Diplomacy with Memory

How the past is employed for future foreign policy gain

This paper describes countries' strategic manipulation of memory on the international stage. It proposes a model – 'diplomacy of memory' - for this currently untheorized form of diplomatic conduct in order to explain how countries employ constructed historic images for foreign policy purposes. Linking the interdisciplinary concept of collective memory with international relations, this paper characterizes the practice of 'diplomacy with memory' as a distinct policy undertaking that shapes and broadcasts "guilt" and "innocence" internationally for strategic objectives. The proposed theoretical assumptions are then applied to two selected post-conflict scenarios: The negotiations between West Germany and Israel, and between Austria and Israel about reparation payments to the Jewish state in the early 1950s. Testing the model's core elements on these historical examples, this paper recommends supplementing the toolkit of traditional diplomatic strategies with memory in order to better explain state behaviour in other post-conflict situations as they emerge.

Collective memory and international relations

The past is politically contested in the present. Understanding the consequences of this insight is at the core of an emerging interdisciplinary literature on collective memory. Collectives, however, unlike individuals do not hold memories physiologically. Instead they create memories as social constructions (Assmann A. 2001). Approaching the past through this crucial characteristic first identified by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1950), situates the past fully in the present. Collective memory is therefore not concerned with history itself but only with its legacy as it is remembered and interpreted. While identifying collective memory by its permanently shifting social frames has become the subject of a wide-ranging interdisciplinary literature spanning the fields of sociology, psychology, history

and anthropology, political science also made a crucial contribution to this scholarship by turning the research attention away from the sociological questions of what memory is and does to a more instrumentalist view on what collectives can *do* with memory (Olick et al. 2011).[1]

In domestic contexts, the crucial functions that collective memory serves to power, particularly the concept's close links to identity and as such also political legitimacy have been widely acknowledged by the literature (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983): collective memory provides a nation with a common myth of origin that endows a collective with emotional and normative underpinning. Through the medium of narratives, memorials and symbols, a particular version of the past is passed on to future generations and as such bears the potential to unite people behind a positive self-image. By providing the necessary link between "history (as a fact), and national ideology (as a myth)" (Markovits and Reich 1997, 12), it is therefore collective memory that fosters domestic peace, stability and ultimately also a common national identity (Anderson 1983; Gillis 1994). Whoever wins the contest over the past, therefore also stands a good chance of winning the political struggle over the present and the future.

Shedding light on these contemporary power dynamics surrounding collective memory, landmark works of the 'politics of memory' literature mainly view collective memory as state-produced memory over which different groups struggle for strategic political gain in the national sphere (Bodnar 1992; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Schudson 1993). While these studies illuminate how states *do* domestic politics with memory in order to realize specific national goals, they overlook how states also make foreign policy with memory for the purpose of achieving international goals. Instead of focusing on the international struggle over memory, collective memory in the existing body of work is viewed exclusively as originating from a complex domestic interplay of political interests. While it is acknowledged that these

[1] The concept of collective memory is often referred to in related terms such as legacy, myth, tradition or narrative, or viewed only very indirectly as features of shared identity, culture, ideology and emotion.

interests may reflect not only domestic but also international aims and contexts, what states can actually *do* with memory in the international sphere remains untheorized within international relations (=IR). Moreover, a consistent introduction of the concept of collective memory into the discipline of IR has not yet taken place. A small body of existing work exhibits a collection of different research foci, concepts, empirical cases and approaches (Bell 2010; Müller 2002; Langenbacher and Shain 2010; Resende and Budryte 2014). While far from suggesting any comprehensive 'international politics of memory' framework, each of these contributions nevertheless underlines the importance of collective memory for international relations while at the same time lamenting the persistent preference for material explanations within the discipline. Collective memory indeed lends itself to show the influence of ideational factors on shaping international relations. However, tackling collective memory's impact on international affairs in a more positivist way has so far only been attempted by a handful of scholars. Yuen Foong Khong (1992) and Ernest May (1975) concentrated on foreign policy decision-making and how "historical analogies" or "lessons of the past" are invoked to aide decision-making processes in the present. Others look at how the historic identity of states influences and determines international behavior such as the development of an anti-militaristic stance (Berger 1998 and 2002; Banchoff 1996 and 1999). Again others look beyond the enacting state and focus on the dynamics a specific policy behavior might trigger between countries. Jennifer Lind (2008) and Yinan He (2009), for example, have convincingly argued that the way countries remember and narrate their past has implications on other countries' threat perception as well as on bilateral reconciliation more broadly.

In each of these bodies of work, collective memory enters a states' foreign policy behavior either as an integral part of a country's identity and its decision-makers' mind-set, or, as an instrumental tool to legitimize international decisions, behavior and goals. Furthermore, in all cases, a complex interplay of domestic and international interests is assumed to have first

formed collective memory in the domestic sphere which then only in a second step reaches and influences international state behavior. That the route of memory's impact might run from the international to domestic sphere rather than vice-versa has not yet caught the attention of scholars. Existing work, while making a valuable contribution to rendering visible collective memory's 'invisible' force, only ever focuses on collective memory's consequences on international state behavior, introducing the concept into IR as passively directing and shaping foreign policy choices or interactions. What has not been explored is the extent to which memory was also the strategy itself with which states actively pursue international goals.

To go beyond the existing scholarship, this paper suggests a more active role for states in employing collective memory on the international stage. Rather than originating in the domestic sphere, collective memory forged for foreign policy purposes is assumed to have first been directed at an international audience, and only in a second step had to be reconciled with a domestic memory landscape. Countries, therefore, are seen to be deliberately making foreign policy with memory, rather than only passively having their foreign policy behavior enabled or constrained by a specific past. Because of its focus on the latter, existing work tells us little about how a country might go about such an endeavor in the international sphere. This paper therefore first develops its own theoretical framework that describes what countries can "do" with memory internationally, or in other words, how they actively make "diplomacy with memory" on the international stage.

The *Diplomacy of Memory* model

In this section, this paper outlines the theoretical contours of international state behaviour with memory. The model designed to describe this currently untheorized form of diplomatic conduct is henceforth called '*diplomacy of memory'* approach. Its framework explains how countries act on the diplomatic stage with the collective memory of their often disreputable

and shameful pasts for the purpose of future foreign policy gain. Seeking to clarify the relationship between collective memory and the diplomatic behaviour of states, several key questions are addressed: What influence does collective memory have on foreign policy behaviour? How does this influence manifest itself? How can it be measured? For what purposes is the past constructed and reconstructed on the international stage? Are international constructions of the past congruent with domestic ones, and how do they interact? Is the past indeed used for foreign policy purposes, or is it a rather marginal tool when more conventional tools are unavailable? In order to approach these questions, the independent variable of the *diplomacy of memory* framework needs to first be specified: what kind of collective memory is forged into a diplomatic tool? In a second step, I clarify what this paper wants to explain with collective memory, namely how countries use memory to pursue foreign policy objectives.

Conceptualizing collective memory as a diplomatic tool

We know from the politics of memory literature that within a country, different memories of diverse groups not only coexist but also mutually interact and battle with one another along the lines of contemporary power struggles. The *diplomacy of memory* approach now suggests taking collective memory out of its domestic context and looking at the version of it that foreign policy actors deliberately forge for a specific foreign policy purpose only. Foreign policy actors, in this model, are therefore assumed to be the makers and bearers of what is henceforth termed "official memory". Reflected in official texts, speeches and diplomatic documents, official memory first and foremost addresses an external, international audience. With foreign policy-makers' work taking place exclusively on the elite-level in ministries and embassies, official memory is mostly not geared towards a domestic public. The official version of memory used in the international sphere is, however, communicated, co-produced and at times challenged by the press at home. In other words, the official memory that best

achieves a strategic international aim may not always be in line with the "public memory" that a society holds of itself. [2] Despite its focus on the official level, the *diplomacy of memory* model thus requires taking into account the prevailing public memory within the domestic society. Best approximated via media outlets and the public discourse journalists both mirror, produce and reflect, this public memory is assumed to facilitate or challenge the official diplomatic use of memory on the international stage.[3]

Foreign policy behaviour with memory

Having conceptualized collective memory as the official memory that foreign policy-makers carry to the international stage, it must still be specified how the *diplomacy of memory* framework explains a country's foreign policy behaviour with memory on the international stage. Building upon Carlsnaes' (2013 and 1992) Foreign Policy Analysis (=FPA) framework, foreign policy is described as consisting of three general characteristics: It is a policy undertaking, it has a purposive nature, and it takes the crucial role of state boundaries into account. In order to apply this general definition to foreign policy behaviour with memory, the same three questions have to be answered. First, what kind of policy undertaking is this? Second, what is its purpose? And third, how does the concept travel across state boundaries? Addressing these questions allows the details of a country's diplomatic behaviour with memory to be defined, and to distinguish it as a separate foreign policy approach. The terminology I use for this as of yet untheorized form of state behaviour is "diplomacy with memory".

In defining diplomacy with memory as a specific foreign policy undertaking, I borrow from Todd Hall's analytical concept of "emotional diplomacy" (Hall 2015). Building on Erving Goffman's (1959) work on "impression management", Hall understands the display of

[2] What I define as "public memory" is an abridged version of Bodnar's (1992) "vernacular memory" and refers to the largest of many co-existing and interacting collective memories within the domestic public sphere.

[3] This idea goes back to Putnam's (1988) assumptions of foreign policy being a "two-level game", therefore requiring a delicate balancing act between domestic and international imperatives.

emotions on the international stage as a diplomatic team performance that constitutes an alternative strategy to traditional statecraft that was described by Hans Morgenthau (1954) as persuasion, compromise, and the threat of force only. Instead, Hall suggests that states can also use the projection of emotions as a strategic tool to achieve their foreign policy aims. They do this by deliberately portraying a certain emotional image to others. Such "emotional performances" are similar to the *diplomacy of memory* model's "memorial performances" in that diplomacy with memory is considered to consist of a deliberate and coordinated diplomatic team effort to portray an official memory to the international stage. As Hall also points out, rationalist IR researchers, most prominently Robert Jervis (1989), termed such an endeavour as "signalling". Signals in general, and therefore also those of an official memory, can affect how a state is viewed and treated by others. As such, the stakes involved in such a diplomatic effort are high, making a country willing to incur a significant cost for the success of their strategy. It is exactly this costly investment made into the credible portrayal of a selected memory that distinguishes diplomatic behaviour with memory from more traditional forms of diplomatic behaviour: where diplomacy is pursued with memory, it is "memory, rather than money" (Müller 2002, 2) that matters most.[4] That, however, does not mean that diplomacy with memory is driven by moral considerations arising from the past, or oriented towards the historic truth. On the contrary, diplomatic behaviour with memory – despite using the "non-traditional" tool of memory to achieve its goals – retains foreign policy's purposive nature and can therefore be qualified as an instrumental strategy oriented first and foremost towards a specific international goal.

Empirically identifying diplomacy with memory: The diplomacy of guilt and innocence

[4] The view that the material properties of a country's cost-benefit calculation cannot be viewed in isolation but gain a different meaning through the 'ideas about the past', i.e. the collective memory that surrounds them, builds on the work of constructivist scholars within IR.

Building on the above outlined theoretical assumptions, the *diplomacy of memory* model offers the following test of valid causal inferences between memory and diplomatic behaviour. If a country actively seeks to conduct its diplomacy with memory, one must find empirical evidence that foreign policy-makers forged a selected version of memory into a diplomatic strategy to achieve an international goal. This alternative state behaviour was further described as generally manifesting as a coordinated and costly diplomatic team effort to signal a specific official memory to the international stage. Any official memory contains a selected historic image of the country's past. Empirically identifying diplomacy with memory therefore also requires specifying the exact historic images available to countries.

The broader collective memory literature suggests diverse, politically-expedient images that vary according to international context: Under the dictates of the 19th century nation-state, the traditional construction of national narratives mainly followed the notions of the victor and the defeated. Naturally, heroic victories bear the strongest potential to unite people behind a positive self-image of their country, but so does "shared suffering" as Ernest Renan had famously pointed out in his speech at the Sorbonne in 1882. With two total wars in the first half of the 20th century, however, the categories of victor and defeated required amendment to include two new concepts originally stemming from the field of criminology: perpetrators and victims. The crucial difference between the old and new pairing lies in the question of reciprocity: The emerging notion of perpetrator implies an unrighteous aggressiveness towards a weak and defenceless other and as such hinges on its guilt. As a result, the outcome of the actions of the perpetrator, unlike the ones of the victor, do not amount to strength, glory, triumph and pride, but rather to guilt and shame. The newly emerging notion of victimhood, on the other hand, hinges on the victim's passivity and defencelessness, and emphasis is placed on innocent suffering in the midst of radically asymmetrical violence. As such, victimhood is directly opposed to the active sacrifice and heroism of the defeated (Assmann A. 2016).

Victimhood, like guilt, can be both a state of being and an emotion. Perpetrators can therefore be guilty of a misdeed without feeling guilty and vice-versa. Similarly, 'victims' can feel victimized without necessarily being victimized. The categories of perpetrator and victim in the post-World War II environment thus constituted two perceived states of being for nations, one of guilt and the other of victimized innocence.[5] The latter was not only sought by the real victims of the war, but it was also deliberately adopted by individuals and countries attempting to evade responsibility for the past. These countries then fabricated their innocence and victimization according to the logic of passive victimhood, putting full blame for the tragedies of the past on others while at the same time highlighting their own suffering.

Coming to terms with the past in the aftermath of World War II therefore required radically new narrative constructions derived from the "non-heroic images" of suffering and shame. The largest part of the interdisciplinary scholarship on collective memory is dedicated to highlighting the difficulties of reconciling the horrors of total war and specifically of the Holocaust[6] with the creation of a positive national self-image.[7] This paper now suggests taking a fresh perspective beyond these national struggles with memory by arguing that internationally the situation looked far different. Employing the historic images of guilt and innocence on the international stage in fact opened two new diplomatic routes for states to gain strategic advantage from their shameful pasts: either they admitted guilt and so also moral responsibility for their past wrongdoings, therefore portraying themselves as "guilty perpetrators" to the outside world. Guilt – at least viewed through Western cultural lenses[8] - hereby becomes interpreted as a debt that can be settled or "made good again" by the

[5] Note that "guilt" and "innocence" are subject to cultural nuances in diverse regions and contexts.

[6] That the Holocaust is crucially intertwined with the concept of collective memory and its study was famously acclaimed by Pierre Nora with the much-quoted line, "whoever says memory, says Shoah" in "*Les Lieux de mémoire*" [Sites of memory] (1984), as well as by Paul Connerton in his seminal work on "How societies remember" (1989).

[7] See for instance, works with a focus on Germany: Art (2006); Herf (1997); Maier (1988); Olick (2017); Zehfuss (2007); on Israel: Segev (1995); Yablonka (2004); Cesarani (2005), as well as those researching the emergence of a supranational, European and global memory: Assmann, A. (2011); Judt (1992); Levy and Sznaider (2006).

[8] See Friedrichs's (2016) description of Western "dignity cultures" which due to their cultural disposition for everybody's intrinsic and inalienable dignity allow for the reintegration of former perpetrators.

perpetrator.[9] Or, states chose to not admit moral responsibility for their past wrongdoings and instead portray themselves as "innocent victims" by imitating notions of passivity and defencelessness. Corresponding to these adopted images of guilt and innocence, one can infer two different courses of diplomatic action for countries: the morally responsible, guilty perpetrator will seek to ameliorate the harm and send verbal and substantive gestures of remorse, shame and apologies, whereas a credible portrayal of "innocence" will avoid exactly these signals, aiming to achieve recognition and compensation only for the own suffering.[10]

Based on these definitions, this paper proposes to trace empirically states' official portrayal of "guilt" or "innocence" vis-à-vis a disreputable past and how they act out the related "perpetrator" or "victim" behaviour on the international stage. The "diplomacy of guilt" aims to signal the image of a guilty perpetrator to the outside world, whereas what can be described as the "diplomacy of innocence" aims to portray the image of an innocent victim. Both, however, are diplomacy with memory: costly investment made into the projection of their respective images of the past to the international stage.

Diplomacy with memory applied: The case of reparations to Israel in 1952

In order to test the assumptions of the *diplomacy of memory* model, I am employing the issue of reparation payments to the Israeli state in the early 1950s as my case study. Examining whether countries used the tool of memory to react to the reparation question requires focussing on two countries directly linked to Israel via the horrific legacy of the Holocaust: West Germany and Austria. Both countries formed the imperial centre of the Third *Reich*, and their peoples served in the German *Wehrmacht* as well as in high ranking positions of the

[9] Hockerts (2007) describes how the German word for guilt [*Schuld*] is related to debt [*Schulden*], and how the latter implies the idea of monetary settlement.
[10] For more on the diplomacy of guilt and guilt behaviour, see: Hall (2015).
For more on the new notion of victimhood, see Assmann A. (2016).

Nazi regime.[11] Both of their societies therefore consisted – as Raul Hilberg (1993) put it - of perpetrators, victims and many bystanders. However, and despite having the same legacy in question, both countries told a very different official story about their Nazi past to the international audience. Where West Germany admitted moral responsibility for the Nazi crimes, Austria portrayed itself to the world as the first victim of Nazi Germany. Both cases therefore lend themselves well to test the theories on how countries conduct diplomacy with memory, be it with guilt or with innocence. Tapping into archival resources[12] and existing, predominantly historic work on the West German[13] and Austrian relations with Israel,[14] these cases serve to exemplify how West Germany and Austria in 1952 each forged their official memory of the Nazi past into a foreign policy tool that serviced a broader goal on the international stage.

Forging the diplomacy of guilt: The question of reparations between West Germany and Israel

On September 15, 1949, Konrad Adenauer became the first freely elected Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. From the very beginning onwards, Adenauer understood the importance of reconciliation with Israel as a political necessity of rehabilitating Germany in the world (Markovits and Reich 1997). In an interview, he stated in November 1949:

> In so far as it is possible in the aftermath of the annihilation of millions of people beyond retrieval, the German people are willing to *make good* the injustice committed against the Jews in the German name by a criminal regime. We consider such a restitution [*Wiedergutmachung*] as our duty. The Federal government is committed to initiate appropriate action.[15]

[11] For Austrian involvement in the Nazi regime, see for instance, Tálos et al. (2000).
[12] Austrian State Archives in Vienna. Archive of the Republic: Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ÖStA/AdR, BKA/AA.
[13] See, for instance: Deutschkron (1983); Feldman (1984); Vogel (1967); Weingardt (1997 & 2002).
[14] See, among others: Embacher and Reiter (1998); Falch and Zimmermann (2005).
[15] Interview with Adenauer on November 11, 1949 by Karl Marx, editor of *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, quoted in: Vogel 1967, 18. Translated by the author from German.

In its desire to atone for the past, West Germany reached out to Israel with the first concrete offer of 10 Million DM in order to test the ground of whether Israel would consider entering into direct negotiations with the FRG. In Israel, this German signal was initially met with significant opposition. Israel at the time treated West Germany as a pariah state and all contacts were forbidden. Yet, the newly founded Jewish state was in desperate need for financial support. In navigating the dilemma between material and moral considerations, Israel appealed to the occupational powers for reparation requests instead of talking to the FRG directly.[16] However, while being sympathetic to the idea of reparations, the Allied powers could not legally force the FRG to pay reparations to the state of Israel, which at the time of the war did not exist. Without using this loophole of international law, West Germany itself signalled that it was willing to freely accept moral responsibility for Nazi crimes. It was this step that rendered West Germany's move novel in the international sphere and compelled Israel to enter in direct talks with the West Germans (Vogel 1967).

The first meeting between Adenauer and the Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Finance, David Horowitz, as well as the Israeli Ambassador to France, Maurice Fischer, took place in Paris in full secrecy on April 19, 1951. Horowitz began to outline the Israeli position. Even though it was utterly impossible to atone for such a horrific past, any kind of financial negotiation could only begin once an official and public declaration of guilt had been made by the FRG. Such a statement had to acknowledge both responsibility for and condemnation of the Nazi crimes (Deutschkron 1983). "It will happen", answered Adenauer promptly (Segev 1995, 271). On September 27, 1951, he delivered a speech in front of the *Bundestag* which contained all the elements of West Germany's emerging diplomacy of guilt. Emphasizing that "unspeakable crimes were committed in the name of the German people", Adenauer pointed to a moral obligation for material compensation even if – as he relentlessly underlined - a

[16] Legation of Israel. 1951. The Israel claim for reparations from Germany. Identical note to the occupying powers.

majority of the German population did not personally participate in the crimes against the Jews.[17] Thus, Adenauer officially acknowledged the wrongdoings carried out in the German name, expressed guilt and shame as well as voluntarily admitted moral responsibility for the past on behalf of the FRG with the consequential attempt to 'make good again', but did so while also avoiding extending guilt to the entire German people.[18] When embracing the issue of reparations, the German Chancellor was well aware that he was speaking to two very different "memory audiences" in the domestic and in the international realm. By the beginning of the 1950s, West German public memories did not include the Jewish Holocaust nor some society-based notion of collective guilt, but rather began to form around the heroic image of the fallen soldier and the suffering induced by Allied bombings and the expulsion of 13 million Germans from the East as well as large looming repressions in the Soviet Zone. The embryonic German public memory of the war was therefore one based on victimization (Herf 1997). Such a domestic public memory of victimhood was of course in no way congruent with the image of the FRG as a guilty perpetrator that officials now began to portray to the outside world. Adenauer nevertheless went on to forge "guilt" into the West Germany's official strategy with memory on the international stage.

A costly investment into guilt: The Luxembourg Agreement

Adenauer's public admission of moral responsibility paved the way for substantive foreign policy action.[19] At a meeting with the Chairman of the Jewish Claims Conference, Nahum Goldman, in London in December 1951, the West German Chancellor immediately agreed to accept Goldman's suggestion of 1.5 billion USD as a basis for negotiations (Bark and Gress 1993). Such was the significance of this breakthrough that Adenauer proclaimed that he could

[17] See Adenauer's speech before the German *Bundestag*, September 27, 1951, quoted in: Vogel 1967, 36.
[18] See Todd Hall's (2015) analysis of the same example of West German reparation payments to Israel. Hall understands West Germany's diplomacy of guilt towards Israel in a similar way, however, he puts emphasis on the strategic acting out of the emotion of guilt rather than of the international portrayal of an official historic image/memory.
[19] For a detailed account on the way to Luxembourg, see: Weingardt (2002).

"hear the wing beat of history".[20] These negotiations clearly took place outside of the realm of standard transactions and it was history, not money that mattered most in this moment. At stake were all of the FRG's material concerns that ranged from the financial burden to the FRG to the imminent threat of a break of economic and political relations with the Arab countries (Deutschkron 1983). Such a traditional cost-benefit calculus, however, did not correspond with the logic of the emerging diplomacy of guilt approach. Writing to Fritz Schäffer, the Finance Minister and one of his main critics, Adenauer declared that "(…) negotiations will be conducted putting aside concerns that in any other case would apply, and instead will be orientated towards the moral and political weight that these unique obligations carry for us."[21] Adenauer viewed reparations as part of the price for the West German entry into the Western alliance, and for this strategic goal, he was prepared to pay. As such, the FRG of its own free will, but for the rational purpose of achieving the country's rehabilitation into the world community, took on the significant material cost of 3.45 billion DM worth of goods and services when it signed the Luxembourg Agreement with Israel on September 10, 1952 (Herf 1997). Despite widespread and persisting public opposition within West Germany,[22] the diplomacy of guilt carried the day and at least on the international level, it immediately began to bear fruit. It was no coincidence that the newly founded European Coal and Steel Community met for the first time on the same day of the signing ceremony in Luxembourg (Vogel 1967). With the reparation agreement sealed, the FRG was thus able to enter the European Community with clear proof of West Germany's desire for reconciliation. The diplomacy of guilt had yielded its first, concrete international success.

[20] Adenauer 1951, quoted in: Segev 1995, 276. Translated by the author from German.
[21] Letter from Adenauer to Fritz Schäffer, Bonn, February 29, 1952, quoted in: Vogel 1967, 41. Translated by the author from German.
[22] The West German public was largely opposed to reparations: an opinion poll in September 1952 revealed that 44% considered them "superfluous", 24% as "too high", and 21% were undecided while only 11% of the population supported an agreement with the Israel (Fink 2006, 277).

Forging the diplomacy of innocence: The question of reparations between Austria and Israel

When Austria declared its independence on April 27, 1945, the *Anschluss* of 1938 was described as having "robbed Austrians of both power and will at the hands of the military aggressor Nazi Germany".[23] Picking up on the Allies' wording of the Moscow Declaration of 1943 which defined Austria as Hitler's first victim, Austria's few anti-Nazi elites who were part of the founding parties of the Second Republic began to internationally portray the country as having been the first victim of Nazi Germany.[24] The logical implication of such a view was that Austria bore no responsibility for anything that happened during the seven years of "occupation", and the country therefore neither deserved Allied occupation nor war reparations (Uhl 2011). Originating as a skilful invention on part of Austria's post-war elite to achieve the country's independence, the idea quickly gained strong public support from wide segments of Austria's society (Rathkolb 2005; Hanisch 1994). Like West Germans, Austrians in the post-war years were preoccupied with their daily survival and their public memories began to form around their own victimization rather than the Jewish Holocaust (Knight 2000). By promoting unity and Austrian national self-identification as different from Germany, the emerging official story of the country's innocence not only achieved Austrian interests on the international stage, but also united diverse domestic groups and their different war experiences thus allowing for a quick shift from the traumas of the past to the needs of the present and future (Pelinka 1990).

However, while the image of victimhood quickly resonated at home, the outside world needed more convincing of Austria's innocence. Among the critical voices from the international community was first and foremost Israel. At the beginning of the 1950s, Israel pursued an

[23] See Austrian Declaration of Independence. May 1, 1945. Preamble & Art. I and II. Vienna: Staatsgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich.

[24] The Austrian officials interviewed for this research, former Chancellor of Austria, Franz Vranitzky, former Ambassador to the US, Eva Nowotny and former Ambassador to Israel, Franz Josef Kuglitsch, all confirmed that the victim narrative was first and foremost an invention of the Austrian Foreign Ministry in the beginning years of the Second Republic, crafted to quickly achieve Austria's independence.

ambivalent policy towards Austria in which moral and pragmatic interests constantly battled one another (Hotam 2005). While it never regarded Austria as a "truly liberated country", Austria was also not qualified as an "enemy state" like the FRG.[25] As a consequence, unlike with West Germany, diplomatic relations between Austria and Israel started as early as 1950. While Israel was conflicted, Austria was from the very beginning keen to establish diplomatic contacts with Israel. Archival documents from the Austrian State Archives clearly reveal that Austrian interest in Israel did not stem from material considerations[26] but rather the symbolic worth the relationship had for its emerging image of "innocent victimhood". The first Austrian representative in Tel Aviv later captured this reasoning with the rhetoric question: "who is interested in Israel anyways, unless it starts shouting that the Austrians were Nazis?" (Hartl 1952, quoted in: Embacher and Reiter 1998, 44). By the beginning of the 1950s, Austrian officials had grasped that the key to international credibility for the country's innocence was to a large part in the hands of Israel.

A costly investment into innocence: Credit agreement instead of reparations

It was in this context that in 1952 Austria granted Israel commercial credit of the amount of 100 million Austrian Schillings.[27] For Israel, a credit agreement with Austria signified a modest loan to finance the absorption of new immigrants in a time when the country was in dire economic circumstances (Zweig 2010). However, what motivated Austria to grant such a loan despite its own financial difficulties? Austria's economy at the time was still fully dependent on the Marshall Plan, but, as internal Israeli sources reveal, Austria nevertheless

[25] The foundations that differentiated Austria from Germany in the official Israeli eyes were laid out by the Knesset as early as 1949 (Steininger 2012).

[26] In the late 1940s, beginning of 1950s, Israel was for Austria - in comparison to the Arab world - of little importance: both politically and economically. Austria's main material interests in Israel were mutually beneficial trade contacts, the clearance of Austrian property in Israel and the legal protection of numerous Austrian Jews that had emigrated to Israel (Albrich 1997; Steininger 2012).

[27] 100 million Austrian Schillings were about 2,5 million USD in 1952. Taking the retail price index (that changed around 641,8% between May 1952 and December 2016) into account, this sum is equivalent to the nowadays sum of 53,9 Million Euro (December 2016). See Statistik Austria. <http://www.statistik.at/Indexrechner/> (2018, July 3).

enthusiastically embraced the project. When the Director of the Austrian National Bank expressed concern that Israel would not be able to repay, he was instructed to authorize the loan or resign.[28] That an economically weak Austria was willing to make such a costly investment in helping a distant, small country of little material and strategic importance constitutes a surprising puzzle at first sight. However, a closer look at the bilateral debate about the wording of the agreement reveals that this credit was "no business as usual" for both countries.

At the beginning of the year 1952, the Israeli Foreign Ministry informed Austria that it would only accept credit if it was paired with a friendship declaration.[29] What exactly such a friendship declaration meant soon became clear. Israeli officials requested that Austria unconditionally condemned the atrocities committed by the Austrian Nazis against the Austrian Jews. Israel aimed for a symbolic gesture similar to Adenauer's statement before the German *Bundestag* which would allow Israeli officials to justify taking Austrian money in front of a critical Israeli public (Embacher and Reiter 1998; Zweig 2010). What Israel however did not take into account was that Austrian thinking followed the logic of its emerging diplomacy of innocence rather than the diplomacy of guilt. Although such a statement meant a pure condemnation of the past without necessarily admitting moral responsibility, Austria refused. Any open declaration vis-a-vis the Nazi past would run counter to Austria's diplomatic approach with memory. Interpreting the Israeli move as an attempt to present Austria with "the bill of the Nazi past through the backdoor of the credit agreement",[30] the Austrian Foreign Ministry began to paint the credit agreement as a generous

[28] See: letter from Eshel to Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 24, 1951, quoted in: Zweig 2010, 54.
[29] See diverse documents from the Austrian State Archives:
Hartl to Foreign Minister Gruber on "Israel – The establishment of diplomatic relations", Tel Aviv, January 2, 1952. ÖStA/AdR, BKA/AA, Israel 2, Gz. 146 350_pol 1952.
Hartl's letter to Foreign Minister Gruber, Tel Aviv, February 2, 1952. ÖStA/AdR, BKA/AA, Israel 2, Gz. 146 350_pol 1952.
[30] Hartl reports to the Austrian Foreign Ministry on "The establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel", Tel Aviv, May 26, 1952. ÖStA/AdR, BKA/AA, Israel 2, Gz. 146 350_pol 1952.

gift on the Austrian part and showed no understanding of what was portrayed as a completely misplaced Israeli request:

> The Republic of Austria, which had itself been violently occupied by Nazi Germany, has nothing to do with these things and therefore Austria sees no reason to specifically state that in a friendship declaration.[31]

Austria's insistence on a successful completion of the credit agreement despite this dispute reveals the broader aim of the Austrian strategy: rather than merely issuing credit, it aimed to advance its image of victimhood before the eyes of the world. As such, for Austria the economic losses from the credit agreement were offset by the gains in credibility when it came to "signalling" its historic image of innocence to the international stage for a credit agreement with Israel would deepen bilateral relations between the two countries while at the same time avoiding reparation payments. Both served to signal Austria's distinctiveness from West Germany at a time when reparations, but no diplomatic relations existed between Israel and the FRG.

The purpose of the loan was to engineer an official Israeli renunciation of reparations requests. By dropping the claim for reparations, Israel would exonerate Austria of guilt for Nazi crimes and in doing so validate Austria's victimhood before the eyes of the world. What Consul-General Hartl later referred to as "the word that should cost us 100 million Schillings"[32] was finally voiced in 1952 by Israel's Foreign Minister Sharett: "Israel will not demand reparations from Austria. (…) Israel accepts the supposition that Germany is responsible for acts committed against Austrian Jews since they took place only after the *Anschluss*" (Sharett 1952, quoted in: Steininger 2012, 62). That Sharett made this statement in Paris en-route to a signing ceremony for the reparations agreement with West Germany was

[31] Response from the Austrian Foreign Ministry to Hartl, Vienna, June 17, 1952. ÖStA/AdR, BKA/AA, Israel 2, Gz. 146 350_pol 1952.
[32] Karl Hartl's letter to Adolf Schärf, Tel Aviv, December 7, 1953, quoted in: Steininger 2012, 84.

no coincidence and made once again clear that Israel had accepted that the Austrian and German cases were different.[33] The Austrian diplomacy of innocence had yielded its first major international success and paved the way towards realizing Austria's largest international aim: the full departure of the occupying powers in 1955.

Implications for the *diplomacy of memory* model: Comparing the Austrian and West German cases

The *diplomacy of memory* model described international state behavior with memory. The cases of West Germany, Austria and Israel in 1952 constituted two clear examples for testing its assumptions. While West Germany and Austria adopted opposite images of guilt and innocence, both countries used memory to pursue their foreign policy objectives on the international stage. As such, both countries were ready to make a costly investment into memory as a diplomatic tool. The West German diplomacy of guilt aimed at the FRG's reintegration into the western world's community of states, suspending all traditional cost-benefit concerns and pushing the decision-making process down the track of reaching a swift agreement with the Israelis. Austria's refusal to pay reparations, but instead issue a commercial loan to Israel, also targeted a broader, international goal: namely, independence from the occupation without having to fulfil large looming reparation demands from the victims of the Third *Reich*. Unlike West Germany's strategy of reintegration into the West by way of admitting guilt, Austria's absolution from the past came from its deliberate distancing from Germany by way of signaling innocence, a strategy that offset all financial concerns and pushed Austria towards issuing a generous credit to Israel in 1952.

[33] Historians up until this day debate and try to understand Sharett's decisiveness on the issue of reparations from Austria. The main explanation points to the legal status of Austria as a liberated country which would have rendered reparation claims almost impossible to achieve under International Law (Zweig 2010, 56).

Thus, both countries selected the diverse historic images of guilt and innocence because these – in the specific international context of the 1950s – were most likely to bring them towards their desired foreign policy goals. Despite the atrocious legacy of the Holocaust, projecting guilt was neither the only, nor a likely option for the FRG at the time. The country's leaders, however, realized the potential that signaling guilt bore towards the goal of Western integration. The admission of responsibility rather than a denial was the surest way towards winning the trust of the Western Allies, while at the same time distancing the FRG from the Communist East. For Austria, on the other hand, projecting innocence and denying guilt opened the path towards independence in the midst of an emerging conflict between its occupying powers. Only an 'innocent' Austria could avoid Soviet claims and secure the country's place as a neutral state between the fault lines of East and West.

The adoption of the image of innocence and guilt is therefore determined by the particular foreign policy aim that a country is pursuing. It thus follows, that when these aims change, the diplomatic practice with memory is altered also. Take, for example, Austria in the 1990s. In 1991, the Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky reversed the cornerstone of its post-war national identity by officially admitting co-responsibility for the Nazi crimes,[34] and Austria, when placed in the framework proposed in this paper, switched from a diplomacy of innocence to one of guilt.[35] What had changed? Without disputing Vranitzky's sincerity of contrition, according to the *diplomacy of memory* model, one must look beyond the morality behind this act and focus the attention at the international incentive structures. Austria's move towards an image of guilt coincided with Austrian accession negotiations to the EU. With the end of the Cold War, the communist East had ceased to serve as the West's "evil other" and in its place now stepped the memory of Auschwitz. As such, the duty of remembrance with the accompanying warning of "Never again" began to form the moral imperative of a new

[34] See Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's speech before the Austrian Parliament, July 8, 1991.

[35] In an interview with the author on March 30, 2017, the former Chancellor of Austria, Franz Vranitzky confirmed that his official admission of co-responsibility on behalf of Austria indeed altered the country's image and as such also diplomatic strategies vis-à-vis Israel and the broader international community.

generation (Diner 2007; Uhl 2016). In this altered European context, signaling innocence and victimhood to the international stage had lost its political expediency. Rather than denying the past, an active acknowledgment of the Holocaust now began to form, as Judt (2007, 803) put it, the entry ticket into Europe. For Austria that meant that just as in the post-WWII era, also now foreign policy gain could be expected from making diplomacy with memory. Where in the 1950s the image of innocence was best suited to advance the country's international aims, in the 1990s, guilt was more useful. Indeed, Austria's newly adopted diplomacy of guilt soon began to bear fruit and the country entered the European Union in 1995. The Austrian case thus underlines that diplomacy with memory changes together with strategic international aims.

Application to further cases

This paper has argued that countries can actively make diplomacy with memory on the international stage, be it by way of portraying guilt or innocence vis-à-vis a disreputable past. In order to prove that memory constitutes an alternative diplomatic tool, we must go beyond the particularities of the cases studied in this paper and find evidence for diplomatic behavior with memory also in other scenarios. A quick look at countries around the world suggests that most states left with a shameful legacy in the aftermath of WWII likely followed what I outlined as the diplomacy of innocence, with some showing a mixture between the diplomacy of innocence and guilt, especially when considered in a longer timeframe. At least in the decades immediately following WWII, the diplomacy of guilt that characterized the West German approach towards Israel was not employed anywhere else, not even by West Germany itself vis-a-vis its neighbors France and Poland.[36] Unmatched also by other countries, it seems that the FRG's coordinated diplomacy of guilt as manifested in the

[36] Lind (2008) and Feldman (2012) both come to that same judgement.

Luxembourg Agreement constitutes what Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett already in 1952 called "a unique step in the history of international relations".[37]

Austria, on the other hand, was not alone in pursuing the diplomacy of innocence on the global stage. Post-war Japan, for example, has been described by Ian Buruma (1995, 294) as resembling a "petulant child, stamping its foot, shouting that it had done nothing wrong, because everybody did it". In clear contrast to West Germany's behaviour towards Israel, Japanese apologies to China and South Korea have been perceived as "too little, too late" (Lind 2008, 2). While some scholars point to elements of a diplomacy of guilt contained in Japanese foreign policies (Hall 2015), there are also countless times when Japan attempted to fend off its past by denying outright its political actions or whitewashing it in its textbooks (Ma 2013), which might attest to the pursuit of the diplomacy of innocence vis-à-vis its Asian neighbours.[38] To prove that Japan used either guilt or innocence as a foreign policy tool, future work must investigate the country's willingness to make a costly investment in this diplomatic strategy. If one argues that the image was one of guilt rather than innocence, research must prove that, for instance, the decade-long Japanese practices of official development assistance for China were motivated by a sense of responsibility for Japanese war crimes during World War II rather than material interests. Or in reverse, if Japan followed a diplomacy of innocence vis-à-vis China as most authors argue, one would need to show that Japanese Prime Ministers' visits to Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto shrine to remember Japanese war dead including war criminals, was a sign of projecting innocence based on Japanese victimhood towards China and the international community, and for what strategic purpose.

That diplomatic behaviour with memory is only pursued where strategic international gain can be leveraged from memory becomes clear from a very different example. The US never

[37] "Sharett: ‚Einzigartig in der Geschichte'. Der israelische Außenminister zum Abkommen mit Bonn" September 12, 1952. *Die Presse*.

[38] For the politics of war commemoration in East Asia, see, for instance: Saito (2017).
For a more detailed account on Sino-Japanese relations and their reconciliation process, see: He (2009).

employed memory as a diplomatic tool, not even towards Japan to which it is linked via the most tragic legacy of the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Far from showing any signs of contrition, the atrocious legacy of the American atomic bombings seemed simply not to have mattered to US conduct with Japan, and the two countries immediately restored peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with one another in the aftermath of World War II (Vogel S. 2002; Lind 2008). Even though further research is needed to fully confirm this assertion, a possible explanation might lie in the US's status as a superpower. For smaller and medium-sized countries, the effort to portray a certain historic image to the international stage is costly but meaningful, and certainly cheaper than other diplomatic tools they can resort to for achieving their goals. Superpowers, on the other hand, by way of already occupying a desirable place within the international community, do not need to reap the benefits from such a signal. Lacking the strategic aim that motivates other countries to act out memory internationally, superpowers seem to conduct no diplomacy with memory at all.

When looking to apply the *diplomacy of memory* model to further cases, it is thus important to keep in mind existing incentive structures within the international system: if there is no strategic foreign policy goal that can be pursued with memory, countries will not resort to this diplomatic tool. Where power relations allowed for the diplomacy with memory to be put at work in the first place, the model furthermore assumed state behaviour to change only when foreign policy aims are altered. Proving this assertion points future research to look beyond the year 1989. With the end of the Cold War, international incentive structures were altered significantly for countries which – if the model holds up to reality – must have therefore also brought about changes in states' diplomatic behaviour with memory. A glance at the post-Cold War era already shows that it proliferated a multitude of restitution cases and official apologies that led scholars as far as to speak of a newly emerging morality within the international community of states (Barkan 2001). While I suggested above that the diplomacy of innocence more or less formed the default strategy for countries in the aftermath of WWII,

in the altered incentive context of a post-Cold War environment, admitting responsibility for the past seems to be a good choice for states' pursuit of their interests. Especially in parts of Europe, denying responsibility lost political expediency within a post-ideological, post-national normative context that upholds "Never Again" as its new moral imperative. Future research is therefore likely to find an increase of cases of the diplomacy of guilt in the 21st century, with countries not only revising their historic images in reference to atrocities perpetrated in past wars, but also regarding the harm inflicted by discriminatory state practices and colonial legacies.

Conclusion

This paper suggested a new theoretical framework to describe and understand how states conduct foreign policy with their memory of a disreputable past. It has gone beyond previous scholarship, which has mainly focused on how countries exploit memory for domestic political gain, by showing how countries employ memory for foreign policy goals. So far, existing IR work dedicated to the interdisciplinary concept of collective memory introduced memory as passively shaping state behavior in the international realm. In contrast, the framework developed here inferred active agency on foreign policy-makers when it comes to deploying memory on an international stage. As the examples of West Germany and Austria in the 1950s underlined, by signaling guilt or innocence vis-à-vis a shameful past to the outside world, official memory was deliberately forged into a useful diplomatic strategy to achieve foreign policy aims, namely Western integration for the FRG, and independence for Austria. While this – as of yet untheorized diplomatic practice – is available to all countries, differences between them in terms of power, legacy, culture and norms suggest that diplomatic behavior with memory is likely to vary across time and regions. In all cases, however, for diplomacy with memory to qualify as such, it must be shown to be dependent upon specific international objectives. If future studies find clear evidence of this also in other

scenarios, then the toolkit of diplomatic strategies within international relations needs to be amended to include collective memory.

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