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Criticism of Israel, modern anti-Semitism and the media¹

Abstract: There is increasing criticism of Israeli policies in the German public that in political discourse is frequently attributed to a resurgence of anti-Semitic attitudes. As one of the factors assumed to be responsible for this, publicists have pointed to the impact of media reportage. Scholars have criticized the coverage of the Middle East conflict as biased in favor of the Palestinians, and even documentaries about the Holocaust have been accused of reproducing the "Nazi view" of the Jews and thus of encouraging anti-Semitic stereotypes.

This criticism should be taken seriously. Nevertheless, there is little empirical research on how criticism of Israel is related to anti-Semitism, how the media report on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, how media audiences react to this media coverage, and whether Holocaust documentaries actually have a "boomerang effect" that encourages anti-Semitism.

The present paper outlines the theoretical and methodological basis and design of an ongoing research project intended to answer these and other research questions.

1. Introduction

Criticism of Israeli Palestine policy continually provokes heated controversies in public discourse. On the one side, many Israelis, Holocaust survivors and their descendants around the globe, as well as non-Jewish Germans who have drawn lessons from their country's history, fear that we are witnessing a resurgence of anti-Semitism. On the other side, the critics of Israeli policy (Jewish and non-Jewish) fear that charges of anti-Semitism are intended to silence criticism. We cannot entirely rule out either possibility.

We must expect that among the critics of Israel there actually are a few who use their criticism as "ersatz communication" to circumvent the communicative taboo on anti-Semitic utterances (Bergmann & Erb, 1991a). As well, we must also consider whether there may in fact be pro-Israeli hard-liners who use the allegation of anti-Semitism to suppress criticism of Israeli policy.

To advance the peace process in the Middle East, the question of the links between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism must be posed in a more differentiated manner. We must examine what other possible factors could likewise promote critical attitudes toward Israel, and we must examine how these factors function.

Correlation studies are only to a limited extent conclusive. Participants who unconditionally support Israeli policy will certainly not harbor long-held anti-Semitic attitudes, and dyed-in-the-wool anti-Semites will not sympathize with Israeli policy. Already these two extreme groups cause a moderate correlation between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. Still, this correlation says nothing about whether and to what extent anti-Semitism motivates criticism of Israel.

Media critics are continually blaming media reportage on the Middle East conflict of encouraging criticism of Israel. The media are accused of one-sided reportage on the Middle East Conflict and of an uncompromising partisanship for the Palestinian position (e.g. Krämer, 2010) which represents Israel as the aggressor and trivializes Palestinian terrorism.

Whether Middle East reportage actually does have such a pro-Palestinian bias can only be determined through systematic empirical studies. With regard to *media effects*, on the other hand, we can express reservations from the start. The research on media effects makes clear the naivete of assuming a linear one-to-one correspondence between media reportage, on the one side, and the attitudes of media recipients, on the other. Media recipients do not simply swallow media constructions of reality unchanged. Instead, recipients integrate media offerings into their own mental models and make revisions that can go as far as rejecting the whole media frame.

Thus, e.g., we must assume that even media reports on the crimes of National Socialism and the Holocaust do not automatically reduce anti-Semitic prejudices. Revealing in this connection is a study by Hormuth & Stephan (1981) on the interrelationships among anti-Semitism, identification with National Socialists and the influence on viewers of the TV series "Holocaust." The study results are surprising: In relative terms, subjects who identified with the Nazis and had seen "Holocaust" blamed the Jews the most strongly for their fate. They indeed blamed the Jews more strongly than others who also identified with the Nazis but had not seen the series, as well as

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more strongly than subjects who identified with the Jews (independently of whether or not they had viewed the series). To explain this finding, the authors drew on the concept of “belief in a just world” (Lerner & Simmons, 1966; Lerner, 1980), according to which people fundamentally want to believe in a “just world” where everyone deserves his fate.

At about the same time, discourse analysts began to critically examine the different strategies of visual representation of the Holocaust (be it in popular movies or documentary films) (cf. Dengler, 2010b) and, e.g., they conjectured that the use of National Socialist film material reinforced the Nazi view of the Jews and thereby contributed *not* to reducing, but rather to propagating anti-Semitic prejudices and stereotypes.

2. Overview of the research plan

We intend to obtain more detailed information about the structure and dynamics of the relationships among criticism of Israel, discussions of German history, and the differentiation of types of modern anti-Semitism. Consequently, two years ago we launched a research project which consists of in all nine sub-studies (cf. Figure 1).

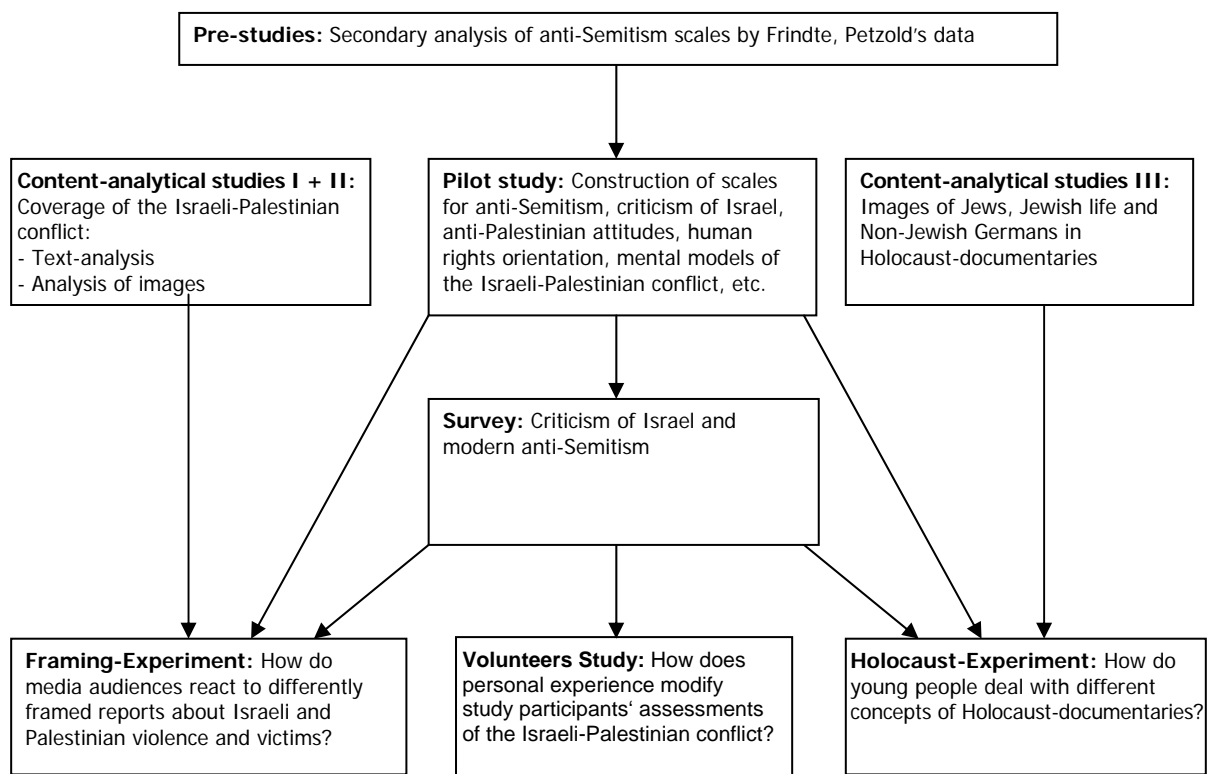


Figure 1, Criticizing Israel, coming to terms with German history and differentiating aspects of modern anti-Semitism: Structure of a research project

3. Facets of Anti-Semitism

The categorizations of various facets of anti-Semitism commonly made in the recent literature provided one of the theoretical starting points for our project (among others Bergmann & Erb, 1991a,b; Frindte, 2006; Frindte et al. 2005a,b; Heyder et al., 2005; Schönbach, 1961; Zick & Küpper, 2007). These categories include:

- *Manifest anti-Semitism* refers to dislike of (MA1) and exclusion of Jews (MA3) based on traditional prejudices like the belief in a “Jewish world conspiracy” (MA2).
- *Secondary anti-Semitism* concerns how Germans deal with the Nazi past, the Holocaust and the question of guilt and responsibility. It includes relativization of the Holocaust (SA2) and the demand to close the books on the past (SA1). It can go as far as a perpetrator-victim reversal (SA3) and the claim that the Jews were themselves to blame for provoking their persecution.
- *Latent anti-Semitism* (LA) is expressed in attempts to *avoid* publicly speaking of intentionally committed discrimination against Jews as Jews.
- *Israel-related anti-Semitism* (IA1) redirects anti-Semitic prejudices against the state of Israel and/or insinuates that Israel pursues advantages by instrumentalizing the Holocaust.

- *Anti-Zionism (PA)*, finally, rejects the creation of Israel in the Middle East as the homeland of the Jews and accuses Zionism of being an aggressive variety of racism whose goal is to drive the Palestinians from their traditional homeland.

We lack clarity on the implications of this distinction.

- Does it imply that the various facets are exchangeable expressions of anti-Semitism, so that independently of which facet is used as an indicator for anti-Semitism, we can always arrange study subjects on the same attitude dimension?
- Or are the facets more or less independent constructs that combine to form typical attitude patterns? Are there, e.g., subjects who have an anti-Zionist attitude and accuse the Israeli state of exploiting the Holocaust for its political advantage, but nevertheless reject all the other above-named facets as prejudices?

3.1 Method

Factor analyses, such as those employed, e.g., by Heyder et al. (2005) and Frindte (2006), to differentiate the various facets of anti-Semitism, are not suitable to reach conclusions about these two alternatives (cf. Kempf, 2009).

We have consequently chosen a different methodical approach: For each of the above-named facets we constructed one or more subscales that are in themselves ordinally homogenous. To test their homogeneity, each of the subscales was subjected to a Latent Class Analysis (LCA) and, on the basis of the item profiles, we examined whether each individual item of a subscale actually defines the same rank order among the identified classes of subjects.

Then, using a second-order LCA, we tested whether the various subscales also define the same rank order and can thereby be regarded as indicators of a single dimension of anti-Semitic attitudes.

In order to do so, we proceeded in three steps: First, by means of a secondary analysis of Petzold's data (2004) we showed that for some of the above-named facets we could construct ordinally homogenous subscales (cf. Kempf, 2009). Then we reworked the items adopted from Petzold, added new items and tested the resulting rough version of the questionnaire in a pilot study of N = 553 German and Austrian study participants. Based on the results of the pilot study, we in part again reworked the formulations of the items and produced a final version of the subscales (cf. Appendix 1) that we used in our main studies.

The data collection of the pilot study was made ca. one year after the Gaza war and lasted from November 2009 to February 2010, with 68.5% of the data collected in Germany and 31.5% in Austria. The ages of the participants ranged from 17 to 63 (M = 22.73; SD = 5.245), and the great majority of the participants were university students.

Unlike the usual response format, which ranges from rejection to agreement, we asked about half of the subjects to estimate on a five-step Likert scale whether they regarded the statements in the items to be mere prejudice or defensible opinions. For the choice of this somewhat unusual response format, discourse-theoretical considerations were crucial. These strengthened our resolve to lower the impertinence of the questionnaire, and to enable subjects to maintain a greater distance from the statements that the items include (cf. Dengler, 2010a). Moreover, since the rejection (actual or alleged) of anti-Semitic statements can be strongly overlaid by social desirability (political correctness), a lack of sensitivity to the (possible) prejudicial content of the statements should be a better indicator of whether and to what extent anti-Semitic prejudices continue to exist despite social sanctions. Due to the encouraging results of the pilot study, we retained this response format for our main studies.

In the main studies we collected data during the months after the Israeli navy's seizure of the Free Gaza ship, more precisely: during the period between June and November 2010. The sample included N = 998 subjects, who were representative of Germany based on their age, gender and school education. Half of them were chosen from an "old" state (Baden-Württemberg, belonging to Cold War West Germany), and the other half from a "new" state (Thüringia, formerly part of the GDR). Moreover, the sample included N = 243 oversampled cases; above all younger study subjects (under 30) with a good school education (*Abitur* – secondary school degree necessary for university admission – or comparable school leaving diploma) were over-represented. We also used N = 464 participants of an online survey, with which we succeeded on the basis of the snowball principle in locating more or less active critics and defenders of Israel. A total of 86.3% of the subjects of this subsample, in which older subjects (over 55) were over-represented, had an *Abitur* or a comparable school diploma, and a further 9.5% had at least a secondary modern school diploma (from a *Realschule*, a degree that is not sufficient for university admission in Germany). For some of the subscales we additionally drew on the data from the three experimental studies.

3.2 Empirical findings

The first results of the main study show that the facets actually do constitute homogenous constructs. Latent class analyses of the new subscales that we constructed to capture the facets showed that the items within the subscales:

- MA1: Dislike of Jews (3 Items)
- MA2: Conspiracy theory (3 Items)
- MA3: Exclusion of Jews (3 Items)
- SA1: Call to close the books (3 Items)
- SA2: Denial of guilt and relativization (3 Items)
- SA3: Perpetrator-victim reversal (4 Items)
- LA: Latent anti-Semitism (3 Items)
- IA: Israel-based anti-Semitism (3 Items)
- PA: Anti-Zionism (3 Items)

respectively defined the same rank order of subjects with regard to the dimension defined by the subscale (cf. Appendix 2). The only exception is subscale MA2, in which there is a small class of 2.97% of the subjects whose profile line cuts across the other classes (cf. Figure 2). These subjects, to be sure, consider it a defensible opinion that there is a Jewish network that decisively influences political and economic processes everywhere in the world. However, they reject as a prejudice the view according to which securing a hegemonic power position in the world is an important goal of Jewry.

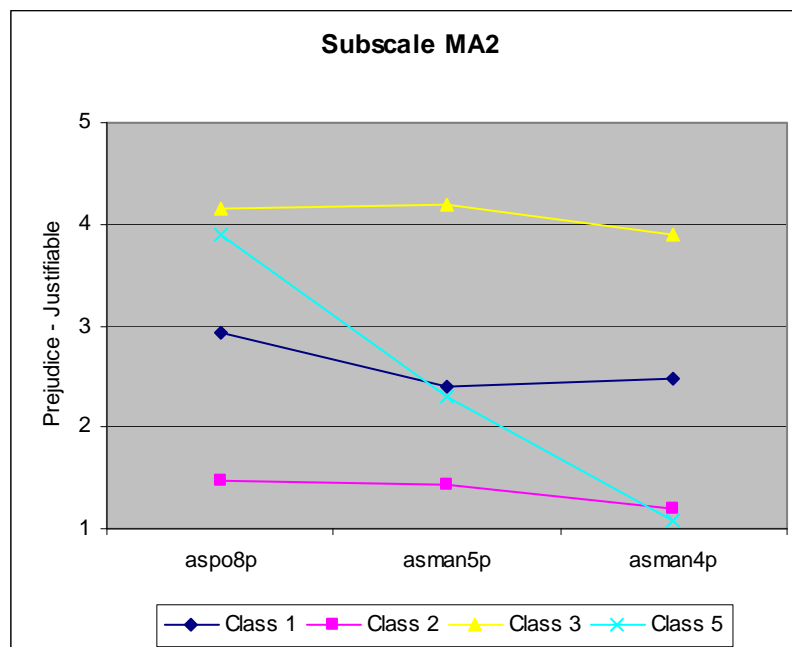


Figure 2. Item profiles of subscale MA2 (conspiracy theory)

Apart from these atypical subjects, the results of a second order LCA show (cf. Figure 3) that the subscales MA1, MA2, MA3, SA1, SA3 and LA respectively define the same rank order with regard to the subjects' anti-Semitism (Kendall-tau = 1.00). Dislike of Jews (MA1), conspiracy theory (MA2), exclusion of Jews (MA3), the demand to close the books on Germany's past (SA1), the perpetrator-victim reversal (SA3) and the refusal to talk about Jews (LA) are thus equivalent indicators for one and the same attitude dimension: anti-Semitism, plain and simple.

On the average the demand to close the books is thereby most likely to be considered a defensible opinion (SA1, $M = 2.88$), followed by the claim of a Jewish world conspiracy (MA2, $M = 2.34$), the perpetrator-victim reversal (SA3, $M = 2.13$) and the refusal to talk about Jews (LA, $M = 2.06$). Most likely to be recognized as expressing prejudices are the exclusion of Jews (MA3, $M = 1.84$) and still more, dislike of Jews (MA1, $M = 1.65$).

The scale for rejecting guilt and relativizing the Holocaust (SA2, $M = 2.22$), to the contrary, cannot be subsumed under this dimension of anti-Semitism. It only differentiates to an insignificant extent between the various classes ($1.95 \leq M \leq 2.51$) and defines a clearly different ranking order (Kendall-tau = 0.77).

Anti-Zionism (PA, $M = 2.84$) and so-called Israel-based anti-Semitism (IA1, $M = 2.90$) elicit a level of agreement that they are defensible opinions which is similar to that of the demand to close the books (SA1) and clearly

higher than for the other anti-Semitism scales. They likewise define the same ranking order of study subjects, so that we can assume that they represent equivalent indicators for the same anti-Zionist attitude dimension.

The ranking order with regard to this attitude dimension does, however, deviate from that with regard to anti-Semitism (Kendall-tau = 0.83): Class 5 shows the second highest values in matters of anti-Zionism, but at the same time also the second strongest rejection of anti-Semitism.

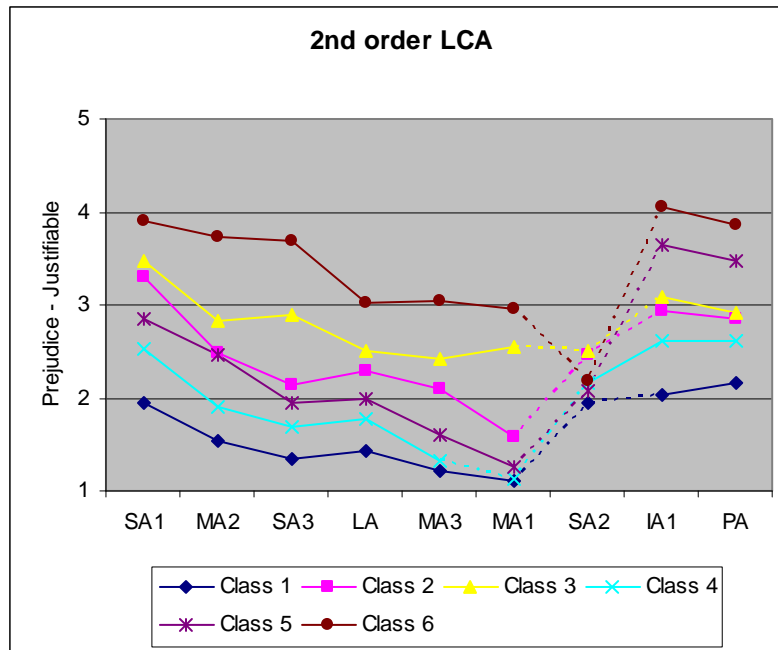


Figure 3. Subscale profiles

This finding can also be illustrated with the results of a Principle Components Analysis (PCA) of the subscales MA1, MA2, MA3, SA1, SA3, LA, IA1 and PA, which identified two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (cf. Table 1). Anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism accordingly appear as largely independent attitude dimensions. Only the subscale MA2 (conspiracy theory) also shows an appreciable loading of anti-Semitism factor 2, which at any rate explains 20.1% of the variance of MA2. This can nonetheless be understood as an indication that anti-Zionist attitudes support the theory of a Jewish world conspiracy or respectively serve some subjects as evidence that it is not just a matter of prejudice (cf. Subscale IA1, Item krit03p: "Without the international power of Jewry Israel could not simply ignore international law.").

Subscales	Components	
	1	2
MA1	,835	,072
MA2	,664	,456
MA3	,805	,185
SA1	,695	,182
SA3	,816	,302
LA	,709	,244
IA1	,292	,805
PA	,123	,870

Table 1. Principal Components Analysis of the scales MA1, MA2, MA3, SA1, SA3, LA, IA1 und PA. VARIMAX-rotated factor loadings with Kaiser Normalization

Since PCA only models pairwise correlations between the subscales, this result should not, however, be overestimated. The results of the LCA, which also comprehends higher ordered relations, clearly indicate that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are by no means so independent of each other. The majority of the classes follow the same rank order with regard to both attitude dimensions. Of the two classes that display dramatically increased values for anti-Zionism ($M > 3$), only Class 6 ($M = 3.96$), which includes 8.86% of the subjects, displays dramatically increased values on the anti-Semitism scales ($M = 3.39$) as well. Class 5 (14.53% of the subjects), to the contrary, combines an anti-Zionist attitude ($M = 3.56$) with extensive rejection of anti-Semitic statements ($M = 2.02$).

4. Conflict theoretical considerations

That anti-Zionism cannot be simply equated with anti-Semitism is thereby obvious, and this presumably also holds for other forms of criticism of Israel, whose anti-Semitic content, in the view of some authors (among others Heyder et al., 2005, Frindte, Wammetsberger & Wettig, 2005a,b; Frindte, 2006), seems more or less obvious. These forms of criticism include:

- One-sidedly blaming Israel (PI01),
- enemy image constructions going as far as comparing Israel with the Third Reich and demands to put pressure on Israel (PI02)
- and – as an especially radical criticism of Israel – the denial of the Jewish state's right to exist, which can go as far as the demand that the Jews pull out of the Middle East (IA2).

If we want to understand what sources nurture this critique and/or work against it, we must also consider other motivations besides anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. In particular:

- Pacifism, human rights orientation, moral disengagement, hostility to Palestine, criticism of terrorism and attitudes hostile to Islam.

Above all, however, we must not forget:

- that the Middle East conflict is definitely *not* just a conflict between Jews and non-Jews;
- it is also a *conflict* that as such is conditioned by the same psychological framework as many other conflicts.

Thus, according to Bar-Tal (1998), the psychic infrastructure that enables the members of a society to endure long-term (intractable) conflicts integrates societal beliefs, among others in 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 that anti-Semitism underlies criticism of Israeli Palestine policy can thus really be defensible or could be merely an aspect of the misperceptions (Deutsch, 1973; Kempf, 2002) that arise from these societal beliefs. These contribute to delegitimizing not only the enemy, but also disinterested third parties and/or minorities within one's society who do not share the basic societal consensus. In escalated conflicts, such misperceptions can be 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 expressing solidarity with Palestine does *not* necessarily prove anti-Semitism, but in some cases indicates 'only' that someone is *taking sides against Israel* (with the appropriate enemy image).

To work toward a peaceful solution, we must overcome these perceptual distortions and replace the above-named beliefs (War Frame) with a different interpretative frame (Peace Frame). In this frame we acknowledge the justification (of at least some) of the other side's interests, recognize mutual victim roles, stop delegitimizing the opponent and strive to achieve individual and national security by finding 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." As well, criticism of Israel arising in a Peace Frame, therefore, runs the risk of being interpreted as anti-Semitic, or at least may appear to show a lack of solidarity with Israel.

In the concrete case the situation is, however, more complicated (cf. Kempf, 2011): Israel has not only been engaged in a continuous state of war for several decades, but also – despite all setbacks – in a peace process for the past eighteen years. In Israel this has led to a weakening of the above-named societal beliefs. Both frames co-exist today in Israel (War- and Peace Frames), sometimes even within individual persons, who vacillate back and forth between these frames. Both frames represent *cognitive* interpretative patterns and are also *emotionally* anchored, indeed in an ambivalent manner. Both frames promise security and simultaneously create insecurity. (1) The War Frame offers security, because tried-and-true action patterns can be continued, but it also creates the threat of continuing violence. (2) 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 whose efficacy is still uncertain. Criticism of Israel resulting from a Peace Frame thus does not necessarily mean insufficient solidarity with Israel or even anti-Semitism, but can, to the contrary, arise from acting in the existential interest of Israel.

The members of a society directly affected by a conflict are not the only ones who develop such beliefs. Outsiders trying to make sense of a conflict in which they are not themselves engaged will also interpret it either in the sense of a peace frame (win-win model) or of a war frame (win-lose model). How a person positions himself toward a conflict – which side he takes, e.g., in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – thus depends essentially on the mental model he forms of the conflict.

Moreover, particularly in Germany, the way people position themselves toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no less ambivalent. 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 with regard to human rights. “Never again fascism” can be interpreted in two ways:

1. As 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 so far as turning into a War Frame: (never again fascism, *therefore* war), as was the case (in part) in 1990/91 Gulf War discourse (Kempf, 1994).
2. As 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 implies strengthening the Peace Frame, it creates the danger of turning into a War Frame and siding with the Palestinians.

Already the results of the pilot study (cf. Kempf, 2011) show that this danger is real.

4.1 Method

Starting from the conception that mental models have not only a cognitive, but also an affective aspect, we designed three separate scales for “concern about the conflict,” “emotional ambivalence of war and peace” and “positioning to the conflict” (cf. Appendix 3) and applied a two-step LCA. As a first step, we identified (latent) classes of typical response patterns for each of the three scales. In a second step, we identified the participants’ mental models by means of a second-order LCA in which we used participants’ class membership as a variable.

4.2 Results of the pilot study

Concern: The results of the pilot study show that the various indicators for concern defined a consistent rank order of the study participants. With increasing concern,

- the share of participants who do not feel attached to either side declines,
- the participants’ attachment shifts toward the Israelis,
- the participants feel more deeply affected by the conflict,
- and they also feel better informed about it.
- The greater their concern, the more often they have visited Israel and/or the Palestinian territories,
- the more they have had personal contacts with Israelis and/or with Palestinians, and the more they have Israeli and/or Palestinian friends, acquaintances, or relatives.

Emotional ambivalence: Overall, the participants of the pilot study tended to be less familiar with the conflict. This was also apparent in their perception of the ambivalence of the peace process.

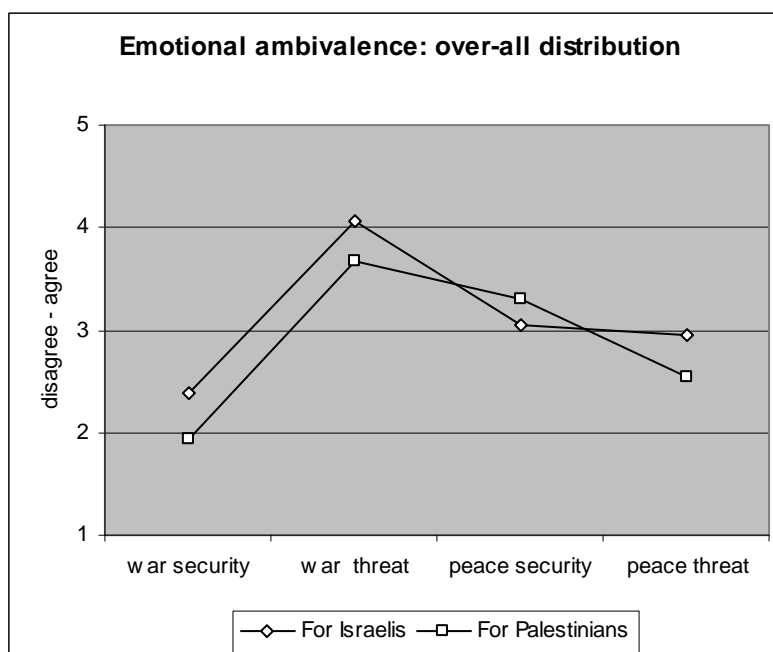


Figure 4, Perceived ambivalence of war and peace

- On average, the participants have no opinion about whether peace would be threatening for the Israelis or whether it could offer them security.
- Otherwise, they prefer a peace solution to the status quo (war):
 - War is regarded as threatening not only for the Israelis, but also for the Palestinians,
 - and able to offer security to neither the Palestinians nor the Israelis.
- Conversely, at least for the Palestinians peace does not represent a threat, and could even offer security (cf. Figure 4).

Thereby the majority of the subjects (87.9%) agreed that the status quo (war) can offer the Palestinians no certainty that in the end they will be able to compel the creation of their own state, and it represents a threat to Israel in the long run.

- A large group, 29.9% of the subjects, thereby adopted a naïve pacifistic pattern in accord with the principle: War is bad, peace would be good – and indeed for both parties. (cf. Figure 5).
- A further 33.6% of the subjects showed basically the same pattern, but had no opinion about whether the return of the occupied territories would make it possible for Israel to enjoy a lasting peace with the Palestinians, and
- 24.4% of the subjects were skeptical about whether a peace solution could offer Israel security.

The remaining subjects had either no opinion at all (1.3%) or merely thought that war is threatening for Israel and can guarantee neither party security (11.0%).

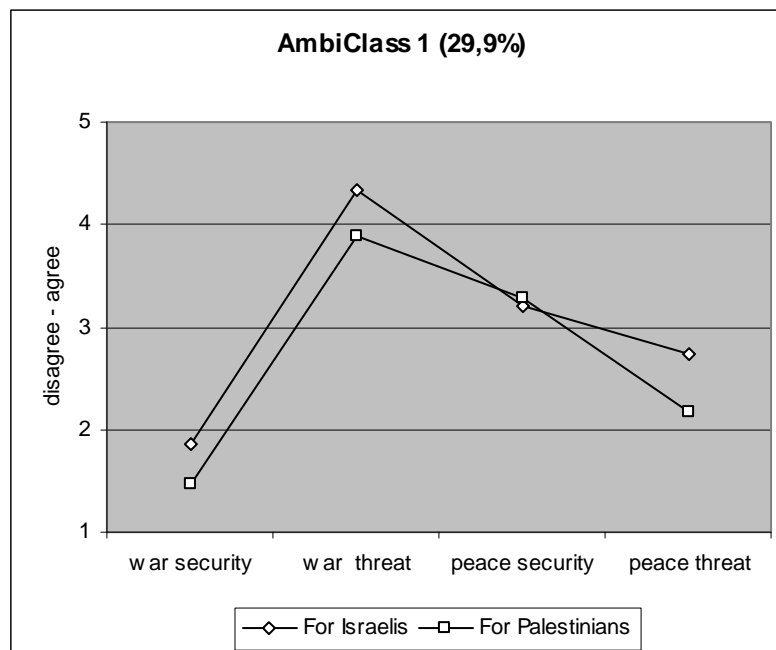


Figure 5, No ambivalence: War is bad, peace would be good

Positioning: With regard to positioning to the conflict, study participants consistently rejected Palestinian terror attacks against the Israeli civilian population more strongly than the Israeli military operations.

- While 10.1% of the participants endorsed peace but were not sufficiently familiar with the conflict to have a clear opinion about it (50-68% no response or "don't know"),
- 31.8% interpreted the conflict within a more or less neutral peace frame with a relatively high level of uncertainty (20-25% no response or "don't know"),
- 51.11% held a pro-Palestinian frame and were fairly certain of their evaluations (max. 3% no response or "don't know"), and
- a small group of participants (7%) was fairly sure of its evaluations (3.4% no response or "don't know") and interpreted the conflict according to a pro-Israeli war frame.

In its purest form (15.9% of the subjects), the neutral peace frame finds expression in that subjects

- reject the legitimacy of the Palestinian liberation struggle against the Israeli occupation as well as that of the Israeli defensive war, but
- blame the Israeli and the Palestinian leadership equally for intransigence and being uncompromising,

- condemn violence on both sides and
- doubt that the destruction of Israel is the goal of the Palestinian leadership (cf. Figure 6).

A further 15.9% of the subjects positioned themselves in a similar manner, but made less severe criticism (10.8%) or were – apart from the condemnation of Palestinian violence – somewhat more critical of Israel than of the Palestinians (5.14%).

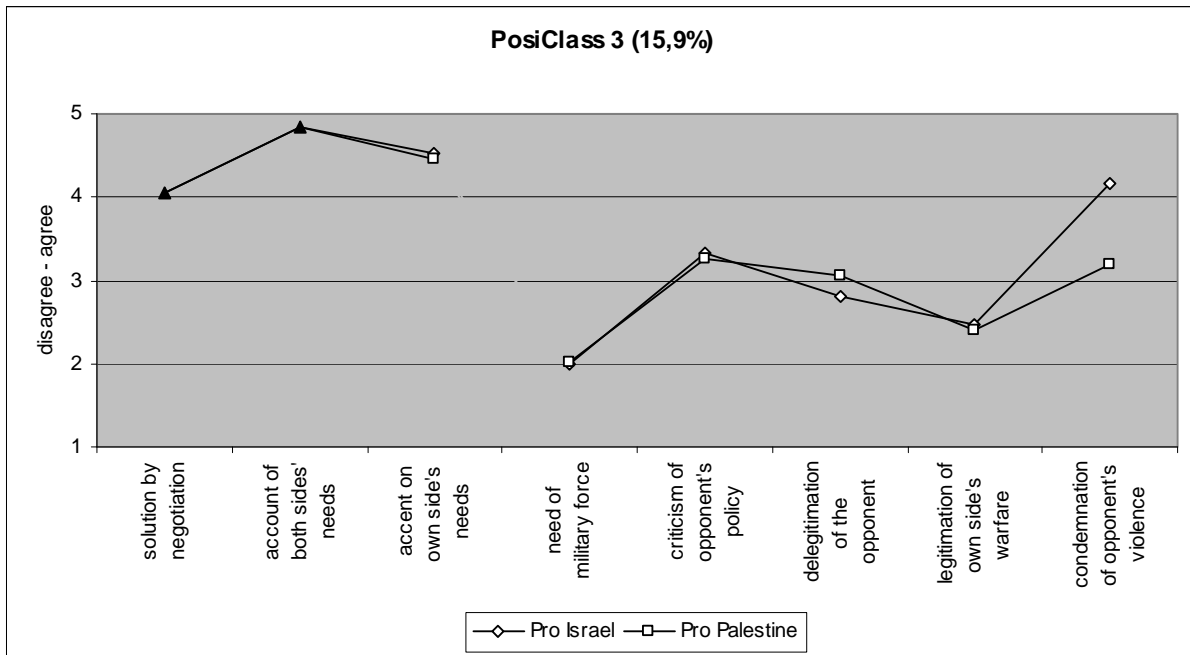


Figure 6, Neutral peace frame

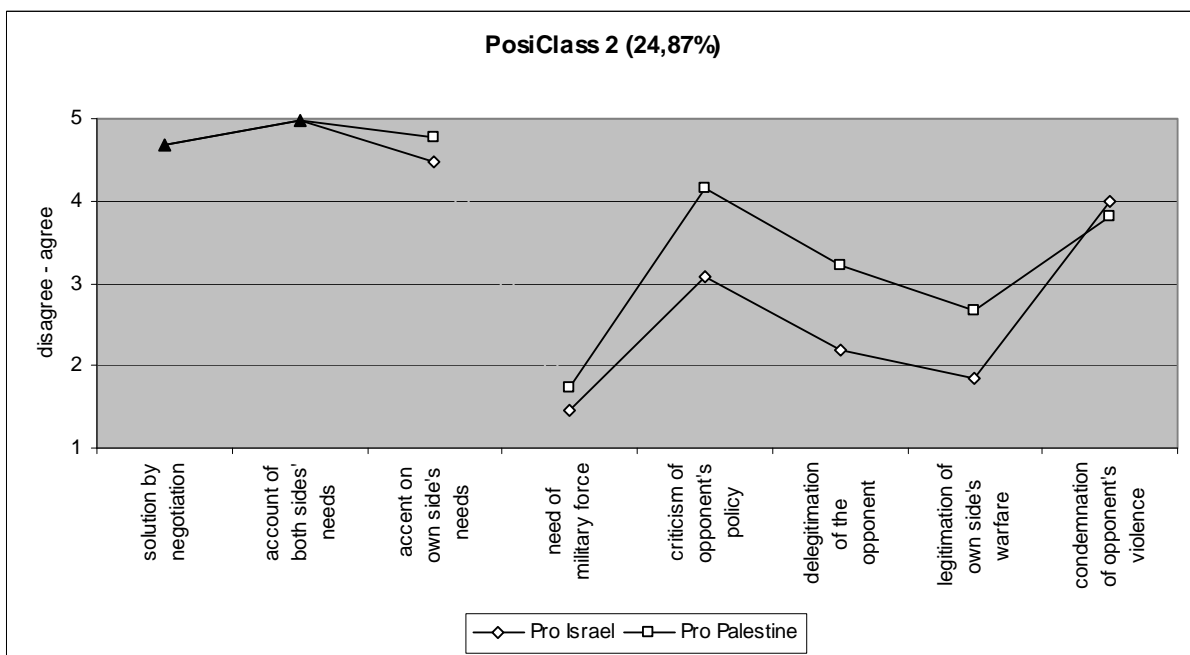


Figure 7, Pro-Palestinian frame with an enemy image of Israel

Some 26.2% of the subjects interpreted the conflict in the frame of a pro-Palestinian peace frame that emphasizes the Palestinians' necessities of life somewhat more strongly than those of the Israelis, and 24.8% of the subjects interpreted the conflict in a pro-Palestinian frame

- which to be sure likewise rejects violence on both sides,

- but contests the legitimacy of the Israeli defensive war more strongly than that of the Palestinian liberation struggle
- and accuses only Israel, but not the Palestinians, of being uncooperative and/or intransigent.

While these participants defended the Palestinian leadership against the accusation that they are pursuing the goal of destroying Israel, they accused Israel of wanting to continue oppressing and disenfranchising the Palestinians (cf. Figure 7). While a certain enemy image of Israel finds expression therein, and this frame thereby teeters on the edge of a pro-Palestinian war frame, a marked war frame on the pro-Palestinian side could not be identified. However, there was one on the pro-Israeli side.

Some 6.9% of the subjects displayed a clearly polarized response pattern

- that accuses the Palestinian leadership of being uncooperative, but defends Israel against the charge of intransigence;
- that defends Israel against the accusation of pursuing the continued oppression and disenfranchisement of the Palestinians, but alleges that the Palestinian leadership aims to destroy Israel;
- that emphasizes the legitimacy of the Israeli defensive war, yet rejects the legitimacy of the Palestinian liberation struggle;
- and condemns Palestinian terror attacks, but justifies Israeli military operations (cf. Figure 8).

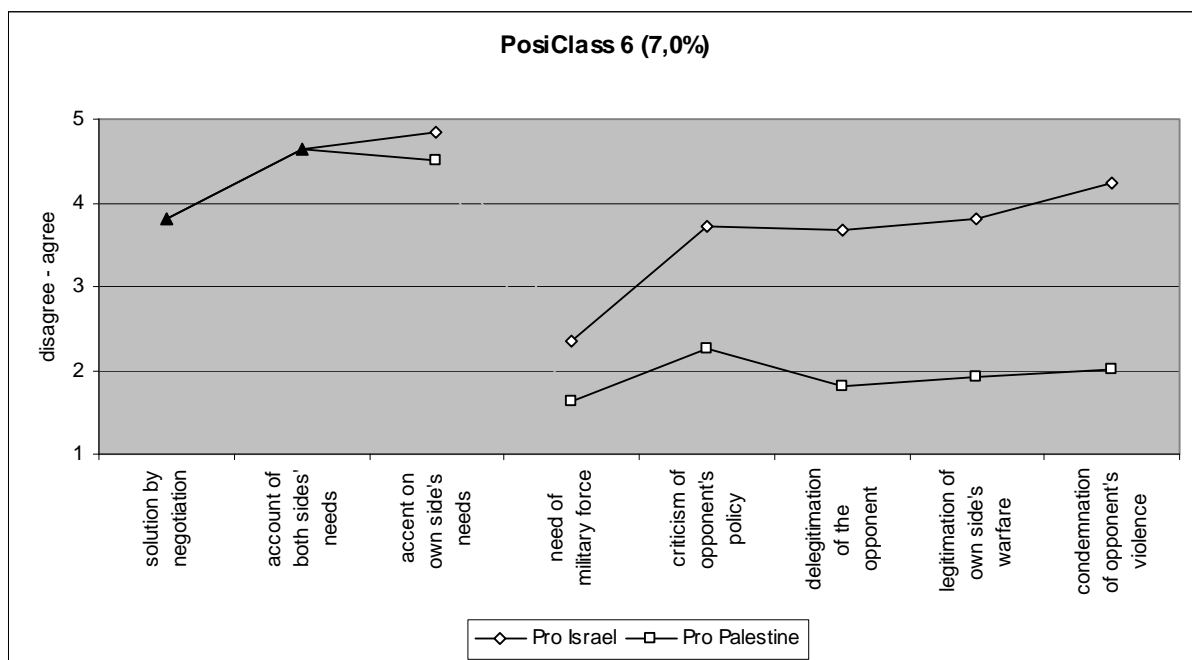


Figure 8, Pro-Israeli war frame

Mental models: If we juxtapose these positioning patterns with the concern caused by the conflict and the perceived ambivalence of war and peace, it appears that with increasing concern the certainty also increases with which subjects believe they can permit themselves to make a judgment about the consequences of war and peace. The mental models according to which they interpret the conflict shift

- from sympathy for Israel (11.68%)
- to understanding for Israeli concerns about peace (21.94%)
- to a pro-Palestinian perspective favoring peace (20.68%)
- to a peace perspective that would benefit both sides (35.94%)
- and finally to a polarization between peace and the perpetuation of the status quo (9.76%) – and at the same time also to a polarization between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian positions: The great majority of the participants in this group (88.8%) support one side or the other in the conflict. They interpret the conflict either according to a pro-Palestinian frame with an enemy image of Israel (45.7%) or according to a pro-Israeli war frame (43.1%).

4.3 Initial results of the main study

These results are largely replicated in our field study.

Concern: Similar to the case in the pilot study, in the field study

- the question of the self-evaluation of their knowledge of the conflict,
- the question of how much the conflict affects them and
- the question of whether they feel attached to one or both sides of the conflict

defined the same rank order of subjects with regard to their being concerned about the conflict (cf. Figure 9).

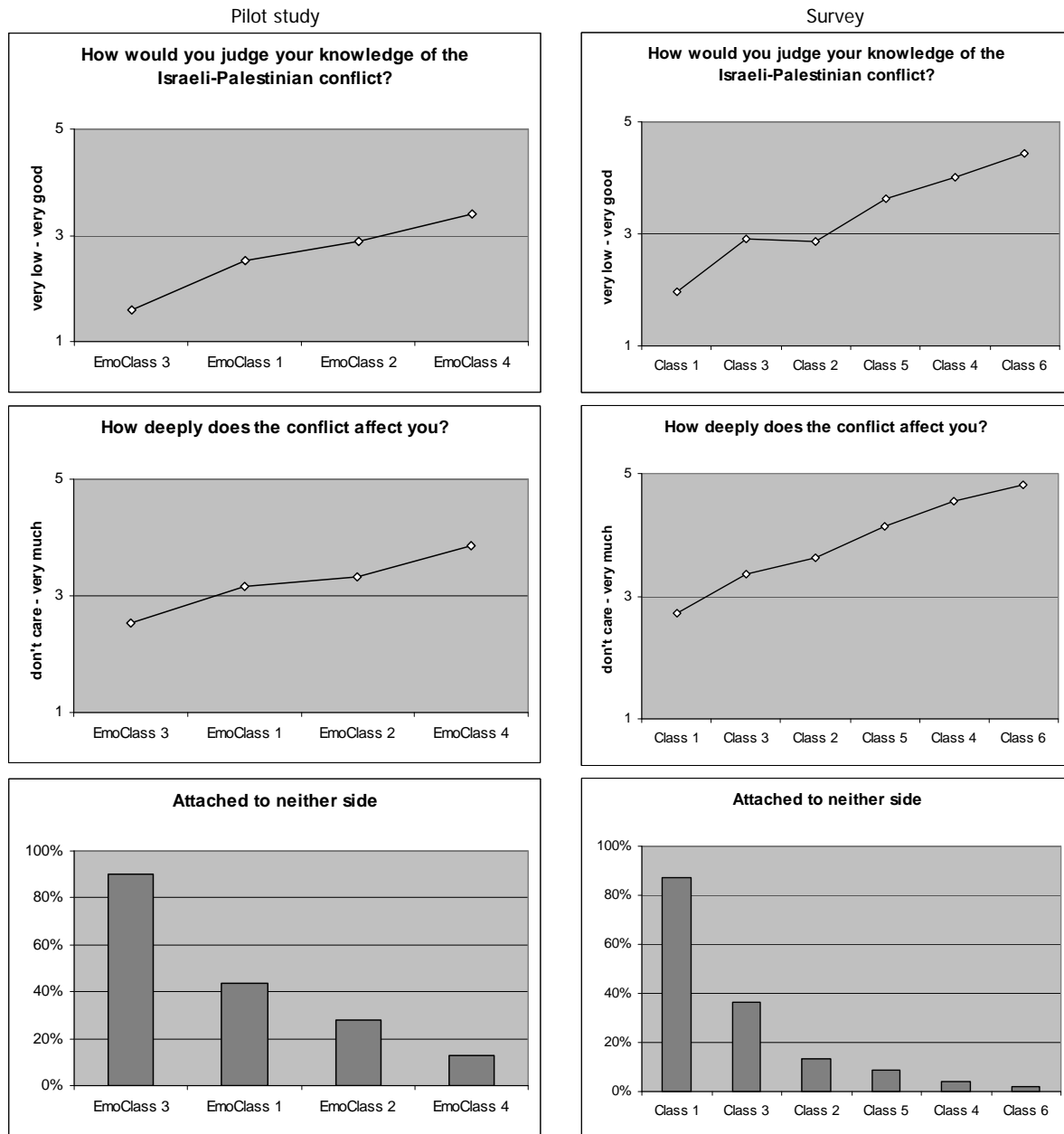


Figure 9, Concern about the conflict

Unlike in the pilot study, in the field study attachment shifted with increasing concern in favor not of the Israelis, however, but rather of the Palestinians (cf. Figure 10). Whether this shift in sympathy to the disadvantage of Israel is due to the composition of our sample or to the time of data collection, is, however, hard to determine.

Favoring the theory of a certain influence exerted by sample composition is that Class 4 of the field study, the 10% of the subjects who feel themselves most strongly attached to the Palestinians, indicated that they

- had never been in Israel and/or the Palestinian territories,
- but have had contacts (in most cases) with Palestinians, and also with Israelis
- and have more Palestinian than Israeli friends, acquaintances or relatives (cf. Figure 11).

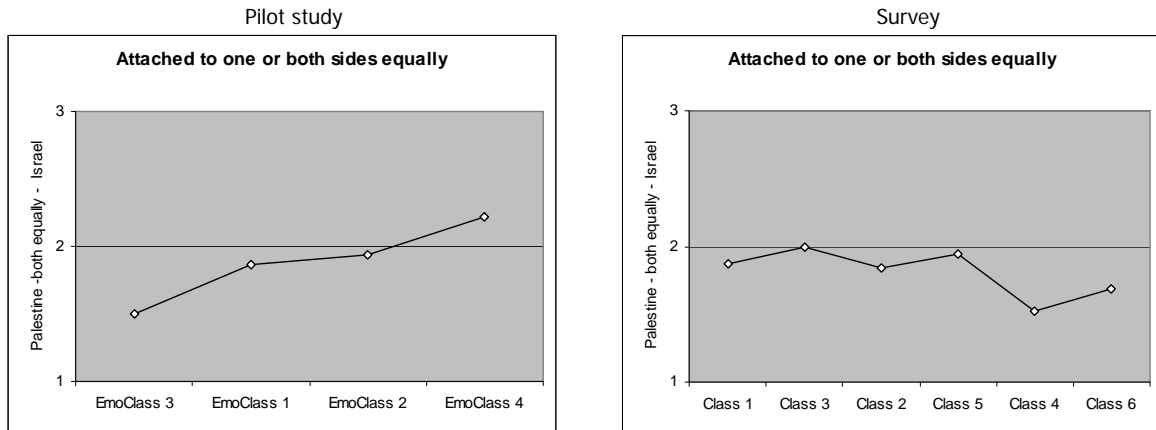


Figure 10, Attachment to one or both sides of the conflict

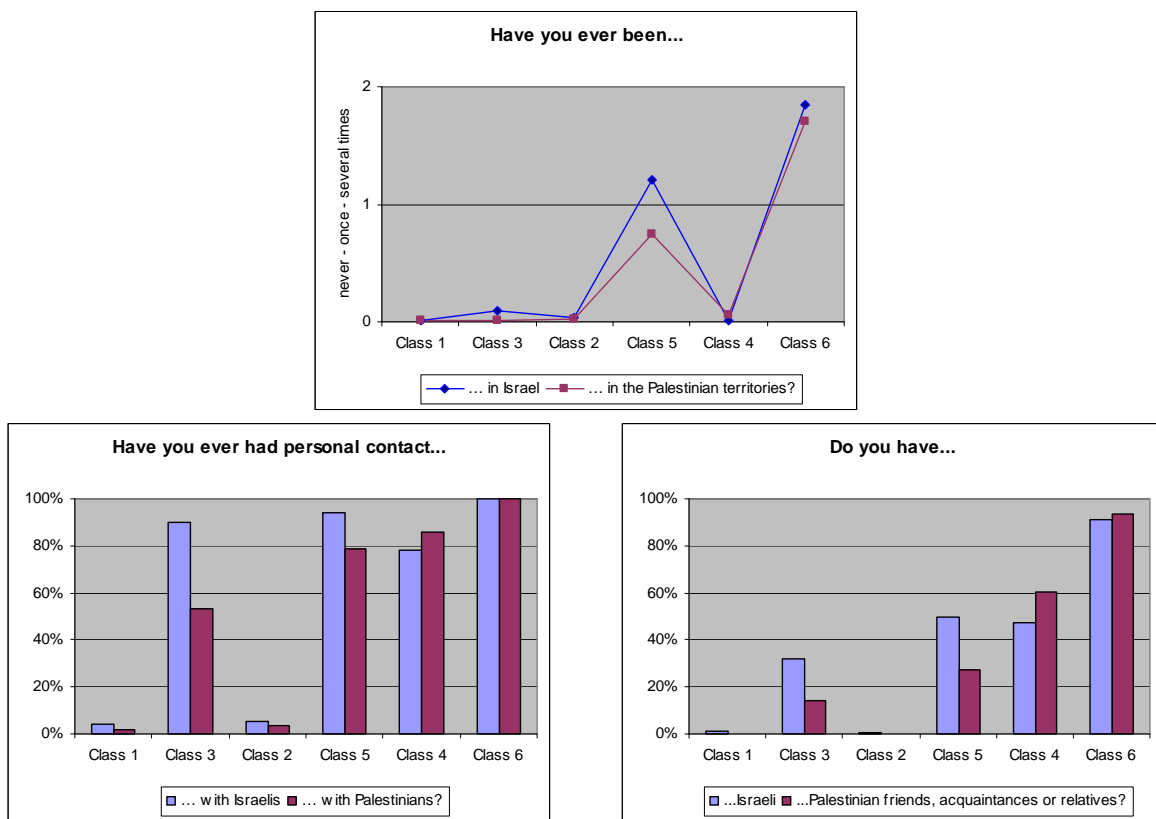


Figure 11, Experiential basis of the study participants of the field study

In the pilot study, there was no such group of subjects, and we suspect that it is a sub-group of the active Israeli critics that we found by means of the online survey. Whether this supposition is correct, and what motivates the pro-Palestinian partisanship of this group of subjects must still be studied, however.

Emotional ambivalence: The participants in the field study were somewhat more sensitive to the ambivalence of war and peace than were the participants of the pilot study.

- To be sure, as well here 36.1% of the subjects held to the simple pattern: "War is bad, peace would be good";
- and 6.3% largely had no opinion (92.9% non- responses) but were inclined, however, to the view that peace would be better for Israel than the status quo;
- 27.7% likewise preferred peace, but were uncertain whether it could offer Israel security (18.0%) or whether war is really so threatening to the Palestinians (9.7%).

Unlike the case in the pilot study,

- 13.4% of the subjects recognized the ambivalence of peace for both sides,
- a further 8.0% of the subjects displayed empathy for Israel's security dilemma,
- and 8.6% of the subjects agreed that the perpetuation of the status quo is bad for the Palestinians, while - in contrast - for Israel it is to be sure ambivalent, but nevertheless the lesser evil.

Even if we suspect at first glance that the last-named group consists of pro-Israeli hard-liners, this is by no means certain. How people who assess the perspectives of war and peace in this manner position themselves toward the conflict may rather depend on which of the two parties they chiefly blame for perpetuating the status quo (war).

Positioning: The questionnaire constructed to capture positioning was modified slightly on the basis of the results of the pilot study. Since they were consistently rejected by the participants of the pilot study, the two items iwar01 and iwar 02 (see Appendix 3) were softened to the formulations:

- iwar01a: The Palestinian leadership should be forced to recognize Israel, and
- pwar01a: The Israeli government should be forced to recognize the rights of the Palestinians

and the item

- npeace02: The continued violence of the Israelis and Palestinians deepens the gulf between the two societies and leads to radicalization on both sides

was added to the questionnaire. The comparability of the results of the two studies was thereby, however, not significantly reduced.

Likewise, in the field study there was again a group of subjects (16.4% as opposed to 10.1%) who were not sufficiently familiar with the conflict to be able to form an opinion.

The majority of the subjects took a position, however, and their positionings had a stronger pro-Palestinian bias than the ones found in the pilot study.

- To be sure, as well in the field study we identified a pro-Israeli war frame (9.2% as opposed to 7.0%) (cf. Figure 12).
- However, the (in the pilot study) more or less neutral peace frames (27.2% as opposed to 31.8%) showed a far more ambivalent pattern, with sympathy either for Israel (9.9%) or for the Palestinians (17.3%).
- The pro-Palestinian peace frame was (with 9.2% as opposed to 26.2%) rather infrequent.
- The frequency of the pro-Palestinian frame teetering "on the edge of a war frame" (cf. Figure 13) remained (with 23.8% as opposed to 24.9%) largely constant, and

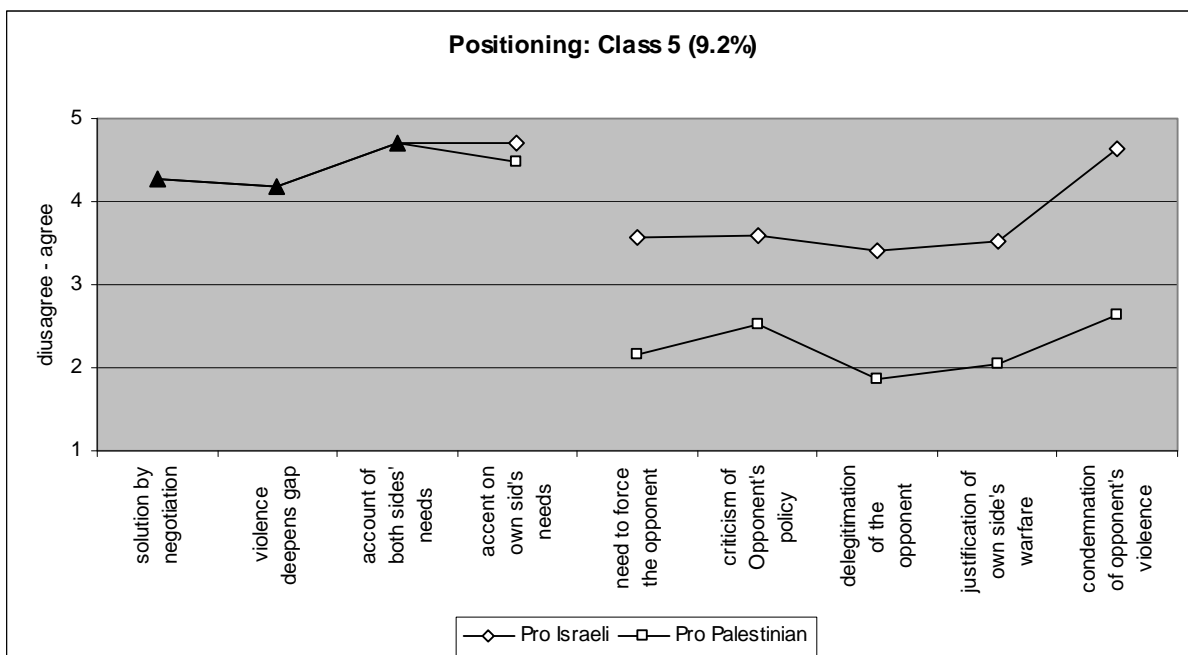


Figure 12, Pro-Israeli war frame

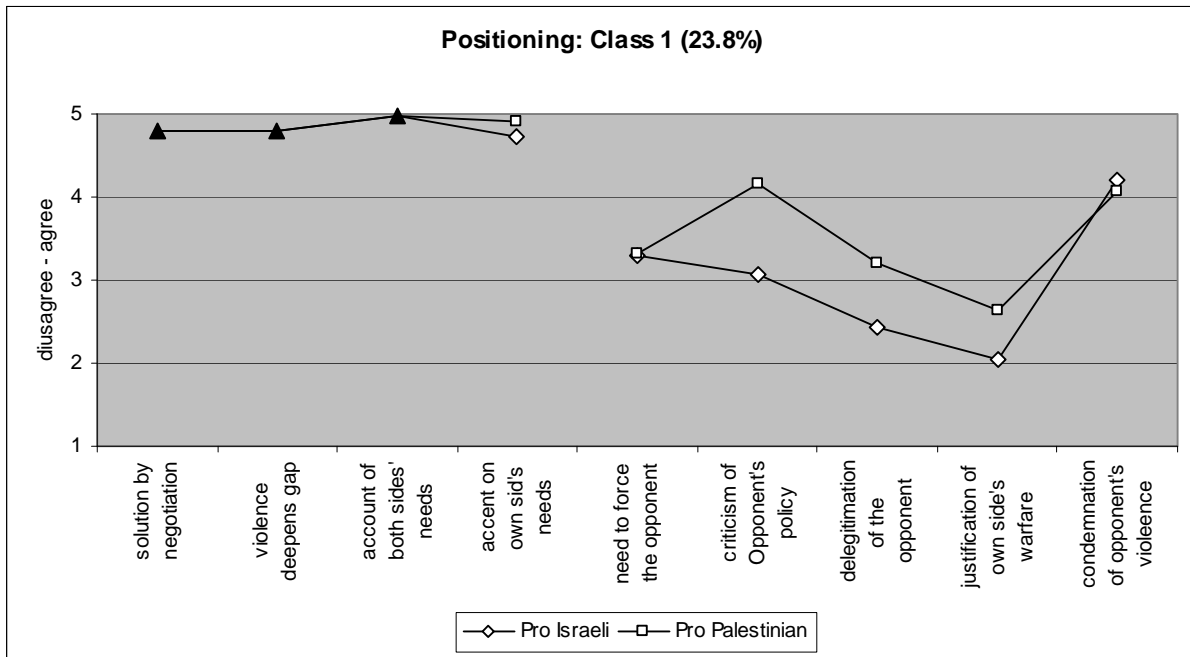


Figure 13, Pro-Palestinian frame with an enemy image of Israel

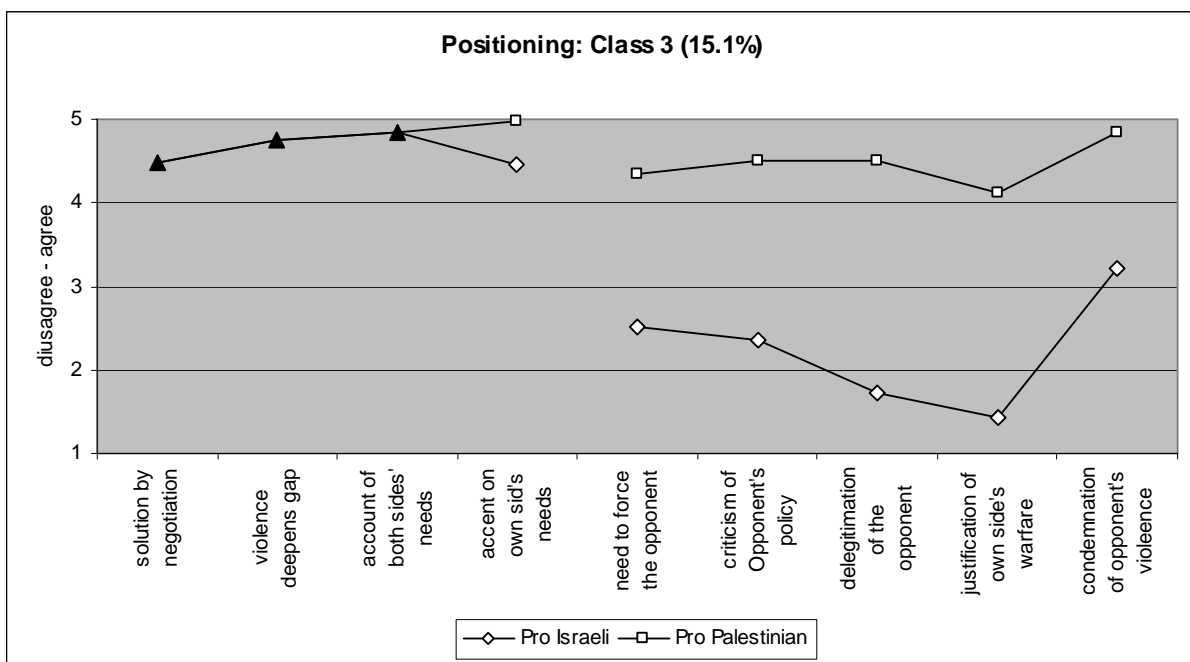


Figure 14, Pro-Palestinian war frame

- unlike the case in the pilot study, a pro-Palestinian war frame could also be identified (cf. Figure 14). With 17.3% this frame is characteristic of a rather large group of subjects.

Mental Models: As well with regard to the reconstruction of the mental models, the results of the pilot study were replicated and (partially) differentiated. A second-order LCA identified 7 classes, 6 of which are clearly ordered with respect to the participants' concern about the conflict (cf. Table 2): The more they are concerned,

- the better the participants consider their knowledge of the conflict to be,
- the more they feel affected by the conflict,
- the fewer of them do not feel attached to either side,
- the more of them visited Israel and/or the Palestinian territories,
- the more of them have had personal contact with Israelis and/or Palestinians,

	Class size		Knowledge	Affectedness	Not attached with either side	Attached with Israelis
	Total sample	Quota sample				
Class 6	8,7%	11,8%	2,178	2,889	75,4%	1,874
Class 3	13,6%	20,7%	2,373	3,055	62,2%	1,901
Class 2	16,8%	21,1%	2,543	3,179	53,4%	1,907
Class 5	12,4%	14,8%	2,867	3,475	39,9%	1,873
Class 1	27,0%	26,6%	3,140	3,732	23,4%	1,832
Class 4	13,5%	2,8%	3,872	4,336	8,8%	1,806
Class 7	8,0%	2,1%	3,774	4,135	17,2%	1,631

	Has been in		Has had personal contact with		Has friends among	
	Israel	Palest. territ.	Israelis	Palestinians	Israelis	Palestinians
Class 6	0,023	0,009	15,2%	9,3%	5,5%	2,5%
Class 3	0,094	0,048	27,5%	17,3%	10,4%	4,4%
Class 2	0,093	0,042	38,3%	23,9%	14,2%	6,5%
Class 5	0,226	0,144	51,1%	38,4%	23,3%	16,2%
Class 1	0,243	0,186	52,2%	41,2%	26,0%	21,2%
Class 4	1,185	0,952	91,5%	82,6%	62,0%	53,8%
Class 7	0,324	0,251	33,1%	29,0%	19,9%	17,0%

Table 2, Second-order LCA: Class sizes and emotional closeness to the conflict

- and the more of them have Israeli and/or Palestinian friends, relatives or acquaintances.

With increasing closeness, participants' sensitivity for the ambivalence of war and peace (cf. Table 3) changes from

- empathy for Israel's security dilemma (Class 6)
- via uncertainty whether peace can offer Israel security (Class 3),
- to recognizing the ambivalence of peace for both parties (Class 2),
- to regarding the status quo as the lesser evil for Israel (Class 5),
- to naive pacifism: "peace is good, war is evil" (Class 1), and finally
- to uncertainty as to whether war is really so bad for the Palestinians (Class 4).

	Empathy for Israel's security dilemma	Uncertainty whether peace can offer Israel security	Ambivalence of peace for both parties	Status quo as the lesser evil for Israel	Naive pacifism: peace is good, war is evil	Uncertainty whether war is really so bad for Palestinians
Class 6	92,8%	6,0%	0,0%	0,0%	1,1%	0,0%
Class 3	0,0%	87,3%	6,8%	0,8%	5,1%	0,0%
Class 2	1,6%	12,1%	56,0%	6,7%	23,6%	0,0%
Class 5	0,2%	2,6%	5,4%	51,1%	38,5%	2,2%
Class 1	0,0%	9,8%	7,1%	0,1%	80,1%	2,8%
Class 4	0,0%	0,0%	4,0%	1,6%	25,4%	69,0%
Class 7	0,3%	6,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,2%	93,1%

Table 3, Second-order LCA: Sensitivity for the ambivalence of war and peace

At the same time, the dominant position that the participants take to the conflict (cf. Table 4) shifts from

- no position at all (Class 6)
- via an ambivalent peace frame with sympathy for Israel (Class 3)
- to an ambivalent peace frame with sympathy for the Palestinians (Class 2),
- to a polarization between a pro-Israeli war frame, pro-Palestinian peace frame and a pro-Palestinian war frame (Class 5).

From this point, the participants' positions switch to the Palestinian side:

- The (mainly) naive pacifists in Class 1 interpret the conflict according to a pro-Palestinian peace frame on the edge of a war frame, and

- the participants in Class 4 who are most concerned about the conflict (cf. Table 2) and – at the same time – do not fear that Palestinian violence is an obstacle to the foundation of a Palestinian state (cf. Table 3) interpret the conflict according to a pro-Palestinian war frame.

	No position	Ambivalent peace frame with sympathy for Israel	Ambivalent peace frame with sympathy for Palestin.	Pro-Israeli war frame	Pro-Palestinian peace frame	Pro-Palestinian peace frame on the edge	Pro-Palestinian war frame
Class 6	66,5%	18,9%	0,0%	0,0%	14,6%	0,0%	0,0%
Class 3	5,0%	47,8%	14,1%	0,7%	27,2%	5,2%	0,0%
Class 2	18,9%	2,6%	63,7%	6,6%	0,0%	8,1%	0,0%
Class 5	0,5%	0,0%	0,0%	36,3%	21,4%	11,7%	30,1%
Class 1	0,0%	0,0%	16,6%	9,8%	0,8%	67,6%	5,3%
Class 4	1,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,5%	0,4%	11,5%	85,7%
Class 7	94,8%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,1%	5,1%

Table 4, Second-order LCA: Positioning to the conflict

The belief that Palestinian violence is not an obstacle to the foundation of a Palestinian state is even stronger among a very small group of participants (Class 7, cf. Table 3) whose knowledge and concern about the conflict are nearly as high as in Class 4 (cf. Table 2). However, these participants are less attached to either side of the conflict and have less personal experience (cf. Table 2), and they do not take a position to the conflict (cf. Table 4).

5. Discussion

It is not surprising that after the Israeli navy's seizure of the Free Gaza ship German positioning shifted in a pro-Palestinian direction. The Israelis not only took actions that were politically unwise and militarily senseless, they also shot themselves in the foot in propaganda terms. From the perspective of propaganda research, the question arises of precisely what has happened to Israel's military professionalism.

Nevertheless, the Germans' positioning has not shifted as dramatically to the disadvantage of Israel as a comparison of our two samples might suggest. Presumably, after the Gaza war there was already a substantial pro-Palestinian positioning potential that due to an unrepresentative pilot study could not, however, be identified in its full extent.

If instead of the above-named frequency of the various positioning patterns in the complete sample of our field study, we consider their frequency distribution within our representative quota sample (cf. Table 5), it appears that this potential is only slightly less than it appears in the complete sample: In summer 2010 more than 40% of all Germans interpreted the conflict in the sense of a pro-Palestinian frame.

- Of them a good fourth did so according to a peace frame,
- almost a fifth in the sense of a war frame,
- and somewhat more than half were on the edge of a war frame.

To be sure, the share of Germans who interpret the conflict according to a pro-Israeli war frame is slightly greater than that of the pro-Palestinian hard-liners, but at the same time, however, this was all that could be identified as a pro-Israeli positioning pattern. And also, among the neutral ambivalent positioning patterns that sympathize with one of the two parties, sympathy for the Palestinians (22.2%) outweighed that for Israel (12.1%), with a ratio of almost two to one.

Positioning patterns	Pilot Study	Field study	
		Complete sample	Quota sample
Pro-Israeli War Frame	7.0%	9.2%	9.8%
Neutral/ambivalent Peace Frames	31.8%	27.2%	34.3%
Pro-Palestinian Peace Frames	26.2%	9.2%	10.8%
Pro-Palestinian Frame "on the edge of a War Frame"	24.9%	23.8%	20.8%
Pro-Palestinian War Frame	0.0%	17.3%	8.7%

Table 5, Frequency distribution of the various positioning patterns in the pilot study, in the complete sample of the field study and in the representative quota sample

This pro-Palestinian positioning potential in the German population is also reflected in that a quarter of the members of our quota sample (Class 3: 14.6%, M = 3.01; Class 5: 5.1%, M = 3.56 and Class 6: 5.4%, M = 3.95)

display higher values on the anti-Zionism scales. They at least partly regard the statements to be evaluated therein to be *not* prejudices, but rather defensible opinions ($M \geq 3$).

It seems that at the time of our field study Israel had lost the propaganda war for the hearts and souls of the Germans. Whether we can explain the high pro-Palestinian positioning potential as simply a result of anti-Semitism remains, however, uncertain.

Evidence to the contrary is provided by the relatively high sensitivity for the ambivalence of war and peace for both parties (cf. Table 6), the partial independence of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist attitudes, and the fact that only a minority of the members of the quota sample (Class 6: 5.4%, $M = 3.39$) also displayed heightened values on the anti-Semitism scales .

Perceptual patterns	Field study	
	Complete sample	Quota sample
Status quo as "lesser evil" for Israel	8.6%	9.5%
Empathy for Israel's security dilemma	8.0%	11.6%
Ambivalence of peace for both sides	13.4%	18.0%
Pro-peace with doubts about whether it can offer Israel security	18.0%	23.6%
Naive pacifism: "War is bad, peace would be good."	36.1%	32.9%
Pro-peace with doubts about whether war is really so threatening for the Palestinians	9.7%	4.2%

Table 6, Perception of ambivalence of war and peace in the complete sample of the field study and in the representative quota sample

It is alarming enough that one in 20 Germans considers anti-Semitic statements to be (at least partly) defensible opinions. In order to exhaustively explain criticism of Israel and the increasing partisanship in favor of the Palestinians, this share of the population is, however, too small. Moreover, we must assume that the resurgence of anti-Semitic prejudices could be not only one of the reasons for attitudes critical of Israel, but also a consequence of these attitudes.

As well, the fact that the persons surveyed feel consistently somewhat more attached to the Palestinians than to the Israelis could be evaluated as evidence of anti-Semitic motivation. On the other hand, this difference is, however, extremely small and probably due to the so-called "David versus Goliath" effect, which favors solidarity with the side that is perceived as weaker.

Furthermore, the transformation that the mental models undergo with increasing concern about the conflict tends more to indicate that it is pacifism and human rights orientations that form the motivational foundation for pro-Palestinian positions, and in the extreme case bring about a shift of the (predominant) peace frame into a war frame.

What really nourishes criticism of Israel and partisanship for the Palestinians, we plan to study by means of Structural Equation Models. The results, I hope to be able to present at next year's conference.

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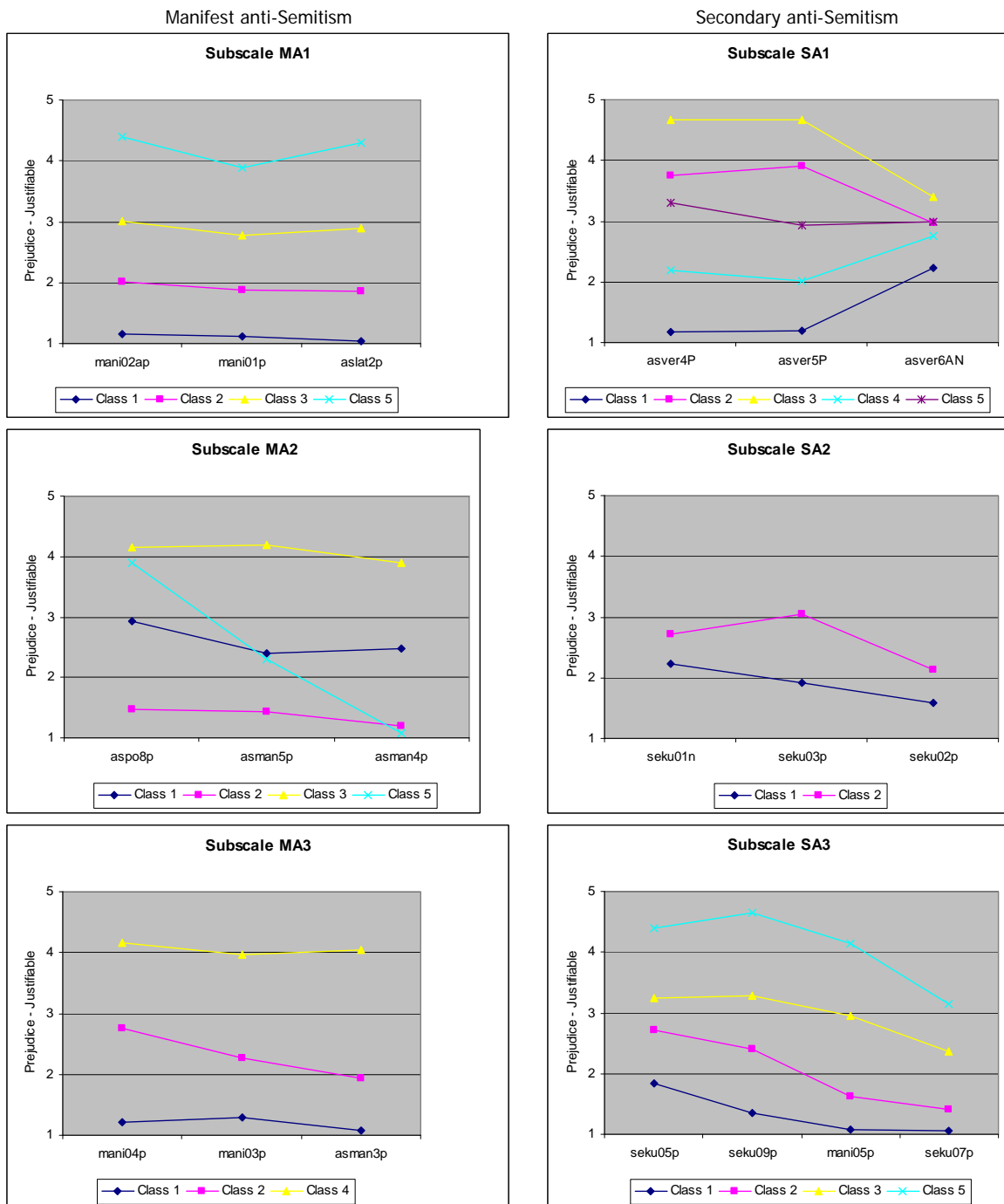
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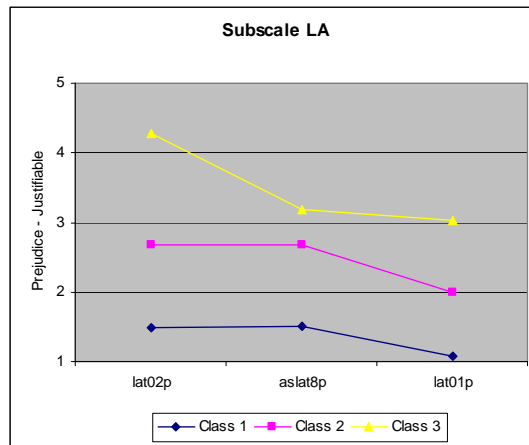
Appendix 1, Subscales for measuring the various facets of anti-Semitism

Manifest Anti-Semitism		
MA1	Dislike of Jews	
	mani01p	Jews are somehow all the same.
	mani02ap	There is something simply idiosyncratic about the Jews, and they don't fit in with us very well.
	aslat2p	It is better to have nothing to do with Jews.
MA2	Conspiracy theory	
	aspo8p	There is a Jewish network that has a decisive influence on political and economic processes in the world.
	asman4p	An important goal of the Jews is to safeguard their dominant position in the world.
	asman5p	The Jews have too much influence in the world.
MA3	Exclusion of Jews	
	asman3p	One shouldn't engage in any trade and commerce with Jews.
	mani03p	Important positions in the state and economy should (better) not be held by Jews.
	mani04p	Jews should not get involved where they are not wanted.
Secondary anti-Semitism		
SA1	Closing the books on the past	
	asver4p	Decades after the end of the war, we shouldn't talk so much about the persecution of Jews anymore, but rather finally close the books on the past.
	Asver5p	We should ultimately put an end to all the talk about our guilt vis-à-vis the Jews.
	Asver6an	The German people have a particular responsibility vis-à-vis the Jews (negative).
SA2	Defense against guilt and relativization	
	Seku01n	Without the help of the population, Hitler could not have started the persecution of the Jews (negative)
	Seku02p	If the Jews had defended themselves more energetically under Hitler, not as many would have perished.
	Seku03p	People only talk about the persecution of the Jews. No one ever talks about how much the Germans suffered.
SA3	Perpetrator-victim reversal	
	mani05p	The Jews have only themselves to blame that people don't like them.
	Seku05p	Many Jews exploit the Holocaust today.
	Seku07p	The way the Jews behaved, it is easy to understand why they were persecuted.
	Seku09p	The Jews are unforgiving and harm Germany when they point a finger at the Holocaust again and again
Latent anti-Semitism		
LA	aslat8p	The whole topic of the "Jews" is somehow unpleasant for me.
	Lat01p	It would be better not to talk about the Jews.
	Lat02p	You cannot say what you really think about the Jews.
Israel-related anti-Semitism		
IA1	krit02p	The Holocaust is a welcome means for the Jews to justify Israel's policies.
	Krit03p	Without the worldwide power of Jewry Israel could not so easily disregard international law.
	Krit04p	We should not let ourselves continue to be pressured by the Jews to let Israel's Palestinian policies go unchallenged.
Anti-Zionism		
PA	zion03ap	Zionism has made the victims of yesterday into the perpetrators of today
	zion04p	The goal of Zionism has always been to expel the Palestinians and take over their land.
	zion05p	Zionism is essentially a variety of racism.

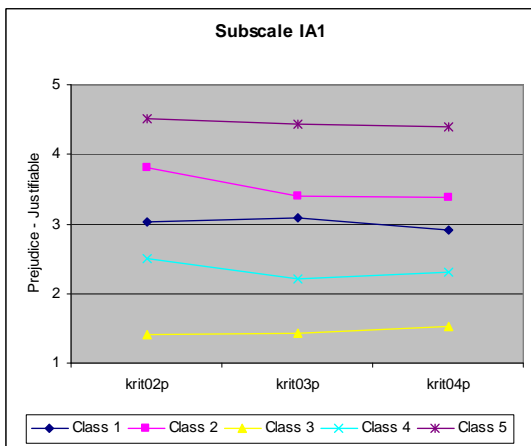
Appendix 2, Item-profiles of the subscales for measuring the various facets of anti-Semitism



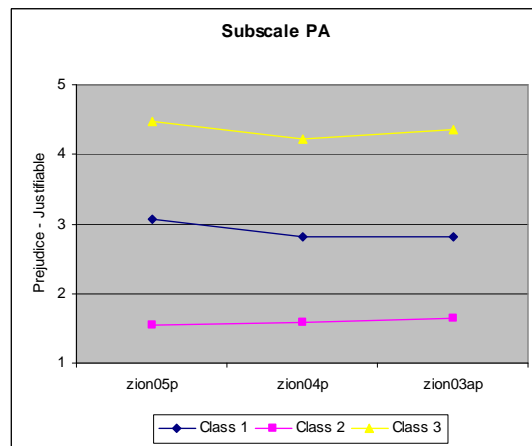
Latent anti-Semitism



Israel-related anti-Semitism



Anti-Zionism



Appendix 3, Scales for reconstructing the participants' mental models of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Assessment of the participants' concern about the conflict		
Knowledge	<u>emo01</u> : How would you judge your knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	
Concern	<u>emo02</u> : How deeply does the conflict affect you?	
Partisanship	<u>emo03</u> : Which side do you feel more attached to?	
Experience	<u>emo04</u> : Have you ever been in Israel?	<u>emo05</u> : Have you ever been in the Palestinian territories?
Personal contact	<u>emo06</u> : Have you ever had personal contacts with Israelis?	<u>emo07</u> : Have you ever had personal contacts with Palestinians?
Relatedness	<u>emo08</u> : Do you have Israeli friends, acquaintances or relatives?	<u>emo09</u> : Do you have any Palestinian friends, acquaintances or relatives?

Assessment of the participants' emotional ambivalence			
		For Israelis	For Palestinians
War frame	Offers security	<u>ambi01i</u> : With firm resolve and military strength, Israel's existence can be secured in the long term	<u>ambi01p</u> : Through persistent armed resistance a Palestinian state can be brought about by force
	Creates threat	<u>ambi02i</u> : As long as Israel tries to control the conflict by military means (alone), its population will be exposed to the constant threat of Palestinian violence	<u>ambi02p</u> : If the Palestinian leadership does not prevent the use of force, the Palestinians will not be allowed to found their own state
Peace frame	Offers security	<u>ambi03i</u> : The complete return of the occupied territories would make it possible for Israel to have an enduring peace with the Palestinians	<u>ambi03p</u> : A little more flexibility would make it possible for the Palestinians to have a lasting peace with Israel
	Creates threat	<u>ambi04i</u> : Returning to the borders of 1967 would represent a great security risk for Israel	<u>ambi04p</u> : A compromise with Israel would mean selling out Palestinian interests

Assessment of the participants' positioning to the conflict		
	Pro-Israeli	Pro-Palestinian
Endorsement of peace	<u>npeace01</u> : A solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be found through negotiation.	
Accentuation of vital needs	<u>npeace03</u> : A solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must take account of the necessities of life of both populations.	
	<u>ipeace01</u> : All the participants should work for the Israelis to be able to look forward to a peaceful future free of fear.	<u>ppeace01</u> : All the participants should work for the Palestinians to be able to lead a peaceful, self-determined life.
Rejection of peaceful conflict resolution	<u>iwar01</u> : The Palestinian leadership can only be made to recognize Israel by force of arms.	<u>pwar01</u> : The Israeli government can only be forced to make concessions by using military force.
Criticism of opponent's policy	<u>iwar02</u> : The Palestinian leadership is not ready to make compromises and tries to impose its maximum aims without regard to losses.	<u>pwar02</u> : Israel is intransigent and tries to maintain existing conditions by the use of force.
Delegitimation of the opponent	<u>iwar03</u> : The goal of the Palestinian leadership is the destruction of Israel.	<u>pwar03</u> : The aim of Israeli policy is the continued oppression and disenfranchisement of the Palestinians.
Legitimation of own side's warfare	<u>iwar04</u> : The Israelis are conducting a legitimate defensive war against Palestinian terrorism.	<u>pwar04</u> : The Palestinians are conducting a legitimate war of liberation against the Israeli occupation.
Condemnation of opponent's violence	<u>iwar05</u> : Nothing can justify the Palestinian terror attacks against the Israeli population.	<u>pwar05</u> : Israel's military operations against the Palestinians are excessive and unjustified.