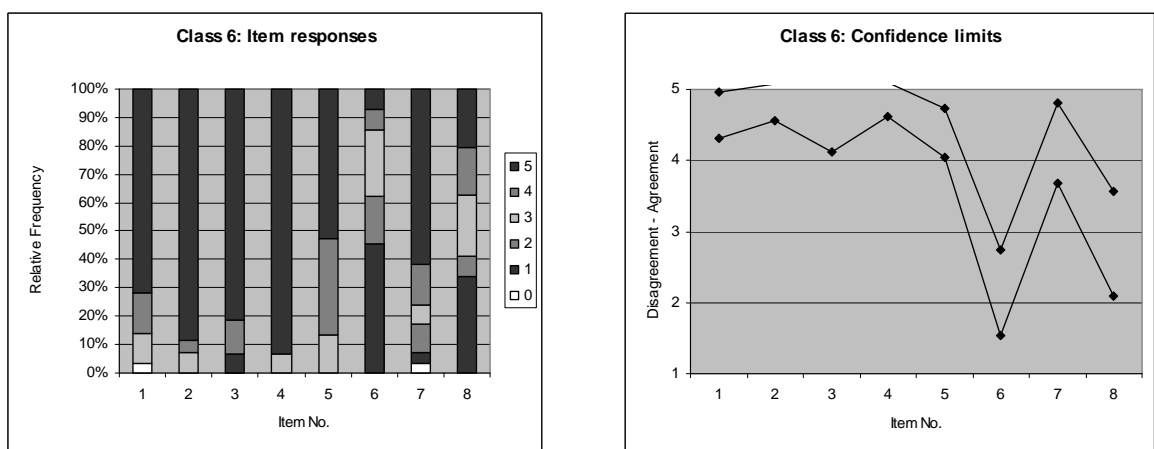


Figure 8: Response frequencies and 99% confidence limits of the mean item scores in class 6.

3.4 The limited usability of questionnaire scores

Summarizing these results, we have identified seven response patterns, none of which is marked by the sort of unconditional solidarity with Israel that is characteristic of the German reason of state which assumes that Israel wages a just war against the Palestinians.

Three of these patterns (class 1, 2 and 4; 63.41%) display a Peace Frame and are either supportive of Israel (class 2; 18.12%), or they refrain from criticising Israel (class 4; 16.77%) or they are critical of Israel (class 1; 28.525%) without any anti-Semitic tendency.

Two of the response patterns (class 5 and 7; 11.9%), do not give evidence of a Peace Frame. These response patterns are either marked by non-responding and refraining from criticising Israel (class 7; 2.2%), or they criticise Israel in a rather moderate way and without taking sides for the Palestinians (class 5; 9.7%). Although these classes do not display any overt anti-Semitic tendencies, the motivation behind them remains unclear and it cannot be completely ruled out that latent anti-Semitism (as the attempt, not to speak publicly about Jews) plays some role for their emergence. More probably, however, the members of these classes simply have little knowledge and not much of an opinion about Israel.

The remaining two response patterns (class 3 and 6; 24.98%) position themselves in favour of the Palestinians, and their criticism of Israel does not refrain from provoking anti-Semitic sentiments. Whether they "only" take sides for the Palestinians and deteriorate into the use of anti-Semitic clichés, or whether they result from a genuine anti-Semitic motivation cannot be easily decided. While the first of these patterns (class 3; 17.95%) criticises Israel in a somewhat more moderate way, class 6 (7.03%) takes a quite radical anti-Israeli position.

Although the various classes are characterized by significantly different response patterns which have different meanings and give rise to different hypothesis about the motivation behind them, they cannot be sufficiently differentiated if we only look at the participants' over-all questionnaire scores (cf. Figure 9), however.

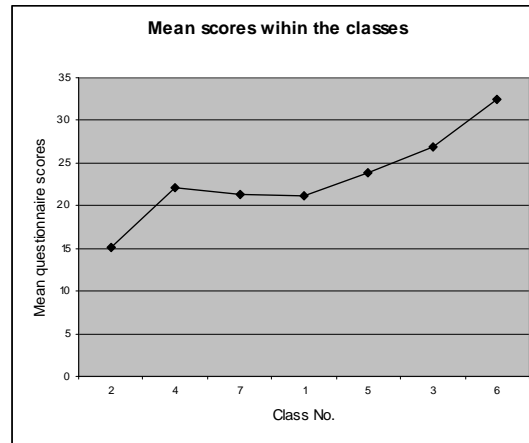


Figure 9: Mean scores within the various classes.

Although the questionnaire scores differentiate between those participants who strongly support Israel (class 2, M = 15.089) and those which take sides for the Palestinians (class 3, M = 26.929; and class 6, M = 32.528), the whole range in-between (class 4, M = 22.047; class 7, M = 21.250; class 1, M = 21.081, and class 5, M = 23.788) remains unclear. Particularly classes 1, 4 and 7 which display dramatically different response patterns have nearly the same over-all mean score: While class 1 displays a non-anti-Semitic form of criticising Israel, class 4 refrains from criticising Israel and class 7 is made up of missing data and neither-nor responses.

3.4 Validity of the interpretations

In order to obtain a more detailed account of a possible anti-Semitic motivation behind the identified response patterns, two mini-scales for manifest anti-Semitism (MA1: Dislike of the Jews; MA2: Jewish conspiracy), another one for secondary anti-Semitism (SA: Ruling off the past) and one for latent anti-Semitism (LA: Refusal to speak about the Jews), were formed of three items each from the questionnaire by Petzold (2004) (cf. Table 5).⁶

MA1: Dislike of the Jews (Cronbach-Alpha = 0.837)	
1	One shouldn't do business with Jews
2	I belong to those who dislike the Jews
3	It is preferable to have nothing to do with Jews
MA2: Jewish conspiracy (Cronbach-Alpha = 0.820)	
1	There exists a secret Jewish network which has a crucial influence on the political and economic processes in this world
2	A fundamental goal of Judaism is to safeguard supremacy in this world
3	The Jews have too much influence on this world
SA: Ruling off the past (Cronbach-Alpha = 0.777)	
1	Decades after the end of war, we shouldn't talk so much about the persecution of Jews and eventually rule off the past
2	One should ultimately put an end to the chitchat about our guilt vis-à-vis the Jews
3	The German people has a particular responsibility vis-à-vis the Jews
LA: Refusal to speak about the Jews (Cronbach-Alpha = 0.469)	
1	I believe that many people do not dare to tell their real opinion of the Jews
2	The whole topic "Jews" is somehow unpleasant for me
3	I don't tell everybody what I think about the Jews

Table 5: The mini-scales for manifest, secondary and latent anti-Semitism.

Analysis of Variance ($F_{3,1640} = 129.469$; $p < 0.001$) revealed a significant difference between the mean scores of the four scales, which are throughout below the neutral score of 9 (cf. the graphic on the left hand side of Figure 10).

The more obvious the anti-Semitic content of the questionnaire items was, the less did the participants agree with it and, particularly the scale for Dislike of the Jews (MA1) has the least mean score. Although this may indicate a response tendency toward social desirability, the scales have a significant regression on the response patterns, however (cf. Table 6).

⁶ As Cronbach-Alpha indicates, particularly the LA-scale is far from optimal, but scale construction was limited by the data available.

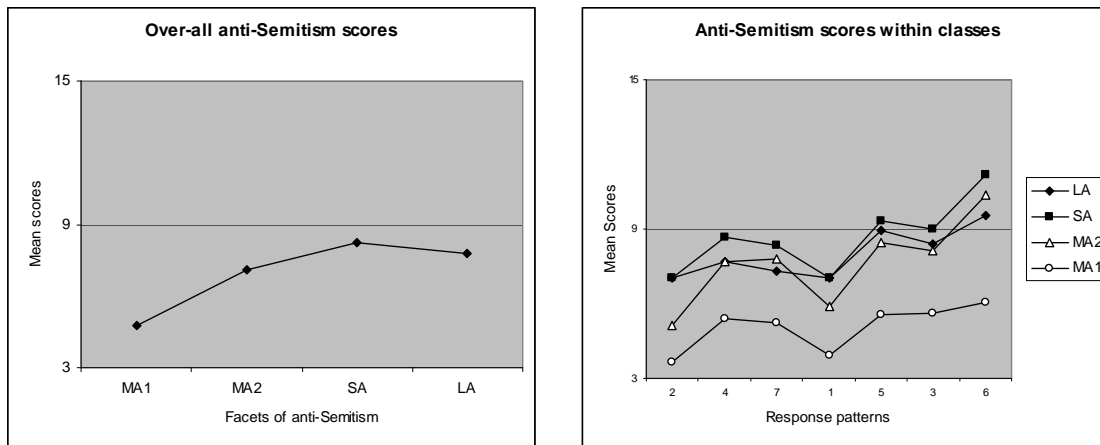


Figure 10: Mean scores of agreement with manifest, secondary and latent anti-Semitic statements in the over-all data (left) and within classes of response patterns (right).

Scale	F	df	p
MA1: Dislike of the Jews	11,228	6, 404	< 0.001
MA2: Jewish conspiracy	24,280	6, 404	< 0.001
SA: Ruling off the past	11,587	6, 404	< 0.001
LA: Refusal to speak about the Jews	10,195	6, 404	< 0.001

Table 6: Main effects of the response patterns on the anti-Semitism scales.

In accordance with our interpretation of the response patterns, the participants belonging to class 2 (support of Israel with a clear cut Peace Frame) and class 1 (criticism of Israel with a clear cut Peace Frame) had the lowest, and the participants belonging to class 3 and class 6 (taking sides for the Palestinians) were among those which had the highest mean scores on each of the four scales. The participants belonging to class 5 (unclear motivation; no clear cut Peace Frame) were among these high scoring classes as well.

3.5 Identifying anti-Semitic forms of criticising Israel

In order to differentiate between anti-Semitic and other forms of criticising Israel, however, these bivariate relations between the response patterns and the anti-Semitism scales are of limited usefulness only. Instead, it would be preferable to reconstruct the meta-patterns according to which the patterns of criticising Israel are combined with the various facets of anti-Semitism.

These meta-patterns can be identified by entering both, the response patterns and the anti-Semitism scales as variables into a second order Latent Class Analysis. For this sake, the responses to the four scales were classified in five categories from “reject” to “support” of anti-Semitic statements (cf. Table 7, Figure 11).

Score	Category	
	No.	Label
3 - 5	1	reject
6 - 7	2	rather reject
8-10	3	neither - nor
11 - 12	4	rather support
13 - 15	5	support

Table 7: Categorization of the scores.

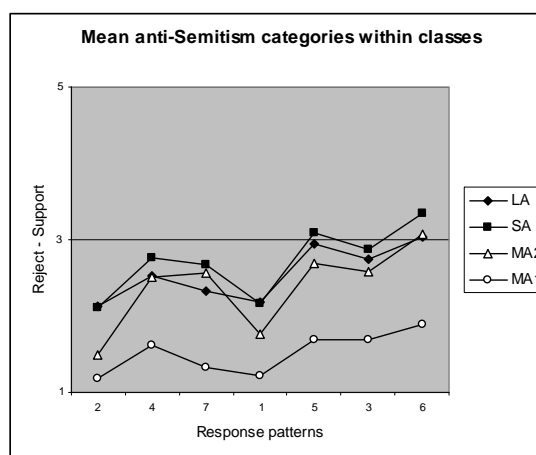


Figure 11: Mean categories within classes of response patterns.

According to the AIC criterion (cf. Table 8), second order Latent Class Analysis identified four meta-patterns, two of which (classes No. 1 and 2) reject all sorts of anti-Semitic statements, while the other two (classes No. 3 and 4) reject only the Dislike of the Jews statements (MA1) but support the Jewish Conspiracy statements (MA2), the Ruling off the Past statements (SA) and the Refusal to Speak about the Jews statements (LA) to a considerable degree.

Number of classes	Log-Likelihood	Number of parameters	Degrees of freedom	Likelihood-Ratio	p	AIC
1	-2732.22	18	1773	1186,18	p > .999	5500,44
2	-2511.37	37	1754	744,48	p > .999	5096,74
3	-2461.15	56	1735	644,04	p > .999	5034,30
4	-2430.08	75	1716	581,90	p > .999	5010,16
5	-2414.33	94	1697	550,40	p > .999	5016,66
6	-2398.70	113	1678	519,14	p > .999	5023,40

Table 8: Goodness of fit statistics of the second order Latent Class Analysis.

Class 1 (37,87%) rejects the anti-Semitic statements most clearly (cf. Figure 12) and contains mainly participants who criticize Israel on the basis of a Peace Frame (response pattern 1) or who support Israel (response pattern 2) (cf. Figure 13).

Class 2 (31,43%) rejects the anti-Semitic statements to a lesser degree (cf. Figure 12). It contains a mixture of participants who are uncritical of Israel (response pattern 4), who criticize Israel on the basis of a Peace Frame (response pattern 1) or who take sides with the Palestinians in a moderate way (response pattern 3). (cf. Figure 13).

Class 3 (22,02%) tends to agree with latent (LA: Refusal to speak about the Jews) and secondary (SA: Ruling off the Past) anti-Semitic statements to some degree (cf. Figure 12) and contains mainly participants who take sides with the Palestinians in a moderate way (response pattern 3), who are critical of Israel without a clear-cut Peace Frame (response pattern 5) or who are uncritical about Israel (response pattern 4) (cf. Figure 13).

Class 4 (8,68%) shows a tendency towards latent (LA) and secondary anti-Semitism (SA) as well. This tendency is stronger than in class 3, however, and this class is the only one which also tends to agree with the assumption of a Jewish conspiracy (MA2) (cf. Figure 12). Participants in this class are mainly those who also take sides with the Palestinians in a most decisive way (response pattern 6) (cf. Figure 13).

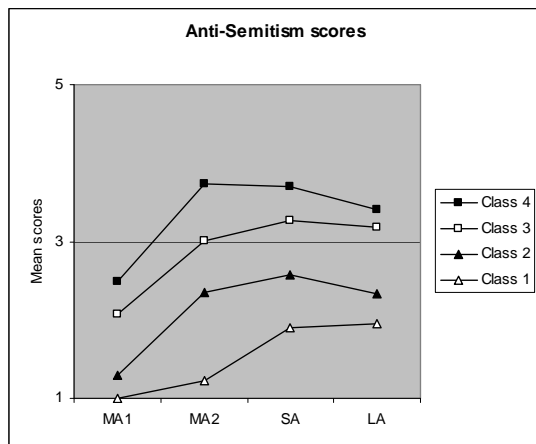


Figure 12: Mean anti-Semitism categories within the meta-classes.

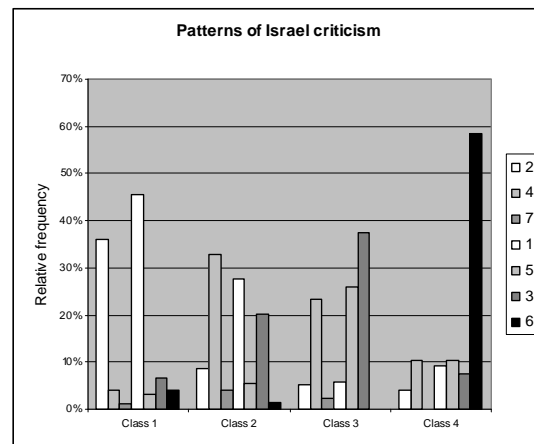


Figure 13: Distribution of the response patterns within the meta-classes.

91.6% of the participants who support Israel (response pattern 2), and 92.4% of the participants who criticize Israel on the basis of a Peace Frame (response pattern 1) belong to one of the classes which are opposed to anti-Semitic statements (classes 1 and 2) (cf. Figure 14).

On the other hand, however, 69.6% of the participants who criticize Israel without following a clear cut Peace Frame (response pattern 5) belong either to class 3 (60.0%) or to class 4 (9.6%). Accordingly, this response pattern (whose motivation had so far appeared as unclear) correlates with an even stronger tendency toward

anti-Semitic attitudes than the moderately pro Palestinian response pattern (response pattern 3), where only 50.0% show a tendency toward anti-Semitic attitudes (class 3: 46.3%; class 4: 3.7%) (cf. Figure 14).

Also the participants who refrain from criticizing Israel (response pattern 4) do not reject anti-Semitic statements throughout. 33.8% of the participants with response pattern 4 (class 3: 28.8%; class 4: 5.0%) belong to one of the classes who rather support them (cf. Figure 14).

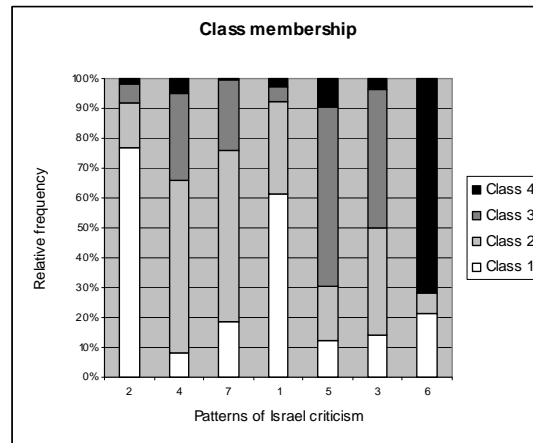


Figure 14: Distribution of the meta-classes within the response patterns.

71.5% of the participants who show a more radical pro-Palestinians response pattern (response pattern 6), finally, belong to class 4 and thus display a strong anti-Semitic attitude (cf. Figure 14).

Since none of these participants (0.0%) belongs to class 3 which displays anti-Semitic prejudices in a more moderate way, it can be assumed that the remaining 27.9% of participants who do not openly express anti-Semitic prejudices do so because of social desirability: Participants who criticize Israel in a radically pro Palestinian way either confess their anti-Semitic tendencies or they try to disguise them.

4. Discussion

It was argued that criticism of Israel can also derive from a variety of other sources as well. Anti-Semitic criticism of Israel, therefore, cannot be directly operationalized by means of questionnaire scores. Instead, one has to look at the response patterns of positioning toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In order to do so, we suggested a methodological approach which identifies these response patterns by means of Latent Class Analysis and will result in the identification of some positioning patterns that are critical of Israel, some which refrain from criticizing Israel and others that are favorable to Israel.

The anti-Semitic elements contained therein can then be identified by means of second order Latent Class Analysis which juxtaposes the positioning patterns with the facets of anti-Semitism, emotional closeness to one of the conflict parties, pacifistic vs. bellicose attitudes and the human rights orientation of the participants.

The data that we used to demonstrate the power of this methodological approach was far from optimal, however. The Israel-criticism questions covered only part of the issues that are relevant for the identification of a pro-Israeli or pro-Palestinian positioning according to a War or a Peace Frame (cf. Table 2). The internal consistency of the scales for measuring the facets of anti-Semitism was partially low (cf. Table 5) and there were no data available for measuring emotional closeness, pacifism and/or human rights orientation.

Nonetheless, we managed to identify a number of positioning patterns which ranged from pro Israeli via neutral to pro-Palestinian response patterns.

While the pattern which is in favor of Israel (response pattern 2: 18.1%) could be demonstrated to oppose anti-Semitic attitudes, the patterns that are critical of Israel ranged from a pattern which rejects anti-Semitic attitudes and criticizes Israel on the basis of a Peace Frame (response pattern 1: 28.5%) to a pattern which displays anti-Semitic attitudes and takes sides for the Palestinians (response pattern 6: 7.0%).

While the latter pattern can be assumed to be motivated by anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitic tendency of the pattern which takes sides for the Palestinians in a more moderate way (response pattern 3: 18.0%) is much weaker. This pattern is possibly not genuine anti-Semitic but rather due to positioning oneself according to a pro-Palestinian War Frame which is motivated by defending the rights of the Palestinian population and partly

degenerates into anti-Semitic attitudes. Whether this hypothesis holds, cannot be tested with the available data however.

Anyways, the anti-Semitic tendency of this moderately pro-Palestinian pattern is noticeably weaker than that of the pattern which criticizes Israel without any evidence of being motivated by solidarity with the Palestinians and/or by interpreting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict according to a Peace Frame (response pattern 5: 9.7%). Accordingly, an anti-Semitic motivation of the latter pattern cannot be ruled out, but again, the available data is not sufficient to give proof of this hypothesis.

The pattern which criticizes Israel on the basis of a clear cut Peace Frame (response pattern 1: 28.5%), on the other hand, rejects anti-Semitic attitudes nearly to the same degree as the patterns which are in favor of Israel. An anti-Semitic motivation of this pattern can, therefore, be ruled out definitively.

While these results seem to suggest that most of the criticism of Israel is not (response pattern 1) or at least not genuinely (response pattern 3) motivated by anti-Semitism, the seemingly neutral pattern which does not take sides for the Israelis but only refrains from criticizing Israel (response patterns 4: 16.5%) displays a considerable amount of anti-Semitic prejudice.

Accordingly, it is not the criticism of Israel per se which should alarm us, but the way, how Israel is criticized (by a minority of the participants), and the sort of wishy-washy neutrality which doesn't utter any criticism is suspicious of anti-Semitic tendencies as well.

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