

GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY OF RECONCILIATION

*from enmity
to amity*



LILY GARDNER FELDMAN

Germany's Foreign Policy of Reconciliation

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From Enmity to Amity

Lily Gardner Feldman

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To Shira and Batya
and their deep commitment to justice and peace.

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Preface and Acknowledgements

On March 18, 2008, Angela Merkel became the first chancellor of a united Germany to speak before the Knesset, Israel's parliament. A minority of Knesset members chose not to attend, either because of the speaker's country or her mother tongue.

Despite the horror of the Holocaust more than six decades earlier, many Knesset members did listen, and Chancellor Merkel's words describing reconciliation resonated with them and with a broad Israeli public:

Ladies and gentlemen, Germany and Israel are and will always remain linked in a special way by the memory of the Shoah. . . . It left wounds that have not healed to this day. . . . It is true that places of remembrance are important, places such as the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin or Yad Vashem. They keep memories alive. But it is also true that places alone are not enough once memories become part of the past. Memories must constantly be recalled. Thoughts must become words, and words deeds. . . . Here of all places I want to explicitly stress that every German Government and every German Chancellor before me has shouldered Germany's special historical responsibility for Israel's security. This historical responsibility is part of my country's *raison d'être*. . . . [A]s David Ben-Gurion said: Anyone who does not believe in miracles is not a realist. Today when we look back on German-Israeli relations, on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, we know that his words have proven to be just as realistic as they are true. Yes, our relations are special, indeed unique—marked by enduring responsibility for the past, shared values, mutual trust, abiding solidarity for one another, and shared confidence. In this spirit, we are celebrating today's anniversary. In this spirit, Germany will never forsake Israel but will remain a true friend and partner.¹

Just three years later, in March 2011, South Korea and China responded to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan by sending rescue teams and humanitarian aid. These gestures were seen as tentative steps in a reconciliation process that has barely begun in Northeast Asia, in contrast to Europe. The Japanese ambassador to Seoul noted that a “friend who helps in a difficult time is a true friend” and predicted that “South Korea–Japan ties will grow closer as a result.”² Although historical background, practical needs, and international context are different in Northeast Asia, both Germany’s complex motivations and multifaceted practical ways in developing international reconciliation are instructive. The uniqueness of the Holocaust does not prevent learning lessons from how Germany chose to address that history in its foreign policy after 1945.

Germany, with few allies, made war on much of the world from 1939 until 1945, and ultimately was surrounded by enemies of its own making. German leaders concluded that Germany needed to return to the family of nations, and had to reconcile with its enemies, for both moral and pragmatic reasons. No country other than Germany in the last half-century has pursued a sustained and complex foreign policy of reconciliation.

My interest in international reconciliation grew first out of my work on the spectacular achievements of the German-Israeli “special relationship” beginning in 1950, and then out of my research on the growing links between American Jewry and Germany that started in the early 1980s. As a student of German foreign policy in general, I began to detect in Germany’s relations with other former enemies some of the same ideas and practices that I found in German-Jewish ties, such that one could begin to identify patterns of reconciliation.

This book is about what Germans, and their leaders, understood by the concept of reconciliation after 1945, focusing on four critical cases—France, Israel, Poland, and Czechoslovakia (subsequently, the Czech Republic). It also is about what each of those bilateral partners understood by the concept. It is about the nuanced German approaches to reconciliation in each case, the what, how, and why it was seeking to accomplish, which defines broadly German foreign policy, all in the shadow of the Cold War, after World War II.

There is an implicit historical sequence. Germany focuses first on reconciling with France, its ancient enemy and neighbor and its primary rival in continental Europe. Then, Germany turns to the European Jewish victims of the Holocaust through the State of Israel that absorbs their surviving rem-

nant. There are repeated challenges to Israel's very survival, beginning with the state's creation in 1948, and Germany is summoned to play a critical role repeatedly in the 1956, 1967, and 1973 wars that put Israel in peril. West Germany acts, during the Cold War, on the western side of the Iron Curtain, but as the Cold War thaws it becomes possible to reconcile progressively with states to the east, particularly Poland and the Czech Republic.

The postwar world, with a divided Germany, determines the broad sequence. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the Soviet Union, the unification of Germany is part of Germany's reconciliation with Poland and the Czech Republic.

The following analysis of four cases of Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation covers a sixty-year period, from 1949 to 2009. It begins with the creation of the Federal Republic and ends with the seventieth anniversary of the outbreak of World War II, the catastrophic event that made the passage from enmity to amity a dire necessity for both Germany and the world.

Chapter 1 presents the strengths and weaknesses of various disciplinary perspectives on reconciliation, and then offers the guiding framework for the book. Chapter 2 provides the setting—the contours of German foreign policy over six decades—and the place reconciliation held in the overall context. It then examines Germany's relations with France (chapter 3), Israel (chapter 4), Poland (chapter 5), and the Czech Republic (chapter 6), using the same categories of history, leadership, institutions, and international context. Chapter 7 draws comparative conclusions about the four country cases, and turns to the other case of international pariah status at the end of World War II, Japan. As I developed my ideas on Germany's international reconciliation, I was called upon frequently to share my findings with Japanese, South Korean, and Chinese scholars, policymakers, and non-governmental actors, as well as American scholars of Northeast Asia, who wanted to break out of the Japanese mold of ignoring or whitewashing the past. Chapter 7 is an effort, mindful of differences, to show how the features of Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation can be applied to Japan's incipient relations with China and South Korea.

A number of institutions and individuals have supported profoundly my research and writing on Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation over two decades. The Jennings Randolph Fellows Program, then in its infancy, at the United States Institute of Peace generously provided me with a year's sabbatical from Tufts University, so that I could begin to explore the concept of reconciliation and its practice in German foreign policy. Tufts University

and my colleagues in the political science department graciously gave me extended leave, so that I could continue the project in Washington, DC. The tranquility and collegiality of the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University enabled me to write the 1999 article in *International Affairs* ("The Principle and Practice of 'Reconciliation' in German Foreign Policy"), setting out my early thoughts on the topic.

The American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS) at Johns Hopkins University has been my academic home on numerous occasions since 1984 when I spent a sabbatical in Washington. It has provided resources, inspiration, context, and friendship, for which I am most grateful. I thank especially its talented and dedicated staff and two directors, Robert G. Livingston and Jackson Janes, for the most congenial and supportive environment in which to think and write freely. This book would not have been completed without such a community as AICGS. Special thanks go to Susanne Dieper and Lynn Van Norstrand, to Kirsten Verclas for her computer wizardry, and to Jessica Riester, who masterfully assembled the bibliography and copyedited the manuscript. Due to an editorial decision, the endnotes and selected bibliography are abbreviated in this published volume. Complete endnotes and selected bibliography can be found at <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781442217102>.

My friend Roy Ginsberg deserves very special thanks for his constant encouragement, belief in the project, and willingness to read every word that I wrote. I am indebted to the following individuals who read parts of the book, or with whom I discussed my ideas on reconciliation: Stewart Aledort, Klaus Bachmann, Tom Banchoff, Gerhard Beestermöller, Lili Cole, Beverly Crawford, Ivo Duchacek, Mark Fliegauf, Philippe Gréciano, Vladimir Handl, Gunther Hellmann, Andrew Horvat, Kai-Olaf Lang, Carl Lankowski, Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, Hanns Maull, Mike Mochizuki, Kristi Monroe, Willie Paterson, Jeff Peck, Richard Rabinowitz, Volker Rittberger, Ernestine Schlant, Stefan Seidendorf, Mark Selden, Eugeniusz Smolar, Panayotis Soldatos, Henning Tewes, Daqing Yang, Marcin Zaborowski, and Klaus Ziemer. Their mixture of approval and critical comments sustained me in this long journey from a small article to a large book.

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My biggest debt is to my husband, Elliot J. Feldman, who appreciated early on the significance of reconciliation, pushed me to think grandly, provided all manner of resources, and helped me immeasurably to find the right language for the remarkable phenomenon of reconciliation. Finally, I wish to thank my two daughters Batya and Shira. As young children they inspired me to think about a world where morality and goodness can flourish. As young women they practice reconciliation every day: as peace, through theater, and as justice, through law.

NOTES

1. Bundesregierung, "Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to the Knesset in Jerusalem," March 18, 2008, www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Reden/2008/03/2008-03-18-rede-knesset.html (accessed April 1, 2008).
2. Quoted in "Japan's Ambassador Expresses Thanks for S. Korean Help after Disaster," *Yonhap News Agency*, March 17, 2011, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2011/03/17/82/0301000000AEN20110317011400315F.HTML (accessed August 26, 2011).

The Narrowness and Breadth of Reconciliation in the International Arena

This chapter is in three parts, all essential for comprehending reconciliation: it defines terms and subsequently offers a model, based on German strategy and experience, for reconciliation generally in international affairs; it assesses disciplinary contributions to understanding the concept; and it previews the role of reconciliation as the very definition of German foreign policy after World War II.

ON UNDERSTANDING RECONCILIATION

“Reconciliation” has become a popular, widely used term with many meanings that depend on who is using it and for what purpose. Because it is equally meaningful as a noun and as a verb (“to reconcile”), it refers to processes, to how something might be changed, and the end product of a process. “Who” uses it refers not only to the particulars of an actor, but to the discipline that defines her perspective. “Purpose” refers to whether the user of the term is offering analysis or prescription, wants to understand something, or is trying to change it.

To translate reconciliation’s many possible meanings into a useful analytical tool, it is necessary to identify the purpose for which the term will be used, the actors who are using it, the process for which they want the term to serve, and the outcome of the process. This book applies the term to international relations. Reconciliation refers here to both process and outcome, to

changing conditions of international enmity into a status of bilateral amity, converting old enemies into friends.

Analysis of the process, and the outcome, depends on perspective and discipline. Reconciliation is a particularly popular term among theologians. The religious literature discussing reconciliation, however, is predominantly based on a Christian theology. For Christian theologians, upon whom politicians often have depended to give the concept meaning, reconciliation requires a victim to forgive.

Forgiveness is not always a prerequisite for reconciliation, particularly among moral philosophers, social psychologists, legal scholars, political scientists, or historians, fairly the universe of disciplines contributing to our understanding and ability to make good use of the concept of reconciliation. For each of these disciplines, there is an actor who reconciles, whether individuals or groups or nations or, for many theologians, a deity. The key actor for all but the theologians is the perpetrator, the state or population principally responsible for causing harm. For theologians, the key actor is the victim because the victim must forgive for reconciliation in Christian theology to be possible.

Reconciliation, both as process and as outcome, always has a motive—there is always a reason why an actor, whether perpetrator or victim, wants reconciliation, usually moral or pragmatic (or both). There are always mechanisms to achieve reconciliation, whether through the apology of the perpetrator or the forgiveness of the victim, usually taking shape in policies or institutions, and there is always an ideal final condition, the nature of reconciliation, although some think the process itself perpetual. Hence, for all of the disciplines that have contributed to thinking about reconciliation— theology, philosophy, social psychology, law, political science, and history—there are common concerns—the motives, actors, mechanisms, and nature, whether in a continuing process or a final idealized condition. The disciplines, and their contributions to thinking about reconciliation, are summarized in table 1.1.

This chapter sorts through the contributions of different academic disciplines and alerts us to the meaning of “reconciliation” as spoken by different actors in different settings. The short conclusion is that the most extensive and useful literature for addressing reconciliation in international affairs is to be found among political scientists and historians, but other disciplines help partially. By “reconciliation” I mean the process of building long-term peace between former enemies through bilateral institutions

across governments and societies. Reconciliation involves the development of friendship, trust, empathy, and magnanimity.

THE DISCIPLINES

The Defect in Christian Theology for Studying Reconciliation

*Reconciliation, a restoration or even a transformation toward an intended wholeness that comes with transcendent human grace, expresses the result of a restored relation in behavior. Forgiveness expresses the acknowledgment and practice of this result.*¹

Theologically based literature views the motives of reconciliation in essentially moral terms, rendering it of limited utility for understanding the politics that shape the path from enmity to amity. Where there is a discussion of politics, it relates to the arena in which morally driven behavior can occur, or the structural realities of the international system, and not to motives for action.

Theological focus is on individuals, whose experience is considered non-conveyable to other actors, such as governments and social groups. However, there is a minority belief that religious institutions, and individual religious leaders, themselves can play various roles in reconciliation. Moral vision and moral imperative are essential for reconciliation, but they need pragmatic action for successful change, and they can appear in the form of spiritual leadership and not only as activity by organized religions.

The heart of theological writings is a rapid, closed process of forgiveness, a very tall order for an exchange between two individuals after injury, and even more daunting between societies after massive carnage. Religion's ancillary discussion of "forbearance" as an alternative to forgiveness is less demanding, and more productive. The truth-seeking and truth-telling elements of religion's forgiveness rituals are instructive, even when the process itself and the end point are not relevant for political reconciliation and are germane for only a limited class of social actors, namely religious groups.

Much of the theological literature fervently assumes that forgiveness is possible under all circumstances, and does not distinguish among different kinds of crimes. The related premise that forgiving connotes forgetting is also problematic, and theological efforts to incorporate history and remembrance still result in contingent or conditioned memory, which allows the perpetrator, rather than the victim, to define the terms of remembering. While there is

Table 1.1.

DISCIPLINES	MOTIVES	ACTORS	MECHANISMS	NATURE	DEFINITION	CASES
RELIGION	• Moral	• Individuals • Perpetrators and victims • Governments • Church as NGO	• Forgiveness • Truth telling • Selective, contingent or no memory	• Process and terminus • Short term • Restoration of relations • Harmony	• Forgiveness	• Early literature references to international cases • Later references to internal cases • Frequent reference to South Africa
PHILOSOPHY	• Moral but also pragmatic	• Individuals • States and societies as a whole	• Forgiveness not essential • Self-respect/ mutual respect • Dignity • Apology • Truth telling • Narrative revision or equilibrium	• Long-term process • Qualitatively new relationship • Continuation of conflict/ resentment	• Thinner: reduction of conflict; accommodation; reconciliation with reality/fate • Fuller: mutual respect • Thicker: forgiveness, but not ideal	• Post-unification Germany • Post-apartheid South Africa
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	• Moral and pragmatic but not a prominent category • Moral obligation of scholars	• Society as a whole • Civil society/NGOs • Groups • Victims and perpetrators • Leadership • Third parties	• Healing • Trust, empathy, security • Interpersonal encounters • System-wide structures • Apology • Forgiveness • Trials, human rights, compensation, restitution, education, media, confidence building • Shared history	• Process and outcome • Transformed relationship/ new patterns of behavior • Harmony	• Minimal: peaceful coexistence • Maximal: change in attitudes, beliefs, goals concerning conflict; active peace	• Rwanda • Israel-Palestine • Northern Ireland • South Africa • German-Jewish relations • El Salvador • Japanese Americans • Japanese Canadians • Lebanon • Australia

DISCIPLINES	MOTIVES	ACTORS	MECHANISMS	NATURE	DEFINITION	CASES
LAW	• Moral and pragmatic	• Society as a whole • Nascent, decent, liberal and civil democracies • Groups • Third parties • Victims and perpetrators • Leadership	• Restorative justice • Truth telling • Acknowledgement and accountability • Trials • Reparations • Remembrance and commemoration • Qualified amnesty • Right to forgive/ forgiveness extreme action • Magnanimity • Repudiation of the past • Contending history	• Long-term process • Transformation • Contention	• Minimal: coexistence • Maximal: relationship of trust; setting aside of disputes; cancellation of estrangement; self-respect and mutual respect	• South Africa • Latin America: Argentina; Uruguay; Chile; Guatemala; El Salvador • Post-war Germany • Post-unification Germany
POLITICAL SCIENCE and HISTORY	• Moral and pragmatic with varying degrees	• Governments • Groups • Third parties • Victims and perpetrators • Leadership	• Retrospective justice • Trials, truth-seeking bodies, restitution, and reparation • Institutions • Political culture • Political forgiveness sometimes necessary, but never sufficient • Knowing remembrance and contrapuntal history	• Long-term process and terminus different from past • Contention	• Minimal: absence of war; peaceful coexistence; political accommodation; rapprochement • Maximal: establishment of political community; trust and friendship; zones of stable peace	• Post-war Germany • Post-unification Germany • Jews; Japanese Americans; Korean “comfort women”; Native Americans; Australian Aborigines; New Zealand Maoris; African American slaves • Northern Ireland • Great Britain and U.S. • Concert of Europe • European Community • ASEAN • Swiss Confederation • Iroquois Confederation • United Arab Emirates

much theological rhetoric about “never forget,” the preferred resentment-free, selective memory can become amnesia over time. The danger of forgetting by the perpetrator is built into the religiously based notion of reconciliation, which presupposes that the perpetrator is “liberated” from his past acts through forgiveness, ultimately placing the burden on the victim.

Religious views of reconciliation center on the restoration of previous relations with the assumption that historical ties were positive, rather than on creating structurally new connections. Harmony characterizes the nature of postconflict relationships in this view, bleeding out the productive contention that is the essence of reconciliation.

Moral Reconciliation without Forgiveness: The Philosophers’ Contribution

Reconciliation . . . is conceptually independent of forgiveness. This is a good thing. For it means that reconciliation might be psychologically possible where forgiveness is not.²

Few philosophers have said much about reconciliation, but, when they have, they have distinguished the moral proposition in philosophy from the moral proposition in theology. As a moral category, reconciliation is deemed more relevant between individuals than between peoples, and here there is some potential role for interpersonal forgiveness. They recognize equally the importance of pragmatism, which can mean accommodation, a “coming to terms with” the past, reconciling with reality or fate, a thin notion of simple coexistence.

Forgiveness for philosophers is not the essence of a larger political sense of reconciliation between peoples and not all acts are seen as forgivable, especially not the Holocaust. Forgiveness can discourage self-reflection and criticism and eliminate the distinction between perpetrator and victim. Apology can right this imbalance. Philosophers consider “normalization” of relations the best form of understanding between peoples with histories of barbarity, a path Germany pursued in its foreign policy of reconciliation. The alternatives to forgiveness by individuals—compassion, sympathy, and magnanimity—resonate with the experiences in international reconciliation.

The reduction of conflict, but not its elimination, is the philosophers’ focus in the process of reconciliation, such that resentment can still be present but is accompanied by some degree of mutual respect. The past is addressed in a complex process in which the “disruptive event” of history is woven into

new narratives. Philosophers stress the need for qualitatively new relations and not the resurrection of old ties, either because the previous relationship was not cordial or because the source of conflict was so offensive that it ruptured any previous connection.

Philosophers see reconciliation as but one component of a process transitioning societies away from conflict, including truth-telling, accountability and punishment, victim compensation, institutional reform, and public deliberation. Forgiveness may be part of the package, but of the sinner, not the sin. The mechanism, the process, then defines the very nature of reconciliation, which is an ongoing process typically without a definable end.

Reconciliation as Healing and Trust: The Social-Psychological Contribution

*Reconciliation goes beyond the agenda of formal conflict resolution to changing the motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes and emotions of the great majority of the society members regarding the conflict, the nature of the relationship between the parties and the parties themselves.*³

Scholars in the field of social psychology have studied extensively the phenomenon of reconciliation. Their emphasis is more on the nature of prior conflict and the actual process of developing trust and acceptance, and less on what animates parties to reconciliation. When they address motives, they consider moral reasons, religious motivations, and self-interest, especially material needs and political pressure.

According to social psychologists, societal and non-governmental actors are important at all stages of the process of reconciliation, from initiation of the new relationship to the development of genuine partnership. They recognize that a top-down initiative needs to accompany the grass roots approach, and appreciate the role of individual leaders.

A unifying theme of the social-psychological view of reconciliation is the goal of healing through the development of acceptance, trust, empathy, and a sense of security, through interpersonal or institutional change in beliefs and attitudes by both victims and perpetrators. In interpersonal encounters, such as dialogue between victim and perpetrator and storytelling, and in institutional fora, such as truth and reconciliation commissions, social psychologists insist reconciliation should include restoration of the victim's dignity. They acknowledge the problem of finding the right balance between healing, which can involve amnesty in exchange for telling the truth, and justice.

Social psychologists deem apology as essential for the process of reconciliation, but identify a range of other mechanisms to promote reconciliation: commemoration and confrontation with history; public trials; human rights policies; compensation; education; mass media; bilateral institutions and people-to-people exchanges; policies for social justice and transformation; and confidence-building measures to confer security.

Despite a broad view of who is involved in the process of reconciliation and through which channels it occurs, social psychologists tend to share theologians' narrow perspective when it comes to the end point of reconciliation. While recognizing that some acts are unforgivable, they deem forgiveness essential for reconciliation. A few usefully temper this absolute requirement of forgiveness by emphasizing the more achievable aim of lessening "unforgiveness" or by calling on the victim to recognize compassionately the perpetrator's humanity. Such basically positive responses may still be unrealizable after acts of barbarism.

In social psychology, reconciliation is, then, both a process and an outcome that are part of a larger, four-stage conflict-resolution and peace framework: conflict; peace agreement; coexistence; and reconciliation. In this framework, the past plays a similar role for social psychologists that it does for theologians. Closure should be achieved, in which the past should be overcome, tidied up, and dealt with as shared, rather than contentious. Some go as far as to posit that reconciliation's focus should be the future and not the past.

Consistent with their message of tidying the messiness of history, social psychologists seem to prefer the presence of harmony over the toleration of tension as the ultimate goal of reconciliation. Unlike those in religion, social psychology observers do not insist that reconciliation must mean the restoration of a prior relationship, but rather that it involves transformation and the creation of new patterns of behavior.

The Centrality of Justice: Legal Perspectives

*Truth for amnesty is said to achieve justice through reconciliation.*⁴

The literature on justice and reconciliation, especially on transitional and restorative justice, is prolific and extends the incipient debate among theologians concerning truth commissions' ability to achieve justice, and among philosophers about whether reconciliation is inherently positive. In attempts to move beyond traditional retributive justice, for legal analysts there are

three distinct approaches for how transitional societies should respond to a history of human rights abuses and crimes against humanity. The “purist” school believes that justice has to take precedence over reconciliation; the “amnesty” approach privileges reconciliation before justice; and the “third way” school argues that justice and reconciliation can be combined.

The third way has come to dominate the literature. Legal scholars concerned with coupling justice and reconciliation refer to the simultaneous need for a “set of moral values” and for “political wisdom.”

Much of the legal literature concentrates on society as a whole and its representative institutions, and refers to “national” and “political” reconciliation. There is a general concern with victims, both as a group and as individuals with considerable, harrowing detail concerning personal stories. Perpetrators also feature prominently, but their needs in reconciliation should not be equated with those of the victims. Legal observations note the significance for reconciliation of individual leadership views. They also see international actors as crucial to the process of reconciliation, for example providing norms of behavior and setting up truth commissions. Yet, third parties cannot impose reconciliation from the outside.

Legal scholars are divided over several features of reconciliation: the timing (condition for the rule of law versus consequence of its creation); the nature (warring groups overcoming their divisions through forgiveness versus disavowal of the previous régime); the mechanism (truth commissions versus criminal prosecution); and the character of the larger framework of transition to democracy (“cultural leap” versus “political battle”).

Reparations are a widely cited tool in achieving both accountability for and acknowledgement of the past. Active repudiation of the past by perpetrators and remembrance are additional tools for confronting history. Legal scholars demand neither forgetting nor sanitizing history nor the absence of later debate in the process of establishing facts and eradicating lies. Contention about history is central. Surely, however, there should be boundaries, not just to facts, but also to interpretation. To avoid debate crossing over into denial or giving priority to perpetrator views as time passes, we could argue that, in the final analysis, victims’ views must take precedence.

Legal scholars identify a need for perpetrators to express regret and remorse, much like the apology central to social psychologists, but they do not insist on forgiveness as part of this initial stage of reconciliation; indeed, they argue it is an extreme action that cannot be coerced. They see the importance of the “right to forgive,” but add that an individual may choose not to

exercise it. Storytelling by victims, commemorations, memorials, and public education are important activities, but tend to be short-term initiatives. All of these ways of confronting the past should bring dignity to the victim and mutual respect between victim and perpetrator.

Legal scholarship focuses on trust as an outcome of the process of reconciliation, but observers do not specify the long-term strategies for its development through institutions. Trust implies more than the end of conflict, yet friendship is not used to characterize a mature relationship of reconciliation in the legal literature. The literature is concerned with transformation, with creating something fundamentally new, yet lacks detail. What is clear is that the process of reconciliation and the larger process of democratization will be defined by contestation and not by harmony.

Institutions and Political Culture: Political Science and History Perspectives

Political reconciliation reestablishes a political community; it (re)creates the conditions of political trust. Trials and executions, public debate and truth commissions, forgiving and forgetting, may all be part of the process.⁵

Political science and history writing on reconciliation is the most comprehensive of all the disciplinary perspectives addressed here. It reiterates themes identified elsewhere, adds new insights, and demonstrates how reconciliation is expressed in the political arena.

Political scientists and historians address two arenas in explaining the emergence of reconciliation through a process of internal democratization or external peace: institution-building and political culture. The ultimate definition of reconciliation, for both internal and external types, is political community and friendship, sometimes referred to as “stable peace.” The minimal definition of reconciliation is political accommodation, rapprochement, or peaceful coexistence.

Political scientists and historians identify both moral and pragmatic motives for pursuing policies of reconciliation, with some difference in emphasis. They distinguish between spiritual and political reconciliation. They recognize the need for context when contemporary political leaders evaluate the undemocratic or amoral behavior of citizens in authoritarian régimes: a balance is necessary between letting societies off the hook and assigning blanket judgments. The weakness lies in those political scientists who ignore the moral motivation of political leaders.

The effort to break out of the rational choice and balance of power theories underwriting traditional analysis of internal or external transformation entails consideration of other key players in reconciliation, such as non-governmental actors, but rarely is their catalytic role, ahead of political actors, recognized. The most instructive literature examines the essential activities of individual political leaders, and the place of political vision, but it fails to account for the friendship relations between leaders of the two countries engaged in reconciliation. Reconciliation involves interpersonal and inter-group interaction between victims and perpetrators. Some of the literature addresses the role of third parties in such interaction, but not systematically.

Most of the political science and historical literature deems successful reconciliation a blend of institutional (investigative commissions, administrative purges and lustration, trials, new political parties, alternative political citizens' movements, restitution, and new foreign policy) and cultural strategies (changes in attitudes and political culture and inculcation of a new civility). Its limitation in international cases resides in overreliance on one form of policy, such as diplomacy, whereas reconciliation encompasses intensive interaction across the policy spectrum. The affective part of the process of reconciliation begins with acknowledgement of past crimes, misdeeds, or injustices. Apology is often the initiation of this process. Much like legal thought, the political-historical perspective believes reconciliation confers respect, justice, and dignity. Similar to social psychology, this perspective also connects reconciliation with healing and trust.

Forgiveness features in discussions of history and the past, but observers differ as to its nature and role. Some differentiate between religious and political forgiveness. Unlike spiritual forgiveness in the religious perspective, political forgiveness does not mean liberation from the past, but it can still be a burdensome requirement after horrific crimes. The political/historical literature evaluates not only whether, but how to confront the past. Debate and contention about history defines political reconciliation, although a minority view refers to compatibility of historical narratives. This literature differentiates between victim and perpetrator viewpoints in contending history, thereby avoiding the danger of moral equivalence.

Political reconciliation is both a process and a terminal condition in political-historical thinking, entailing the forging of relationships that are fundamentally different from the past. New relationships are made through contention, the stuff of politics, and not through the harmonization of interests and attitudes.

A MODEL FOR RECONCILIATION

The five disciplines contributing to our understanding of reconciliation base their findings on concrete cases, mainly of internal reconciliation. Germany features only periodically, and then as an example of internal reconciliation in the process of German unification. Here I elucidate the missing companion piece: German foreign policy's contribution to understanding the global phenomenon of international reconciliation.

This book proposes a model for an ideal type of reconciliation, based on discernible patterns in German foreign policy, and measures the relative success of German foreign policy in four bilateral cases—with France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic. These four bilateral cases are the ones most frequently cited by German leaders as the foundation of Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation. This range of cases permits consideration of reconciliation in diverse settings: as an infant process, an ongoing engagement, and as a mature concept. It enables us to look at both the domestic and international determinants of reconciliation, and at reconciliation in three time periods: during the Cold War, after German unification, and post–September 11. And it enables us to compare the relative importance of four variables that shape German strategy and tailor it to specific requirements—history, leadership, institutions, and international context. The relative influence of the variables is summarized in table 1.2.

The framework guiding the rest of this book is related to, but not originally derived from, the preceding five disciplinary perspectives on reconciliation.⁶ To elaborate practical strategies of reconciliation, we need to distill the findings from the general literature on reconciliation for the case at hand, German foreign policy.

History

Our operating assumption is that reconciliation as a genuine alternative to war is a long-term process, that memories are deep, and that the notion of a living past is important. A continuing, dynamic confrontation with the past, a historical consciousness or what Eva Kolinsky has called the “restitution of individuality,” appears necessary to achieve reconciliation.⁷

The effort to vivify history, rather than to bury it, to put a face to human suffering, to highlight remembrance at the collective and individual levels, is important initially, and for the maintenance of a fundamentally

Table 1.2.

	FRANCE				ISRAEL				POLAND				CZECH REPUBLIC			
	Intense	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Intense	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Intense	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Intense	Strong	Moderate	Weak
HISTORY			x		x								x			
LEADERSHIP	x				x					x					x	
INSTITUTIONS	x					x				x					x	
<i>Societal</i>																
<i>Official</i>	x					x					x					x
INTERNATIONAL																
CONTEXT			x			x						x				x
<i>Global</i>																
<i>EU</i>	x						x		x				x			

revised structure of interaction thereafter. In the recasting of relations after conflict, three sequential stages relate to history: the past as stimulus, acknowledgement of grievances, and the past as present. The first stage relates to the motives for reconciliation. Whereas reconciliation is always a coupling of morality and pragmatism, the dominance of one or the other will affect the degree of history's importance. Genuine moral concern will give prominence to history. Pragmatism diminishes history's importance. The German language has two terms for "reconciliation," *Versöhnung* and *Aussöhnung*, conveying respectively a spiritual/emotional aspect and a practical/material element.⁸

Both the first and second stages of reconciliation occur at the beginning of the new relationship. The initial weaving of history into the fabric of international relations is significant symbolically and practically. Apology for historical wrongs, or some variant thereof through the recognition of past injurious behavior, is a prerequisite for fundamental departure, with the injured party often providing the impulse. Apology does not have to elicit a statement of forgiveness, which is an extreme and perhaps paralyzing demand at the outset, but does call for a deliberate response, in terms of magnanimity, understanding, or resonance of the gesture in formal terms. Dialogue does not have to evolve around the concept of guilt, but does require the acceptance of responsibility and a commitment to the pursuit of justice and truth. Such statements and demonstrations of change often are related to pragmatic material needs, even as they may be inspired by a moral imperative.

The "past as present" stage encompasses the ongoing process of reconciliation, whether in the form of education, memorials, or written and verbal dialogues about the past. Telling stories and relating history are not efforts to equalize or homogenize views when different interpretations of history exist, but rather provide an opportunity to recount and recognize the different narratives, so that divergence forms the focus of interaction, with history as a constructive irritant. In the end, however, when victim/perpetrator categories are clear, it must be the victims who have the last word.

Leadership

Visionary societal actors frequently inspire or goad the political class into action, although their activities often are quiet and unheralded. Political leadership and courage, nonetheless, is always required for reconciliation to proceed. The visible leadership necessary to set a tone and project a message to a broader public comes more naturally from the political arena. Reconcili-

ation must find broad support among publics and politicians, but willingness to steer a new course is rarely unanimous. Skillful, informed political leadership must navigate difficult waters, especially in the inevitable times of crisis that challenge partners in reconciliation and require its validation.

Institutions

A key element of reconciliation is institutionalized transformation.⁹ Bilateral governmental institutions between states and institutionalized transnational networks between societies afford new attitudes, new bureaucratic and personal relationships, and a new framework within which the parties can confront one another as equals in a recalibrated power relationship. A focus on institutions permits us to look beyond ad hoc arrangements and incidental behavior to patterns of commitment by both individuals and collectives. It also enables us temporally to move beyond a snap-shot to a panorama that captures developments over time. Continuous institutional interaction can facilitate the development of joint interests, and of linked strategies to third parties.

Institutionalization, involving both regularized, long-term bilateral entities between governments and between ministries, as well as preferential policies between the two sides, evolves in four stages: (1) circumscription, in which domestic or international factors limit the extent but do not stymie the initiation of institutional cooperation; (2) growth, where the restrictions have been removed or managed; (3) consolidation, in which the institutions are refined or expanded; and (4) reevaluation, where the institutions are rethought in light of the passage of time and new policy challenges. The length and timing of these stages differs across the four cases.

Two types of interaction between governments and societies are important in bilateral reconciliation: the internal relationship between governmental and societal actors within a state regarding the outside actor; and the external relationship between the society in one country and the government of the other. Societal institutions can play one of four roles regarding governments, either internally or externally: catalyst, complement, conduit, or competitor.¹⁰ As German societal institutions perform their various roles in reconciliation, they interact constantly with societal organizations in the partner country, building dense networks of reliable ties.

As catalysts, non-governmental actors are crucial, during the early stage after enmity, in stimulating government activity. Their initiatives constitute

a public demonstration of the desire for change in relations with the other country and a prod to their own government to act.

Societal actors and organizations that complement or run parallel to official activities can be linked to the government in three ways: public funding; the presence of an official framework, whether treaty or agreement; and reflections on past governmental behavior (in fora such as textbook commissions, reaching agreement on teaching about the past to successor generations). Even where there is no direct governmental linkage, non-governmental actors can influence the official relationship with the other country. Whether direct or indirect relationships exist, for the behavior of a non-governmental actor to constitute a complement its effect on official relations must be benign or positive. Their commonality is that the governments themselves do not undertake the activities.¹¹

When non-governmental actors serve as catalysts, governments respond to them. When non-governmental actors operate as complements, governments encourage them openly. When non-governmental organizations behave as conduits, governments act inconspicuously.

Germany has a unique institution, the political foundation, which operates on behalf of, yet independent of, the major, contending political parties. They expound the views and ideology of the parties, but they are funded by the government, not the parties themselves. They extend German politics, not just the German government, beyond embassy channels into foreign countries. Some countries try to limit the activities abroad of political parties that are out of power, adhering to a principle that, beyond a country's boundaries or shores, it should speak with one voice. Germany has been more pluralistic, such that the political foundations may be *sui generis* and inapplicable to a model for reconciliation, but their role has been significant as one of many institutions with impact. They are discussed here because, despite being unique, they embody most of the characteristics discernible in other non-governmental institutions that contribute to successful reconciliation. And, although other countries do not have political foundations—establishments of bricks and mortar and budgets—they do often have cross-border links between political parties ideologically aligned.

President Roman Herzog deemed Germany's political foundations among the most reliable channels of German foreign policy, which to countries that frown upon the international activities of parties in opposition may seem odd. Others have referred to the foundations as "border crossers" (*Grenzgänger*) between society and the state, for they operate internationally with public funding, and are subject to some government

control, yet they have close relations with political parties, which protect them from government meddling.¹²

The role of conduit, or channel of communication, suggests that party foundations perform public and private functions that governments cannot undertake—constant cultivation of relations with opposition parties and parties in power; provision of expert advice; open dialogues with regional or local governments or with societal actors; and frequent utilization of back channels. The foundations' political affiliations rendered them authoritative in the eyes of other countries, a perspective aided further by the foundations' physical presence abroad and their ability to inform German politicians and government officials.

When a non-governmental institution acts as competitor it can complicate official policy and the bilateral relationship by disagreeing openly with a government, or by initiating its own activities abroad that conflict with German government policy. Non-governmental activity can be critical of either a positive or negative policy toward the partner country by the German government. Conventionally, the activities of opposition parties might be the most suspect of all, but, in the German experience, the political foundations generally have served as Herzog described them.

International Context

Two aspects of the international system are relevant for reconciliation. A robust, institutionalized multilateral framework advances the cause of reconciliation by guaranteeing that the parties cannot avoid one another, thereby locking in the relationship, and by proffering an environment for the development of joint interests. The configuration of the broader international system is also significant, either stimulating or deterring reconciliation.

The four variables—history, leadership, institutions, and international context—structure reconciliation as an open-ended process. This concept does not infuse peace with a vision of harmony and tension-free coexistence, but rather integrates differences. Productive contention unfolds in a shared and cooperative framework that identifies and softens, but does not eliminate, divergence. Contention is a more realistic goal than perfect peace. Friendship, trust, and community—the ultimate expressions of reconciliation and the opposite of the enmity that separated the parties—result from grinding efforts. Authentication of reconciliation thus emerges from challenge, not harmony, from the mutual acceptance of persistent differences and disagreements and the perpetual quest for mutual accommodation.

GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY OF RECONCILIATION

The cornerstone, perhaps the very definition, of German foreign policy after World War II became, progressively, reconciliation. The dominant imperative became political and moral readmission into the family of nations, and prosperity depended upon trade and friendly relations. Germany had to reconcile with the countries and peoples it had attacked, occupied, and slaughtered during a brutal seven years of war and destruction.

This book offers four detailed case studies of German foreign policy developed by governments and private parties. These four cases shape Germany's overall foreign policy, especially as expressed within the European Union. They demonstrate that German unification is mostly an exercise in absorption, except that unified Germany's first chancellor from the East came with particular sensibilities that infused reconciliation with enduring meaning, sustaining the policies and beliefs that had defined Germany for sixty years.

Reconciliation as foreign policy cannot be understood in the most traditional, especially religious, terms. Religious reconciliation requires forgiveness, and therefore the acceptance by victims of having been victimized. Political, international reconciliation has no such requirement. Reconciliation, as understood and pursued by political leaders, recognizes and accepts the past without condoning it, compensates for the past without indulging it. It is both practical and moral, understood as both necessary and right.

After World War II, bitterness characterized much German popular sentiment, and much popular sentiment in the countries and among the peoples who felt victimized by German aggression. World conditions also impeded reconciliation, particularly for countries and peoples to Germany's east who were sealed off by the Cold War and schooled in ideologies antithetical to the capitalism embraced by West Germany. Political leaders were constrained by the Cold War from reaching out to Poland and Czechoslovakia, in particular, while Germans were embittered by their expulsion from Czechoslovakia and Poland and wanted to be compensated, not reconciled.

These conditions required West Germany to produce visionary, courageous leaders prepared to get out in front of public opinion, and stay there. Anti-Semitism did not end in Germany with the fall of the Third Reich, so peace with Israel and compensation to Jewish victims were not the most popular of policies. Nor were binding economic agreements with France, nor border settlements with Poland, nor compensation to Czechs. Public opinion

polls reveal a gradual conversion of German sentiment, largely tracking generational change, but well ahead of popular views. German leaders crafted policies toward France, Israel, Poland, and Czechoslovakia (later, the Czech Republic) that manifested a sustained commitment to the reconciliation which the German public only eventually, and often reluctantly, embraced.

German leaders typically ran ahead of public opinion, but nonetheless behind intersocietal developments. Churches in Germany and in France, Poland, and Czechoslovakia forged ties despite political barriers. Scientists and scholars and movements of youth from a postwar generation built networks of relationships upon which political leaders would later depend and elaborate, formalizing in treaties and international agreements relationships drawing together Germans and the peoples of countries victimized by Hitler that transformed enmity to amity and conflict into cooperation.

German leaders would have achieved nothing, could not have pursued their foreign policy of choice, without interlocutors among their victims. German leaders had to get out in front of public opinion, and so did leaders in Israel, France, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Whereas religious reconciliation may be achieved through forgiveness, and therefore the ultimate act of one party, political and international reconciliation requires the acts of at least two parties, compromising, accommodating, but not forgetting why they are acting as they do. Postwar reconciliation, therefore, required courageous and visionary leaders in Germany's partner countries and peoples.

Reconciliation, to last, requires institutionalization, and most likely succeeds in broader frameworks. For Germany, particularly in relations with France, Poland, and the Czech Republic, but also significantly with Israel, that framework became the European Union. Germany's policies in the European Union became the embodiment of its bilateral relations, fashioned out of the principles of reconciliation.

Reconciliation is not merely a term often used by German leaders. It is an idea full of specific criteria manifest in every dimension of Germany's international affairs. And it is reciprocal. The four partners to whom Germany devotes its efforts to reconcile also recognize and rely upon the concept and the principles that compose it.

Germany's commitment to reconciliation as a foreign policy has attracted imitators. The principles Germany has championed have come into play in other bilateral relationships, sometimes with Germany's specific engagement and encouragement. As a systematic alternative to war and as a vehicle of international cooperation, reconciliation is not merely commendable. Germany

has demonstrated that it is practical as well as moral. The case studies in this book suggest lessons with potentially unlimited application.

NOTES

1. Raymond G. Helmick, S. J. and Rodney L. Petersen, eds., *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy & Conflict Transformation* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001), 13.

Not all observers writing in this tradition are theologians. Daniel Philpott, for example, is a political scientist with a broad view that touches on politics and institutions. See Daniel Philpott, "Religion, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice: The State of the Field," *SSRC Working Papers* (New York: Social Science Research Council, October 17, 2007); and his edited volume *The Politics of Past Evil: Religion, Reconciliation and the Dilemmas of Transitional Justice* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

A broader, more political, view is also advanced by the theologians Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz in *Vergebung macht frei. Vorschläge für eine Theologie der Versöhnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Otto Lembeck, 1996); and Ralf K. Wüstenberg, *Die politische Dimension der Versöhnung. Eine theologische Studie zum Umgang mit Schuld nach den Systemumbrüchen in Südafrika und Deutschland* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003).

Jewish theological thinking has a very different take on forgiveness, for example, Abraham Joshua Heschel in Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1997), 165–66.

The following, additional literature was analyzed for religious thinking on reconciliation:

Cynthia Sampson, "A Study of the International Conciliation of Religious Figures," Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School, October 15, 1987.

Cynthia Sampson, "'To Make Real the Bond Between Us All': Quaker Conciliation During the Nigerian Civil War," in *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, ed. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Brian Frost, *The Politics of Peace* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1991).

Robert J. Schreiter, "Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order," *The Boston Theological Institute Series* 3 (1992).

Hizkias Assefa, "Peace and Reconciliation as a Paradigm: A Philosophy of Peace and its Implications on Conflict, Governance, and Economic Growth in Africa," *Nairobi Peace Initiative Monograph Series* 1 (1993).

Gerhard Beestermöller, "(Vor)gelebte Versöhnung als Weg in die Zukunft. Der Konziliare Prozeß und das Ethos der Vergebungsbereitschaft," *Catholica* 3 (1995): 203–13.

John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

Gerhard Beestermöller and Hans-Richard Reuter, eds., *Politik der Versöhnung* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2002).

Alistair I. McFayden and Marcel Sarot, eds., *Forgiveness and Truth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001).

Nigel Biggar, ed., *Burying the Past: Making Peace and Doing Justice after Civil Conflict* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001).

Donald Shriver, *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Lynn S. Graybill, "South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Ethical and Theological Perspectives," *Ethics & International Affairs* 12 (1998).

Lynn S. Graybill, *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Miracle or Model* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002).

Desmond Mpilo Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

2. Susan Dwyer, "Reconciliation for Realists," *Ethics & International Affairs* 13 (1999): 96. The following literature was analyzed for philosophical thinking on reconciliation:

David A. Crocker, "Reckoning with Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework," *Ethics & International Affairs* 13 (1999).

David A. Crocker, "Truth Commissions, Transitional Justice, and Civil Society," in *Truth v. Justice: The Morality of Truth Commissions*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Dennis Thompson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Klaus-M. Kodalle, "Verzeihung nach Wendezeiten? Über Unnachsichtigkeit und misslingende Selbstentschuldung," in *Jenaer Philosophische Vorträge und Studien* 12, ed. Wolfram Högbe (Erlangen and Jena: Verlag Palme & Enke, 1994).

Elisabeth Seidler, "Versöhnung: Prolegomena einer künftigen Soteriologie," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 42, no. 1–2 (1995): 5–48.

Joram Graf Haber, *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Study* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991).

Jeffrie G. Murphy, *Getting Even: Forgiveness and Its Limits* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Charles L. Griswold, *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

3. Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, ed., *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12.

Some peace studies and conflict management analysts have a broader political perspective in which neither forgiveness nor harmony nor shared narrative plays a role. See, for example, David Bloomfield, "On Good Terms: Clarifying Reconciliation," *Berghof Report*, no. 14 (Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, October 2006).

The following additional literature was analyzed for social-psychological ideas on reconciliation:

Louis Kriesberg, "Reconciliation: Conceptual and Empirical Issues," paper presented at the International Studies Association, Minneapolis, 1998.

Nicholas Tavuchis, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991).

John Torpey and Rosa Sevy, "Commemoration, Redress, and Reconciliation: The Cases of Japanese-Americans and Japanese-Canadians," in John Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

- Robert L. Rothstein, ed., *After the Peace: Resistance and Reconciliation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).
- Daniel Bar-Tal, "From Intractable Conflict Through Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation: Psychological Analysis," *Political Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2000).
- Daniel Bar-Tal and Yona Teichman, "Conclusions and Implications," in *Stereotypes and Prejudice in Conflict: Representation of Arabs in the Israeli Jewish Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- Ervin Staub and Laurie Ann Pearlman, "Healing, Reconciliation and Forgiving after Genocide and Other Collective Violence" in Helmick and Petersen, *Reconciliation and Forgiveness*.
- Ervin Staub, "Genocide and Mass Killing: Origins, Prevention, Healing and Reconciliation," *Political Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2000).
- George E. Irani, "Rituals of Reconciliation: Arab-Islamic Perspectives," *Kroc Institute Occasional Paper* 19: OP: 2 (August 2000).
- Dan Bar-On, *Bridging the Gap: Storytelling as a Way to Work Through Political and Collective Hostilities* (Hamburg: edition Körber-Stiftung, 2000).
- Brandon Hamber, "Does the Truth Heal? A Psychological Perspective on Political Strategies for Dealing with the Legacy of Political Violence," in Biggar, *Burying the Past*.
- David J. Whitaker, "Apartheid in South Africa: Reconciliation in Debate," in *Conflict and Reconciliation in the Contemporary World* (London: Routledge, 1999).
- Everett L. Worthington, Jr., "Unforgiveness, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation and Their Implications for Societal Interventions," in Helmick and Petersen, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*.
- Donna Hicks, "The Role of Identity Reconstruction in Promoting Reconciliation," in Helmick and Petersen, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*.
4. Robert I. Rotberg and Dennis Thompson, eds., *Truth v. Justice. The Morality of Truth Commissions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 14.
- Even though there is little strict legal thinking on reconciliation, the term "legal perspectives" is still used here for four reasons: some of the work is by legal scholars; it involves fundamentally issues of justice; it seeks a rule of law framework in transitional societies; and it presents alternatives to judicial solutions after periods of domestic barbarism.
- The following literature presents additional, legal thinking on reconciliation:
- Carla Hesse and Robert Post, eds., *Human Rights in Political Transitions: Gettysburg to Bosnia* (New York: Zone Books, 1999).
- Charles Villa-Vicencio and Wilhelm Verwoerd, eds., *Looking Back Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2000).
- Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon, 1998).
- Martha Minow, "Breaking the Cycles of Hatred," in *Breaking the Cycles of Hatred: Memory, Law, and Repair*, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).
- Neil J. Kritz, ed., *Transitional Justice. How Emerging Democracies Reckon With Former Regimes. Volume I: General Considerations* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995).

Donna Pankhurst, "Issues of Justice and Reconciliation in Complex Political Emergencies: Conceptualizing Reconciliation, Justice and Peace," *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1999).

Juan Méndez, "National Reconciliation, Transnational Justice, and the Criminal Court," *Ethics & International Affairs* 15, no. 1 (2001).

Yasmin Naqvi, "The Right to the Truth in International Law: Fact or Fiction?" *International Review of the Red Cross* 88, no. 862 (June 2006).

Kader Asmal, Louise Asmal, and Ronald Suresh Roberts, *Reconciliation Through Truth: A Reckoning of Apartheid's Criminal Governance* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997).

Mark Osiel, *Mass Atrocity, Collective Memory, and the Law* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997).

5. Anne Sa'adah, *Germany's Second Chance: Trust, Justice, and Democratization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 1.

Very few historians have concerned themselves with reconciliation. Charles Maier and Elazar Barkan, the major exceptions, are grouped together with political scientists as they share a similar approach to contemporary history.

The most ambitious political science effort to date is Charles A. Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends. The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). His emphasis on reciprocity, institutions, and societal links augments our understanding of reconciliation. However, he chooses not to consider Germany's bilateral cases of reconciliation because of the overlay of occupation. This omission is critical: Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation after World War II is an admired and imitated model for others. This book demonstrates that in Germany's reconciliation with both France and Israel, occupation (particularly U.S. pressure) was but one factor propelling reconciliation, with much of the driving force coming from internal sources—moral and pragmatic vision of societal and political leaders—and not from external actors.

The following, additional literature by political scientists and historians was analyzed:

A. James McAdams, ed., *Transitional Justice and the Rule of Law in New Democracies* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

A. James McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

A. James McAdams, "Transitional Justice after 1989: Is Germany So Different?" *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, no. 33 (Fall 2003).

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11. Kaiser and Mildemberger characterize these entities, particularly friendship associations, as "intermediary organizations" (*Mittlerorganisationen*), mediating between societies and between society and politics: Karl Kaiser and Markus Mildemberger, "Gesellschaftliche Mittlerorganisationen," in *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik. Band 4: Institutionen und Ressourcen*, ed. Wolf-Dieter Eberwein and Karl Kaiser (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998), 199–200.

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The foundations share the political ideology of Germany's political parties, but are separate from them financially and institutionally: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung: Christian Democratic Union; Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung: Social Democratic Party; Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung: Free Democratic Party; Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung: The Greens; Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung: Christian Social Union; Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung: The Left Party.

Responsibility and Realism

The Contours of German Foreign Policy as Context for External Reconciliation

A comprehensive appreciation of how Germany's external reconciliation came about, was pursued in practice, and is maintained during the tectonic changes of the twenty-first century requires situating this particular form of international engagement in the larger context of German foreign policy. Germany's external reconciliation was not idiosyncratic, but rather reflected general trends in German foreign policy after 1949.

Analysts of Germany's international engagement often have used the concept of political culture to explain the determinants of foreign policy activity. In a similar effort to loosen the realist straitjacket, other observers have employed history as the key value shaping Germany's external relations. These efforts to look at beliefs, values, norms, morality, and sentiment expand our understanding of German foreign policy, but they do not exclude realist analysis because they also focus on power and national interest. They consider how history and culture shape the nature of power and interests, and how the international system (the primary determinant for the realists) is constantly interacting with domestic forces.

Even though realism as a general framework for international relations elevates the use of military force in a state's tool box, realist and cultural-historical approaches to the German case agree that this dimension was missing until the 1990s. Like realists, the cultural-historical school notes the role of political leadership, such that it, too, associates eras of German foreign policy with either the chancellor or the foreign minister. Unlike the realists, analysts of culture and history emphasize societal factors, particularly public opinion.¹

Combining the analysis of interests with cultural-historical interpretations, and echoing Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel's formulation of "responsibility and realism,"² this chapter provides a general background for the four dimensions of reconciliation (history, leadership, institutions, and international context) that will be considered extensively in each of the country-specific chapters that follow. It organizes the material of postwar German foreign policy around key periods of activity, and within each centers on three topics: the main developments and concepts; German leaders' references over time to external reconciliation; and public opinion concerning reconciliation.

German foreign policy from its inception in 1949 through its sixtieth anniversary in 2009 can be broken down into six periods: 1949–1966 (the Adenauer era: integration into the West); 1966–1974 (the Brandt era: *Ostpolitik*); 1974–1989 (the Schmidt-Kohl era: the policy of balance); 1989–1998 (the Kohl era: the new multilateralism); 1998–2005 (the Schröder-Fischer era: idealism and realism); and 2005–2009 (the Merkel era: a unified approach of values and pragmatism).³

THE ADENAUER ERA, 1949–1966: INTEGRATION INTO THE WEST

An amalgam of realist and historical-cultural approaches produces four conditions that surrounded German foreign policy in its constitutive phase: an undemocratic past; the recent history of the Holocaust; a divided country in a divided Europe; and the Cold War involving the Soviet threat and German dependence on the United States. These political, psychological, and structural conditions elicited three foreign policy goals: security, rehabilitation, and unification.

Although they differ over the degree of choice Germany enjoyed and over the sources of stimuli (external versus internal), realists and the historical-cultural approach agree that Germany opted for a multilateralist path that meant cooperation and commitment in the hallmark Western institutions: the European Coal and Steel Community in April 1951; the subsequently aborted European Defense Community in May 1952; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in May 1955; and the European Economic Community in March 1957. Germany surrendered large degrees of its recently won sovereignty to these organizations in return for readmission to

the family of nations on the basis of equality, a process to which Chancellor Adenauer referred as the “leitmotif” of his stewardship of foreign policy, describing it in both pragmatic and moral terms.

The policy of integration into the West (*Westintegration* or *Westpolitik*) reflected Adenauer’s belief that Germany was by origin, conviction, and necessity a West European country.⁴ The Contractual Agreements of May 1952 and the London and Paris Agreements of September and October 1954 codified this new framework between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Western powers, reaffirmed the latter’s support of German unification, contained a European solution to the Saar question, and shared West Germany’s claim to sole representation of the German nation (*Alleinvertretungsanspruch*). West Germany formulated further its own idea of national identity and national interest at this time in the Hallstein Doctrine, which promised that West Germany would not conclude or maintain diplomatic relations with any state that recognized the German Democratic Republic, and precluded Germany from establishing diplomatic relations with Israel until 1965.

A necessary corollary of political and economic integration into the West (and a product of the June 1950 outbreak of war in Korea) was German rearmament. Like *Westpolitik*, rearmament was vigorously contested in the early 1950s, especially by the Social Democratic Party (SPD), who feared it would cement the division of Germany and Europe, as well as by a cross section of German society from the churches to trade unions. By the end of the decade, however, the political contestation had given way to consensus; rearmament was a fundamental reality, while antimilitarism had shown itself to be a powerful fraternal twin.

The period 1949 to 1955 was marked by the structural and legal integration of Germany into the West. The subsequent period (1955–1966) was a time for Germany’s pursuit of the “psychological” aspect of recovery, namely unification. By the late 1950s/early 1960s German differences with the United States over unification became apparent: Adenauer was deeply dissatisfied with the American willingness to accept the status quo over the Berlin question, culminating in the weak response to the August 1961 building of the Berlin Wall. Internal political differences over relations with the United States played out in the divisions between Atlanticists and Gaullists, and in the final form of the January 1963 Elysée Treaty between France and Germany. The divisions contributed to Adenauer’s demise as chancellor and his replacement by Ludwig Erhard.

The Federal Republic's multilateral approach throughout the period from 1949 to 1966 is linked to its incipient policy of external reconciliation in six ways, spanning its goals and nature, and the types of actors involved:

- a bilateral policy of reconciliation demonstrated concretely to the Western Allies that Germany was serious about confronting its past;
- given the constraints on foreign policy, reconciliation enabled the Federal Republic to forge a path beyond multilateralism that could be independently and distinctively German in a positive way;
- institution-building and international equality, at the heart of Adenauer's multilateral "policy of peace," were replicated in the bilateral channel of reconciliation;
- the irony that multilateral rearmament helped build peace was repeated in bilateral reconciliation, where joint military training and weapons relationships were early preoccupations;
- whereas societal actors were stymied in their challenge to Adenauer's vision of peace, reconciliation allowed them to articulate peace in practice; and
- the choice of Westpolitik meant that Poland and Czechoslovakia were precluded from Adenauer's efforts at reconciliation in this period.

Reconciliation as a Government Priority

The centerpiece of Adenauer's policy toward the West was Germany's relationship with France, as he noted in the first months of the Federal Republic's founding: "Franco-German conflict, which dominated European history for centuries and caused so many wars and so much destruction . . . must be eliminated once and for all."⁵ Writing about his meeting with French foreign minister Robert Schuman in January 1950, Adenauer exhibited his long-standing commitment to a new quality of relations, before turning to equality: "Franco-German reconciliation and understanding was already my goal in the 1920s." He was motivated by a combination of history, psychology, and necessity.⁶

Adenauer's foreign minister, Heinrich von Brentano, used similar terminology early on, referring in June 1956 to "the long-term goal of reconciliation and partnership with France." Shortly thereafter, and just a decade after the end of World War II, Adenauer characterized the Franco-German relationship as "close [and] friendly."⁷

By 1961, Bundestag president Eugen Gerstenmaier had seen sufficient progress in the Franco-German relationship to air it as a model for relations with the East, a suggestion to counter Adenauer's Western-oriented vision of Europe: "We thank God that after so much blood and tears we live not only in a peaceful relationship with France, but in a relationship of reconciliation and friendship. . . . We would like a similar relationship with our neighbors in the East and Southeast."⁸ This advocacy for a "policy of reconciliation with our Eastern neighbors" was endorsed by the Free Democratic Party (FDP), as evidenced by Erich Mende's Bundestag speech in October 1962.⁹

Adenauer felt history "casting its shadow" over his effort to reshape Franco-German relations, but was convinced he would succeed because of the pragmatic necessity and definition of "interests" on both sides.¹⁰ Complete rehabilitation, however, would be sought elsewhere, namely in the relationship with Israel, where there was moral clarity as to victimhood. After all, at the same time that the French were victims of the Second World War, they had also been important collaborators.

Adenauer's overtures to Israel in the early 1950s were prompted by a moral imperative, as he reports in his memoirs: "As I stressed many times, I felt our duty to the Jews as a deep moral debt." The chancellor's reasoning was also, however, highly pragmatic: "One of my chief aims . . . was to put in order our relationship to Israel and the Jews, both for moral and political reasons. Germany could not become a respected and equal member of the family of nations until it had recognized and proven the will to make amends."¹¹

In arguing for ratification of the Luxembourg Reparations Agreement with Israel in March 1953, Adenauer talked of the specific nature of the relationship as "a relaxation of tension" and set it in the larger context of "human coexistence between peoples."¹² Success in the human dimension would be an arduous task, not least because German public opinion in this period initially revealed rigid and unfriendly attitudes toward both Israel and France.

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: A General Absence

History and a sense of moral obligation were powerful forces driving official foreign policy, but there was political risk of getting ahead of public opinion. At the beginning of the Adenauer era, public opinion appeared not to distance itself from the immediate past, questioning Adenauer's political judgment, but, with time, change did occur. For example, when asked in May 1952 whether, in the absence of war, Hitler would have been one of the

greatest German statesmen, 48 percent said he would (36 percent responded in the negative), but by May 1964 the numbers had reversed, with 29 percent positive responses and 44 percent rejecting the idea that Hitler was among Germany's greatest statesmen. When Hitler was compared to Adenauer in terms of who had done most for Germany, in August 1952, Adenauer was chosen by only 3 percent of respondents; Hitler received 9 percent (Otto von Bismarck was ranked highest). However, by April 1964, Hitler's figure had declined to 3 percent and Adenauer's had risen to 38 percent.

Public attitudes concerning France were not overwhelmingly positive at the beginning of the Adenauer era but, like the more general question of attitudes toward history, they showed growth with time. In June 1951, when Adenauer already had accepted that some form of surrender of the Saar might be the price for long-term peace, 78 percent of those surveyed felt the Saar should not be separated from Germany. Nonetheless, in May 1955, before the final resolution on the Saar (which was returned to Germany by referendum in October 1955), a plurality of 49 percent "very much" wanted to achieve a "permanent reconciliation" with the French, and only 5 percent were opposed. The Elysée Treaty, generally viewed as the codification of that permanent reconciliation, received majority support in July 1963, with 51 percent considering it a "good thing" and 17 percent a bad thing (19 percent were undecided and 13 percent had no opinion)—still not a ringing endorsement of reconciliation with France.

France did not fare so well when compared to other countries in German public opinion. Asked in May 1953 with which countries Germany should seek the closest cooperation, France came in third with 55 percent (after the United States with 88 percent and the United Kingdom with 62 percent). Ten years later, attitudes were more complicated: France had risen by August 1963 to 70 percent (behind the United States with 90 percent, but ahead of the United Kingdom with 65 percent). Yet, when asked in February 1963 to choose between the alternatives of British accession to the European Union (EU) or the continuation of "close friendly" ties to France, 36 percent opted for the British path and only 24 percent for the French (40 percent were undecided or had no opinion). On a specific question relating to the Atlanticist/Gaullist debate, in January 1965 only 19 percent sided with the French option while 48 percent favored the American (33 percent were undecided). Preference for the United States was again evident a few months later when 49 percent of respondents believed the United States to be Germany's "best friend" and only 9 percent chose France (nonetheless in second place).

German public attitudes toward Israel also displayed elements of distance and understanding. In August 1949, a majority of 54 percent supported restitution to surviving German Jews (some 40 percent of whom lived in Israel), with 31 percent of respondents against the measure and 15 percent undecided. But, when asked three years later about reparations to the State of Israel via the 1952 Luxembourg Reparations Agreement, 44 percent deemed it unnecessary and only 35 percent had positive responses (11 percent unqualified agreement plus 24 percent agreement with reduction of the amount). In a comparison of countries with which Germany should seek “the closest possible cooperation,” in March 1953 Israel stood in eighth place with only 15 percent (just before Poland with 11 percent). Among countries with which Germany should not seek “particularly close cooperation,” Israel was in third place with 37 percent after Russia with 61 percent and Poland with 60 percent.

When German-Israeli relations faced challenges in the mid-1960s, public opinion did not come to Israel’s support with any majority on either the provision of weapons (64 percent against, 11 percent for, 25 percent undecided) nor the establishment of diplomatic relations (46 percent for, 20 percent against, 34 percent undecided). Faced with the choice of staying neutral or helping Israel if she should be attacked by Arab countries, 75 percent favored neutrality and only 10 percent preferred aiding Israel.¹³

Despite the German public’s unenthusiastic attitude toward Israel at the time, after Adenauer’s era there was support when the public reflected on his legacy in 1967. “Reconciliation with Israel and restitution to the Jews” stood, with 38 percent popular support, in seventh place on the list of Adenauer’s greatest contributions to Germany. “Reconciliation and friendship” with France was second, at 70 percent, to the return of German prisoners of war from Russia (75 percent).¹⁴

THE BRANDT ERA, 1966–1974: OSTPOLITIK

Already during the Erhard chancellorship, Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder had launched his program of “small steps” and “policy of movement” toward the East, but it was Willy Brandt’s tenure as foreign minister (December 1966–October 1969) and then chancellor that made Ostpolitik the defining feature of German foreign policy in this period. Realists point to the influence of the international system, especially the thawing of U.S.-Soviet relations and

the development of *détente* in the late 1960s and early 1970s as the motivation for Ostpolitik, whereas the historical-cultural school highlights internal forces, particularly the press of history.

Adenauer's policy of integration into the West was now complemented by Brandt's affirmative policy toward the East. Brandt's goal remained national unity, but required accepting the international status quo while nurturing the human connection in East-West ties to make the division more palatable. Just as Adenauer's Westpolitik entailed bilateral agreements ensconced within a multilateral framework, Brandt's Ostpolitik centered on bilateral treaties—with the Soviet Union (August 1970), Poland (December 1970), East Germany (December 1972), and Czechoslovakia (December 1973)—coupled with active support for the multicountry, all-European Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The bilateralism of the Soviet, Polish, and Czechoslovak treaties involved renunciation of the use of force and *de facto* recognition of boundaries (pending a German peace settlement), thus mirroring Westpolitik by rendering war essentially impossible and by accepting the geographic consequences of World War II. This major departure in German foreign policy, like Adenauer's Westpolitik, was highly contested, with the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) and refugee groups opposed to what they saw as acceptance of division on Soviet terms. By the end of Brandt's tenure, however, consensus reigned around Brandt's approach.

Brandt's policy of "change through rapprochement" (*Wandel durch Annäherung*) in the period 1966 to 1974 was connected with external reconciliation in five ways, again reflecting its goals, nature, and actors:

- bilateral reconciliation in the East as a further demonstration to the Four Powers that Germany could confront its past structurally;
- reconciliation with the East as an avenue for crafting a uniquely German approach to international affairs;
- reconciliation initiatives of societal actors, particularly the 1965 overture of the Polish church and of German religious groups, demonstrating in a microcosm what was possible for the broader Ostpolitik of the early 1970s;
- reinvigoration of Westpolitik, especially a consolidation of Franco-German reconciliation; and
- with the foundation of German foreign policy resting on good relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union, limits on the Eastern

reconciliation partners: the August 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia to curb its nascent democracy movement meant Germany had to restrict its societal efforts to Poland.

Reconciliation in the East and the West: Governments and Societies

In a 1965 speech in Coventry, before becoming foreign minister, Willy Brandt reflected at length on the idea of reconciliation, emphasizing the roles of both political leaders and the larger society and the motivations of both realism and idealism. As foreign minister and chancellor he pursued these four themes in practice—to the West with France and to the East with Poland—and he forged connections between the two paths by suggesting that Franco-German reconciliation should be a model for Germany's initiatives with Poland. An integral part of Brandt's "peace policy" for Europe was Franco-German relations:

The reconciliation of the French and German peoples is one of the most important realities of the postwar world. . . . The reconciliation of these two peoples, who have been hostile to each other for centuries, is anchored in the hearts of the younger generation . . . and is only conditionally dependent on the relationship between the governments. . . . Both here and there everyone knows that such a union is in our own self-interest, as it is in the interest of the preservation of peace. . . . Friendship does not mean the neglect of one's own interests or the mere mimicking of what others say.

In his evaluation of the first five years of the Franco-German Elysée Treaty, Brandt saw more progress at the societal level (examples were youth and cultural exchanges, and commerce and technology) than he did in joint policies at the political level. He rededicated Germany to fulfilling all the goals of the treaty, but singled out one area in particular for political cooperation: "a thoroughly close accord in those questions touching on Eastern policy."¹⁵

Just as Adenauer's overtures to France were long in the making, Brandt's thinking about Poland emerged from lengthy consideration: "Long before I became Federal Foreign Minister, I was convinced that reconciliation with the Poles carried the same historic importance as Franco-German understanding." History weighed heavily in Brandt's arguments for reconciliation with Poland, and resonated with a new generation in Germany: "I never forget in all this that it was Hitler's 'Greater Germany' that brought about such unspeakable misery, above all to Eastern Europe." But contemporary

political realism also played a significant role, as Brandt reflected concerning the 1970 Warsaw Treaty: “Reason dictated that an enforced revision of the historical process whereby millions of Germans had lost their homeland was out of the question.”

Brandt recognized early on that the political dimension would be difficult, and was gratified, therefore, by the 1970 Treaty. He saw private activity, such as cultural exchange, or public-private initiatives, such as economic relations, developing more readily than public policy. In this sense reconciliation was both the starting point—the framework of the treaty—and the long process thereafter, the goal of which was friendship throughout Europe: “[W]e shall not attain a real accommodation until peace, cooperation, reconciliation, and—yes, I hope one day—friendship as well prevail, not only in the West but also between Germany and its neighbors in the East.” Such a process would require “careful spadework.”¹⁶

The centrality of history for Brandt placed Poland in an exclusive category with Israel: “Never had—or have—our relations with any country apart from Israel been fraught with painful memories and emotional prejudice.”¹⁷ The German government had referred to “normalization” of relations with Poland in the sense of formalizing ties through the 1970 Treaty, employing language that the Federal Republic increasingly used for relations with Israel after the 1965 establishment of diplomatic relations.¹⁸

By the early 1970s, Germany had articulated fully its policy of political balance and “even-handedness” (*Ausgewogenheit*) in the Middle East, which was expressed in efforts to renew diplomatic relations in the Arab world (broken after the 1965 formalization of ties with Israel) and in increasing support for Palestinian self-determination. In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Germany was politically and publicly neutral (as it had been in the 1967 Six-Day War), but emotionally Chancellor Brandt avowed that Germany had a different response: “For us there can be no neutrality of the heart and the conscience.” And, behind the scenes, Germany worked to aid Israel, fulfilling its commitment to Israel’s “right to exist.” Even though he had drawn parallels between Poland and Israel on the emotional level, Brandt resisted using the same terminology of reconciliation with Israel, sensing the chasm left by the Holocaust:

We have been accused of no longer entertaining special relations—as past governments—but rather normal relations with Israel. Some have said that this has something to do with our Ostpolitik. . . . Our relationship in fact still carries a

special sign: the fact of the murder of millions of Jews in Europe. . . . I admit that we have to use the term normalization carefully.¹⁹

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: Increasingly Positive Attitudes

The public's ability to draw lessons from the past seemed to improve during the Brandt era, but it was not uniformly willing to let the past act as a guide. Asked in May 1967 whether Hitler would have been one of Germany's greatest statesmen, if not for World War II, 52 percent answered negatively compared to 36 percent in 1964. When Hitler was compared to other German leaders regarding contributions to Germany, his rating stayed at only 2 percent from 1966 until 1971, whereas the figures for Brandt and Adenauer were much higher and increased. Nonetheless, in 1969, in a significant area of policy related to history, the statute of limitations on Nazi crimes, a large majority (67 percent) wanted a "clean break with the past" and only one-quarter of respondents wanted to continue pursuing Nazis.

Overall public attitudes toward France remained essentially the same as during the Adenauer era, with elements of closeness coupled with distance. For example, in November 1968 and August 1972, 68 percent and 63 percent, respectively, wanted the closest cooperation with France (the figures for the United States were 81 percent and 76 percent). In a direct comparison of priority to the Americans or to the French, there was improvement in 1966 with an equal number of responses for the United States and France at 29 percent (and 42 percent undecided). Even though only 17 percent of those surveyed considered Charles de Gaulle a friend in September 1968, a year later, in May 1969, the 1963 Franco-German Treaty was ranked by Germans as de Gaulle's greatest contribution compared to eleven other items.

During Brandt's Ostpolitik initiatives, public attitudes toward Poland improved but Poles were seen with uncertainty. The number of respondents who thought there should be the closest cooperation with Poland had risen from 11 percent in 1953 to 25 percent in 1968, and to 32 percent in 1972. In 1972, a plurality of 43 percent had a positive response to the 1970 Treaty, and 62 percent had resigned themselves to the reality of the Oder-Neisse border between Poland and Germany, yet this result was not accompanied by positive attitudes toward Poles. A minority of only 18 percent viewed Poles in a favorable light (30 percent neutral, 19 percent negative, and 33 percent undecided).

Despite the lukewarm attitude toward Poles, there was an understanding of which active measures would improve relations. Asking specifically

about how to achieve reconciliation with Poland, a survey in 1972 yielded the following results: 55 percent for easing travel restrictions; 50 percent for regular consultations and negotiations between governments; 49 percent for better economic ties; 43 percent for youth exchange; 37 percent for exchange of scholars; 34 percent for more sporting meetings; and 32 percent for more information about Poland.

Surveys on attitudes toward Israel also registered more sympathy than in the Adenauer period. In 1972, 25 percent of respondents chose Israel as the country with which Germany should have the closest possible cooperation, an increase of 8 percent over 1963 (but behind Poland). On the Arab-Israeli conflict, there was much greater support for Israel's position compared to the past, and compared to sympathy for the Arabs, with 59 percent agreeing in July 1967 that Israel should retain all of Jerusalem, and 55 percent backing Israel's retention of all or part of the territory occupied in the Six-Day War. On the basic question of support for Israel or the Arabs, the pro-Israeli views went from 10 percent in March 1965 (most were neutral) to 50 percent in December 1974.²⁰

THE SCHMIDT-KOHL ERA, 1974–1989: POLICIES OF BALANCE

SPD chancellor Helmut Schmidt and CDU chancellor Helmut Kohl were different personalities, who represented ideologically distinct political parties, but they pursued remarkably similar foreign policies, as Kohl has pointed out: "In questions of foreign policy, there were only the smallest of differences between Helmut Schmidt and me."²¹ Both pursued policies of political and military balance that, according to Schmidt, were a "necessary condition for peace," requiring peaceful action, restraint, communication, compromise, and cooperation.²² Even though they weighted elements differently, with Schmidt mediating between East and West and Kohl preferring to approach the East on the basis of a united West, both sought to consolidate the structural gains of Adenauer and Brandt and to go further in practical terms.²³

During the Schmidt-Kohl era, détente essentially collapsed amidst a series of super power initiatives and posturing: the Soviet missile build-up; President Jimmy Carter's aborted plan for the neutron bomb; the deployment of new missiles in Germany as one path of the 1979 NATO double-track decision; the failure of East-West arms control negotiations (the other path of the dual track); the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; the 1980 boycott of the

Moscow Olympics; the 1981 imposition of martial law in Poland; and President Ronald Reagan's 1983 characterization of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire," and his proposal for a Strategic Defense Initiative. Many of these issues were hotly debated within and among Germany's political parties.

In all of this international upheaval, Germany tried to maintain equilibrium between its relations to the East and its ties to the West, with Schmidt playing a public role and Kohl operating behind the scenes. They both sought stability in the international system and calculability/predictability (*Berechenbarkeit*) of German action.

Emphasizing balance meant recognition of one's own interests, but also an understanding that their pursuit would require new means, given German history and the reality of political and economic interdependence in the 1970s and 1980s. Both Schmidt and Kohl were committed to ensconcing German foreign policy interests in the larger embrace of the European Community. They promoted in this period the development of the Community's common foreign policy (European Political Cooperation) in bilateral arenas such as the Middle East, and multilateral fora such as the United Nations (UN) and the CSCE. An increased international role meant achieving a new kind of balance, between interests and "responsibility for peace." Neither Schmidt nor Kohl wanted Germany to be a "big power," but neither advocated the extreme alternative of self-abnegation; Germany was somewhere between "giant" and "dwarf."²⁴

The rhetorical importance Schmidt and Kohl assigned to history was part of a public and intellectual debate in the 1970s and 1980s, with the 1979 showing of the television program *Holocaust*, and the 1986–1987 historians' debate (*Historikerstreit*). *Holocaust* provided average Germans an opportunity, many for the first time, to connect emotionally with the victims of genocide; the *Historikerstreit* offered a more mixed message, with one side arguing against the uniqueness of the Holocaust.

Both Schmidt and Kohl were ambivalent about the press of history. They wanted history and the fact of the Holocaust to help shape the purpose and means of German foreign policy, but they also wanted to move beyond it.²⁵

The Schmidt-Kohl emphasis on balance and an increased German role in the world has at least five implications for reconciliation, all bound up with Germany's choice of actors:

- consolidation of German foreign policy meant strengthening one of the two main branches of reconciliation, the relationship with France;

- an important part of the new dynamic in Franco-German relations occurred within the framework of the European Community;
- a lessened significance of history was accompanied by partial downgrading of the relationship with Israel;
- the desire to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union meant a difficult balance between reconciliation efforts with Polish society and a preference for expanding state-to-state cooperation; and
- the rigid nature of the post-1968 Czech regime and its fierce loyalty to Moscow meant only a modicum of German contact with Czechoslovakia, for example the April 1978 visit of head of state and party chief Gustáv Husák.

Reconciliation in the West and the East: New Forms

Helmut Schmidt spoke and wrote about the special quality of relations with France, Poland, and Israel, and on occasion employed the terminology of reconciliation. For Schmidt, the relationship with France was central, for Germany's policy of peace in Europe depended on it. He believed history was important, but welcomed the 1975 French decision to stop commemorating May 8, 1945.²⁶

Schmidt emphasized the role of interests and necessity: the high degree of cooperation over many years meant one could talk of "common interests." Schmidt shared Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's view that the relationship was best described as "a perfect and flawless understanding" (*entente parfaite et sans faille*), in which each was the other's best friend and "unprecedented" levels of "intensity and diversity" had been reached. In this period, the relationship demonstrated regularly that it extended far beyond the bilateral domain: the political and economic successes of the European Community, including the establishment of the European Council, reform of the European Parliament with direct elections, and the vision of a European Monetary System, were "unthinkable without German-French cooperation."²⁷

Helmut Kohl shared the perception that the Franco-German bilateral relationship served a larger purpose as the "dynamic force in the process of European unification," and he cited common foreign policy, the Single European Act, and development policy as further examples of joint Franco-German policies during this period.²⁸ Kohl's foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, similarly proclaimed the Franco-German relationship as a "historical example of reconciliation" that made European integration possible

and that could be generalized to the rest of Europe.²⁹ Painting himself as the heir to Adenauer, Kohl referred to the bilateral relationship as a topic “close to the heart” (*Herzensthema*) and frequently referred to reconciliation. For Kohl, reconciliation was both a terminal condition—with the conclusion of the Saar statute representing the “actual day of reconciliation”—and a process—with the 1963 Treaty providing an important marker and a foundation for “permanent friendship” and a “privileged partnership.”

Kohl and Mitterrand instituted a further structural development in 1988 on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty with the creation of a Security and Defense Council and an Economic and Financial Council. Like Schmidt, Kohl recognized that an “ill-fated past” was an important context for Franco-German relations, but preferred to focus on the present and future, as evidenced by the joint Kohl-Mitterrand 1984 visit and hand-holding at Verdun, which for Kohl “confirmed that break [with the past].”³⁰

The rhetorical significance assigned to history was also apparent in the thinking of Schmidt and Kohl about Israel and Jews, but their actions again suggested a preference for the contemporary. In reflections on his 1966 visit to Israel before he became chancellor, Schmidt noted how his initial sympathy for Israel turned to a neutral position during his administration, and how historical obligation prevented the full development of his real sympathies, which lay with the Palestinians. Germany’s historic responsibility for the Jews of the world made it co-responsible for peace in the Middle East, but did not seem, for Schmidt, to dictate a special relationship with Israel. Similarly, in a 1977 speech at Auschwitz, Schmidt talked about the historically determined moral basis of relations with Poland, and the need for reconciliation, but he failed to mention either Jews or Israel. On the thirty-third anniversary of Israel’s founding, Schmidt did suggest that relations between German and Israeli societies were “unusually close,” and expressed Germany’s readiness for “reconciliation and cooperation.” Yet, his criticism of Israel by this time was manifest in his open disinclination to reciprocate Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s state visit of 1975, and in his plan to sell arms to Saudi Arabia (later cancelled due to political opposition).³¹

Whereas Schmidt’s sympathy for Israel declined over time, Kohl’s increased, following painful stumbling over history in the early days of his chancellorship. He characterized himself in his January 1984 visit to Israel as “the first chancellor of the post-war generation,” as a “symbol of the bridge between our two countries and peoples across the abyss of the past.” He alerted Israelis that West Germany’s Middle Eastern policy would be made

in Bonn, not Jerusalem, and his initiation and pursuit of the subsequent 1985 visit with President Reagan to the Bitburg cemetery (containing the graves of Waffen-SS soldiers) was a sign of German-American reconciliation that relegated the past to a footnote.³²

Kohl ultimately tried to compensate for the Bitburg visit—the apparent institutionalization of amnesia about the acts of Nazis—by referring elsewhere to remembrance, historical responsibility, and reconciliation.³³ By the end of the Schmidt-Kohl era, Kohl had maintained the even-handedness in the Middle East begun by Brandt and continued initially by Schmidt, but he also had expressed Germany's special concern for Israel. He included Israel in the same category as France and Poland when itemizing Adenauer's contributions during a November 1989 visit to Poland. Nonetheless, Kohl understood reconciliation as limiting the pressure of history on the present by describing Germany's desire to "fill in the graves of the past."³⁴

Schmidt did not view Germany's relations with the East as equal to those with the West because of the different political, philosophical, and social systems, yet he compared them in the same categories of partnership, mutual predictability, reciprocal trust, and cooperation. He stressed the formal treaty-based quality of relations as "normalization."³⁵ During his tenure, Schmidt sought to strengthen official ties through new agreements—the 1975 agreement on financial credits and travel visas; and the 1976 agreement on cultural and economic cooperation—and visits—the 1976 visit of the First Secretary of the Polish Workers' Party Edward Gierek; and his own 1977 visit to Poland.

Schmidt intoned in his November 1977 Auschwitz speech that politics were more than power and interests and must entail a moral dimension, particularly concerning Poland. On various occasions, he called for progress in reconciliation, going beyond normalization. Yet, early on he also stated that the purpose of deepening relations was "to overcome the past."³⁶ And, when Poland was in crisis in the early 1980s and the Solidarity Movement was beaten back in the framework of martial law, Schmidt opted for limited criticism of the Polish government, unenthusiastically cancelled an invitation for Gierek to visit Germany, and did not abbreviate his own visit to the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Even though Kohl was a more vociferous critic of the Polish government than Schmidt, he sympathized with Schmidt's decision to visit East Germany.³⁷

German political leaders did not always reflect German social views. German society, especially religious groups, vigorously demonstrated con-

cern for the Polish revolt by sending millions of care packages, an act long remembered positively by Poles.³⁸

While Schmidt's government was containing its criticism of the Polish government, the opposition Christian Democrats were maintaining contact with Polish dissidents and other societal actors. This practice intensified after Kohl became chancellor in 1982, and then again in the second half of the 1980s when Soviet *perestroika* eased Poland's external access. Kohl himself was committed to continuing "normalization and reconciliation" with Poland on the basis of the 1970 Treaty, especially after the lifting of martial law and the release of political prisoners, but his commitment was made difficult by his susceptibility to pressure from some CDU-CSU Bundestag members (including members of his own cabinet) and the expellee organizations, who did not accept the reality of the postwar German-Polish border or the limited rights of the German minorities in Poland. For Kohl, history meant reconciliation was necessary, but, in a policy of moderation, oriented to the future by encouraging closer ties among young people.³⁹

The relationship between history and reconciliation resurfaced for Kohl at the end of this era, but in a new form suggesting Germans as victims. Germany had chosen not to send a representative to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of World War II in Poland, but Kohl did make a statement to the Bundestag. Mindful of Germany's obligation to Poland because of Polish suffering in World War II, Kohl insisted that "reconciliation is only possible when the full truth is told." That truth, according to Kohl, included the loss of life of over two million Germans expelled from Poland, and the suffering of German survivors.⁴⁰

The September 1989 installation in Poland of the first non-Communist prime minister in forty years provided the basis for a new relationship. Kohl went there two months later (but was interrupted by the opening of the Berlin Wall). The visit led to a series of bilateral agreements on an array of topics that would achieve the "full normalization" envisioned in the 1970 Treaty: youth exchange; science and technology; health and medical sciences; promotion and protection of investments; the environment; land, forestry, and agriculture; culture and information technology; ministerial consultations; and creation of consulates in Cracow and Hamburg. For Kohl, these concrete arrangements were part of the process of reconciliation, the purpose of which, following the Franco-German and German-Israeli models, was to "heal the wounds of the past" and move forward to the future.⁴¹ For the Poles, however, the final basis of reconciliation would be the legal resolution

of the Oder-Neisse border, which would have to wait another year and the dénouement of German unification.

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: A Reflection of Official Views?

The German public still expressed a certain obligation to draw lessons from the past during this era, but as with Schmidt and Kohl there was not always consistency. The number of those who thought Hitler not a great statesman continued to grow slightly, reaching 55 percent in 1978. At 40 percent, the number of those who wanted still to pursue Nazis in 1979 had also increased, but it was still less than the 47 percent of the sample who wanted to “draw a line under the past” (*einen Schlußstrich ziehen*), and by 1986 the latter number had risen to 66 percent with only 24 percent believing the past should still be considered.

Public attitudes regarding France remained stable. Between 1975 and 1983, 60 percent to 70 percent wanted the closest cooperation with France, second only to the United States, and France was still second only to the United States when choosing Germany’s best friend between 1977 and 1981, although the numbers were considerably lower than for the first choice. A large majority, 73 percent, seemed to endorse the reconciliation process in a November 1984 poll about the likelihood of permanent friendship, and the same percentage expressed satisfaction with the Kohl-Mitterrand Verdun “reconciliation.” A poll in July 1981 indicated that 53 percent liked the French, up from 39 percent in 1965. When compared with other nationalities in 1982 and 1986, France, with 31 percent and 35 percent, respectively, came third out of ten, after Austria and Switzerland, or first among non-German-speaking countries.

Attitudes toward Poland were less positive than during the Brandt era, with the number of those wanting the closest cooperation with Poland dropping from 32 percent in 1972 to around 21 percent in 1975 and 1983, a decline also registered in the limited acceptance of the government’s 1975 agreement (35 percent for and 47 percent against with 18 percent undecided). Public opinion (as opposed to societal groups sending packages) did seem to agree with the government’s low-key response to the early-1980s crisis in Poland: 30 percent thought the German government should be sympathetic to the strikes in Poland, while 54 percent felt the government should restrain itself so as not to make a tense situation worse. In August 1989, at the end of the Schmidt-Kohl era, a notable percentage (42 percent) chose to disapprove

of those who recognized the Oder-Neisse border, while a smaller percentage (32 percent) disagreed.

As with Schmidt, sympathy within the German public for Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict dropped, first only slightly, from 50 percent at the end of 1974 to 44 percent in 1978, but then dramatically, to only 21 percent in 1981, tapering off at 20 percent and 19 percent in 1982 and 1983. Reflecting Schmidt's attitude, in May 1981, 56 percent of Germans favored a Palestinian state; only 16 percent thought a Palestinian state would endanger Israel. Toward the end of the Schmidt-Kohl era in January 1987, however, support for Israel was back to 39 percent (with 17 percent for the Arabs and a high of 44 percent for the "do not know" category), still considerably less than in its high period in the early 1970s.

The same decline was evident in attitudes toward the bilateral relationship. By 1975, only 19 percent chose Israel as the country with whom Germany should have the closest cooperation, a stable measure through 1983. By 1986, a clear majority of 58 percent believed Israel should be treated like any other state, and that Germany should not be influenced by the past.⁴²

THE KOHL ERA, 1989–1998: THE NEW MULTILATERALISM

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the unraveling of the Soviet bloc, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in the three short years from 1989 until 1992 meant fundamental changes in the international system that had framed German foreign policy for the previous four decades. Scholars in the realist and historical-cultural schools agree on the triple challenge now facing German foreign policy: unification (whether financially and psychologically Germany would be inward-looking; whether its neighbors and allies would endorse the process); European integration (whether deepening—more integration—and widening—more members—could happen simultaneously); and disintegration (whether of Yugoslavia, or of Kuwait, through Saddam Hussein's invasion). Yet, they differ on how to interpret Germany's response, with realists explaining discontinuity and historical-culturalists seeing continuity. Realists emphasize discontinuities expressed in new power attributes of increased size; a new geopolitical location; newfound national interests; a taste for unilateralism; and the use of military force. Accepting the reality of structural change, the historical-cultural school identifies much more continuity of policy in multilateralism, "soft" means, and institution building. Realists

use the image of Germany as a traditional, “normal” or nascent great power, whereas the historical-cultural approach prefers the notion of Germany as a nuanced, “tamed” or civilian power.

Unification surely was Germany’s greatest challenge. It meant huge transfer payments to the East; large budget deficits; growing inflationary pressures; and initial opposition from France, the United Kingdom, and Russia. However, neither the economic nor the diplomatic obstacles stood in the way of immediate unification through the Two Plus Four negotiation process between the two Germanies and the United States, France, Russia, and the UK that led to formal merger on October 3, 1990.

In addition to the four-power effort, the relatively smooth path to formal unification was attributable to the way the then-European Community adapted to the new Germany and integrated the GDR. This constructive adjustment reinforced Germany’s own notion that it must maintain an outward-looking stance despite the real economic burden of unification that was revealed after October 3. Rather than turning insular or nationalistic, Germany proved its reliability and Europeanness by redoubling its efforts for European integration.

Germany’s commitment to accelerating European integration was evident in its leadership role, despite domestic opposition, in the negotiation of the treaties of Maastricht (1991) and Amsterdam (1997) that sought to redefine for the post-Cold War era the European Union’s values, purposes, and structures. In the decade following the caesura of 1989, deepening, whether full in the form of supranationalism, or incipient in the form of intergovernmentalism, occurred across a wide range of policy areas, including economic and monetary union, common foreign and security policy, and justice and home affairs. Germany’s commitment to a Europe wider and deeper was driven by a belief in the EU as a peaceful “community of values” that stood in contrast to Germany’s violent past, and by Germany’s national interests—a German foreign policy now based on domestic history and a European present.

Germany demonstrated, both bilaterally and in the framework of the EU, the same commitment to widening the community to include countries of Central and Eastern Europe, first in association, then as members. Germany’s objectives in eastern enlargement of the EU were both pragmatic (political democratization and economic marketization) and moral (mutual trust, engendering in the East a feeling of belonging); it linked the goals in the overriding purpose of creating and maintaining peace, security, and stability in Central and Eastern Europe.

Germany's engaged multilateralism concerning the EU extended to NATO, particularly over enlargement, and to the CSCE, particularly over structural reform and institutionalization. According to Kohl, the "European house" embodied in all three organizations had to be large enough for all Europeans to live there, and failure to enlarge would be "a betrayal of the very ideals of Europe."⁴³ Germany's bilateral treaties with Poland in November 1990 and June 1991 were designed to resolve outstanding issues resulting from World War II, to structure the new relationship of cooperation, and to position the new ties in a larger European institutional framework. A similar, but less extensive, treaty with Czechoslovakia was concluded in February 1992.

Creation of a European framework for disintegrating Yugoslavia proved much more difficult during the post-Cold War era. With the December 1991 recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, Germany proceeded unilaterally, but quickly enveloped its initiative within an EU framework. The burgeoning Yugoslav conflicts in 1991 and the Gulf War that had started the previous year presented Germany with a new challenge: whether to use military force. Despite Kohl's desire for more military engagement, domestic politics limited Germany's involvement in the Gulf War to logistical and to massive financial support.

This minimal military assistance became, however, the starting point in a trend to more Bundeswehr humanitarian missions in a variety of locations outside Europe, with tentative military contributions in former Yugoslavia. By 1994, the Constitutional Court had concluded that, within UN auspices and following Bundestag approval, Germany could contribute militarily to collective action, paving the way for Germany's participation during 1995 and 1996 in the NATO force in Bosnia (IFOR and SFOR). Throughout the heated domestic discussions over Germany's international military role, the government insisted on the twin motives of Germany's historically driven commitment to human rights and peace and the necessity of being a good ally.

Kohl's policy of renewed multilateralism in a changed Europe gave rise to six implications for reconciliation in terms of actors, instruments, and policy.

- Reconciliation was validated as a policy instrument for its success with respect to the West (with France, and in the European Community), enabling German unification.
- Germany could now make Poland and Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic after 1993) targets for reconciliation.

- Reconciliation was institutionalized and linked to Germany's self-definition and unification through treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia.
- New borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia resulting from German unification meant new outlets for reconciliation in the form of cross-frontier transactions.
- Growing attention to an international military role could be expressed in reconciliation, for example in the Bundeswehr's joint activity with Poland and the Czech Republic after 1993.
- The need to prove Europeanness through renewed commitment to Europe entailed cementing Germany's relationship with France in new bilateral and multilateral areas.

Reconciliation across Europe: Transferring the Model and Articulating the Policy

In Kohl's post-Cold War period, Germany advanced reconciliation to a new level in three ways: transferring the existing model for France and Israel to Poland and the Czech Republic; expanding the vocabulary of reconciliation to other German foreign policy players; and articulating the four cases—France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic—as a comprehensive whole.

Despite French President François Mitterrand's initial coolness to unification, or because of it, Kohl reiterated the themes he had struck before the razing of the Berlin Wall: that the Franco-German friendship was an "affair of the heart," that it possessed a special quality, that it was "one of the greatest achievements of the post-war period."⁴⁴ There were also new accents: a recognition that the bilateral relationship was complex, and involved more than just chancellors, as evidenced by the affirmative comments of Foreign Minister Genscher.⁴⁵ Kohl welcomed, as in the previous period, gestures of reconciliation, such as the inclusion of German soldiers for the first time in July 1994 in the celebration of France's national holiday, following the activation of the Franco-German brigade in 1990.

The mutual military commitment was extended from the bilateral to the multilateral arena with the creation of the Eurocorps and various Franco-German initiatives (joint letters and papers by the chancellor and the prime minister and the two foreign ministers) for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. Franco-German cooperation and leadership continued in other EU domains (on political union more broadly and on the next, crucial stage of economic and monetary union, even though there was fierce opposi-

tion to the latter in the German political and economic elite, and among the public). The linkage of Franco-German reconciliation with the larger success of the European Union as an entity in the global arena was registered by President Roman Herzog in 1995: "The message of reconciliation still remains the best message Europe can offer the world."⁴⁶

As German-Polish relations entered a new phase with German unification, Germany looked to the Franco-German model for organizing and structuring relations with its new Eastern partner. Echoing a theme prominent throughout his observations on reconciliation, Kohl pointed to the societal aspects, such as cross-border initiatives, youth exchange, and twinning of societies, as shining beacons in Franco-German relations that could be applied to the German-Polish case.⁴⁷ The three countries also came together in the August 1991 declaration of the Weimar triangle for societal and political dialogue.

The societal dimension became an increasing emphasis in Kohl's conceptualization of German-Polish relations at the same time that he finally recognized the German-Polish border, the ultimate location for people-to-people exchanges. History and moral obligation moved Germany to pursue a "permanent reconciliation" with the Polish people and state, but so did reason and a responsibility for the future of Europe. As in the past, Kohl employed a contingent sense of history, one whose wounds could be healed and whose good chapters should be elevated.⁴⁸ By contrast, Federal President Herzog's sense of German-Polish reconciliation was defined by the exposure of past horrors.⁴⁹ The June 1991 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation codified the commitment to reconciliation, put in place the governmental and societal structures to encourage and facilitate those exchanges, and addressed the issue of the German minority in Poland.⁵⁰

The Bundestag debate on the 1991 German-Polish Treaty marked the commencement of a trend, not only to apply models, but to embrace German-Polish relations in institutions similar to those in Franco-German and German-Israeli relations.⁵¹ At the same time, key German foreign policymakers were referring to both models (from East to West) and the creation of a new zone of reconciliation (pan-European), which implied that the Czech Republic was also part of the overall scheme of reconciliation.⁵² Foreign Minister Kinkel made a clear connection when he lamented in April 1998 the slowness of development in German-Czech relations in comparison with the three other cases: "It cannot be right that we succeed in restoring friendly relations with these countries and peoples, but the efforts for good neighborly relations with the Czech Republic continue to meet with obstacles. It must be possible to make progress here."⁵³

The German-Czech declaration a year earlier, in January 1997, was an important step forward, and an effort to address the shortcomings of the 1992 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between Germany and Czechoslovakia, but it focused only gingerly on the topic of reconciliation. Both sides offered a statement of regret for historical wrongs, with an additional German acknowledgement that its actions (the 1938 Munich Agreement) had initiated a historical process that culminated in Czechoslovakia's expulsion of Sudeten Germans. In Chancellor Kohl's comments about the declaration, he saw it as a contribution to reconciliation, which he felt had been blocked until 1989 by both history and the Iron Curtain. Again, the chancellor seemed more interested in the future.⁵⁴ President Herzog's thinking about German-Czech relations recaptured a theme Chancellor Kohl had struck for German-Polish relations as the Cold War was ending, namely that confronting history requires the full, unvarnished truth and, thus, recognition of victims on both sides. For Herzog, the "inner secret of reconciliation is forgiveness."⁵⁵

German policymakers did not seem in this period to accord German-Czech relations the same priority as Franco-German and German-Polish relations. Israel, the fourth partner in the policy package, fared better, with further economic institutionalization, as in the German-Israeli Cooperation Council for high technology. Politically, the Gulf War and the involvement of German firms in Iraq's weapons program set back relations, subsequently repaired with Germany's provision of Fuchs reconnaissance vehicles and Patriot missiles, and a commitment to underwrite financially the purchase of two submarines for Israel.

Kohl singled out Israel as a country to whom Germany had a "special responsibility." As in the other cases, Germany now emphasized the societal dimension of relations, particularly relations among young people. Echoing Brandt thirty years earlier, Foreign Minister Kinkel acknowledged that reconciliation could never be automatic but, rather, the object of "constant, careful maintenance."⁵⁶

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: Stable Attitudes

As in the pre-1989 period, attitudes about the press of the past on the present were mixed. By 1990, the number of respondents who thought Hitler was not a great statesman had reached an all-time high of 67 percent. In 1991, 56 percent of those polled thought it a good idea to build museums of German

history in Bonn and Berlin. Yet, there was a much more ambivalent answer to the question of whether Germans were too preoccupied with the past, with 40 percent responding in the affirmative and 42 percent in the negative. By 1995, only 30 percent felt Germany had not dealt with its past sufficiently.

The German public continued to attach priority to its relationship with France, but still saw the United States as its most important ally. For example, France, with 21 percent, remained second in 1995 as Germany's "best friend," but considerably behind the United States (47 percent of Germans). In the same year, Germans expressed more sympathy for the Swiss and Austrians and Americans. Adenauer's policies toward France in 1995 still placed fifth out of fifteen in a list of the first chancellor's greatest achievements; and, in a similar question on Kohl, friendship with France ranked third, almost the same as good relations with both the United States and Russia, which ranked second to German unification.

Public attitudes appeared to track government policy regarding the role of the Franco-German relationship in the multilateral setting of the EU, with a huge majority of 86 percent seeing balanced Franco-German leadership as the right general path. In the specific case of monetary union, 92 percent felt that France and Germany must act together.

Poland continued to elicit negative responses among the German public during this period, but positive attitudes emerged with an acceptance of the reality of the relationship. At the dawn of the new relationship with Poland in September 1990, a plurality of 43 percent believed that relations with Poland were good; 30 percent answered negatively and almost the same percentage was undecided. Once the new partnership was underway, the positive number increased to 49 percent. A majority of 52 percent thought the relationship would become as close as Franco-German ties, with 35 percent disagreeing.

When the government was still wavering over acceptance of the Oder-Neisse border, in December 1989, 59 percent of those surveyed said Germany should accept the border. Two years later, after the government had recognized the frontier *de jure*, the acceptance figure went up to 70 percent. The public did not rate the accompanying Good Neighborliness and Friendship Treaty so well, with only 39 percent believing it would bring positive results, and low expectations and undecideds each received about 30 percent, even though 51 percent felt that it was necessary.

Pragmatism seemed to define attitudes toward economic ties with Poland as much as any other consideration. Of the ten countries to whom Germany should give economic assistance in a 1991 survey question, the public ranked

Poland third, where Poland would also rank (48 percent) in a 1996 poll about countries upon which Germany's economic development depended. The bilateral importance of Poland in polls did not extend to the multilateral arena, for EU membership for Poland was supported by only 38 percent in 1994, with 44 percent viewing Poland and other Eastern European countries as too great an economic burden. A plurality of Germans supported NATO membership for Poland (33 percent in 1995), but "undecideds" constituted the largest group of survey respondents.

Negative attitudes persisted regarding the Polish people. In a 1996 poll asking which groups Germans saw as most suspect criminally, Poland ranked fifth out of sixteen possibilities. On a general sympathy rating, only 2 percent of those polled, the lowest figure, were well-disposed to the Poles.

Attitudes toward Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic revealed both interest and disinclination during this period. Half as many Germans thought Czechs worthy of the economic assistance they thought Poles should receive in 1991, but, at 63 percent, the Czech Republic rated 15 percent higher than Poland in a 1996 survey about the priority countries in Central and Eastern Europe for the German economy. On a basic sympathy poll in 1995, the Czech Republic stood fourth from the bottom with 6 percent, yet ahead of Poland. More Germans opposed EU membership for Czechs (and Poles) than NATO membership.

Israel continued to receive negative responses from the German public in the 1990s as well. Fewer Germans (39 percent) sympathized with Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1991 than in 1987 (40 percent), although only 16 percent supported the Arab side. The "do not know" category had risen by 1991 to 46 percent, when only 36 percent of respondents felt Germany had a "special responsibility" for Israel and 50 percent disagreed. On a specific reconciliation question in 1995, Israel ranked ninth in a list of Adenauer's greatest achievements, down from seventh place in 1967.⁵⁷

THE SCHRÖDER-FISCHER ERA, 1998–2005: IDEALISM AND REALISM

Foreign policy in the Kohl era was heavily influenced by the tectonic changes in Germany and Europe—the end of the Cold War and the unification of Germany—interacting with the tradition of engaged multilateralism. For Gerhard Schröder and his activist foreign minister, Joschka Fischer,

fundamental departures occurred in the broader international system and caused a reassessment of German foreign policy, but also confirmed basic values developed over the previous five decades. The debate between realists and historical culturalists resurfaced, again with an emphasis on great power status, on the one hand, and civilian power attributes on the other. The new dimension was an assessment on the basis of a ten-year record, as opposed to the speculative evaluation at the beginning of the decade.

The consensus in 1998 was that Germany was still a “civilian power,” but one now using offensive military power for the first time (seen in the civilian power framework as a last resort, not as an impossible option). Civilian power and great power advocates both saw a difference in German foreign policy style, with the first chancellor with no personal memory of World War II articulating German self-confidence in the global arena, a special German path domestically and internationally, and a highly pragmatic instinct, leading him to be less constrained by the past than his predecessors.⁵⁸ Yet, history deeply affected Schröder’s foreign minister, and accounted for his moral compass in the international domain.

Analysts seeing Germany as a civilian power expressed concern about incoherence and overstretch in German foreign policy writ large. Domestic economic and social challenges and limited resources made Schröder particularly vulnerable to their criticism. However, had analysts concentrated on one of the key areas of foreign policy—reconciliation—they would have seen coherence, success, and a special German contribution to global affairs. Reconciliation had always been important in the foreign policy of the German Federal Republic. For the united Germany of the Schröder-Fischer era, reconciliation gradually became a defining feature.

Schröder-Fischer considered the use of offensive military force an extreme exception for a Germany characterized as a civilian power whose history dictated multilateralism and a responsibility for peace, the rule of law, and individual freedom after the antithetical legacy of the Third Reich. Previous German administrations had pursued these principles, but Schröder and Fischer articulated them most vigorously, particularly the policy of conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and a broad conception of security that emphasized non-military means, non-governmental actors, and transnational issues. The creation of the Berlin Center for International Peace Contingents (*Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze*) was a concrete example of a non-military initiative to complement Germany’s military commitments abroad.⁵⁹

Four major events challenged German foreign policy as Schröder and Fischer sought to implement their views on Germany's international relations: the Kosovo War; September 11 and the Afghan War; the Iraq War; and European integration and constitutional issues. Fischer termed Germany's participation for the first time since 1945 in an offensive war—the NATO air war against Serbia beginning in March 1999—the most difficult decision of his political career. Both Fischer and Schröder stressed the need for military intervention only as a last resort after coercive diplomacy had failed, and only in a multilateral force. Both emphasized a moral imperative to stand militarily against Serbia's ethnic cleansing, and the political need to assume international responsibility as a good ally. Germany, thus, was willing to pursue war as a means to a peace that would embrace the Balkans as a whole within the political, economic, and values framework of the EU. Germans saw this war was an exception. In the decision to join the NATO forces, German society, particularly Fischer and the Greens, was departing from the long-cherished principle of "No More War" (*Nie wieder Krieg*) with the rationale that the other historical lesson, "No More Auschwitz" (*Nie wieder Auschwitz*), dominated in this case.⁶⁰

At the same time that it actively supported the air war, Germany vigorously opposed the proposal for a ground war. Fischer also effectively worked the diplomatic channels. His six-stage peace plan became the basis of the deal struck by Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and Russian Foreign Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin with Slobodan Milosevic to end the war.

After the war, Germany provided a critical element of NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) both in terms of the number of troops (3,350) and military leadership. And, beginning in September 2001, Germany was the lead nation in NATO's Operation Amber Fox in Macedonia. Germany then rounded out its comprehensive approach to the Balkans in its combined authorship (with the United States) of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, launched in July 1999 with a German, Bodo Hombach, serving as its special coordinator.

If Kosovo were an unwelcome reminder of the virulence of traditional nationalism, then September 11, 2001 was a signal that the world had changed and that terrorism had replaced the Soviet Union as the chief threat to the West and Germany's main foreign policy challenge. Assuming international responsibility, Germany enacted a series of domestic and multilateral measures (EU, UN, G-8, NATO, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Council of Europe) to curb terrorism politically, economi-

cally, and ideologically. It also established an antiterror military contingent in the Horn of Africa as part of Enduring Freedom.

The decision to participate in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for Afghanistan with over two thousand troops committed Germany again to a military solution aimed at a political outcome, democratization. After the December 2001 Bundestag decision to deploy troops, Germany developed a multifaceted policy, involving diplomatic leadership to bring about an all-party provisional government, the subsequent *loya jirga* (grand council), and the new constitution (Petersberg conferences I and II; Berlin conference); humanitarian, economic, and technical assistance, including the lead in training Afghanistan's new police force and a civil-military Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kunduz; and cultural and educational programs. Germany's rationale for involvement in Afghanistan emphasized a military last resort to bring about fundamental political change in the face of state-sponsored terrorism (Taliban-Al Qaida connection), extreme human rights abuses, and a multilateral UN framework.⁶¹

Germany's decision not to participate in the war in Iraq has been criticized by Americans as either knee-jerk pacifism or simple-minded anti-Americanism. As much as Schröder's decision for military non-involvement, even if there were a UN mandate, had domestic roots by tapping into a strong, popular strain of antimilitarism before the German federal elections in 2002, it also was based on rational foreign policy criteria. Those same factors that had been present in the Afghan case were deemed absent in the Iraq case. For Germany to go to war in Iraq, it would have needed to encounter the following conditions or likely consequences: a multilateral framework; the exhaustion of political solutions; discovery of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and/or state-sponsored terrorism; and the promise of increased regional stability.⁶² Severe differences with the United States over Iraq and complete agreement with French opposition to the war impaired German-American relations more than at any time since 1945, but Germany still participated in the training of Iraqi security forces outside Iraq, and committed to economic, technical, and humanitarian assistance and debt relief. Germany pushed for a UN framework for political stabilization.⁶³

Despite divergences with some EU members, Germany still saw its position regarding Iraq, like its policy on terrorism and Afghanistan, in the context of the EU's external relations and global role. Like Kohl, Schröder-Fischer stressed the EU's identity as a "community of values" as much as

an economic entity. Promotion of these values—human rights, peace, democratization, economic opportunity—required the EU to assume a global role politically and, on occasion, militarily, with the growing recognition that international crises laid bare the EU’s structural and policy weaknesses.

In this area of the EU’s foreign and security policy, as well as on issues of institutional architecture, economic and financial policies, and justice and home affairs, Germany made a major contribution, separately and together with France, to the EU’s constitutional convention, which gave rise to the conclusion of a much-debated European Constitution at the Brussels summit in June 2004. Following Kohl, Schröder-Fischer were vigorous supporters of EU enlargement, which one month before the Brussels summit had delivered ten new members, including the Czech Republic and Poland, in a process that Schröder described as a “return to the European family,” and a product of both “political and moral necessity.”⁶⁴

The new international order Schröder-Fischer faced, and their overall foreign policy agenda, were consequential for reconciliation in six ways regarding purpose, actors, activity, and venue:

- Germany was no longer limiting reconciliation to its bilateral cases, employing “reconciliation” for regional conflicts, whether in Afghanistan or the Balkans. Five decades of successful utilization of the concept in German foreign policy suggested its potential usefulness in the larger international system. Some of the German lessons of international reconciliation between countries were now being applied to internal reconciliation between groups elsewhere in the world;
- The importance of transnational issues and transnational actors, always central to bilateral reconciliation, was heightened after September 11;
- Germany’s limited resources for foreign policy and defense elevated the advantages of bilateral reconciliation: pooling resources, affording relative predictability, and deploying a cost-contained diplomacy;
- The EU’s expansion provided a new framework for German-Polish and German-Czech relations with both opportunities and problems;
- The constitutionalization of the EU and the war in Iraq provided new avenues for Franco-German cooperation in third areas at the same time that the bilateral partnership was further institutionalized; and
- The role of history in German foreign policy for the first chancellor and foreign minister with no personal memory of World War II, whether

moving beyond it or remembering it, played out in the four bilateral cases of reconciliation in both harmonious and disharmonious fashions.

Reconciliation: A Dominant Theme

In the Red-Green coalition, the “reconciliation” of previous governments became a comprehensive and coherent cornerstone of foreign policy. Leaders clarified their use of the term, where it originated, and where they were taking it.

The general commitment to reconciliation as a central element of Germany’s peace policy was evident in the agenda of the Berlin Center for International Peace Contingents, where reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) between “divided and traumatized societies” was a major goal, involving a range of instruments such as national and international criminal courts; truth and reconciliation commissions; victim-perpetrator dialogues; and both official and civil society actors.⁶⁵

The issue of justice in the process of reconciliation was a priority for Foreign Minister Fischer, whose December 2003 comments on a trial for Saddam Hussein derived from general observations: “In several other regions and points of history, it was very important for the process of reconciliation that there was a fair and public trial.”⁶⁶ Earlier, in a July 1999 interview on the Balkans, Fischer drew specific parallels between internal and international reconciliation by accessing Germany’s own experience in the four bilateral cases:

Those who maintain [that Albanians, Serbs, and Roma cannot live in peaceful coexistence] have little sense of European history. Czechs and Germans, Poles and Germans, French and Germans, Jews and Germans—who would have thought 60 years ago that we could live today in a united Europe, that there could once again be a flourishing Jewish community in Germany? . . . Reconciliation is possible when one departs from the root cause of murder and crime, and that is nationalism.⁶⁷

He also singled out two of the cases in a November 2000 discussion with Japanese students in Hiroshima to show how reconciliation has dramatic national and international consequences that go to the heart of identity and acceptance: “Without reconciliation with Poland and Israel, German unification would have been impossible.” He impressed upon the young people that “China is waiting for Japan’s word [of regret].”⁶⁸

The confirmation that the four cases are the basis for Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation appeared in the summer of 2004 when the German Foreign Office listed the historical "gestures of reconciliation."⁶⁹

Three of the German partners in reconciliation—France, Poland, and the Czech Republic—are members of the EU, and Germany used the process of enlargement to the east to emphasize the success of reconciliation in Western Europe and to push for an extension of the process to Central and Eastern Europe. Gerhard Schröder identified the peaceful revolution of 1989 as "the moment of reconciliation of peoples and the continuation of a process that began fifty years ago with the treaties of Rome." Fischer identified the process of European integration as the "basis of reconciliation" that must be extended to Central and Eastern Europe. And President Johannes Rau characterized eastern enlargement as a "milestone in the reconciliation of Europe" that must involve grass roots, all of society, and acceptance of differences.⁷⁰

As much as it conceptualized these several relationships as part of a whole, Germany also treated them separately. The conflict and cooperation that characterized Franco-German relations in the Kohl period after unification was also evident in the Schröder-Fischer era. At the EU December 2000 summit in Nice, France and Germany were divided over Germany's push for more votes in the Council of Ministers to correspond to its increased population after unification. Rather than setting back the bilateral relationship, the EU differences stimulated further institutionalization of the relationship through the Blaesheim agreements: informal meetings of the heads of state and government now accompany the regular meetings of the foreign ministers and amplify the formal biannual talks of the German chancellor and French president.

By the time of the EU Brussels summit in October 2002, France and Germany were able to agree on financing the common agricultural policy, and went on to make significant joint contributions to the EU's constitutional convention on all of the major institutional and policy issues facing the EU.⁷¹ Having confirmed their European partnership, Germany and France sought to align their positions with respect to third areas, with Iraq representing the most dramatic example.

The January 2003 fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty was occasion for Schröder to note how reconciliation made possible the common approach to the EU, constituting the "motor . . . and heart" of European integration. As much as Franco-German reconciliation was assumed by a younger generation, involving a commitment to freedom and justice for all of Europe, it also

needed work, involving a major effort by each partner to improve knowledge of the other's language as a complement to the many areas of societal and governmental cooperation.⁷²

The maturity of the relationship now permitted a realistic historical assessment. Fischer struck the same themes in his anniversary speech on reconciliation, but added three dimensions. He noted the context of a dark history of hereditary enmity that made enduring "friendship" so necessary; the postwar process of combining vision and pragmatism that made the EU unique; and the tool of "productive tension" between France and Germany that made bilateral and EU agreements in a framework of friendship more authentic.⁷³

The 1963 Elysée Treaty was the formal beginning of reconciliation for France and Germany, but Schröder recognized that June 6, 1944 was the date from which the basis of a new relationship emerged, through Germany's defeat and eventual liberation. The sixtieth anniversary of D-Day, the first time a French president had invited a German chancellor to participate, was the ultimate demonstration of reconciliation, "without which European unification would never have been possible."⁷⁴

In an April 2004 speech to the Polish parliament (Sejm), Federal President Rau accentuated the positive by noting that membership in the EU (and NATO) meant an even closer "community of interest" between Germany and Poland. He did not ignore, however, differences between the two countries over the EU that developed with respect to internal constitutional issues, particularly the question of weighted voting, and disagreement on external relations, especially concerning the United States on Iraq.⁷⁵ Despite the divergences, Rau urged an ongoing dialogue "in the spirit of reconciliation . . . and conscious of history and the future"; he envisioned a partnership in the EU comparable to the Franco-German partnership.⁷⁶ Four years earlier, Schröder, too, had raised the reconciliation theme before the Polish parliament, referencing the plight of Polish forced labor during the Third Reich; Brandt's kneeling before the Warsaw Ghetto memorial thirty years earlier; the Polish bishops' initiative of 1965; the 1970 and 1991 treaties; and the more recent societal exchanges, particularly among young people. Schröder emphasized the compatibility of political goals: "For the first time in our history our two countries are allies in a long-term alliance [NATO]. For the first time in a hundred years, Germany and Poland have like-minded interests and share a common responsibility for a united Europe."⁷⁷

Schröder repeated these themes of common interests, transnational connections, and a European framework in August 2004 on the occasion of the

sixtieth anniversary of the Warsaw uprising. He recalled history, echoing his foreign minister, in three significant ways: a reference to forgiveness as one of three separate elements together with understanding and reconciliation; an acknowledgement that Germany started World War II; and a statement of the German government's opposition to German property claims against Poland and a Center Against Expulsion in Berlin.⁷⁸ The latter two issues have been a thorn in German-Polish relations since June 2000 when Erika Steinbach, the president of the Expellee Federation and CDU parliamentarian, proposed a center that would permanently showcase the victimhood and plight of German expellees, including from Poland.

The postwar expulsion issue, this time of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia, also dominated German-Czech relations. In a September 2001 repetition of earlier Christian Social Union (CSU) demands, Edmund Stoiber, the minister-president of Bavaria, suggested that Czech membership in the EU should be conditional on Czech rescission of the Beneš Decrees that had legitimized the postwar expulsion and expropriation. In an effort to quell the forces in both the Czech Republic and Germany that were exploiting these issues and thereby "damaging reconciliation," Fischer insisted that the German government would not pursue the question of German property claims against the Czech Republic.⁷⁹

The Sudeten German issue became fully politicized in January 2002 when Czech Prime Minister Miloš Zeman referred to Sudeten Germans as a pro-Nazi fifth column during the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. He was denounced by many in Germany. German officials downplayed the issue, but Schröder was forced to cancel his planned trip to Prague (later rescheduled) and the European Parliament began to look into whether the Beneš Decrees violated EU norms (later resolved in the negative).

The German government continued to support firmly Czech membership in the EU and heralded its achievement in May 2004. Germany and the Czech Republic, together with Poland, recognized the "key position" the three countries would play in the EU's future.⁸⁰ Such unity, however, did not obviate German-Czech differences in the EU, particularly over the French and German attempts to change the Maastricht criteria on economic performance for membership in the European Monetary Union.

Despite bilateral disagreements and tensions in the EU, Germany and the Czech Republic moved forward, according to Schröder during his September 2003 trip to Prague, on their "path of reconciliation," including a social security agreement; a new military cooperation agreement in 2002; and improved

cross-border relations at both official and societal levels.⁸¹ Asked in Prague about the proposal for a Center Against Expulsion in Berlin, Schröder echoed voices in the Czech Republic and Poland by identifying as contributions to reconciliation a European solution, a common confrontation with the past, and a sensitivity to the context surrounding the expulsions.

With Czech and Polish membership in the EU, Israel became the only reconciliation partner outside the European community. However, as they all shared experience as victims of Germany's Nazi past, so they would continue to experience together Germany's efforts to reconcile with them. Israel joined the Czech Republic and Poland in negotiations with Germany over slave and forced labor that concluded in 2000 after a hard battle, including a major statement of remorse from Federal President Rau who, in the name of the German people, asked the victims for forgiveness.⁸² In both his capacity as minister-president of North Rhine-Westphalia and as federal president, Rau was highly supportive of Israel and was the first German president to speak before the Israeli Knesset, an event in the German language that marked "that reconciliation is really possible." There, he again asked for forgiveness and committed Germany to everlasting memory of Jewish suffering.⁸³

Schröder struck the same themes of forgiveness and memory on the occasion of the thirty-fifth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel in May 2000 when he recognized that this "path to reconciliation" was still "painful" for many Jews, and characterized the beginning of official ties a "milestone" on that road.⁸⁴ He repudiated those attempts in Germany to put a line (*Schlußstrich*) under the past and to quarantine remembrance, but he was also forward-looking by noting the dense network of personal and bureaucratic ties in this "partnership" across all policy and societal domains, and the centrality of connections by young people.

While Schröder balanced the past and the future regarding Israel, Fischer allowed history to dominate as a constant companion shaping and monitoring contemporary behavior. Fischer used the terminology of German-Jewish reconciliation when talking about the Balkans and about Japan, but he preferred to underscore the uniqueness of the German-Israeli tie by referring to the historically determined "special relationship." Nonetheless, the content of reconciliation was clear: Israel as a "partner" and "friend" with whom "remembrance and trust" were the bedrock of relations.⁸⁵

Schröder continued his predecessors' policy of even-handedness concerning the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, leading to differences between Germany

and Israel. Fischer, by contrast, seemed to have a more nuanced understanding. He supported the creation of a Palestinian state and was critical of particular Israeli policies, but he understood fundamentally, unlike most of the international community and some portions of German society, the Israeli position that it “will never accept a position of weakness,” and that it has a right to defend itself against terrorism.⁸⁶ Schröder stressed the limits of Germany’s supply of weapons to Israel, while Fischer referred to a continuation of “traditional” arms cooperation. While Schröder maintained a formal, measured position, Fischer was an activist in the Middle East conflict. In June 2001, he mediated between Yassir Arafat and Ariel Sharon and in April 2002 he offered a peace plan of his own. For both Schröder and Fischer, when it came to the EU forum for Middle East policy, Germany acted both to initiate, and as a brake, as in its refusal to join the April 2002 groundswell for sanctions against Israel.

Despite differences over the Middle East conflict, the bilateral German-Israeli relationship in the Schröder-Fischer era reached an extraordinary level of cooperation. For example, Germany played a primary role, at Israel’s request, in the January 2004 exchange of prisoners that took place on German soil between Israel and Hezbollah of Lebanon.⁸⁷

Germany’s use of the term “reconciliation” in the Balkans and in Afghanistan was much more recent than in the four bilateral cases, and involved export of the term to major regional conflicts in which Germany was but one of many actors. In a July 1999 speech to new Bundeswehr recruits, Chancellor Schröder outlined the essential political purpose of Germany’s military involvement in Bosnia and Kosovo: “to guarantee peace and to provide an opportunity for reconstruction and reconciliation.”⁸⁸ After Milosevic’s ouster in fall 2000, Foreign Minister Fischer offered a rationale for Germany’s political, military, economic, and non-governmental engagement: “Peace requires that trust be created. Trust will flourish only when security is guaranteed and the truth is spoken. This is the basis for reconciliation and reconciliation is the foundation on which peace stands.”

In reminding his Bundestag audience that “these will be very painful processes,” and elsewhere that justice was a vital precondition for reconciliation, Fischer understood that the political agenda must be accompanied by an emotional one. A year later, Fischer employed the notion of “internal reconciliation,” this time involving multiethnicity and democratization, to justify Germany’s military engagement in Macedonia as a conflict-prevention measure.⁸⁹

Reconciliation provided the framework for German action in Afghanistan, but in an even more focused way. The first aim of the political process that emerged from the December 2001 Petersberg (Bonn) conference, inspired and chaired by Germany, was “national reconciliation,” accompanied by efforts to bring about “lasting peace, stability . . . and human rights.”⁹⁰ The subsequent “Bonn process” (*Bonner Prozess*) centered on economic, political, defense, and societal institution building. Shortly after the first Petersberg conference, Schröder noted how Europe’s common history of conflict must be seen as the context for cooperation on behalf of peace in other parts of the world, such as among German, Dutch, and Danish troops in Afghanistan.⁹¹

Reconciliation was a major focus of the Fall 2003 Security Council mission to Afghanistan, headed by Gunter Pleuger, the German ambassador to the UN. The mission’s report noted that the lack of security in Afghanistan meant a lack of focus on reconciliation, and recommended institutional reform and creation, particularly of political parties, as a way “to strengthen national unity and reconciliation,” which must involve all of society “irrespective of past events.”⁹² Institutions would be more important than history but, following other international examples, impunity should not check justice.

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: Change and Continuity

The mixed response of the German public to questions of history continued in this period. For the first time, in November 2000, Hitler received no votes as the German statesman who had done the most for Germany. On specific policies related to the past, Germans also showed a sense of responsibility with a slight plurality supporting a Holocaust memorial in Berlin (46 percent for, 39 percent against) and a significant majority favoring payments for Third Reich forced labor (63 percent for, 16 percent against). However, in response to a question of how “burdened” Germans felt about the Third Reich and World War II, only 31 percent said they felt burdened (9 percent very burdened, 22 percent burdened) while 66 percent registered a lack of burden (39 percent hardly burdened, 27 percent not at all).

For the first time, in July 2001, France scored first, ahead of the United States (79 percent to 78 percent) regarding preference for Germany’s cooperation with international partners (perhaps a reflection of alienation from President George W. Bush). France also moved up to third place, ahead of the United States, on a sympathy question (34 percent to 27 percent), and ranked high on a “closeness scale.”

The German public remained divided over Poland. A large majority (75 percent) in October 2001 accepted the German-Polish border, but support for Poland's EU membership remained around 37 percent. Fifty-four percent of respondents thought enlargement to the east to include Poland and the Czech Republic would weaken the EU. In a list of nineteen countries with which Germans expressed sympathy, Poland remained near the bottom at fifteenth place with 3 percent, and only slightly better, in thirteenth place, in a cooperation poll. On a comparative question of whether relations with Poland might become as close as relations with France, only 30 percent agreed in July 1999 (down from 52 percent in 1994).

Germans were no more enthusiastic about Czech membership in the EU than Polish, nor did Germans feel particularly sympathetic for Czechs or favor cooperation with them. The Czech Republic was fifteenth of nineteen countries in the cooperation poll.

As in the Kohl era, Israel was still seen negatively by the German public, tying the Czech Republic in fifteenth place (out of nineteen) in the July 2001 cooperation poll, and second to last in the sympathy poll (the same standing as China). By March 2001, on the Middle East conflict Israel had dropped a dramatic twenty-five points since a decade earlier (the "neither/nor" category represented the chief gainer at 53 percent) when it recorded only 14 percent support. Figures on a Palestinian state remained essentially the same as in the Schmidt-Kohl era, with 51 percent for a Palestinian state and only 11 percent concerned that it could be a danger to Israel.⁹³

THE MERKEL ERA, 2005–2009: A UNIFIED APPROACH OF VALUES AND PRAGMATISM

Idealism and realism were frequently, though not perfectly, joined in the Red-Green government through the thoughts and actions of the chancellor and foreign minister. In the subsequent Grand Coalition, they consistently were unified in the single person of Angela Merkel, using the language of "values" and "interests," and were codified by Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier's 2006 reference to Germany's "self-confident modesty."⁹⁴ There was broad agreement with the previous government on the elements of foreign policy, but differences over the degree of their integration and in style of conducting foreign affairs.

In a major speech to the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in September 2008, Chancellor Merkel formulated the relationship between values and pragmatic needs in the following way: "Interest-based foreign policy must also be values-driven foreign policy."⁹⁵ She highlighted the role of dialogue as a primary instrument to further human rights, which she characterized as a key expression of values-driven foreign policy (she met with the Dalai Lama, for example, a shift in German foreign policy). Elsewhere, she identified peace, democracy, freedom, trust, solidarity, the rule of law, friendly competition, respect, and tolerance as key values binding Germany to familiar and potential partners.⁹⁶

Merkel reinvigorated relations with the United States that had deteriorated under the previous German government, and looked for a stable strategic relationship with Russia that involved criticism as well as cooperation (the sole tendency of the Red-Green coalition). Her major foreign policy preoccupation was the European Union, especially during Germany's presidency in the first half of 2007, when she was responsible for a variety of economic and political compromises; she was able to achieve the unifying Berlin Declaration as to purpose on the EU's fiftieth anniversary, and paved the constitutional way for the Lisbon Treaty in the subsequent Portuguese presidency. Her speeches and actions concerning the EU assigned geographic importance to eastern European members and thematic emphasis to common energy initiatives and climate change policies; she stressed the need for coordinated efforts regarding the international financial and economic crisis.⁹⁷

The chancellor's many trips abroad stressed Germany's role as a foremost trading state, which at the same time was committed to sustainable development in the developing world. In conflict zones such as the Middle East, the Balkans, Africa, and Afghanistan, Merkel highlighted Germany's moral responsibility for military involvement and mediation, as well as the practical goal of stability.⁹⁸ During her first term in office, Germany developed in its security white paper the new concept of "networked security" (*vernetzte Sicherheit*), in which traditional military security—used as "a last resort"—"must go hand in hand with political and civil processes . . . [that require] the creation of structures reflecting the broad spectrum of political, diplomatic, military, civil, economic and development instruments." The corresponding "action plan" called for "civil crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peace consolidation."⁹⁹ Continuing a trend already present in the previous era of German foreign policy, Merkel's vision of Germany's global role

emphasizing civil society accorded significance to non-governmental actors across a functional spectrum from economics to the environment.

Chancellor Merkel's worldview, and the nature of the international system, impacted reconciliation in seven ways:

- The European Union was the chief vehicle for consolidating the four bilateral relationships of reconciliation.
- Within the EU, where Merkel underscored the interests of small and middle powers, Germany was attentive to German-Polish and German-Czech relations, including the former Soviet bloc countries' concerns about Russia.
- Merkel showed a special commitment to Israel, articulated in terms of morals and values, and influenced by the lack of opportunity for her to confront Germany's past as a citizen of the GDR; improved German-U.S. relations reinforced this position.
- Germany's emphasis on pragmatism meant an increase in practical modalities and institutions to cement reconciliation in all cases.
- The relationship with France was viewed mostly in pragmatic terms, undergirded with a recognition that in light of international economic and political crises, joint leadership in the EU was essential.
- Compromise was a key ingredient in addressing inevitable tensions and differences in relations.
- The societal dimension and people-to-people ties of reconciliation found new expressions in a transnationalizing world.

Reconciliation: An Internalized, Integrated, and Normalized Phenomenon

By the end of Merkel's first government in 2009, sixty years after Adenauer rendered it a priority of the new Germany, reconciliation as a guiding light had come full circle abroad, in the EU, and at home.

In the period 2005 to 2009, Merkel devoted considerable attention to Germany's relations with France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic, travelling to the partners extensively (eighteen times to France, three times to Israel, six times to Poland, and five times to the Czech Republic). As in the previous government, no relations were always in complete accord. Close partnerships included diverging interests. Merkel's style of diplomatic finesse—personal connection, dynamic conciliation—was

highly suited to resolving such differences, often within the EU over constitutional issues, common foreign policy, external relations, and the EU's economic and financial future.

Merkel couched all the bilateral relationships in the language of reconciliation—partnership, friendship, trust, common values, historical consciousness—but she only infrequently used the term “reconciliation” per se. Schröder and Fischer had demonstrated that German leaders who grew up after World War II could be just as committed to reconciliation as a previous generation. Merkel completed the circle through her dedication to the principle of reconciliation even though, as an East German citizen, she had no opportunity to participate earlier in its conceptualization or practice. She appeared to have internalized the idea of Germany's external reconciliation, accepting its purposes and priorities, while seeking to consolidate decades of achievement through new institutionalization at the governmental and societal levels.

At the same time that Merkel appeared to feel no need to use the term “reconciliation”—because it was so obvious and “normal” how reconciled relations were—the German Bundestag became the forum for the term's frequent articulation (both the spiritual *Versöhnung* and the practical *Aussöhnung*). Foreign policy debates in the Bundestag during this period, including over questions of German military involvement, were framed in terms of the goals and modalities of reconciliation in the following conflicts that Germany had prioritized: Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Bosnia, Kosovo, Honduras, Latin America, Africa, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Armenia-Turkey, and Cyprus.¹⁰⁰ These debates mentioned Germany's relations with France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic as demonstrations of reconciliation for other cases in the world, identified both moral and pragmatic motivations for reconciliation, recognized its essence in confronting the past, and focused on reconciliation at different levels (individual, group, and national).

A frequent example in the Bundestag discussion of reconciliation's success was the European Union, an institution that Merkel also explained in terms of reconciliation.¹⁰¹ In her most elaborated speech on Europe—in the high profile “Humboldt Series on Europe”—the chancellor outlined four principles of Germany's policy toward Europe.¹⁰² First, Germany's European policy involves the pursuit of German interests at the same time that Germany is mindful of the needs of the whole community, painted as “two sides of the same coin.” In this way, the European Union is always part of

Germany's "raison d'état," with Germany moving from a "peripheral position" at the beginning to a "central place" in the twenty-first century. Franco-German initiatives, not as dictates but as catalysts, are critical for decision making in the EU.

Second, Merkel sees "no alternative to deepening of the EU of twenty-seven members" if it is to be an efficient and effective system. Her goal is to prevent divisions from rendering the EU lame, and to call into question the long-term consequences of a Europe of "variable speeds." This sense of equity of rights and responsibilities for all accords well with the gratitude Merkel expresses at the beginning of her speech to Eastern European countries such as Poland and the Czech Republic for their contributions to the processes of German and European unity.

The third characteristic for Merkel is the EU's "uniqueness," not to be compared to a traditional state or government that provokes anxieties among publics by suggesting a replacement of their national structures and purposes. In Merkel's view, a clear and realistic division of labor and responsibility between the EU and member states can lessen the popular fear of a super state.

Merkel's final principle fixes on the values underwriting the whole European project—peace and freedom, now largely complete internally, but which continue to drive Europe's external political and economic role and the specifics of its common security and defense policy and of individual civil and military missions (more than twenty since 1999). The Middle East has featured in Europe's foreign policy profile politically and economically at least since the early 1970s.

A year earlier, in 2008, the chancellor was categorical about Europe's values-based achievement as a response to history: "We can anticipate the future only when we keep remembrance alive. Only with that recognition can we appreciate the miracle of the gift of reconciliation between our peoples and of the peace system of European unification. While this gift is costly, equally large is the danger that we can give in to a feeling of self-satisfaction." Reconciliation and peace require constant self-reflection and self-criticism.¹⁰³

Merkel invoked the EU as a reconciliation-based peace community also when talking about the expulsion of Germans from Polish and Czech lands after World War II, a frequent topic for the chancellor, who was a fervent advocate for the controversial Center Against Expulsion to be created in Berlin with government support. For her, the European peace community

was “the answer to so-called hereditary enmity, to nationalism, to war, to expulsion, and to force.” She emphasized the path of reconciliation with Germany’s neighbors, including in the EU framework, but also brought the term home, by suggesting that external reconciliation made it possible for many Germans to show sympathy for and be reconciled with the plight of the expellees and to support their integration into postwar Germany. External reconciliation resolves sixty years later into self-reconciliation, but the latter is not a substitute or superior goal. Accordingly, Merkel insisted on identifying the clear cause of expulsion and attendant suffering as German actions: “Flight and expulsion were causally related to the World War begun by Germans and to the terrible wrongs of the National Socialist dictatorship and its fellow travelers and supporters.” In expressing commitment to remember German suffering, she was also trying to guard against relativization of the past. She saw no end to the work of reconciliation in Europe, for “reconciliation, partnership and peace are an everlasting process.”¹⁰⁴

Reconciliation and Public Opinion: The Stability of Mixed Views

Public attitudes during the first Merkel government, through September 2009, were similar to the previous era. In a 2009 list of issues about which Germans could feel pride, 67 percent were proud of reconciliation with former enemies (85 percent was the highest amount of pride, accorded to German philosophers and writers). Opinion, however, was divided over whether a line (*Schlußstrich*) should be drawn under the past, with 44 percent saying it should (suggesting the past should not encumber contemporary Germany) and 43 percent believing Germany’s past should be confronted critically. In a related question, 69 percent of Germans felt the German past had been dealt with sufficiently; only 15 percent disagreed with the statement. A clear majority, 59 percent, also thought Germany should not talk so much about the Nazi past, although a sizeable number (33 percent) disagreed. Answers were less clear concerning the overreporting of Jewish persecution during the Third Reich: 25 percent agreed, 11 percent thought there was too little reporting, and 37 percent thought it was the right amount.

In a list of fourteen countries, France remained at the top of Germany’s most important partners, ranking first in 2008 and second in 2009 (the U.S. position reversed in the two years). Poland stood at the top of the last third of countries mentioned, whereas the Czech Republic was the penultimate country chosen in both years, and Israel was the last. With 20 percent, France

was deemed Germany's best friend in 2008, although the largest number of respondents (44 percent) could give no concrete answer or thought all countries were friends. Neither Poland, nor the Czech Republic, nor Israel was singled out.

Specific questions about Israel continued to display the negative responses of previous periods. A majority of respondents considered relations with Israel "good," with only 6 percent indicating they were very good and 2 percent registering "very bad"; a full 22 percent could give no answer. A minority of Germans (35 percent) agreed that Germany "has a special responsibility for the fate of Israel," whereas half of all respondents disagreed. Yet, 65 percent of respondents still characterized the relationship in general as "special," with only 18 percent calling it a "normal" relationship.¹⁰⁵

CONCLUSION

The analysis presented here has focused on the long-term development of German foreign policy, on the role reconciliation has played in Germany's external relations, and on the attitude of the German public toward four bilateral cases. Reconciliation over the first six decades of post-World War II Germany has developed as the cornerstone of foreign policy, gaining clarity and frequent reference. It has been, however, often more important to German leaders—especially in the cases of Israel and the Czech Republic—than to the German public.

German Foreign Policy

Over the past six decades, German foreign policy has displayed great continuity. The pursuit of an embrace by the family of nations has favored multilateralism, especially in the EU, but has been achieved through reconciliation with specific partners. Driven by both morality and pragmatism, responsibility and realism, German foreign policy relied principally on diplomacy, but evolved to include military tools. For Germany, these elements seem to define *raison d'état*.

The change in German foreign policy since unification in both style—more open about interests—and content—use of military power—did not suggest an abdication of the dominant application of soft power, but rather a new calibration of soft power with hard power. All German leaders were

conscious of special historical burdens, but there were differences as to whether the past should be confronted, was something to be overcome, or should be regarded as lessons, guidance for the future. On balance, in terms of foreign policy identity, Germany remains a “civilian power,” but no longer without an offensive military power capability and a willingness to use force as a last resort.

Reconciliation

Some in Germany have given reconciliation a religious purpose, seeking forgiveness, but for the most part reconciliation has been a political means to develop durable international friendships. It required acknowledging the past, learning from it, and structuring new relations from those lessons. Reconciliation as concept and as practice evolved from a framework for relations with the West to a framework for relations with the East and the constitution of an all-European identity.

The EU became over time the principal venue for the bilateral relations of reconciliation, even for Israel as a non-member. Having created and maintained reconciliation over a sixty-year period in Europe and with Israel, Germany was then able to extend the principles of reconciliation to regional conflicts in other parts of the globe, thereby fashioning a unique contribution to international relations. Moral issues related to the past formed an important dimension of reconciliation, but interests and political necessity were also important. Different policymakers accentuated one dimension or another of reconciliation, but all seemed to emphasize a process of overcoming enmity, developing partnership, cooperation, trust, and friendship, and all wanted to elevate the role of non-governmental actors. After 1945, reconciliation, the process (as Germans saw it) of making up for World War II, defined German foreign policy, not the war itself, and not the Nazi regime that produced it.

Public Opinion

German leaders led, shaping and developing Germany’s new place in the world through reconciliation. The German public was not fully supportive. Public attitudes were marked by a combination of distance and sympathy. Over time, attitudes toward France grew more sympathetic, but toward Israel became increasingly negative. There has been little public enthusiasm for the Czechs and Poles.

Reconciliation of nations is impossible without societal support. German leaders overcame popular ambivalence through non-governmental actors. They also recognized popular support for the principles of reconciliation. Unlike general public opinion that was equivocal about the weight of the past, societal institutions were propelled by its force and carried with them the German public.

NOTES

1. The two main traditional analyses of German foreign policy that emphasize the role of Germany's external environment as a constraint on German choices are found in: Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *West German Foreign Policy, 1949–1963* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967); "West German Foreign Policy, 1949–1979: Necessities and Choices," in *West German Foreign Policy, 1949–1979*, ed. Wolfram F. Hanrieder, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1980); and Helga Haftendorn, *Security and Détente: Conflicting Priorities in German Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1985). Both authors refer to domestic forces, but the defining feature of their analyses remains the international system.

Realist literature includes: Christian Hacke, "Germany and the New Europe," in *From the Atlantic to the Urals. National Perspectives on the New Europe*, eds. David P. Calleo and Philip H. Gordon (Arlington, VA: Seven Locks Press, 1992); Hans-Peter Schwarz, "Germany's National and European Interests. A Country with National Interests?" *Daedalus* 123, no. 2 (Spring 1994); Philip H. Gordon, "Berlin's Difficulties: The Normalization of German Foreign Policy," *Orbis* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1994); Max Otte with Jürgen Greve, *A Rising Middle Power? German Foreign Policy in Transformation, 1989–1999* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000).

Examples of historical-cultural approaches to foreign policy are:

Peter J. Katzenstein, "United Germany in an Integrating Europe," in *Tamed Power. Germany in Europe*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Andrei S. Markovits and Simon Reich, *The German Predicament: Memory and Power in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Thomas Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics and Foreign Policy, 1945–1995* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Sebastian Harnisch and Hanns W. Maull, eds., *Germany as a Civilian Power? The Foreign Policy of the Berlin Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Volker Rittberger, ed., *German Foreign Policy Since Unification: Theories and Case Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Gunther Hellmann, "Wider die machtpolitische Resozialisierung der deutschen Aussenpolitik. Ein Plädoyer für offensiven Idealismus," *WeltTrends*, no. 42 (April 2004); each of Thomas Risse, "Deutsche Identität und Aussenpolitik"; Hanns Maull, "Deutschland als Zivilmacht"; and Gunther Hellmann, Reinhard Wolf, Siegmur Schmidt, "Deutsche Außenpolitik in historischer und systematischer Perspektive,"

in *Handbuch zur deutschen Außenpolitik*, eds. Gunther Hellmann, Reinhard Wolf, and Siegmund Schmidt (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2007); Wilfried von Bredow, "Mars, Venus—oder doch lieber Pluto? Die deutsche Außenpolitik muss über ihre Prioritätenentscheiden," in *Deutsche Außenpolitik. Sicherheit, Wohlfahrt, Institutionen und Normen*, eds. Thomas Jäger, Alexander Höse, and Karl Oppermann (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2007); and Regina Karp, "Germany: A 'Normal' Global Actor?" *German Politics* 18, no. 1 (March 2009).

2. Klaus Kinkel, "Verantwortung, Realismus, Zukunftssicherung. Deutsche Außenpolitik in einer sich neu ordnenden Welt," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 19, 1993.

3. Here and in each country-specific chapter under "Leadership," I show mainly the thinking of chancellors on reconciliation due to their institutional power to set policy guidelines (*Richtlinienkompetenz*). See Judith Siwert-Probst, "Die klassischen aussenpolitischen Institutionen," in *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik. Band 4: Institutionen und Ressourcen*, eds. Wolf-Dieter Eberwein and Karl Kaiser, 13 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1998); and Karl-Rudolf Korte, "Bundeskanzleramt," in *Handbuch zur deutschen Außenpolitik*, 208–9.

Ludwig Erhard became chancellor in 1965. He is remembered most for his contributions to German domestic policy and not foreign policy (except the conclusion of diplomatic relations with Israel), and so he is excluded here. Similarly, Kurt-Georg Kiesinger (1966–1969) is not known as a foreign policy chancellor due to the dominant role of Willy Brandt as foreign minister. The other foreign minister featuring in this periodization is Joschka Fischer due to his singular contributions to the understanding of reconciliation. Hans-Dietrich Genscher was Germany's longest-serving foreign minister, from 1974 until 1992, but he expounded on the concept only infrequently.

Following Gunther Hellmann's advice, under "Governmental Institutions" in each country-specific chapter, I supplement this chapter's primary focus on chancellors with an additional periodization that considers other governmental actors and events (such as major speeches and symbolic gestures).

4. Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1967), 236.

5. Auswärtiges Amt, *40 Jahre Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik. Eine Dokumentation* (Stuttgart: Verlag Bonn Aktuell, 1989), 23.

6. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953*, 246, 283; F. Roy Willis, *France, Germany and the New Europe, 1945–1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

7. 2. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 155. Sitzung* (June 28, 1956), 8415; 2. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 168. Sitzung* (November 8, 1956), 9263.

8. 3. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 166. Sitzung* (June 30, 1961), 9763.

9. 4. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 40. Sitzung* (October 11, 1962), 1696.

10. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1945–1953*, 283.

11. Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1953–1955* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1968), 145; Konrad Adenauer, "Bilanz einer Reise: Deutschlands Verhältnis zu Israel," *Die Politische Meinung* 1, no. 115 (1966): 15.

12. 1. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 252. Sitzung* (March 4, 1953), 12095.

13. The Institut für Demoskopie is relied on exclusively here for its long record of looking consistently at the four countries in Germany's external reconciliation. Elisabeth Noelle

and Erich Peter Neumann, eds., *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls 1947–1966*. Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981), 188, 193–94, 201–3, 241, 316, 502, 509–11, 524, 527–28, 534–37, 570–73.

14. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, eds., *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1993–1997* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1997), 540.

15. Willy Brandt, *Peace: Writings and Speeches of the Nobel Prize Winner 1971* (Bonn Bad-Godesberg: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft GmbH, 1971), 110, 21–23; Willy Brandt, *A Peace Policy for Europe* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969), 39–41, 46–49, 110.

16. Willy Brandt, *People and Politics: The Years 1960–1975* (Boston: Little, Brown: 1978), 181, 183; Brandt, *A Peace Policy*, 110–14, 117. Banchoff cites a 1953 Brandt speech referring to reconciliation, *The German Problem Transformed*, 82.

17. Brandt, *People and Politics*, 181.

18. Text in *40 Jahre Aussenpolitik*, 340–42.

19. Quoted in Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship*, 168, 170, 221–22.

20. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, ed., *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls 1967–1980*. Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981), 113–14, 409, 456, 460–61, 566; Elisabeth Neumann and Erich Peter Noelle, eds., *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, 1968–1973* (Allensbach: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1974), 200, 409, 467–68, 581.

21. Helmut Kohl, *Erinnerungen, 1930–1982* (Munich: Droemer Verlag, 2004), 387.

22. Wolfram Hanrieder, ed., *Helmut Schmidt: Perspectives on Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1982), 191–92.

23. Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, 112–13, 116.

24. Hanrieder, *Helmut Schmidt*, 51, 209; Helmut Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy for the West: The Anachronism of National Strategies in an Interdependent World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), chapters 1 and 2. Helmut Kohl, “Policy Statement by Chancellor Kohl to the German Bundestag, Bonn, March 18, 1987,” *Statements & Speeches* 10, no. 4 (New York: German Information Center, March 23, 1987).

25. Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, 115–19.

26. Helmut Schmidt, *Weggefährten. Erinnerungen und Reflexionen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1996), 270–71.

27. 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 38. Sitzung* (May 26, 1981), 1972; Hanrieder, *Helmut Schmidt*, 42–43, 175; Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy*, 55; Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, 268–69; 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 118. Sitzung* (October 1, 1982), 7161; 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 34. Sitzung* (May 7, 1981), 1713.

28. Kohl, “Policy Statement by Chancellor Helmut Kohl to the German Bundestag, Bonn, March 18, 1987,” 8; Helmut Kohl, “Franco–German Relations and the Future of Europe,” October 13, 1988, *Report from the Aspen Institute*, Berlin, no. 8/88, 20.

29. 11. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 113. Sitzung* (December 1, 1988), 8147–48.

30. Kohl, *Erinnerungen, 1930–1982*, 149; Kohl, “Franco–German Relations,” 17–19; “Policy Statement by Chancellor Helmut Kohl 1987,” 8.

31. Text of the Auschwitz speech on November 23, 1977 is at: library.fes.de/pdf-files/netzquelle/a81-10624.pdf (accessed July 1, 2011), 45–6. See also: 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 34. Sitzung* (May 7, 1981), 1711; Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, 337.

32. Lily Gardner Feldman, "German Morality and Israel," in *The Federal Republic at Forty*, ed. Peter H. Merkl, 443–44 (New York: New York University Press, 1989).

33. Helmut Kohl, "Speech given during a commemorative ceremony at the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, April 21, 1985," in Press and Information Office of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Remembrance, Sorrow and Reconciliation. Speeches and Declarations in Connection with the 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War in Europe* (Bonn: Bundespresse- und informationsamt, 1985).

34. Hans-Adolf Jacobsen and Mieczysław Tomala, eds., *Bonn – Warschau, 1945–1991. Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen. Analyse und Dokumentation* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1992), 493–94.

35. Hanrieder, *Helmut Schmidt*, 19, 147.

36. 8. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 5. Sitzung* (December 16, 1976), 48; 8. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 65. Sitzung* (January 19, 1978), 4962; 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 118. Sitzung* (October 1, 1982), 7162.

37. 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 108. Sitzung* (June 24, 1982), 6572; 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 78. Sitzung* (January 19, 1982), 4520; 9. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 5. Sitzung* (November 24, 1980), 29; Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed*, 95–96, 114; Kohl, *Erinnerungen, 1930–1982*, 605–6.

38. Jacobsen and Tomala, *Bonn – Warschau, 1945–1991*, 46.

39. Mieczysław Tomala, "Die Beziehungen zwischen Polen und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," in *Bonn – Warschau*, 18–19, 46–47, 359–72; Kohl, "Policy Statement by Chancellor Helmut Kohl to the German Bundestag, Bonn, March 18, 1987," 9.

40. Jacobsen and Tomala, *Bonn – Warschau*, 474.

41. Jacobsen and Tomala, *Bonn – Warschau*, 474–75, 501–10.

42. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, ed., *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie, 1974–1976. Band 6* (Vienna: Verlag Fritz Molden, 1976), 283; Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Edgar Piel, eds., *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie, 1978–1983. Band 8* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1983), 191, 194, 582, 589, 594, 596, 648, 652, 657; Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, eds., *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie, 1984–92. Band 9* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1993), 381, 992, 995–98, 1000.

43. Lily Gardner Feldman, "Germany and the European Union: Its Role as Architect in the Shaping of Political Union," *Working Paper 7.16*, Center for German and European Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1990; Lily Gardner Feldman, "Germany and the EC: Realism and Responsibility," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 531 (January 1994).

44. 11. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 228. Sitzung* (October 4, 1990), 18026; 12. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 172. Sitzung* (September 8, 1993), 14769; 12. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 231. Sitzung* (May 27, 1994), 20122; 12. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 242. Sitzung* (September 7, 1994), 21436; 13. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 49. Sitzung* (July 13, 1995), 4073; 13. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 77. Sitzung* (December 7, 1995), 6712–14; 13. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 234. Sitzung* (May 6, 1998), 21435.

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48. 11. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 176. Sitzung* (November 16, 1989), 13327–30; 11. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 228. Sitzung* (October 4, 1990), 18028; 12. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 87. Sitzung* (April 2, 1992), 7177.

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51. 12. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 39. Sitzung* (September 6, 1991), 3243–49; 13. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll der 31. Sitzung* (March 30, 1995), 2365; Helmut Kohl, "'Das transatlantische Netzwerk ausbauen und verstärken,' speech to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, Chicago, June 19, 1997," *Bulletin*, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, no. 63 (July 30, 1997).

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53. Interview in *Die Welt*, April 16, 1998.

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Germany's Relations with France

From Enmity to Amity

A union between France and Germany would give new life and vigor to a Europe that is seriously ill. It would have an immense psychological and material influence and would liberate powers that are sure to save Europe. I believe this is the only possible way of achieving the unity of Europe. It would cause the rivalry between the two countries to disappear.

—Konrad Adenauer, March 7, 1950¹

Sixty years after Chancellor Adenauer's statement in an interview with the journalist Joseph Kingsbury-Smith, the revolutionary idea of a full, formal Franco-German union had not been realized, yet something approaching that goal clearly had been obtained by the beginning of the twenty-first century: in the annals of international relations there is probably no equivalent of the dense network of ties, institutions, and common policies that bind the policy elites and societies of France and Germany today. Enmity has been transformed into amity.

European integration was stalled in 2005 by the French and Dutch publics' rejection of the Constitutional Treaty, despite Franco-German efforts for its acceptance and, in 2008 and 2009, by the global economic and financial crisis, despite Franco-German efforts at a European solution. Yet, on many other occasions in the last six decades, France and Germany propelled European unity. This chapter explores the four dimensions of reconciliation—history, leadership, institutions, and international context—that define and explain the Franco-German relationship in its bilateral and multilateral (EC/EU) manifestations.

HISTORY

The past is always prologue. It is never possible to escape history when considering reconciliation because the very term implies something to reconcile about. That something is always what came before. The role of history in reconciliation takes three forms: the past as stimulus; the acknowledgement of grievances; and the past as present. New action to reframe an old relationship occurs officially and on non-governmental levels.

The Past as Stimulus

During the first five years of the postwar period, the impact of France's 1940 defeat and the subsequent "viciousness" of German occupation meant French officialdom, largely influenced by General de Gaulle, exhibited a punitive attitude toward Germany. However, at the beginning of the 1950s a softening appeared, partly due to the Cold War, but largely due to the vision of French and German leaders.²

In a second interview with Kingsbury-Smith on France in March 1950, Adenauer utilized the immediate past of war to frame his proposal to recast the Franco-German relationship as a radical alternative to hatred. Against this background, Franco-German cooperation would have both affective and concrete benefits, with an emphasis on the former:

It would doubtless be a big step forward if Frenchmen and Germans sat in one house and at one table in order to work together and to carry joint responsibility. The psychological consequences would be inestimable. French security demands could be satisfied in this fashion and the growth of German nationalism could be prevented. I felt that the understanding that would grow between Germany and France . . . would be even more significant than all the economic advantages that would undoubtedly accrue.³

Just two months later, in May 1950, France's foreign minister Robert Schuman reiterated the role of the past, and the psychological and tangible impulses for his proposal to create a European Coal and Steel Community with the Franco-German pooling of resources at its heart: "The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible."⁴

The ample literature on the motives that Adenauer and Schuman both adduced for their fundamental rethinking of Franco-German relations—a

moral alternative to the horrors of three wars since 1870 and a practical sense of how to bind Germany and secure France—features pragmatic impulses most prominently and disputes the assumption of a “hereditary enmity” (*Erbfeindschaft*) between France and Germany before 1870.⁵ An implication is that post-1945 relations were not built on a purely negative past, but also that World War II might be considered the continuation of wars between nation-states, international conduct defined more by *raison d'état* than hostility between peoples.

History, although not an obstacle to new ties, did not disappear completely from official thinking after 1950. It was particularly evident in the thinking of Charles de Gaulle and of François Mitterrand, and in French policies concerning a range of issues with Germany: the Federal Republic's role in the European Community in the 1950s and 1960s; Ostpolitik in the 1970s; American missiles in Germany and German unification at the beginning and end of the 1980s; German recognition of Croatia and Slovenia and the German position on EU eastern enlargement in the 1990s.⁶ French fears related to German power—before 1989 economic and after 1989 political—and to the ghost of Rapallo as Germany looked east. France pursued policies to anchor Germany bilaterally and multilaterally and Germany exhibited a consistent willingness to bind itself in European institutions. Despite the residue of fear, French early acceptance of a new Germany could be seen in the French readiness to use the term “reconciliation” both officially, for example by Robert Schuman, and unofficially, for example by Joseph Rován.⁷

The pull of religion among politicians—the well-known Roman Catholic interaction of Adenauer and Schuman—was amplified in society. These morally driven initiatives for future relations included the 1945 founding of the journal *Documents/Dokumente* by the Jesuit priest Jean du Rivau to present evidence to French religious, intellectual, and resistance figures of “positive intellectual and religious thought” in Germany.⁸ These efforts also involved less-heralded Protestant voices, for example the French Protestant church's November 1946 participation in the Speyer synod, the church's theological institute in Montpellier for German prisoners of war, and the activities of Marcel Sturm, the French military chaplain in Germany.⁹

Moral Rearmament's center in Caux was an important venue for confrontation between French and German spiritual and political leaders, as recorded by Irène Laure, a wartime resistance fighter who, like other resistance members, overcame her personal hatred of Germany through forgiveness.¹⁰ Such efforts did not represent the majority French sentiment (only a minority of 10 to 20



Figure 3.1. Chancellor Helmut Kohl honors Joseph Rován (left) for his commitment to Franco-German relations, Bonn, December 10, 1986. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Schaack

percent of French trusted Germany in the 1950s), but they marked a structural beginning to the significant improvement in relations taking place in the 1960s.¹¹ Thus, religious impulses and a spirit of forgiveness, a way above all for some French to overcome their antipathy toward Germans, were among the critical postwar foundations for reconciliation.

Acknowledging Grievances

Religiously based moral impulses may have lubricated initial Franco-German contacts, but pragmatic and material needs converted the affective component into formal political commitment, beginning with formal statements spelling out key historical issues. If postwar Europe were to be revived, France and Germany each would need the other, as Adenauer, Schuman, Jean Monnet, and de Gaulle all recognized. The 1950 plans of Schuman (in May) and René Plevén (in October for the European Defense Community or EDC) signaled that relations could be transformed. Opposition in Germany, deriving from both pragmatic fear of cementing Germany's division and moral fear of rearmament, was significant but not decisive. The more fundamental French opposition to EDC resulted in Germany's membership in NATO, which together with the 1954 London and Paris Agreements (regarding the end of the occupation regime in Germany and the creation of the Western European Union), and the 1956 signing of the Saar Treaty (France's ceding, after a referendum in the area, the Saarland to Germany) officially established a new bilateral relationship.

The Schuman Plan recognized the problem as "the age-old opposition of France and Germany"; the Plevén Plan addressed the "mistrust and suspicion [of a German] national army"; the Paris Agreements addressed the Western allies' goal for "Germany and its former enemies" of a "permanent peace"; the Saar Treaty spoke of "concessions on both sides," and a "new era in Franco-German relations." As these agreements represented the formal beginning of a radical departure, so the Elysée Treaty in 1963 marked the first major achievement in its "conviction that reconciliation between the German and French peoples, ending a centuries-old rivalry, is an historical event fundamentally restructuring relations."¹² The treaty drew a detailed road map for future cooperation.

By the time of the 1963 Treaty, Germany had sought to address another domain of World War II vestiges: compensation for Nazi crimes. During its postwar occupation of Germany, France had exacted economic compensation in the form of restituted goods, reparations, and industrial production, but, in the July 1960 bilateral agreement with France, it was Germany that took the initiative to address the past through material recompense to victims not covered by the 1956 federal compensation law (*Bundesentschädigungsgesetz*). Much of the formal, agreement-based confrontation with the

past took place in the 1950s and 1960s, but certain areas were fully liberated only with German unification. For example, after 1990, France and Germany engaged in an intensive exchange of cultural goods expropriated by one or the other during World War II or in earlier periods of tension. In May 1995, on the fiftieth anniversary of Germany's surrender, Mitterrand acknowledged the bravery of German soldiers and their love of "fatherland" in a speech in Berlin.¹³

The Past as Present

Organizations

Many of the activities associated with acknowledging grievances occurred in formal, public, governmental encounters, whereas the ongoing exercise of using history as a focus of understanding evolved largely in the private sphere. Myriad organizations have been engaged in the daily confrontation with history through memorials, commemorations, and educational initiatives, but three are particularly noteworthy in terms of timing, goals, means, the nature of history, and effect: the Franco-German Textbook Commission (*deutsch-französische Schulbuchkommission*) and related activities of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (*Georg-Eckert-Institut für internationale Schulbuchforschung*); the German Historical Institute (GHI) in Paris (*Deutsches Historisches Institut*); and Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace (*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*).¹⁴

Timing: All three organizations originated early in the Franco-German relationship, demonstrating that confrontation with history can commence when scars of war are still relatively fresh. As a direct successor to the exchanges of the 1930s, the initial contacts between French and German historians and history teachers in the immediate postwar period proceeded smoothly and already in 1951 produced a "Franco-German Agreement on Contentious Questions of European History." In the early 1980s, these exchanges were incorporated into the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, reincarnated in 1975 in Braunschweig on the foundation of an institute first created in 1953.¹⁵ The 1964 creation of the German Historical Institute in Paris grew out of the German Center for Historical Research (*Centre Allemand de Recherches Historiques*), which had opened in 1958.¹⁶ Action Reconciliation was also founded in 1958, by the German evangelical church.¹⁷

Goals: The three organizations have been linked in their goals of developing knowledge and learning, both of the “other” to reduce stereotypes (“decontaminating history”) and of the bilateral relationship to reduce friction, with the German-French Textbook Commission and Action Reconciliation most driven by didactic and reconciliation purposes.¹⁸ Action Reconciliation encourages young Germans of post-high school age, regardless of religious affiliation, to volunteer in countries that had suffered under Nazism. The Textbook Commission also targets young people, mainly of high-school age, whereas the German Historical Institute’s work was geared to an older population.

Means: Exchange and encounter have been the three organizations’ common tools, for the Textbook Commission through regular meetings of its members who are history and education teachers; for the GHI through joint work or shared results of its French and German researchers; and for Action Reconciliation through German volunteers’ personal engagement in French organizations, ranging from construction of the “reconciliation church” in Taizé and of a synagogue in Villeurbane, to social service work, including with elderly victims of Nazism. For GHI and Action Reconciliation, public lectures provide an additional forum for exchange. All three use the medium of the written word: the commission’s agreements about textbook content, and the Eckert Institute’s publications; the GHI’s own volumes; and Action Reconciliation’s newsletters.

Nature of History: The nature of history refers to perspective (unified or discordant), framework (national or European), and time (the particular period of history). In the commission’s first phase, during the 1950s and 1960s, it aimed to create one common or consensual account of national histories, whereas in later periods it was keen to bring out differences in historical approach (within a joint institutional framework) and to focus on Franco-German relations in the context of European integration. In the most recent, 1988 agreement, recommendations covered the whole period from Weimar and the Third Republic to National Socialism and Vichy, and then to all of the postwar period.

At the beginning of the new millennium the commission was working on revised recommendations, but they were never published, in part because of differing goals, with German participants emphasizing “socio-political context” and French participants focusing on “pedagogic pragmatism.” By this time, formal commission meetings had ceased, but the habits of intellectual and personal cooperation from many decades were carried over to the

preparation and realization of the Franco-German common history textbooks with their broad sweep of the past.¹⁹ By 2009, the Georg Eckert Institute had developed a new project on “Competition and Convergence: Images of Europe in German and French Textbooks from 1900 to the Present Day,” again stressing a wide historical perspective.

The GHI’s approach to the study of history is eclectic, with a broad conception beginning from at least the Middle Ages and spanning to revolution, empire, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It covers national histories, the history of France and Germany, and the history of European integration.

Action Reconciliation’s original stimulus was the Nazi period, addressed prominently also by the other two organizations, but in recent years it, too, has paid attention to larger European issues, particularly peace. Unlike the other two organizations, Action Reconciliation deals directly with remembrance and memory.

Effects: Effect is hard to measure, and is more easily undertaken in the Textbook Commission and Eckert Institute undertakings than in Action Reconciliation participants’ personal atonement or the GHI’s wide-ranging activities. There have been four indicators of success in the textbook case: the actual Franco-German agreements on textbook recommendations (the latest was in 1988); imitation—the effort by others, such as Japan and various Balkan countries, to replicate the commission’s work; the 2004 evaluation of the Georg Eckert Institute by a panel of independent experts; and the preparatory work for and participation in the drafting of the joint, and globally unique, Franco-German history textbook.²⁰ The latter originated in the January 2003 Franco-German youth parliament, was sponsored by various French and German official entities, was crafted by a team of French and German scholars and textbook experts, and published simultaneously by a French and German publisher. Volumes appeared in 2006 (1945 to the present) and 2008 (from the Congress of Vienna to 1945), with a third volume (the period until 1815) slated for 2011. They are geared to high school students, convey a variety of perspectives to reduce national views, and, with time, will be evaluated regarding use and effectiveness.²¹

The Eckert Institute recognizes success in its Franco-German programs through the development of positive attitudes, but also acknowledges more is required for each side to understand fully the cultural distinction of the other. Both governments have recognized the need for much more language training and language mastery in the two countries.²²

Symbolic Events

The private domain was the chief venue for continuous societal confrontation with the past, which was blessed officially on the occasion of the October 2004 Franco-German Ministerial Council (*deutsch-französischer Ministerrat*). The French and German governments participated in confronting the past, but periodically and in public displays, through commemoration of anniversaries and recognition of a new relationship. For Ulrich Krotz, these “symbolic acts are gestures, rituals, and ceremonies that do not directly aim at the solving of problems, the formulating of interests and positions, or the making of policies . . . [but rather] help institutionalize Franco-German relations as a value and, often, as an end in themselves.”²³ Whether remembering history directly or highlighting the special, friendly quality of the present, these acts were all responses to the past.

There were at least eleven occasions of symbolic gestures during the last sixty years.²⁴ Four were commemorations:

- the September 1984 meeting of Mitterrand and Kohl at the battlefield of Verdun;
- the July 1994 participation of German soldiers in the parade on the Champs-Élysée for the French national holiday;
- the June 2004 involvement of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in the sixtieth anniversary of D-Day;
- Chancellor Angela Merkel's November 2009 presence at the World War I armistice's anniversary.

While each event invoked the past, painful history was seen as part of a longer process resulting in reconciliation, portrayed symbolically: the hand-holding at Verdun; the appearance of German soldiers as part of the Euro-corps; a Franco-German ceremony and embrace at the peace memorial in Caen, Normandy; the joint wreath laying at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. In 1984, the fortieth anniversary of D-Day was still too early to invite German participation, and the meeting at Verdun was in some ways compensation; 1994 was still too early, for there were members of the government who had done war-time service, and the July 14 parade acted as a substitute.²⁵ By 2004, President Jacques Chirac had concluded that the time had arrived, but the orchestration still had to be handled “very delicately” due to the lingering bitterness of some French.²⁶ And, as France's prime minister Jean-Pierre



Figure 3.2. Joint mass of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles de Gaulle, Reims Cathedral, July 8, 1962. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Steiner

Raffarin made clear a few days after the D-Day events in a commemoration of the massacre in Oradour-sur-Glane, searching for a different future did not mean erasing the past.²⁷ By 2009, a turning point had been reached, and Nicolas Sarkozy saw Merkel's presence as a "historic act" and Franco-German friendship as a "treasure," in line with his pronouncements downgrading "repentance" (especially for France concerning Vichy and Algeria).²⁸

Purely affirmative events included:

- the September 1958 conversations between Adenauer and de Gaulle in Colombey-les-deux-Églises, the French president's private home;
- Adenauer's July 1962 state visit to France, including a Franco-German military parade and religious service in Reims;
- de Gaulle's September 1962 return state visit to Germany;
- Mitterrand's 1983 speech to the German Bundestag on the twentieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty;
- the November 1999 speech of Gerhard Schröder to the Assemblée Nationale, the first by a German chancellor;



Figure 3.3. French President François Mitterrand addresses German parliament, Bonn, January 20, 1983. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Wegmann

- the January 2003 fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, including a joint session of the Bundestag and the Assemblée Nationale in Versailles, joint meetings of representatives of the German Bundesrat and the French Sénat, and a youth parliament; and
- the joint October 2008 dedication of a de Gaulle memorial at Colombey-les-Deux-Églises.²⁹

Already in the Colombey-les-Deux-Églises meeting of 1958, de Gaulle identified a new Germany, from which Nazism had disappeared. The fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, almost five decades after the Colombey meeting, was an opportunity to reflect on the many faces of reconciliation whose outline had been etched by the 1963 agreements. After a period of coolness in the relationship, it was also an occasion for both Schröder and Chirac to demonstrate their leadership, both as individuals and together, and their friendship. Merkel's presence at the 2008 memorial dedication in Colombey similarly was a sign of Franco-German "friendship" according to Sarkozy, after a difficult period.³⁰

LEADERSHIP

In his reflections on Germany and its neighbors, former chancellor Helmut Schmidt reminds us that he and President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing frequently registered differences as they sought to address major policy issues together, but that "profound personal openness" made compromise possible and developed trust.³¹ He also notes that Franco-German agreements often faced opposition at home. At critical junctures in Franco-German relations, political leaders guided the enterprise skillfully through substantial domestic or bilateral challenges.

The positive influence of guidance was greatest when political leaders on both sides operated in harmony, where this kind of leadership as a bilateral unit seemed to depend on positive personal chemistry and sustained personal friendship.

Observations by French and German leaders testify to the personal connections and to the character of the counterpart.³² One common theme is appreciation of the psychological and philosophical dimensions of the national background each leader embodied. Adenauer, for example, referred to de Gaulle's pride, sense of history, and commitment to the nation-state

with its trappings of independence and sovereignty, of which he was initially suspicious (especially if it meant diluting European integration), but ultimately appreciative.³³ Schmidt understood Giscard as a product of the *grands écoles*. He ranks Giscard as his “closest French friend,” whose basic philosophies on economics and the Soviet Union meshed with his own; reliability, integrity, and truthfulness meant they were never blinded politically by their personal friendship. Kohl applauded Mitterrand as a “good friend” and “great patriot” with whom he had a deep personal relationship, which “exceeded by far [their] alliance of interests.”³⁴

De Gaulle wrote of the “magnanimity” that characterized his responses to Adenauer’s description of Germany’s psychological needs and willingness to recognize France’s absolute requirement of security. Giscard spoke of Schmidt’s “personal engagement” making a difference. Their friendship continued when both left office, expressed in regular personal meetings and in joint professional activities such as the 1986 creation of the Committee for the Monetary Union of Europe. Mitterrand emphasized the “respect” he felt toward Kohl, and the “personal dimension” of friendship forged from the resolution of policy differences (in part stemming from ideological divergence), but also from the commonality of both experiencing war as young men.³⁵

The personal ties between Schröder and Chirac did not immediately compare to these three earlier partnerships, but by the end of the Schröder government the two leaders did display a considerable degree of trust, the very basis for friendship.³⁶ For example, in October 2003, when the German chancellor’s presence was required in the Bundestag for a crucial vote, Schröder delegated Chirac to represent him at a European Union summit in Brussels, a departure of “huge symbolism” both for the EU and Franco-German relations.³⁷ Like other chancellors before him, Schröder understood that differences are woven into the fabric of relations and do not invalidate amity; rather, friendship provided “a very firm foundation” on which to negotiate clashing perspectives.³⁸

Angela Merkel’s pre-chancellor relationship with then minister of the interior Nicolas Sarkozy was cordial, but once they became head of government and head of state personal relations deteriorated to the extent that she felt “infuriated” over the French president’s go-it-alone style and she “got on his nerves” by her failure to rein in her finance minister’s criticism of French economic policy. Things came to a head in March 2008 due to differences in style and perspective.³⁹ However, by the April 2009 jointly hosted

NATO summit the pair's ability to discuss problems openly and confront one another personally, coupled with a common pragmatism and desire for EU leadership, allowed relations to improve such that the two leaders together with their spouses were on very friendly terms. Sarkozy observed: "In politics, and on the international stage, personal relations are often more important than one imagines."⁴⁰

German leaders recognized, then, France's need still to be seen as a great and powerful nation, and French leaders have understood Germany's need to be treated as an equal. All were committed to European integration, whether of the supranational or intergovernmental variety.

A second theme in leaders' commentary is the intensity and regularity of personal encounters, after 1963 in the framework of the Elysée Treaty and before 1963 and beyond in the framework of the European Community and European Union. De Gaulle thought the volume and frequency of encounters was important when describing how the 1958 meeting was the first step to the 1963 Treaty: "From then until mid-1962, Konrad Adenauer and I were to write to each other on some forty occasions. We saw each other fifteen times. . . . We spent more than one hundred hours in conversation." Schmidt has characterized in similar terms his engagement with Giscard in 1974 on all manner of EC questions, such that, thereafter, "close contact became the rule."⁴¹ And Mitterrand used similar language to encapsulate the development of his friendship with Kohl in the 1980s and early 1990s.

A third theme in the reflections of French and German leaders is the involvement of other family members and the use of leaders' private homes as venues. Schmidt recalls how, at first, Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing, whose father was murdered in a German concentration camp, was distant, but became involved in a close friendship between the two couples. De Gaulle purposefully selected his private home for the 1958 meeting, the first in the postwar period between a French president and a German chancellor: "It seemed to me appropriate to mark the occasion in some special way, and I felt the atmosphere of a family house would be more striking than the splendor of a palace as a setting for the historic encounter between this old Frenchman and this very old German in the name of their two peoples. And so my wife and I offered the chancellor the modest hospitality of La Boissérie."⁴² Schmidt makes exactly the same point about familial surroundings benefiting relations two decades later. Kohl reports on how the involvement of his wife aided the Franco-German relationship.⁴³

These pairs stand out for their joint efforts in Franco-German relations, but other personalities, acting as individuals, also were deemed important leaders. Theodor Heuss, Germany's first president, and Carlo Schmid, a prominent SPD member of the Bundestag, were key players in the first stage of reconciliation, as was Pierre Mendès-France on the French side when the defeat of EDC meant German incorporation into the Western European Union (WEU) and NATO. Brandt singled out French foreign ministers Maurice Couve de Murville and Michel Debré, and noted how he did not have close connections to French Socialists, in part due to his ties to de Gaulle, whom he revered from their common background of resistance during World War II.⁴⁴ Schmidt identified a number of French personalities: Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, René Pleven, Jacques Delors, Joseph Rovin, Alfred Grosser, André Beaufre, Paul Stehlin, Jacques Massu, Pierre Pflimlin, Maurice Faure, Michel Rocard, Jacques Chirac, Raymond Barre.⁴⁵

Just as close personal ties between leaders can contribute to a positive framework for confronting and resolving differences, absence of comity can burden relations. Poor relations between de Gaulle and Ludwig Erhard were an extreme case of personalities and profiles not meshing. De Gaulle lauded Erhard's role as economics minister in Germany's postwar recovery, but was entirely dismissive of him as chancellor, particularly after the Atlanticist Erhard's vigorous role in inserting into the 1963 Elysée Treaty, contrary to the lame-duck Adenauer's wishes, a preamble that emphasized Germany's obligations to NATO, transatlantic ties, and an inclusive form of European integration.⁴⁶ For his part, Erhard disliked de Gaulle's imperiousness, and profoundly disagreed with his views on Europe, particularly the general's veto of British membership and his opposition to a European Free Trade Area.

Erhard cautioned against attributing too much responsibility for reconciliation to de Gaulle and Adenauer and preferred to see its source in the will of the people. De Gaulle's power politics approach collided with Erhard's market orientation; mutual feelings of dislike hampered already difficult relations.⁴⁷ The relationship between de Gaulle and Kurt-Georg Kiesinger, Erhard's successor, was almost as "pathetic."⁴⁸

A less severe case of an absent personal chemistry was the relationship between Georges Pompidou as president and Willy Brandt as chancellor. Despite some improvement in relations, analysts nonetheless noted the reality of continuing tensions. Brandt detailed these disagreements and his perception of the encounters with Pompidou. He referred to the Franco-German

personal tie as “more than . . . the requisite practical working relationship” and one characterized by “candor and mutual understanding,” even when they diverged, but Brandt failed to label his connection to Pompidou as friendship, in the same way his predecessors and successors did.⁴⁹

Personal relations and individual commitment on the part of government leaders make a difference, as the contrast in de Gaulle’s relations with Adenauer and Erhard demonstrate most starkly. Yet, de Gaulle recognized that partnership had to be anchored in something less subject to change and chance than personal chemistry and leadership. In addition to his reasoning that a treaty would place distance between Germany and the United States immediately, and preempt any German unilateralism in the East, one of de Gaulle’s main motivations for the 1963 Elysée Treaty was to embed Germany for the long term and to make relations more predictable through the creation of permanent institutions. De Gaulle went on to be disappointed in the treaty itself after the Bundestag insisted on the preamble, and compared treaties to young girls and roses, who can fade quickly.

Despite such disillusion, the institutions that developed from the 1963 Treaty proved to be highly durable, bearing out Adenauer’s response to de Gaulle’s notion of ephemeral roses: “I know roses. And the plants with the most thorns are the most resistant. The roses [in my garden] survived the winter brilliantly. This friendship between France and Germany is like a rose that will always have buds and flowers.” De Gaulle was moved already in July 1963 to revise his initial metaphor with the following words: “The treaty is neither a rose nor a rose bush, but a rose garden. A rose barely lasts a morning. . . . But with good will a rose garden lasts a long time.”⁵⁰

The 1963 Treaty first focused on governmental institutions, but it also dwelt on the importance of connections among young people, which meant the elevation of non-governmental actors, a necessary companion to state activities, as de Gaulle had made clear during Adenauer’s 1962 visit to Reims.⁵¹ More than thirty years after the signing of the treaty, in regretting the initial coolness of the Schröder-Chirac relationship, Kohl testified to the importance of these people-to-people ties: “Fortunately, the French-German friendship is no longer dependent on governments. It is a friendship between the two nations.”⁵²

The following analysis demonstrates that both governments and peoples were key players. What linked them was institutions, which conferred predictability to a historically chaotic, and equality to a historically asymmetrical, relationship.

INSTITUTIONS

Non-governmental Institutions

Non-governmental actors can play multiple roles in relations of reconciliation. They can be catalysts, complements, conduits, or competitors. In the Franco-German partnership, the first three roles are relevant.⁵³

Catalysts

The postwar role of religious institutions and other organizations focused on history was accompanied by broader activity, also propelled by a moral imperative. Joseph Rovin pointed to the importance of other societal actors in Franco-German reconciliation well in advance of the 1963 Elysée Treaty, citing his own French organization—the International Liaison and Documentation Office (*Le Bureau International de Liaison et de Documentation*), created in Paris in August 1945 and later expanded to an office in Bonn—but also the Franco-German Institute (*Deutsch-Französisches Institut*, DFI), opened in Ludwigsburg in 1948.⁵⁴

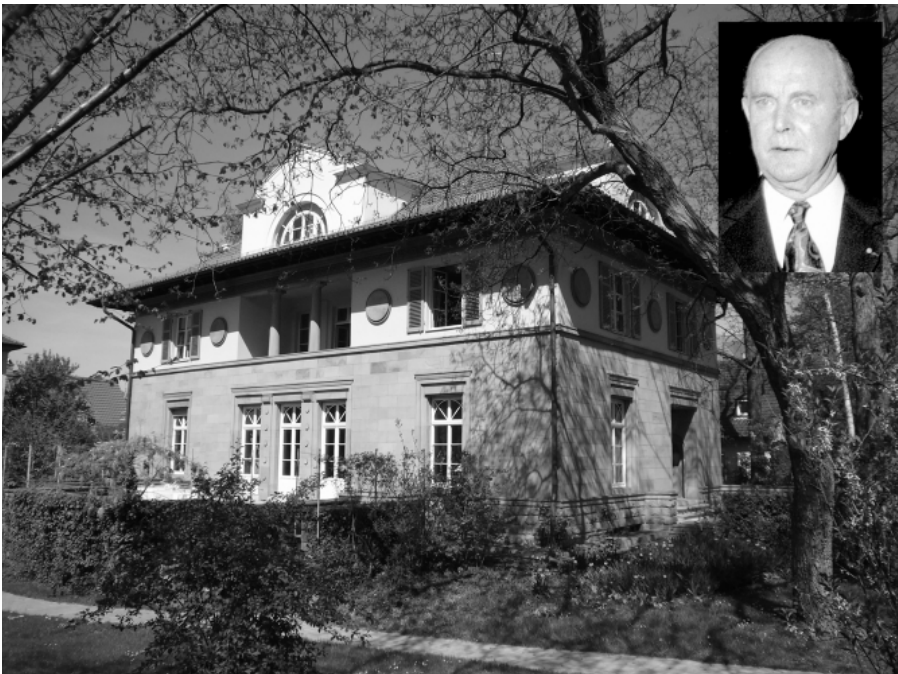


Figure 3.4. Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg and its first director, Dr. Fritz Schenk, 1948–1972. Courtesy of Franco-German Institute

The DFI was founded by eleven public figures, important politicians, including Theodor Heuss and Carlo Schmid (who served as president of the organization from its creation until his death in 1979). Their extensive political contacts garnered support for the institution.⁵⁵

DFI's mission resonated in Germany because of the bilateral connections it had with the French Committee for Exchanges with the New Germany (*Comité Français d'Échanges avec l'Allemagne Nouvelle*), founded in 1948 by a cross-section of French journalists, intellectuals, and politicians.⁵⁶ Funding was both public (local and regional) and private. In its first stage, from 1948 until 1963, in which DFI focused on meetings and exchanges between Germans and French, it benefited from cooperative relations with other German societal organizations, whether political, cultural, or media-related, whose interest was France. DFI remained an elite phenomenon in the 1950s, in significant part because it had no funding for outreach beyond the middle class, but the institute's language classes and informal exchanges were an important model for the section of the 1963 intergovernmental Friendship Treaty dealing with education and youth.⁵⁷

Complements

The Franco-German Institute: DFI has been one of the most durable and comprehensive societal initiatives dealing with Franco-German relations in the last six decades. After the first stage, when its activities were more extensive than official policy, the institute's work complemented governmental ties in four stages: consolidation and education of the successor generation, 1963–1972; foundation for comparative systems analysis, 1972–1989; formation of national societies in Europe after 1989; and Franco-German relations in the context of European integration and globalization.⁵⁸ In its first stage, DFI inspired a rebirth of local political life, establishing quickly a new generation keen on building a concrete Franco-German community.

At the new millennium, the chief partner for DFI was the Center for Information and Research on Contemporary Germany (*Centre d'Information et de Recherche sur l'Allemagne Contemporaine—CIRAC*) in Paris. Exchanges and discussions between elites and between youth in France and Germany; sponsorship of research and publications; and provision of information to a broader public continued as DFI's main methods, and political elites continued as the mainstay of DFI's participants.⁵⁹ Beyond DFI, political networks were multiple, institutionalized in particular through political party connections.

The Elysée Treaty of 1963, and its supplement of 1988, provided a framework for the extensive network of contacts in every walk of society. The variety and intensity of societal contacts prompted already in 1967 the appointment of Coordinators for Franco-German Cooperation (*Koordinatoren für deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit*), based in the foreign ministries of the two countries. As part of the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, the position was renamed "Commissioner for Franco-German Cooperation" (*Die Beauftragten für die deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit*).⁶⁰ The treaty also created the position of Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany for Cultural Affairs (*Der Bevollmächtigte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland für kulturelle Angelegenheiten*), a representative of the German states, in light of the several states' (*Länder*) responsibility for culture and education in the German federal system.⁶¹

Youth Exchange: One of the most important endeavors, in terms of funding, numbers of participants, and programs, has been the Franco-German Youth Office (*Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk*), created in 1963 within the framework of the Elysée Treaty. Its bilateral Administrative Council is appointed by the two governments, convenes alternately in France and Germany under the chair of the two ministries of youth affairs, and implements its directives through a secretary general (alternating nationals). Both nationalities serve in all parts of the organization regardless of location, and have responsibility for programs in both countries.⁶²

The non-governmental partners carrying out the exchanges include youth associations, sports clubs, language centers, training centers, trade unions, schools and universities, and town twinning organizations. Other methods besides exchange include training, festivals, conferences and seminars, and internships, covering a range of functional areas from journalism to agronomy to employment. In 2007, the Youth Office was funded at €20.5 million, with equal contributions from the two governments. Since 1963, eight million French and German youths have participated in more than three hundred thousand exchange programs; the annual programs in the first decade of the twenty-first century stood at some eleven thousand, with two hundred thousand participants.

The initial Youth Office goal of harmony was replaced over time by the objective of understanding differences. With the goal of educating for a larger European context, like other non-governmental actors cited above, the organization also promotes trilateral meetings, involving, for example, young people from other Western European countries, from Central and Eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent from other geographic regions.

Monitoring effect has been an issue more in the field of youth exchange than in any other area of complementary activity, and over time has yielded mixed results, with the main criticism relating to the organization's structural weaknesses and program inconsistencies and rigidities.⁶³ The most definitive evaluations, undertaken by a working group commissioned by the two youth ministries and by a working group of the Bundestag and Assemblée Nationale, were occasioned by the 2003 fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty. While finding deficiencies in administration, program coherence, and funding, both evaluations emphasized that the Franco-German Youth Office had succeeded admirably in its original goal of fostering reconciliation and understanding through youth encounters and exchanges. Like the Franco-German Textbook Commission, Franco-German youth exchange was seen as an effective model for reconciliation in crisis regions in Europe. "European identity," rather than the original Franco-German rivalry and conflict, became the operative environment for youth as the exchanges expanded.

Success in the second goal of the 1963 Treaty, the learning of each other's language, has been limited, more so in France than in Germany, leading to a recommendation for focusing on language mastery not only in language training, but across all activities, including employment-related programs.⁶⁴ Beginning in 2001 and 2002, with support of the Robert Bosch Foundation (*Robert Bosch Stiftung*) and Daimler Chrysler, "Language Buses" (*DeutschMobil* and *FranceMobile*) in both countries have recruited students to learn French or German, with a subsequent campaign orchestrated at the ministerial level.⁶⁵ Following the reports of the two working groups, in recognition of the need to create commitment to Franco-German partnership by a new generation, the two ministers of youth instituted major administrative and program reforms along the lines suggested, including more effective participation of civil society representatives in decision making.

Sister Cities: Youth encounters and exchanges occur across many functional domains. So do private activities beyond youth.⁶⁶ To provide easier access to information for this broad private sector, the two governments organized a joint website. Over 2,500 towns and regions are twinned, starting with Ludwigsburg and Montbéliard in 1950. Following the fortieth anniversary of the 1963 Treaty, January 22 was designated "Franco-German Day," an opportunity to place the relationship in the center of the curriculum in educational institutions, and to promote the relationship in twinned cities, towns, and municipalities.

Education: Some 4,800 schools have partnerships. There are Franco-German schools in Saarbrücken, Freiburg, and Buc, whose graduation diplomas are recognized in both countries, and some graduates were credentialed in both countries. Since 1999, there has been a Franco-German virtual university administered in Saarbrücken with its own finances, administration, and president. French and German universities form its core. Collaboration in science has been impressive, including contacts via agreements between the National Center for Scientific Research (*Centre national de la recherche scientifique*) and the German Research Foundation (*Deutscher Forschungsgemeinschaft*), as well as the Max Planck Society (*Max-Planck-Gesellschaft*). There are over eight hundred agreements in the sciences between French and German universities; and, since 1979, a Franco-German society for science and technology (*Deutsch-französische Gesellschaft für Wissenschaft und Technologie*) has existed with offices in Germany and France.⁶⁷ Other disciplines have been equally well represented both in university connections and exchanges and in the specialized work of research organizations such as the German Council on Foreign Relations (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik*, DGAP), funded through the Robert Bosch Foundation and by the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*).

Culture: Cultural clubs and friendship societies have been sufficiently numerous that an umbrella Organization of Franco-German Societies (*Vereinigung Deutsch-Französischer Gesellschaften in Deutschland e.V.*) was established in Germany in 1981. Like the Franco-German Cultural Institutes (*Deutsch-französische Kulturinstitute*), they parallel the work of the publicly supported Goethe Institute (*Goethe Institut*) in France, organizing all manner of exchanges and activities in the arts. There has been also, starting in 1991, a jointly operated television network, ARTE, and since 2000/2003 a Franco-German Film Academy and Franco-German film meetings.⁶⁸ The plethora of private cultural activity between the two societies and across the arts has been framed within the Cultural Agreement between France and Germany, signed in October 1954.

Economics: Bilateral activity has extended to the economic sphere through institutions such as trade unions; the Franco-German Chamber of Commerce (*Deutsch-Französische Industrie- und Handelskammer*), founded in 1955; the annual (since 1991) Franco-German Industry Forum (*Deutsch-Französische Unternehmengespräche*); and the German Tourism Office (*Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus e.V.*).⁶⁹ There is also substantial cooperation in business education, including a Franco-German Institute

for Higher Learning in Technology and Economics (*Deutsch-französisches Hochschulinstitut für Technik und Wirtschaft*), founded in 1978. In these fora, motives transformed from shared values and friendship to instrumental business and economic calculations.

France and Germany became each other's most important trade partner. By 2009, Germany was the most important investor in France, and France was the fourth largest investor in Germany, with direct investment increasing by 27 percent between 2005 and 2008.⁷⁰ Like political relations, Franco-German economic relations experienced vicissitudes, particularly in the 1990s when there was a decline in trading ties.⁷¹ Major mergers (Aventis, European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company, Framatome ANP) between French and German companies in the high technology field, however, increased the private economic links between the two countries, and the EADS Airbus project, which started as a Franco-German venture, is seen as a major success combining resources and technology.

Conduits

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) have been the most active foundations in France. For the KAS office, which opened in 1980, cooperation with France enjoyed the highest priority. Although the political elite, in power and in opposition, especially during the cohabitation period of the Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin from 1997 until 2002, was the main focus, the KAS has developed close ties to business, the media, trade unions, churches, and research institutions.⁷² Issues of importance for the bilateral relationship, such as comparative public policy, foreign and security policy, and the whole arena of European integration, also have been the foci of activity. Regular meetings of parliamentarians are a key feature of exchange. The KAS, when appropriate, also trilateralizes its discussions to include transatlantic dialogues.

The FES office, which opened in 1985, concentrates on Franco-German relations and European integration, aiming at a similar range of interlocutors as the KAS. The party connections could be seen in Franco-German study groups on foreign and security policy and on economic and financial policy, set up in 1996 by the then-head of the French Socialist Party, Lionel Jospin, and the then-chair of the SPD, Oskar Lafontaine. The foundation's connections to the French Socialist Party emerged even more importantly after 2002 when the latter was forced into opposition. The FES activity focuses, like the

programs of the KAS, on comparative social, economic, and institutional issues, and foreign and security policy.⁷³

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNS), the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS), the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS), and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS) have regional offices in Brussels, mostly dealing with European integration and the role of individual countries such as France, but have no separate representation in Paris.

Almost six decades after entry into the Franco-German Treaty that framed much of their intersocietal activity, Frenchmen had developed a highly positive attitude toward Germany. In a poll conducted for the *Fondation pour l'Innovation Politique*, when asked about the three countries they liked most, French respondents named Germany first in 19 percent of the cases (second only to France, which received 39 percent of first preferences). When first, second, and third preferences were aggregated, Germany again was second (at 50 percent) this time behind Spain (58 percent), where millions of French traditionally vacation.⁷⁴

Governmental Institutions

The fraternal twin of the dense network of societal organizations connecting France and Germany is the bilateral governmental institutions provided for by the Elysée Treaty.⁷⁵ According to the French and German governments, forty years later those structural ties constitute an “incomparable” level of cooperation.⁷⁶

Some analysts still have seen meager accomplishments, viewing, as one observer suggested, “an empty folder.”⁷⁷ However, given the history of hatred and war, success should be measured not only by political and policy outcome, but also by the very creation of institutions. Using both criteria, forty years after the treaty, there was a large sense of achievement. Yet, for a long period after the signing of the treaty, such achievement was not apparent on either dimension.

The development of Franco-German governmental institutions can be defined across four periods: 1963 to 1988 when, apart from governmental meetings, the Elysée Treaty seemed largely moribund; 1988 to 2003, when provisions in the original treaty were acted upon through the creation of bilateral institutions; 2003 until 2005, when a major reassessment was occasioned by the fortieth anniversary and a deepening of agreement was prompted by U.S. policy in Iraq; and 2005 to 2009, when a combination

of pragmatism and friendship permitted weathering of global and internal challenges. As with non-governmental actors, the concept of “institutions” covers the creation of actual organizations as well as the institutionalization (permanence, regularity) of meetings and exchanges; it also entails ensuing policy activity.

Over these four periods, bilateral activity flowered from relatively simple consultation and coordination to active cooperation and common policies, and finally to joint policies toward the outside world. From the perspective of the two governments, the 1963 Treaty “sealed” reconciliation between France and Germany, implying that the uncoordinated, private developments and irregular governmental meetings identified before this date constituted the first phase of the reconciliation process, and that institutionalization represented the second phase.

There is another dimension to be noted, separating the Cold War and a divided Germany from a unified Germany in an expanding Europe. These most recent developments stimulated great anxiety in France, with popular perceptions of marginalization from a Europe whose center of gravity, drawn by a more powerful Germany, would move eastward. Germany in this post-Cold War period worked to assuage French fears.

1963–1988

In addition to regular meetings of officials in education and youth affairs as a framework for the private exchanges addressed in “Non-governmental Institutions” (above), the two broad areas broached by the treaty were political relations and defense. On the former, the treaty provided for a minimum of two meetings every year between heads of state and government and four times every year for the foreign ministers. For the latter, defense ministers were to meet four times each year, and chiefs of staff of the armed forces were to come together at least once every two months. Although political relations between 1963 and 1966 were considered “most difficult” between de Gaulle and Erhard, even then the two annual summits did take place, as did foreign ministers’ meetings.

The institutionalization of political ties through regularity of meetings proceeded in the next period of “lukewarm” relations between de Gaulle and Kiesinger, and even included important decisions, such as the agreement of the March 1969 summit to develop the Airbus.⁷⁸ In the slightly improved connection between Brandt and Pompidou, regular contacts continued. By

mid-1975, there had been twenty-six summit meetings. The institutionalization of meetings, coupled with the personal connection between leaders, meant considerable success in broad political cooperation during the subsequent tenure of the Giscard d'Estaing-Schmidt and Mitterrand-Kohl pairs, including agreements on economic policy, the environment and natural disasters, science policy, and key political agreements in the EC arena.

Defense ties were institutionalized in the period from 1963 to 1974, but no real cooperation ensued. It was said that "the spirit of the treaty as envisioned by de Gaulle and Adenauer was dead." "Real progress" was made only with the arrival of Giscard d'Estaing and Schmidt, both of whom introduced domestic changes in the security arena conducive to Franco-German military cooperation, yet it was not unlimited.⁷⁹ Despite the ongoing differences in strategic culture and military orientation (French commitment to independence and exclusion of Germany from nuclear planning; German commitment to NATO), and against a background of renewed U.S.-Soviet détente of the mid-1980s, in their frequent meetings Mitterrand and Kohl undertook a number of measures to improve Franco-German military cooperation, including: the proposal for a mixed Franco-German military group; the creation of a Franco-German commission on security; Mitterrand's Bundestag speech supporting the deployment of Pershing missiles in Germany; the revival of the WEU; and Operation Bold Sparrow, the most important military maneuvers to date between France and Germany. Yet, given the promise of the Elysée Treaty, institutionalization still fell short.

1988–2003

The 1963 Elysée Treaty's twenty-fifth anniversary occasioned a major government reassessment in the belief that this framework should not "stiffen into ritual or routine."⁸⁰ Political commitment to further institutionalization was registered in the Kohl-Mitterrand decision made at the fiftieth summit in November 1987 and carried out at the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting in January 1988 to create Franco-German councils in defense, economics and finance, and culture. By the fall of 1989 there was further political commitment to institutionalization, this time for a council on the environment, and a significant agreement for military cooperation (at five thousand troops, not in numbers, but as a symbol), the Franco-German brigade.

Soon after the significant institutional achievements in the early days of this period (1988–2003), there was a reminder that Franco-German

relations were still accompanied by tough tests. The strength of the relationship had been tested on a variety of occasions before 1989: examples include EDC in the 1950s; the EC's "empty chair" in the 1960s (after French withdrawal from the EC Council of Ministers); monetary policy in the 1970s; the United States and NATO in the 1980s. Relations, nonetheless, survived, and even prospered.

German unification was to prove the ultimate test, the authentication of reconciliation. At first it was unclear how robust the relationship actually was in light of two factors, the absence of advanced warning from Kohl to Mitterrand about the chancellor's November 1989 dramatic, ten-point plan to overcome the division of Germany and Europe; and the reality of Mitterrand's outright concern about, if not opposition to, German unification, expressed in his December 1989 discussions with Gorbachev and his trip to East Germany (the first visit there of a head of state from the three Western allies).⁸¹ However, by the summer of 1990, through a combination of the inexorability of the process, Gorbachev's acceptance of unification, Germany's handling of the process, and the crafting of a wider EC process to which Bonn was firmly committed, Mitterrand had come to support German unification. Joint bilateral actions continued, including the agreement on a treaty for the development of the common TV channel ARTE (October 1990); common overtures to the EU Council presidency on Common Foreign and Security Policy (December 1990); and on making the Franco-German military brigade the basis of a Eurocorps (in place by October 1993).

In the decade after the creation of the Eurocorps, up to the fortieth anniversary of the treaty in 2003, there was a new kind of institutionalization. It was now across the board and beyond both the bilateral relationship and the EU in the areas of security, public policy, foreign policy, bureaucracy, and politics.⁸²

Three developments were particularly noteworthy in the hard security arena: the Elysée Treaty-based creation of a Franco-German armaments agency in 1995; the December 1996 crafting of a Franco-German security and defense concept at the sixty-eighth bilateral summit; and the sending of soldiers from the Franco-German brigade to Bosnia-Herzegovina in December 1996. Complementing these military activities were two agreements in a broader conception of security, the May 1999 creation of the Franco-German Center for Police and Customs Cooperation (*Gemeinsames Zentrum der deutsch-französischen Polizei- und Zollzusammenarbeit*); and the November 2000 agreement to count alternative military service performed by young Germans in France and by young Frenchmen in Germany.

In the public policy domain, there was an effort to air and coordinate positions on pressing domestic issues important for both countries and for the international community, for example the June 2001 joint statement on racism and xenophobia, and the November 2001 joint statement on bioethics. The breadth and diversity of agreements were displayed further in the film agreement between France and Germany earlier in the same year. Policy in this exceptional decade also embraced common positions on foreign affairs: the first conference, in May 1991, in Weimar, of French and German ambassadors to East European countries; the first Franco-German foreign ministers' conference in December 1995 on cooperation in foreign policy and in policy toward the EU; the April 1997 joint appearances of the German and French ambassadors to the United States; the December 1998 opening of a joint Franco-German office in Banja-Luka in Bosnia-Herzegovina; the June 2000 joint declaration on South East Europe; and the November 2001 joint declaration on Afghanistan.

A novel evolution in foreign policy in this period was an expansion in 1997 of the bureaucratic exchanges already existing between the French and German foreign ministries to include French representation in the German embassy in Paris and German representation in the French embassy in Bonn. The system in which Germans would serve in the French foreign ministry and French bureaucrats would serve in the German foreign ministry dates back to 1986, and was followed by exchanges between other ministries, including defense, justice and interior, transportation, economics, and finance.⁸³

Additional bilateral institutions were established at the political level in this period of expansion, with an exchange program for French and German interns in the Bundestag and Assemblée Nationale beginning in 1989. Seeking to intensify cooperation between the two parliaments, this intern exchange added to the individual and joint activities of the longstanding Franco-German parliamentarians' groups in the two countries. In addition, there were common sessions of the foreign affairs committees of the two parliaments and annual meetings of the presidencies of the two bodies.

Again, the overall cooperative tenor of the relationship did not eliminate the reality of discord. However, that discord could lead to further institutionalization, for example, after the fallout at the December 2000 Nice summit, the initiation of the "Blaesheim Process" in which informal, ad hoc meetings (every six to eight weeks) of the heads of state and government and foreign ministers complemented the formal, regularized meetings that occur much less frequently.

2003–2005

The period from 2003 to 2005 was dominated by two developments: the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, and the war in Iraq. Concerns of ritual and routine expressed on the twenty-fifth anniversary reappeared for the fortieth birthday of the treaty, but so did the hope for a new impetus through new institutions.⁸⁴

If the first two periods (1963–1988; 1988–2003) constituted times of building bilateral institutions, the period from 2003 to 2005 was characterized by a sense of closure. According to Brigitte Sauzay, Schröder's advisor on Franco-German relations and formerly chief interpreter for the French president, in this third phase, the players in Franco-German relations were no longer preoccupied with reconciliation. The goal of "demystifying" the other had largely been realized.

"Closure" should not suggest the disappearance of the process of reconciliation. As a daily task, the key issue was the pragmatic handling of practical policy questions, yet reconciliation appeared intermittently as an opportunity for expressing and interpreting gestures emotionally, for example the sixtieth anniversary of the Allied Normandy assault against Nazi Germany.⁸⁵ As an active element of policy, in this period of institutional consolidation and refinement, according to Sauzay, the goal was the export of the successful model of bilateral reconciliation to the new Europe of twenty-five as it inevitably encountered crises and roadblocks.⁸⁶

Fortieth Anniversary of the Elysée Treaty: The two governments' joint declaration on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary provided both the rationale and nature of institutional change. France and Germany recognized that, after forty years, the context of their relationship had undergone significant change: the end of the Cold War; the realization of German unification; the enlargement of the EU to the east; globalization. Now the challenge had become to help steer a new Europe in a new world.

France and Germany acknowledged in the joint declaration the centrality of institutions' dual location, both for societies and governments. In addition to the societal goals of improving language mastery, instituting a Franco-German Day, and reforming youth exchange programs, the two countries proposed joint Franco-German teams for international sporting events, an annual conference to discuss major social issues, and new journalist exchanges.⁸⁷ They recommended Europeanizing certain bilateral connections such as the Franco-German institutions of higher education and the ARTE cultural channel.⁸⁸

France and Germany underscored the trend toward comparative public policy analysis and joint positions from the end of the period from 1988 to 2003, covering the waterfront of issues: security and foreign policy, harmonization of law, dual citizenship, regional cooperation, economic and finance policy, development aid, the environment, and science and technology.

In a number of the areas identified by the joint declaration, the lofty rhetoric of the anniversary was matched by cooperation in practice. For example, already in October 2003, leaders from all sixteen German states and twenty-two French regions (*régions*) met, for the first time, to discuss intensified cooperation in language, cultural, educational, and economic affairs.⁸⁹ Despite major disagreements in summer and fall 2004 over economic mergers, the creation of a European shipbuilding megacompany, and the length of the work week in the two countries, at the end of October 2004 the German and French economics ministers agreed to a five-point plan, including the creation of a working group of economic experts to hammer out areas for industrial cooperation and Franco-German technology centers. An October 2004 joint declaration on the compatibility of French and German professional diplomas was designed to enhance economic integration by encouraging labor mobility.⁹⁰

In foreign policy, France and Germany opened in June 2003 a common diplomatic representation in Podgorica. In the cultural sphere, France and Germany made good on the January 2003 plan, in 2004, for joint cultural programs by supporting financially fifty-seven programs in forty-nine countries. By summer 2004, the two countries were involved in another third-country cooperation, the transport of soldiers from the Franco-German brigade for action in Afghanistan. In February 2005, the French and German special representatives for Europe visited Croatia together. Closer to home, the French and German interior ministers agreed to an additional form of cross-border cooperation, joint Franco-German police patrols along the border between the two countries, as part of a general compact to combat terrorism and illegal immigration.⁹¹

The transformation from a verbal commitment to policy cooperation into actual collaboration across many sectors was facilitated by two major institutional changes initiated by the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty: the conversion of the biannual meetings of heads of state and government into joint ministerial councils (*Gemeinsame Ministerräte*) involving practically the whole cabinet on either side together; and the creation in the French and German foreign ministries of a new post of

Commissioner for Franco-German Cooperation (*Der Beauftragte für die deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit*) to coordinate the preparation of bilateral fora, the implementation of joint decisions, and harmonization of positions on the EU.⁹² The bureaucratic domesticization and internalization of Franco-German reconciliation in Germany were expressed in the reality that coordination headaches of the ministerial councils involved German agencies more than they did French counterparts.

The War in Iraq: France and Germany were proactive in forging joint positions and joint institutions, but they also reacted to international events, the most dramatic of which was the war in Iraq. Their joint position on Iraq demonstrated both the depth and consistency of foreign policy coordination between France and Germany.

As in most other areas of policy interaction, France and Germany did not agree completely on Iraq: Germany flatly opposed any military intervention, even with a UN mandate, whereas France viewed military invasion, with UN approval, as a last resort. Yet, predictably, given the pattern of ultimate cooperation after differences and the recent commitment to foreign policy coordination, the two countries firmly concurred on two points that rendered the American action unacceptable to both: the UN, and not the United States, should have been the final arbiter of Iraq's compliance with the weapons inspection regime; and not all channels for a diplomatic solution had been exhausted before the U.S. military intervention in March 2003.⁹³

During the period from fall 2002 through the beginning of 2005, a Franco-German response to American policy was expressed at every stage of the three parts to the conflict: inspection; military intervention; and handover of sovereignty. Articulation of jointness occurred in bilateral venues (meetings of heads of state and government and of foreign ministers), in multilateral fora (the UN), and on major ceremonial occasions (the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty). In fall 2002 to spring 2003, France and Germany questioned U.S. policy in the initial UN discussions of Iraq and weapons of mass destruction, and in the subsequent debate about military intervention, culminating in their joint position against war at the end of January 2003. In February 2003, the two countries initially refused to agree to NATO military support to Turkey in case of war with Iraq. In the same month, they issued a declaration, together with Russia, calling for beefed-up inspections and full implementation of previous UN resolutions (Security Council Resolution 1441) as an alternative to war. In March 2003 came the Franco-German promise to veto, again with Russia, any UN resolution authorizing war.⁹⁴

By April 2003, France, Germany, and Russia were calling for a central role for the UN in fighting international terrorism and dealing with the humanitarian crisis and territorial integrity of Iraq. Six months later, France and Germany reacted coolly to the initial American attempt for UN legitimization of the U.S. administration in Iraq. By the end of the year, both countries agreed to ease Iraq's international debt. In February 2004, the two countries began to voice their concern about the American plan for the transfer of sovereignty after June 30, but also agreed, together with Japan, to coordinate efforts for development aid, police training, and education. By June, France and Germany were able to accept the revised Anglo-American Security Council Resolution on the transfer of power to Iraq.⁹⁵

In their summer 2004 summit in Sochi, France, Germany, and Russia agreed to work more closely on international terrorism, and to promote a stabilization of the situation in Iraq. In their bilateral meeting in Strasbourg in October, Schröder and Chirac discussed the upcoming international conference on planning the Iraqi election. By the end of the year, France and Germany were refusing participation of their soldiers in a NATO-led training mission in Iraq, but both continued to support the training of Iraqi security forces outside Iraq.⁹⁶

2005–2009

Angela Merkel's first trip abroad and first foray into EU summitry as chancellor revealed much about what would happen during the period from 2005 to 2009. Claiming that it was not an act of "ritual" but "conviction," Merkel chose Paris as the first foreign capital to visit as chancellor, in November 2005, even though Poland was her initial consideration.⁹⁷ At the EU summit the next month, Merkel mediated successfully between France and the United Kingdom over the budget, not automatically taking the French side (*à la Schröder*), yet insisting on an ultimate Franco-German delivery of the compromise to Prime Minister Tony Blair.⁹⁸

The next four years in Franco-German relations would be marked by serious public disagreements, accentuated by differences in style, temperament, and experience of Merkel and presidents Chirac and Sarkozy, but in the end the partnership was as strong and primary as ever, undergirded by steady, quotidian jointness in bilateral policies and institutions out of the public eye. The larger context of European integration had always been vital, but the connection became more important than ever as the EU internal identity

crisis and the international economic and financial meltdown presented fundamental challenges, to which France and Germany finally responded jointly. Reconciliation proved in this period to be a process of negotiating differences for common good.

Over the four-year period, three differences dominated the Franco-German agenda. French preference for a protectionist, heavy state hand in the economy contrasted with German insistence on limited state intervention. The contrast partially accounted for two more specific divergences, over the fledgling Quaero bilateral search engine enterprise, and the well-established Airbus.⁹⁹ The two specific cases of divergence were resolved differently, one suggesting agreement to disagree and the other suggesting compromise.

The Quaero project, launched by Schröder and Chirac, involved a government-private industry partnership as a European challenge to Google, but by January 2007 the German government had withdrawn from the initiative due to concerns about the basic design and a preference for a German product.¹⁰⁰

As the Airbus crisis over financial solvency, building location for new planes, jobs, management, and restructuring heated up in October 2006, Merkel and Chirac voiced commitment to maintaining a Franco-German balance of burdens and opportunities, but failed to resolve the problems. With Sarkozy's May 2007 arrival in power came preference for a greater French government participation in the Franco-German parent company, EADS, a move Merkel rejected. However, at their July 2007 meeting in Toulouse, Merkel and Sarkozy echoed shareholder sentiment by agreeing to replace the cumbersome binational, dual-headed management at both Airbus and EADS with a sole German president and chief executive at Airbus and a sole French chief executive at EADS.¹⁰¹

The divergent approaches and temperaments also had institutional fallout. Sarkozy cancelled a March 2008 meeting with Merkel and another one between the French and German finance ministers. Yet, the interaction was revived immediately on a smaller scale by a working dinner after the two leaders jointly opened a major information technology fair together in Hannover, where Sarkozy observed: "In order for our partnership to succeed, it is necessary for each to understand and accept our differences in economic culture."¹⁰² Moreover, the thirteen Blaesheim-format informal meetings that did occur from late 2005 through late 2009, dwarfed the one cancellation.

Beyond the public spats, in a second, highly institutionalized and formal set of bilateral meetings—the joint cabinet consultations—France and Germany demonstrated deep partnership. In this period from 2005 to 2009

under Merkel, the joint cabinet consultations—which replaced in 2003 the Elysée Treaty's semiannual summits—proceeded six times, consistently using the language of commonality (of purpose, ideals, and work), trust (personal and professional), normalcy (of closeness and tradition), and practical solutions. Partnership ranged beyond words to action in a series of agreements and commitments for new or expanded cooperation in the spheres of transportation, integration of immigrants, research and technology, the environment, energy, youth, common diplomatic training, common cultural and diplomatic missions abroad, joint defense training and combined foreign missions, trade, joint investigation teams for crimes, development aid, border police, education, labor, and economics.¹⁰³ A new, globally unique ministerial feature was the presence of a French cabinet minister at a regular German cabinet meeting and vice versa, but the loftier vision of nationals in opposite cabinets (such as a German minister of economics as a member of the French cabinet) did not happen.

As a mature, tested partnership, the Franco-German relationship no longer needed to refer to reconciliation rhetorically, but in reconciliation gestures it did occasionally remind itself and its publics how far the relationship had come. To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Adenauer-de Gaulle meeting in Colombey-les-Deux-Églises, in October 2008 Merkel and Sarkozy jointly dedicated a de Gaulle memorial, and she emphasized their “historic responsibility.”¹⁰⁴

In their March 2009 press conference following the Berlin joint cabinet consultations, President Sarkozy said he told the chancellor it was “an honor” for France to welcome the stationing of German troops (as part of the Franco-German brigade) on French soil for the first time since World War II.¹⁰⁵ At the end of the period under review, on November 11, 2009, for the first time a German chancellor participated in Paris in the World War I Armistice Day anniversary (she had forgone the opportunity to attend in November 2008 when the event occurred in Verdun). Here Chancellor Merkel underscored the centrality of reconciliation: its strength, intimate connection to friendship and memory, origin in the extended hand of France, and consequence in common responsibility for Europe. President Sarkozy characterized her presence as “a gesture of exceptional friendship.”¹⁰⁶

Agreement in the bilateral domain was central for reconciliation in the four periods considered, spanning 1963 to 2009, but the EC/EU arena and the broader international context also played their part from the beginning of the cooperative partnership in the 1950s.



Figure 3.5. Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy at Charles de Gaulle's grave, Colombey-les-deux-Églises, October 11, 2008. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Steins

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

“International context” refers to both the broader global environment in which Franco-German reconciliation was set, and the narrower regional context of the European Community/European Union.

Global Influence

In chapter 2, I identified the international developments surrounding Germany's external relations and foreign policy of reconciliation in three periods: the evolution of the Cold War; détente; and the fall of the Berlin Wall coupled with the demise of the Soviet bloc.

From American urgings for German rearmament that helped spark the Plevén Plan in 1950, through American policy toward Iraq that generated Franco-German opposition some fifty years later, U.S. behavior played a role as one of several factors accounting for reconciliation between Germany

and France. Similarly, from Soviet control of East Germany and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the Cold War through the expiration of the Soviet bloc, Russia's behavior helped determine the fact and nature of Franco-German reconciliation. Here our focus is, then, the regional context of the EC/EU that was most intimately connected to the seeding and full flowering of Franco-German reconciliation.

France and Germany in the EU

Over six decades, from the first ideas of Adenauer and Schuman through the joint declaration of January 2003 and the subsequent commitments of Merkel and Sarkozy, French and German officials emphasized the inextricable link between the bilateral relationship and the larger setting of European integration. Merkel proclaimed in January 2006: "We [France and Germany] are in agreement that Europe stagnates when France and Germany are not the motor." Sarkozy voiced the complementary position two years later: "When Europe appears united, then this occurs because Germany and France have worked together."¹⁰⁷ In the past decades, societal actors also increasingly chose this optic.

The relationship between reconciliation and integration worked in both directions. Evaluating both the effect of integration on reconciliation and the ability of reconciliation to influence integration, there is a positive consequence in the first and mixed results for the second. It is the fact of "jointness," coming up with common proposals, that defined reconciliation during the past fifty years, but, as the two countries began to export the reconciliation model to an enlarged EU, the second dimension, of Franco-German influence on the EU, became just as significant.

The structure of the EC/EU proffered a framework for the development of reconciliation in at least seven ways. First, the European framework conferred structural equality on the two actors whose physical and power attributes were otherwise asymmetrical. Second, it took care of changes in power attributes, such as Germany's increased population with German unification, at least in the increase for Germany of seats in the European Parliament and the institution of a population dimension for Qualified Majority Voting (QMV). Third, the larger European context provided a constant venue for interaction. Fourth, over the years, the European framework meant engagement on all manner of functional and policy arenas. Fifth, the broader vista served as a constant reminder of the closeness of France and Germany

by permitting comparison with other pairs or with potential partners. Sixth, the larger arena with multiple countries fostered the need for leadership by France and Germany. Finally, the project of European integration gave France and Germany the opportunity to deepen reconciliation by working together to devise common proposals to move the EC/EU forward.

In chapter 2 we noted, even in the face of differences, the many areas of coordination and joint positions developed over many decades, beginning with Schmidt and Chirac over the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and culminating in the Franco-German joint papers on the main aspects of the constitutional convention. Douglas Webber and others have gone a step further, assessing through the 1990s both the degree of jointness (level of divergence/convergence of Franco-German views) and influence (as a motor of integration).¹⁰⁸ Using a broad range of issue areas and citing European and national interest, they identified a range of jointness and a range of influence. The analysis of Webber and others also demonstrated an unexpected relationship between jointness and influence: “Franco-German influence in the EU also appears to be greater—paradoxically—the greater the initial divergence between their preferences on a given issue.”¹⁰⁹ Even though France and Germany disagreed at the outset of discussions, the unity forged through debate and deliberation conferred joint influence on EU decision-making.

In the new era of a massively enlarged EU since 2003 and 2004 (anticipated, and then real), there was evidence of jointness, lack of influence, and influence on the part of the Franco-German partnership, with actions over the Constitutional Treaty, Turkey’s accession, and the Stability Pact proving particularly revealing.¹¹⁰ The January 2003 Franco-German initiative in the convention regarding institutional architecture attempted to bridge the two different positions that had developed in the EU over priority to the Council or the Commission and the Parliament. Much of the Franco-German proposal for reconfiguration of the institutions was accepted eventually, but, on the key question of extending QMV, the proposal ran into successful opposition, particularly from the United Kingdom, which wanted to retain a veto on taxation, social policy, and foreign and security policy.¹¹¹ Franco-German cooperation on constitutional issues extended to active involvement by both Schröder and Fischer in the referendum campaign for the Constitutional Treaty in France, which proved unsuccessful in May 2005.¹¹²

Despite earlier differences between the French and German governments over whether Turkey should join the EU, and ongoing political and societal opposition, the two countries jointly met with the Turkish prime minister in

October 2004 and promised strong support. At the December 2004 Brussels summit, where the question of opening negotiations with Turkey was answered favorably, France and Germany played a key role in forging a compromise as the negotiations deadlocked over Turkey's recognition of Cyprus.¹¹³

Whereas initiatives by France and Germany on the Convention and on Turkey were considered actions to promote integration, their conduct concerning the Stability and Growth Pact was deemed counterproductive by observers. When it was clear in November 2003 that in 2004 Germany and France, for the third year running, would exceed the 3 percent budget deficit criterion in the euro zone of the EMU, they were able to push through a temporary suspension of the pact's rules. Despite the July 2004 European Court of Justice ruling, in the Commission's favor, that the Council had used the wrong procedure when it suspended action against France and Germany, by December the Commission aborted its attempts to carry out sanctions and a month later the member states' finance ministers also abandoned the path of disciplinary action. In their October 2004 bilateral summit, France and Germany had urged jointly a major reform of the Stability Pact that would allow growth to play a bigger role, would permit exclusion of some public spending from the deficit calculation, and would lessen the role of the Commission in deciding on infractions. The prospect was for limited reform of the Stability and Growth Pact.¹¹⁴

The fact that France and Germany had been architects of integration in the sensitive arena of economic and monetary union and represented the largest and second largest economies only heightened the negative impact of their actions. Observers of the Franco-German relationship cast this incident in bleak terms, accusing Germany and France of losing "the moral high ground," of being "serial sinners," and of constituting a "duo infernale."¹¹⁵ Coming after the bitter split within the EU over Iraq, the Franco-German action on the Stability Pact was seen as further evidence of disintegrative tendencies caused by them.

If the period beginning with enlargement to the east and ending with the French "no" to the Constitutional Treaty was difficult for the EU, the next five years from 2005 through 2009 would be a time of ultimate challenge both internally—the need to resurrect a constitutional framework—and externally—the global economic and financial crisis. The Franco-German leadership pairings of Merkel-Chirac and Merkel-Sarkozy frequently disagreed on both challenges, but in the end arrived with joint proposals and actions to confront political and economic crises. The jointness of positions

led to influence in political matters, but less so in the economic realm. Germany's EU presidency in the first half of 2007 and France's EU presidency in the second half of 2008 provided opportunities for leadership, both unilateral and bilateral. Domestic politics in both countries were tough, but not deal-breaking constraints on Franco-German compromises.

On the political front, France and Germany quarreled, then agreed, on two notable issues: Merkel's resuscitation, during Germany's 2007 presidency, of the constitutional framework that would become the Lisbon Treaty and Sarkozy's proposal for a Mediterranean Union. Merkel's early commitment to retrieving the Constitutional Treaty as a whole was met by the cherry-picking approach of first Chirac, then Sarkozy. However, by the time of the June 2007 European Council meeting, Sarkozy was more supportive of Merkel's view of the Constitutional Treaty and played a leading role in overcoming Polish opposition, arriving at a compromise on content and a decision to convene a new intergovernmental conference.¹¹⁶ During the French 2008 EU presidency, Sarkozy prioritized the continuing Lisbon Treaty ratification process.

One of Sarkozy's first European proposals as president in 2007 was a new EU-funded Mediterranean Union for dialogue and joint projects limited to EU and non-EU countries bordering the Mediterranean. It met with stiff opposition from Merkel due to its redundancy, given the existing Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the Barcelona Process; its exclusion of northern EU states; and its focus on issues, like immigration, the environment, and the Middle East peace process, of significance to the whole EU. At the March 2008 Hannover meeting of Merkel and Sarkozy, the French president compromised and agreed that the organization should be inclusive—renamed the Union for the Mediterranean—and be a fundamental part of the Barcelona Process; it would be presented as a Franco-German proposal at the next European Council. Merkel noted after the meeting that “what’s important is that we ended up agreeing,” despite differences. Sarkozy lauded the agreement as an example of their partnership approach—to acknowledge problems, talk them through, and find solutions.¹¹⁷

At the same time that France and Germany struggled with key political issues, they also agreed on other topics more easily, for example on deepening rather than enlarging the EU, particularly regarding Turkey. They jointly campaigned for the 2009 EU Parliament elections, and concurred on the choice of the first permanent European Council president later that year.¹¹⁸ They also agreed on the need for a more robust EU defense and se-

curity identity, arguing in a February 2009 joint article for a leading German newspaper that modern security had to combine civil and military dimensions (they subsequently delivered a joint statement at the Munich Security Conference). The strength of bilateral Franco-German military cooperation, including the reinvigorated Franco-German brigade, France's return to NATO's integrated military command, and the joint hosting of the April 2009 NATO summit (in Kehl and Strasbourg), indicated their willingness (though not necessarily readiness) for leadership.¹¹⁹

The first few months of the global economic and financial crisis, commencing in September 2008, revealed a major difference in reaction: Sarkozy looked for an immediate, collective reaction of the EU, whereas Merkel was more hesitant, preferring national responses (although her domestic response was also slow), and initially opposing an EU-wide economic growth stimulus package. Over the course of the next eighteen months, as conditions worsened (culminating in the Greek financial crisis), a further, related difference was clear: Sarkozy's priority for a new EU crisis instrument contrasted with Merkel's calls for new international institutional arrangements.¹²⁰ Yet, jointness still prevailed.

In the October 2008, November 2008, and March 2009 Franco-German meetings, Merkel and Sarkozy underlined that a "common response" to the economic and financial crisis for the EU was a priority, arguing that Franco-German convergence and coordination were greater than differences and unilateralism.¹²¹ At the December 2008 European Council meeting, Merkel compromised with France on the EU stimulus plan, even though she had been left out of premeeting discussions among France, Britain, and the European Commission president. Unlike other EU members, they opposed a reduction in the Value Added Tax (VAT).¹²² They worked out a joint position for the April 2009 London G20 summit and held a joint press conference in London to insist on stronger banking and financial regulations.¹²³ In fall 2008 and spring 2009 they coauthored articles in leading French and German newspapers to show solidarity and the necessity of a strong EU response to global crises.¹²⁴

The new millennium's first decade was a reminder to France and Germany not to take their leadership or their partners' acquiescence for granted, especially in the new Europe of twenty-seven. By the end of 2009 it was unclear how Europe would move forward: the old way of the resolution of Franco-German differences generating broadly accepted compromises; or through "pioneer groups" (a new form of the older German "core Europe"

idea and French notion of “*géometrie variable*”); or through an alternative leadership pair. One reality was, however, incontrovertible: the Franco-German relationship would continue to play a significant role in the EU, whether as stimulus or brake. Whichever role the two countries chose, they probably would play it together.

CONCLUSION

Reconciliation for France and Germany was and continues as a long-term process, spanning more than sixty years and involving both governments and societies. Non-governmental actors were critical in taking the first steps. Governments were involved in formalizing agreements that acknowledged grievances. A second phase ensued with the 1963 Elysée Treaty, the tentative development of bilateral governmental institutions, and the multiplication of societal institutions. The dense nature of governmental reconciliation took off with the 1963 Treaty’s twenty-fifth anniversary and was further strengthened by German unification.

Some observers, such as Schröder’s advisor on Franco-German relations, would argue that, with the fortieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty in 2003, the reconciliation phase of the partnership was over, which was not to suggest either indifference or negativity in the relationship, but rather the internalization of reconciliation such that it had become a routine no longer requiring open preoccupation. Reconciliation in the Franco-German case did not connote constant or complete harmony, however; contention lubricated agreement. Relations could be difficult, ideas and policies could diverge, but new relations of amity were distinguished from the past of enmity by a fundamental ethos of cooperation and a structural framework for its realization.

History and material interests acted as a stimulus from the beginning. Symbolic events, often related to history, were expressions of a new relationship. History continued to exert some impact, particularly on societal actors. Pragmatism, especially in the form of international interests, remained important. Vicissitudes in Franco-German relations were overcome by leaders committed to cooperation.

Bilateral governmental institutions, conferring equality on national partners, enabled leaders to produce joint policies; promote habits of cooperation; and engender trust. Societal institutions were just as important, catalyzing and complementing government conduct, and also serving in governments’

place. Institutions covered every sector of social and governmental activity and fostered an allied Franco-German approach to almost everything.

Franco-German internalization of reconciliation brought with it the prospect of externalization—the export of the concept to the EU—but it remained open whether this model could operate in an enlarged Europe of twenty-seven. In Adenauer's words, France and Germany may still “save Europe,” but global financial crises challenging an enlarged community create uncertainty. Certainly, the fundamental rivalry between the two countries that previously led to war, and that so concerned Adenauer, has disappeared, but the future of Franco-German cooperation and partnership hinges on the commitment of a new generation, whose considerable experience with the other country, in a variety of fora, must be honed, hardened, and transformed into new networks and new leadership.¹²⁵ The center of the European Union may not hold without that generational commitment.

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Germany's Relations with Israel

From Abyss to Miracle

We were driven by a great political and moral obligation to Israel to respond to its demands.

—Konrad Adenauer on the Wassenaar reparations negotiations beginning on March 20, 1952¹

The twin motives of morality and pragmatism Adenauer linked for negotiations in 1952 have framed German-Israeli relations ever since.² The tentative steps taken then, an extraordinary departure bringing Germans and Israelis face-to-face less than a decade after the end of the Holocaust, grew into partnership. In the early 1950s, Israeli officials understandably encountered Germany with tremendous personal and professional reluctance and antipathy, illustrated by the exclusion of Germany from countries valid for Israeli passports. Five decades later, during President Horst Köhler's February 2005 visit to Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon spoke of "friendly relations" that are "full and fruitful." Both sides on that occasion invoked the notion of trust to characterize ties, a framing reiterated by Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert during the German leader's March 2008 speech to the Knesset.³

This chapter, like the last, uses the four dimensions of history, leadership, institutions, and international context to understand an incredible journey. Although the categories are familiar from the French case, the content and weight of each category in German-Israeli relations will at times be different, if not unique.

HISTORY

Despite repeated wars (Franco-Prussian and two World Wars), history did not dominate Franco-German relations after 1945. In the German-Israeli case, by contrast, history defined the relationship, as President Köhler acknowledged in his February 2005 speech to the Knesset: “Responsibility for the Shoah is part of Germany’s identity. . . . Germany will always stand by Israel and its people.” Prime Minister Sharon echoed the indelibility of the past during President Köhler’s visit, but also delimited the relationship: “Even 60 years after the Holocaust, the pain of the terrible loss of millions of innocent Jews . . . has not faded. . . . There cannot be and there is no pardon and forgiveness for what the Jewish people suffered at the hands of the Germans.”

When Chancellor Merkel offered her own formulation—“Germany and Israel are and will always remain linked in a special way by the memory of the Shoah”—Prime Minister Olmert, celebrating the present, still invoked the past: “We are adding and writing the most important pages to a new chapter, and even if its roots can never be removed from the dark chapters, its peak has already ascended into clear skies.”

Even though history was pervasive in German-Israeli relations, stretching over the length and breadth of interaction, it remains useful to consider the three different ways history has appeared: the past as stimulus; the acknowledgement of grievances; and the past as present.

The Past as Stimulus

At a time when French officialdom expressed an actively punitive attitude toward Germany, Jews and Israel from 1945 until 1950 were largely silent about the immediate past. The German government, too, was reluctant to broach the topic of Germans and Jews, as noted by German and Jewish observers at the time,⁴ although the leader of the opposition, Kurt Schumacher, and Germany’s first president, Theodor Heuss, both referred to Germany’s responsibility for Nazi crimes.⁵

Religious leadership was not a catalyst for German-Israeli relations, as it had been in the Franco-German case, partly because there were no religious counterparts, but spiritual connections did develop through the Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation (*Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*), created in the late 1940s. The societies were involved in interfaith discussions within Germany.⁶

Moral inspiration in German society, directly related to the immediate past, did not take, in the German-Israeli case, an entirely religious route as with France. On September 27, 1951, Adenauer expressed to the Bundestag German regret and responsibility, and offered compensation to Israel and world Jewry. Adenauer invoked a "moral debt": "The Federal Government and . . . the great majority of the German people are aware of the immeasurable suffering that was brought upon the Jews . . . during the time of National Socialism. . . . Unspeakable crimes have been committed in the name of the German people, calling for moral and material indemnity."⁷ Yet, despite an Israeli request, the moral framework did not include an acknowledgement of collective guilt.⁸

Just as France initiated the Schuman Plan to reconfigure the old structure of relations, Israel initiated change through diplomatic notes of January 16 and March 12, 1951, asking the four powers for compensation from Germany (at this time it refused to deal with Germany directly), which helped cut through the silence, provoking Adenauer's statement to the Bundestag. The March note revealed the Israeli government's moral argument, despite moral indignation among the public and politicians in Israel against taking any compensation from Germany: "To quote the Bible, 'Hast thou killed and also taken possession?'"

Israel made clear in the March note that material reparation could never compensate for the unprecedented "massacre and despoliation," thereby setting a marker for its permanent refusal to accept the German term for compensation, "*Wiedergutmachung*," or "making good." Israel instead uses the term "*shilumim*," suggesting material compensation.⁹ Unlike the French, Israelis also do not utilize the term "reconciliation," preferring "rapprochement," "special relationship," "understanding," or "cooperation."¹⁰ Israelis understand reconciliation as a Christian term embodying forgiveness, which, they insist, only the murdered victims of the Holocaust or G-d on Yom Kippur can deliver.¹¹

Acknowledging Grievances

Adenauer's Bundestag statement was an important milestone, following Israel's diplomatic notes in January and March 1951, culminating in the Luxembourg Reparations Agreement ("Reparations Agreement") of September 1952 (the actual negotiations were in Wassenaar, Holland). Adenauer continued to be motivated by moral obligation, but pragmatism now became

more pronounced as Germany drew closer to regaining sovereignty in parallel negotiations with the three Western powers.

Israel, too, was driven by pragmatism, the needs of a highly precarious fledgling economy, finding it necessary to negotiate directly with Germany.¹² Although ratified in March 1953 by 239 to 35 votes with 86 abstentions, there was significant opposition in Adenauer's cabinet and in the parliament to the 1952 Reparations Agreement because of concern about the ability to pay and the potential effect on relations with the Arab world.

The Reparations Agreement acknowledged that "unspeakable crimes were perpetrated against the Jewish people during the National Socialist régime of terror," and that a primary consequence was Israel's need to absorb Jewish refugees. There was, however, neither handshake nor speech in the brief ceremony concluding the agreement.

Following Israel's claim, based on the cost of absorption, the agreement provided for goods and services over twelve years to the value of DM 3 billion (DM 3 *Milliarden*). The commitment to supply Israel with German goods helped Israel, but also benefitted the German economy, encouraging German manufacture and entrenching German products in the Israeli economy.

A further DM 450 million went to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany for victims outside Israel. In addition, individual Israelis (about 40 percent of the total recipients) received payment, as opposed to goods to the state, through German legislation: the Federal Indemnification Law of 1956 (*Bundesentschädigungsgesetz*) and the Federal Restitution Law of 1957 (*Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz*), and their subsequent amendments. Over the course of the next decades, after hard bargaining, West Germany on several occasions created additional special funds to compensate victims who were excluded from this legislation through non-compliance with filing deadlines or residency requirements; many of the victims lived in Israel.

Despite Germany's considerable efforts in restitution and indemnification, several major areas of compensation to Jews were still outstanding at the time of German unification forty years after the end of World War II: victims who had resided in East Germany; victims in Central and Eastern Europe; and victims of slave and forced labor. Following complex and difficult negotiations, all three types of victims finally were addressed, the first in October 1990 as part of the unification treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the GDR; the second, in the January 1998 agreement for

a fund administered by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany; and the third in the July 2000 agreement that led to the creation of the Remembrance, Responsibility, and Future Foundation (*Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft*), funded by the German government and private industry. Although the Israeli government was involved in the latter negotiations, and Israeli citizens have been recipients of forced-labor compensation (4.7 percent of all recipients, 13 percent of total compensation), it was American Jewish organizations and the American government that played principal roles.

Combining the pre-1989 and postunification efforts, by the end of 2008 Germany had provided €66 billion (€66 *Milliarden*) in all forms of compensation (Jewish and non-Jewish, with by far the largest share in the former category).¹³

Israel became the venue for new claims in 2007 by first-generation Holocaust survivors, who for various reasons had never received any compensation, and second-generation victims, the children of survivors, in need of psychological treatment. Their dire needs led to charges that the Israeli government should have negotiated better terms with Germany in the early 1950s reparations negotiations. The Germans suspended initial negotiations at the German embassy in Tel Aviv, while resisting negotiations with the Israeli government. Germany suggested looking for settlement in the framework of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.¹⁴

Israeli grievances emanating from the Holocaust were deep and enduring. German goods in kind and monetary payments could not reduce pain and suffering, but they did indicate to Germany's victims an acceptance of responsibility for Nazi crimes. Yet, while beginning a process in the early 1950s that acknowledged grievances, Germany generated new grievances over diplomatic relations.

Timing was everything. Adenauer wanted Israel's diplomatic recognition at the time of the Reparations Agreement to enhance Germany's international rehabilitation. Israel resisted. By 1955 to 1956, feeling diplomatic isolation, Israel warmed to Germany's proposals for an arrangement short of full diplomatic recognition but, by then, Germany feared that FRG recognition of Israel would incur Arab recognition of the GDR, leading to a severing of German-Arab ties in line with the requirements of the Hallstein Doctrine.

Despite Israel's standing request for diplomatic relations, Germany refused until 1965, when a combination of moral reasoning and domestic and international pressure led to Chancellor Ludwig Erhard's decision to

establish formal ties. In the intervening decade, Germany compensated Israel for this absence of diplomatic recognition through financial aid and arms supplies.¹⁵

Recognizing that West Germany's claim to sole representation of German nationhood, as expressed in the Hallstein Doctrine, had made relations with Israel difficult, Germany finally realized that establishing diplomatic relations "was an issue that had to be resolved for its own sake."¹⁶ "Its own sake" meant historical reasons.

The Past as Present

Germany acknowledged grievances through carefully orchestrated and highly public government acts, but followed with intersocietal engagement. In the case of Jews and Israel, acknowledgement was followed, as well, by continuous acts of government. Memorials, including at gravesites and concentration camps, have been a major vehicle to honor the victims of the Holocaust. The various memorials number over six thousand, but the first national effort, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (*Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas*), was opened only on May 10, 2005, sixty years after the end of the Holocaust.¹⁷

The societal initiative that began in 1988 generated much public and political discussion as to form and purpose, culminating in the Bundestag resolution of June 1999 to build a field of steles and an underground information and education center in Berlin. The three-fold purpose of the resolution was to honor the victims, engage in memory of the Holocaust, and instill values about democracy and human rights. As in the more recent cases of German financial compensation, American Jewry rather than Israeli representatives were the principal discussion partner of German officials in the decision on the memorial.¹⁸ Nonetheless, on the occasion of the memorial's opening, the Israeli foreign ministry spokesperson deemed the new site a "positive step," and the German government a "partner" in the worldwide fight against anti-Semitism.¹⁹

Organizations in Germany

Preoccupation with the Holocaust and its consequences has been manifest in the activities of multiple non-governmental organizations at the federal and local levels in Germany and in Israel, unsurprisingly many more than

operate regarding the Franco-German past. In what Arno Lustiger, a survivor of Auschwitz-Blechhammer, called a “genuine, impressive network of memory,” eight stand out. Four are in Germany addressing Jewry at large: the Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation; the Fritz Bauer Institute (*Fritz Bauer Institut*) and its predecessor program; Against Forgetting/For Democracy (*Gegen Vergessen/für Demokratie*); and Learning from History (*Lernen aus der Geschichte*). Against Forgetting and the Societies also have extensive regional chapters: thirty in the first case, and seventy-eight in the second. Four involve Israel directly: the German-Israeli Textbook Commission (*Deutsch-Israelische Schulbuchkommission*); Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*); and the two Minerva Centers in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv dealing with German history. The eight organizations, like those in Franco-German relations, are noteworthy in terms of timing, goals, means, the nature of history, and effect.

Timing: The four organizations operating in the German context appeared at different times, which helped shape their purpose.²⁰ The Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation were an early expression of a moral desire to confront the past and the lack of dialogue of earlier periods.²¹ The other three organizations—the Fritz Bauer Program/Institute, Against Forgetting/For Democracy, and Learning From History—were founded after German unification (in 1991/1995, 1993, and 2001, respectively), using the historical opportunity for the whole nation to engage the past and demonstrating that the passage of time extinguishes neither the need nor the impetus to reflect.

Goals: All four organizations seek a “confrontation” (*Auseinandersetzung*) with history by drawing moral lessons from the past, based on an acknowledgement of German responsibility for Nazi crimes. The Societies and Against Forgetting go further by referring to German guilt. All four aim at personal and professional understanding of the Third Reich’s roots and consequences as a way to prevent the recurrence of history. Their common goal has been to create a “culture of remembrance” (*Erinnerungskultur*), and to educate German society, particularly its youth, about the past.

The Societies seek religious tolerance and mutual learning between Christians and Jews, as well as solidarity with Israel, which also features in the work of the Fritz Bauer Institute. Against Forgetting/For Democracy has the broadest goal in seeking to strengthen democratic thinking and practice, especially in the defense of human and minority rights.

Means: The four organizations act as facilitators in providing information, whether by compiling school projects dealing with the Nazi past (the

learning project); offering a full documentation center and library (the Fritz Bauer Institute); or connecting to other organizations, as did all four. The Institute, the Societies, and Against Forgetting all organize meetings, including commemorative events such as the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, for either general audiences or professionals. Fritz Bauer organized in 2005 together with Yad Vashem the first joint German-Israeli working group of professionals dealing with memorials, building on informal exchanges between Yad Vashem and various German groups that developed in the early 1990s.²² All three work with survivors as witnesses and as educational resources.

Of the four organizations, the Fritz Bauer Institute, integrated into the University of Frankfurt since 2000, is the only practicing research outfit, with project-oriented fellowships and working groups, a variety of publications, and a guest professorship, the first in Germany focusing solely on the history of the Holocaust and its consequences. The Societies and Against Forgetting, with a more activist focus, issue statements and appeals on pressing issues, such as right-wing violence and anti-Semitism or compensation to forgotten victims of Nazism. The Societies' Brotherhood Week (*Woche der Brüderlichkeit*) is a feature of German life.

Nature of History: The Fritz Bauer Institute and the learning project pursue the most focused sense of history in their work on the Holocaust, but not to the neglect of mass murder more generally in the Third Reich. While the Holocaust and the Third Reich assume a central place in the work of both the Societies and Against Forgetting, other periods of history are also addressed: Biblical times and the early origins of Jewish communities in Germany in the former, and the repression of the GDR in the latter (without suggesting equation with the Third Reich). All four initiatives center on the importance of conveying Jewish victims' history.

Effects: The long-term effect of all these undertakings is hard to calculate. Evaluating his organization's progress in a March 2003 essay in the *Jüdische Allgemeine Wochenzeitung* the then-Protestant copresident of the Coordinating Committee of the Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, Berndt Schaller, identified many positive developments in historical consciousness among his twenty thousand members. At the same time, he expressed concern about the declining interest of the younger generation, on both sides in Jewish-Christian dialogue, a development that he felt should be challenged by the dictum of Leo Baeck fifty years ago that Jews and Christians must be

a caution and a warning for each other.²³ Such an engagement is particularly relevant in an era of renewed anti-Semitism in Germany and Europe.

Israel-Centered Organizations

Timing: Four Israel-centered organizations, like the four focused on Germany, were founded at different times, with Action Reconciliation the first to develop bilateral ties in 1961 after the Eichmann trial. The West and East German Action Reconciliation organizations merged in 1991.²⁴ The Tel Aviv Institute for German History opened in 1971 and became a Minerva Center funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research in 1980, at which time the Koebner Minerva Center for German History also was established from the same funding source.²⁵ German-Israeli textbook deliberation took place already in the 1970s, but formal bilateral commission meetings started only in 1981 and ended in 1985. A new Commission was decided on in 2009. Israel was a major focus of the Georg Eckert Institute's research agenda.²⁶ As in the case of the other four organizations, then, decades can elapse before institutional initiatives occur.

Goals: The medium-term goal of Action Reconciliation and the textbook initiatives is reconciliation and understanding, with peace and conflict-prevention serving as the long-term aim. The Georg Eckert Institute shares with the two university-based Minerva Centers the additional goal of accumulation of knowledge through research and education. The two Centers also aim to develop scholarly networks between Germany and Israel and with third countries, and to create a successor generation of Israeli students of German history. In their common effort to confront the past through remembrance based on knowledge and understanding (and, in Action's case, a formal acceptance of guilt), all four organizations gear their work to young people.

Means: All four organizations convene meetings, whether conferences, lectures, or encounters, to foster professional and personal exchanges as well as scholarly and public outreach. They all disseminate information through publications, whether books, articles, or monographs deriving from research in the case of the two Minerva Centers and the Georg Eckert Institute, or newsletters in the case of Action Reconciliation. The latter distinguishes itself as an activist organization through its volunteer work in Israel in five areas: with Holocaust survivors; in research facilities and memorials concerning the Holocaust; with the physically, mentally, and economically

challenged; and with Jewish-Palestinian groups. It also has been activist in registering positions on major issues, for example concern about anti-Semitism. Uniquely, Action Reconciliation performs a facilitative role in encounter programs at its Beit Ben Yehuda-Haus Pax meeting house in Jerusalem. The two Minerva Centers and the Georg Eckert Institute are committed to teaching and sponsoring research through fellowships.

Nature of History: The two Minerva Centers are the broadest of the four organizations in the span of history covered (Middle Ages, Weimar, National Socialism, Jewish history in Germany, post-1945 German history, German-Israeli relations) and in their approaches to that history (traditional and post-Zionist). While focusing on Germany, the larger European perspective and comparative history are by no means excluded from the Centers' work.

Action Reconciliation and the Textbook Institute both give priority to the Holocaust: its current consequences for the former and its contemporary representation in both German and Israeli textbooks for the latter. In its treatment of Jewish history in addition to German history, the Georg Eckert Institute's recommendations stretched back at least as far as the Middle Ages. Both entities also Europeanize their activities: Action Reconciliation triangulates programs with Germans, Israelis, and Poles, and the Institute broadens the perspective by recommending the inclusion of contemporary Germany and its place in the EU. Both branch out to the Middle East more broadly. Action Reconciliation's annual reports detail the growing importance of the Middle East conflict directly or contextually for its work.

After the three phases of German-Israeli textbook deliberations (early meetings in the 1970s; formal meetings under the sponsorship of the Israeli Ministry of Education 1981-1985, culminating in the 1985 and 1992 revised recommendations; implementation seminars through 1995), there was a formal absence of meetings as a result of funding gaps on the Israeli side, although individual German and Israeli scholars interacted in international conferences and through the Institute's scholarship program.²⁷ The gap was filled somewhat by a German-Israeli-Palestinian project on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israeli and Palestinian textbooks. The new German-Israeli Textbook Commission, sponsored financially by the German Foreign Office, will look specifically at the way Germany and Israel are portrayed in the other country's textbooks.

Effects: Some success is evident in the development of an active network between German and Israeli scholars at the two Minerva Centers as they go back and forth between the two countries in both teaching and research.

The Israeli ambassador to Germany, Shimon Stein, has considered the effectiveness of Action Reconciliation's endeavors. Measured by the initial extreme reluctance of Holocaust survivors in Israel to involve themselves with young Germans, the level and quality of such interactions thereafter suggest success and contribute significantly to an image of a new and changed Germany. Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer praised Action Reconciliation in a similar vein, and the creation of an association of Israeli Friends of Action Reconciliation testified further to the overall positive reception for the program in Israel.²⁸ Action Reconciliation itself boasts of filling some 75 percent of its openings in Israel, despite the very real tensions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the reality that the overall figure for German volunteers in Israel from various organizations shrank by over 80 percent in 2002–2003. Yet, Action Reconciliation has acknowledged program weakness in too great a concentration on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.²⁹

The German-Israeli textbook deliberations were successful in agreement on textbook content.³⁰ The implementation of the German-Israeli schoolbook recommendations, however, had mixed results. An evaluation of German-Israeli cultural exchanges by the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (*Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen*, ifa) in Stuttgart concluded that there was insufficient treatment of contemporary Israel in school textbooks, and that the German-Israeli discussions should be resuscitated.³¹ Building on its conclusion that the image of Jews in German textbooks remains "limited, one-sided, and misleading," the Leo Baeck Institute initiated a commission with the Georg Eckert Institute, the Association of History Teachers, and the Central Council of Jews in Germany, to propose changes making Jews the subjects of extensive historical treatment and not just objects and victims.³² *Länder* like Bavaria were quick to remove offensive textbooks, but Hamburg was much more reluctant to deal with the stereotyping of Jews and anti-Semitism in textbooks.³³

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism in German society was of concern to organizations focused on Germany and those centered on Israel. Periodic eruptions of physical anti-Semitism have occurred throughout the life of German-Israeli relations but, according to an Israeli monitoring source, they took on a new intensity at the start of the millennium, with a 100 percent increase in 2001 over the previous year.³⁴ Additional surveys revealed an increase, from 20 percent of respon-

dents in 1999 to 36 percent in 2002. A poll by *Der Spiegel*, however, showed a small decline in anti-Semitic attitudes. The American Jewish Committee in Berlin concluded that there was not a dramatic surge, but there were new forms of anti-Semitism, a finding borne out by major studies on anti-Semitism undertaken by the European Union in 2002–2003 and by the University of Bielefeld in 2004.³⁵ Another EU poll later in 2003 showed that 65 percent of Germans thought Israel was the greatest threat to world peace (ahead of Iran, North Korea, and Iraq), interpreted in its exaggeration as a new form of anti-Semitism.³⁶ A Pew survey in 2008 showed that anti-Semitism in Germany had grown from 21 percent to 25 percent over the previous three years.³⁷

Anti-Semitism appeared in the mainstream of German politics in the 2002 statements of FDP vice-chairman and Bundestag member Jürgen Möllemann; in the October 2003 comments of CDU Bundestag member Martin Hohman; and in the 2004 election of the National Democratic Party of Germany (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, NPD) (9.2 percent) to the *Land* parliament of Saxony and of the German People's Union (*Deutsche Volksunion*, DVU) (6.1 percent) to the *Land* parliament of Brandenburg. Anti-Semitism also became linked to anti-Zionism and anti-Israel sentiments, as pointed out not only by the Jewish community in Germany, but also by the German foreign minister Fischer in April 2002 and by the Bundestag's November 2008 resolution condemning anti-Semitism.³⁸

As the Bielefeld study demonstrated, not all criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic, but the investigation did find a significant anti-Semitic basis for some attitudes toward Israel, particularly in three areas: negative attitudes to all Jews because of Israeli policy, questioning the loyalty of German Jews to Germany, and comparisons of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians with Nazi policy toward the Jews.³⁹ The poll also revealed that large numbers of Germans, between 60 percent and 80 percent, depending on political affiliation, were annoyed that crimes against Jews were still held against them. A dramatic physical expression of being unburdened by the past was the walk-out of the NPD from the Saxon parliament during the minute of silence for the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in January 2005. Such acts, however, did not pass unchallenged, and Greens in the Saxon parliament subsequently turned their backs whenever NPD members spoke.⁴⁰

In his April 2007 visit to Yad Vashem, the president of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany expressed shame at new signs of anti-Semitism in Germany.⁴¹ The Bundestag November 2008 statement, drafted with difficulty due to mutual accusations of internal anti-Semitism by the CSU and the Left Party (*Die Linke*), noted that anti-Semitism could be de-

tected in every part of the German population and was a very serious societal problem. It also called for vigorous promotion of Jewish life in Germany.⁴²

Public concern about anti-Semitism, as expressed in many of the eight organizations, was matched by official anxiety and action. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Foreign Minister Fischer repeatedly spoke out against anti-Semitism and showed solidarity with the Jewish community in Germany. President Köhler emphasized the government's concern during his February 2005 discussions in Israel.⁴³ Chancellor Merkel began her April 2007 speech at the Hebrew University with a promise to eradicate anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobia.⁴⁴ During Chancellor Schröder's 2000 visit to Israel, the Israeli government thanked the German leader for his engagement against anti-Semitism and right-wing extremism, and, during President Köhler's 2005 trip, Israeli President Moshe Katsav said he had "full confidence in German democracy" despite the real concerns he and Prime Minister Sharon expressed about the new, often Israel-centered anti-Semitism in Germany, and the NPD January 2005 walk-out from the Saxon parliament. During Chancellor Merkel's first 2006 visit to Israel, Prime Minister Olmert noted Germany's commitment to the "struggle against anti-Semitism."⁴⁵

An earlier effort by the German government to ban the NPD failed for tactical reasons, but following the walk-out from the Saxon parliament, Chancellor Schröder again deemed the party unconstitutional and promised to make another attempt to render the NPD illegal. Following the NPD's plan to demonstrate outside the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in spring 2005, the government initiated legislation to prevent the right of assembly for neo-Nazis at memorials to the victims of Nazism. The renewed effort at banning the NPD during the first Merkel government failed due to CDU/CSU doubts about the effectiveness of such a measure.⁴⁶

German political leaders continuously honored the Holocaust's victims at Yad Vashem in Israel. Visiting, wreath-laying, and signing the guest book at Yad Vashem are mandatory for German leaders on trips to Israel, as expressed by President Köhler's written lines in February 2005: "We must never forget"; and Chancellor Merkel's a year later: "He who knows the past has a future."⁴⁷ Normally there is the language of silence for German leaders at Yad Vashem, but in March 2005, Foreign Minister Fischer spoke when he was invited to attend the opening of the New Museum, an honor reflecting the high esteem in which the foreign minister was held in Israel:

The crimes against humanity of the Holocaust will always remain an inextinguishable part of German history. We will never and should never retreat from

the historical-moral responsibility for Auschwitz. Thus, there's hardly an issue that touches the self-understanding of the new, democratic Germany so deeply as our relationship to Israel. Therefore, for us the right of existence and the security of the State of Israel and its citizens are an unbounded duty.⁴⁸

In his speech, Fischer emphasized the cooperation between the new German Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and Yad Vashem, a formal extension of sporadic ties between Yad Vashem and German researchers and educators on the Holocaust dating back to the early 1990s.

Symbolic Events

Fischer's speech at Yad Vashem was of great symbolic importance, demonstrating the possibility of friendly ties, even in reference to the Holocaust. There are at least eleven examples of consecutive, symbolic breakthroughs in German-Israeli relations:

- the 1957 public address in Israel by a German leader, the opposition SPD chairman Erich Ollenhauer;⁴⁹
- the August 1965 presentation of credentials by the first German ambassador to Israel, Rolf Pauls, a veteran of World War II (but not a member of the Nazi party);
- the first visit to Germany by a Knesset delegation in March 1969;
- the February 1970 first visit of an Israeli foreign minister to Germany and the return first visit of his German counterpart in June 1971;
- the July 1973 first visit to Israel by a German chancellor in office, Willy Brandt (Adenauer made a private, out-of-office visit in 1966);
- the return first visit of an Israeli prime minister to Germany in July 1975;
- the first visit to Israel in October 1985 of a German president, Richard von Weizsäcker;
- the return first visit by the Israeli President Chaim Herzog in April 1987;
- the January 1996 first speech in the German Bundestag by an Israeli president, Ezer Weizman;
- the counterpart first speech in German to the Knesset by a German president, Johannes Rau, in February 2000; and
- Angela Merkel's speech to the Knesset, the first by a German chancellor and by a foreign head of government, in March 2008.



Figure 4.1. Israeli President Ezer Weizman addresses German parliament, Bonn, January 15, 1996. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Fassbender



Figure 4.2. President Johannes Rau (center left) meets with Knesset President Avraham Burg (center right), Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (right), and Israeli President Ezer Weizman (left) on the day of his speech to the Knesset, Jerusalem, February 16, 2000. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Stuttgart

In all these events, the quality of being first was a stark reminder of the past that did not diminish for Israel with temporal distance from the Holocaust, as signified in the fact of Israeli opposition to many of these events, including the Rau and Merkel speeches to the Knesset. Yet, whether in Germany or in Israel, these events reflected the positive and friendly ties that had been woven into the fabric of relations since 1949.

Although not “firsts,” the sixtieth anniversary in 2005 of the liberation of concentration camps and of war’s end and the fortieth anniversary of German-Israeli diplomatic relations struck the same duality of past and present. The sixtieth anniversary in 2008 of Israel’s founding displayed the same pattern. These anniversaries pointed up the aging and passing of the Holocaust-survivor generation, such that on the seventieth and fiftieth anniversaries, the authentic voice of Jewish witnesses will be stilled.

A third category of events demonstrates German public support for Israel in times of crisis:

- the March 1960 Adenauer–Ben-Gurion meeting at the Waldorf Astoria in New York (after a wave of anti-Semitic incidents in Germany in 1959 and 1960);
- Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher’s trip to Israel and Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s Bundestag speech in January 1991 (during the Gulf War after Scud missiles hit Israel, enabled by German companies’ participation in the development of Iraq’s missile capability);
- the April 2002 speeches by Chancellor Schröder and Foreign Minister Fischer (at the height of international and German societal criticism of Israeli policy during the second intifada);
- Israeli Prime Minister Olmert’s singling out Chancellor Merkel for being Israel’s “helpful friend” in the 2006 Lebanon war (even as German politicians and society were critical).

Such symbolic acts of support were accompanied by significant policy action as compensation: development aid for the Negev in the first case, arms supplies in the second and third, and the dispatch of troops in the fourth.⁵⁰

Of all these events, one stands out as the most dramatic reminder of the past, whose treatment opened up the path of German-Israeli relations: the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem. Ben-Gurion insisted that Eichmann be tried in Israel, rather than in Germany or Argentina (where he was caught) as a way of familiarizing young Israelis with the full reality of the

Holocaust. Adenauer was convinced that Israel would proceed fairly and correctly, but was concerned about an anti-German backlash when the details of the Holocaust were recalled. Ben-Gurion did try to limit the damage to the German reputation, in line with his earlier Knesset speech of October 1959 in which he distinguished between Nazi Germany and the new Germany. Unlike the Nuremberg trials, which were based on Allied and German documentation, the Eichmann trial relied on Jewish sources and witnesses, giving dominant voice to the victims and providing another step in rendering them as equals in the new relationship between Germany and Israel.⁵¹

Whether as a stimulus to commence relations, as the subject of international agreements, or as an ongoing reminder of purpose, history has been an active force in Germany's ties to Israel both at the governmental and societal levels. Such engagement, however, precluded neither anti-Semitism nor Holocaust fatigue in some segments of German society. Israeli leadership viewed contemporary Germany as a democracy capable of dealing with both anti-Semitism and Holocaust fatigue, but remained vigilant about concrete manifestations of both phenomena.

Uniformly, Israelis deemed history central in the relationship with Germany, but differed over whether it could permit friendship. Avi Primor, the Israeli ambassador to Germany in the mid-1990s, used the analogy of "wound and scar." For him, the wounds of the past were no longer open sores, yet sensitive scars persisted and at times of crisis became inflamed. This terminology caused demands for his resignation in Israel by those who viewed the past as a fatal wound killing all possibility of active connection.⁵² Acts of leadership in German-Israeli relations demonstrate that remembrance of the past can accommodate new and healthy ties.

LEADERSHIP

Opposition to relations with Germany was a continuous feature of Israeli life, from the time of the decision to negotiate directly with Germany over reparations in the early 1950s, to Chancellor Merkel's Knesset speech sixty years later. There was similar sentiment in Germany, where opposition to the special relationship with Israel was a factor in German politics from the time of the conclusion of the Reparations Agreement through the sixtieth anniversary of the Israeli state. The highly cooperative relationship between Germany and Israel was not without contest and disagreement, especially over

the Middle East conflict and relations with the Arab world, but it was guided by leaders of vision who acted decisively with long-term perspectives.

While there were no diplomatic ties until 1965, there were personal relations. They may not have matched Franco-German leadership networks, neither in frequency nor intensity, but they were remarkable nevertheless.

Germans expressed an affinity for national identity traits of Israelis. Recounting his 1960 Waldorf Astoria meeting with Ben-Gurion, Adenauer began with, "We hit it off right away." He then described Ben-Gurion's accounting of Israel's development needs and Israel's pioneering spirit. The encounter, he said, impressed him "deeply."⁵³

Adenauer's commentary on his 1966 meeting in Israel (as a private citizen) with Ben-Gurion revealed further their mutual empathy.⁵⁴ Helmut Schmidt described in similar terms a meeting the same year (through an invitation of the SPD sister party Mapai) with Golda Meir, lauding her indomitable spirit and echoing Adenauer's esteem for Israel's sense of a long history. Schmidt called this meeting with Golda Meir the "most important and consequential" of his trip to Israel, and it led to a formalization of relations between the two political parties.⁵⁵ Schmidt also wrote with personal warmth about Moshe Dayan, Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin.⁵⁶

As foreign minister in the mid-1960s, and later as chancellor, Willy Brandt often clashed with Golda Meir over Middle East peace. Nonetheless, in his memoirs he respected her determination and steadfast commitment to her people's security, indicating that they were "very close . . . emotionally."⁵⁷ In his official capacity, Brandt built on the personal relationship with Meir begun years earlier, largely through the Socialist International, a channel used later to air bilateral differences, for example after the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Brandt singled out as friends Yigal Allon and Abba Eban, who possessed "great charm and an outstanding intellect."⁵⁸ More recently, Helmut Kohl recorded the personal, Holocaust-related events that shaped Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as a national leader, and elaborated on his personal ties to Israeli politicians such as Teddy Kollek, the long-time mayor of Jerusalem.⁵⁹

German leaders of various political stripes all recognized how precarious Israel's security was. Even as they sometimes diverged severely with Israel, their respect for Israeli leaders never waned. No one was more mindful of Israel's need for strength than Foreign Minister Fischer, whose personal engagement, registered with great frequency in speeches and visits (fourteen by the time he left office in November 2005), made possible an unlikely per-

sonal connection between a Green Party member and the then-Likud prime minister, Ariel Sharon. That emotional commitment led Fischer on occasion to mediate between the parties to the Middle East conflict, most notably after the June 2001 suicide bombing of an Israeli nightclub in Tel Aviv.⁶⁰

Chancellor Merkel's unique personal biography as an East German led to a special understanding of Israel's needs. Merkel's speech to the Knesset in March 2008 was the first of a German chancellor representing a united Germany, and it was by an East German. She noted:

I myself spent the first thirty-five years of my life in the German Democratic Republic, a part of Germany where National Socialism was considered a West German problem. But the GDR did not recognize the State of Israel until shortly before its own demise. It took more than forty years before Germany as a whole acknowledged and embraced both its historical responsibility and the State of Israel.

There is the sense in her public utterances that her own, inevitable absence of connection to Israel, as an East German, now propelled her to make a special effort to travel to Israel, and to develop close personal relations with its leaders. It was a compensation for the past.

Even before Merkel became chancellor, she signaled a special interest in Israel. In September 2005, she chose for one of her rare interviews with the foreign press during the election campaign the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, to which she said: "For us, relations with Israel are a precious treasure that we must preserve."⁶¹ When Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert visited Berlin in February 2008, Chancellor Merkel carved out time for personal exchanges in her private residence (as she had on his first visit in 2006); as a special gesture she served Israeli wine at their dinner. During Olmert's tenure, according to Merkel, the two leaders stayed in "very close contact."⁶²

Like Johannes Rau, Fischer and Merkel frequently were praised in Israel as the state's greatest friends. For Israelis, German leaders, beginning with Adenauer, were recognized for their commitment to democracy and to a new Germany. Even though Israeli leaders experienced personal inhibitions in dealing with Germany, particularly in setting foot on German soil, they followed Ben-Gurion's lead of approaching Germany pragmatically. This capacity of Israeli leaders to blend the past with present and future needs, combining a moral perspective with practical necessity, was aided by exceptional personal relations with German leaders.

Ben-Gurion shared Adenauer's sense that interest must accompany memory: "On this criterion, I initiated a policy of friendship to Germany." Ben-Gurion emphasized Adenauer's leadership of Germany through a time of political, economic, and moral renewal after the war: "[He was] one of the great statesmen of our time."⁶³ In his review of the Waldorf Astoria meeting, Ben-Gurion stressed his trust in Adenauer's "honesty and fairness" and, therefore, did not push for a written agreement on development aid for the Negev.⁶⁴

The two personal meetings between Adenauer and Ben-Gurion were supplemented by an active correspondence. Ben-Gurion's successor, Levi



Figure 4.3. Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, Waldorf Astoria hotel, New York, March 14, 1960. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Wundshammer

Eshkol, did not share the same kind of personal connection to German leaders, but he did espouse the same pursuit of interest, as in his speech to the Knesset on diplomatic relations: "I am confident that in the balance of reason and emotion, this consideration—the need to strengthen and consolidate the State of Israel—must weigh down the scale."⁶⁵

In the mid-1950s, after the Reparations Agreement, but before the Waldorf Astoria meeting, another long-term friendship of leaders developed between Shimon Peres, the Israeli defense minister, and Franz-Josef Strauss, the German defense minister. Beginning with a secret meeting in Germany, they fashioned a significant arms relationship, which seemed to depend on the mutual recognition of leadership qualities. Peres evaluated Strauss: "He understood that what was now needed were courageous and imaginative leaders who had the power to stretch a bridge across the chasm [of the past]." Peres and his colleagues departed from the meeting with an optimism born of personal connections: "We left with the definite feeling that the foundation had been laid for a special relationship between the two countries and between the two Ministries of Defence," and, "Mutual trust deepened with time, and . . . most of our affairs were arranged at personal meetings and without recourse to superfluous paperwork or bureaucracy."⁶⁶

Golda Meir understood how friendship and unconventional channels could overcome difficult political relations. She contacted Brandt soon after the 1973 war to arrange a meeting of the Socialist International in an effort to garner European support for Israel's position. She expressed particular appreciation for Brandt's leadership in pursuit of international peace, as exemplified in his Nobel Peace Prize.⁶⁷

Just as Meir sought to rely on Brandt in the Socialist International in the 1970s, Yitzhak Shamir as foreign minister and prime minister a decade later viewed Foreign Minister Genscher as Israel's ally in other international arenas: "We met often, mostly at the UN, and I came to regard him highly and to value his support of Israel in the Common Market." Shamir appreciated Genscher as someone who confronted the past, enabling "years of understanding between us," and "the intellectual and emotional efforts we had both made in an extraordinary cause."⁶⁸

Helmut Kohl's personal commitment to Israel's security, especially through his vociferous pursuit of Israel's interests in the EU, was the focus of Shimon Peres's remarks when, as prime minister, he made a special trip to Munich in January 1996 for the B'nai B'rith gold medal award to the chancellor. Peres praised Kohl's blending of "political wisdom [and] moral

commitment,” his “strength of leadership [and] vision.”⁶⁹ Olmert, similarly, referred to Merkel’s “friendliness, friendship and deep connection to Israel,” that he felt from their first meeting.⁷⁰

Chancellors, prime ministers, and ministers of state were the essential, but not the only leaders creating friendly interstate relations. Israeli ambassadors to Germany and German ambassadors to Israel, who have written jointly and separately about their experiences, emphasize the important role of personal chemistry in the relationship.⁷¹

The ambassadors, like their political leaders, also refer to the regularity of meetings as an ingredient helping to forge personal ties. They note the personal impact of meeting in the leaders’ private homes, including family members in meetings, as reported, for example, by Adenauer in his visit with Ben-Gurion in Sde Boker; by Peres in his exchange with Strauss at the latter’s home in Bavaria; by Schmidt in his talks with Meir in Jerusalem and Dayan in Bonn and Hamburg; by Brandt in his stay at Kibbutz Ginosar hosted by Allon; and by the ambassadors on both sides about countless German-Israeli personal encounters.

Not all the personal relations were warm, or even cordial. Menachem Begin and Schmidt did not like each other. In his many pages devoted to world leaders, Schmidt mentioned Begin only in passing, and then merely to suggest he was not the best peace partner for President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, as he lacked the vision defining men such as Ben-Gurion and Dayan. Schmidt acknowledged his bad personal relationship with Begin.⁷² And for Begin, throughout his life in political office he would not listen to the German language, visit Germany, or buy German products.⁷³ Others mentioned the coolness of some German foreign ministers, particularly Schröder and Walter Scheel, to Israeli representatives.⁷⁴ Yet, even when personal chemistry did not help the relationship, *raison d’état* prevailed.

INSTITUTIONS

Non-governmental Institutions

The personal ties that characterized much of leadership interaction also featured prominently in societal exchanges that began to routinize through institutionalization. Prior to diplomatic relations, these societal connections

defined the German-Israeli relationship, and they are recognized now as a fundamental ingredient of reconciliation.⁷⁵

Catalysts

The Peace with Israel Movement (*Aktion Friede mit Israel*), founded in 1951 by journalists Erich Lüth and Rudolf Küstermeier (who had been incarcerated by the Nazis), was based on moral reasoning. Peace with Israel published articles in *Die Neue Zeitung*, the *Telegraf*, and *Die Welt*, recognizing Germany's responsibility for Nazi crimes, promising to fight any resurgence of anti-Semitism, and asking Israel for peace.

Lüth and Küstermeier intentionally were trying to provoke the German government to end its silence regarding the Nazi past, an omission denounced by the Israeli government. They spoke through letters, newspaper articles, rallies, and lectures written, organized, and attended by thousands of Germans. Nahum Goldmann, who was to become the chief representative



Figure 4.4. Erich Lüth (left), the founder of Peace with Israel movement, with Moshe Dayan, on the Mediterranean during one of his six trips to Israel from 1953 to 1963. Courtesy of Erich Lüth, *Viele Steine lagen am Weg*

for world Jewry in the subsequent reparations negotiations, saw the Peace with Israel initiative as a major breakthrough.⁷⁶ There were domestic and international political pressures on Germany, but the press at the time observed that the activities of concerned citizens played a role in Adenauer's overture.⁷⁷ The Social Democrat Carlo Schmid (active in both Franco-German and German-Polish reconciliation) and the Christian Democrat Heinrich von Brentano interacted with Israeli politicians at the fortieth conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in August/September 1951, unofficial political contacts that also influenced Adenauer.

Complements

Political Parties and Trade Unions: From the conclusion of the 1952 Luxembourg Reparations Agreement until the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965, German-Israeli governmental relations were largely out of public view. They involved the implementation of the reparations agreement (delivering German goods that built the infrastructure of the Israeli economy); an agreement for German development aid to Israel; and German military assistance.

There was no German ambassador. Instead key individuals, such as Küstermeier and Lüth, traveled frequently to Israel and were dubbed "unofficial ambassadors" by Israelis. Such private ties assumed public importance, particularly among political parties. Regular connections began between the SPD and Mapai in 1957 and 1958. Ties between the FDP and the Independent Liberal Party and between the CDU and Likud started much later, improving after the 1977 entry of Likud into national politics in Israel. All German parties voiced their support for Israel in the German-Israeli Parliamentary Association, founded in 1972 and historically one of Germany's largest parliamentary groups. Political parties expressed support for Israel in a 2005 resolution celebrating the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations and in the subsequent parliamentary debate, as did the president of the Bundestag on Israel's sixtieth birthday three years later.⁷⁸

Active links between the German Trade Union Federation (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*, DGB) and the Israeli equivalent, *Histadrut*, started in 1950. By 1975, the two associations had concluded a partnership agreement and subsequently some ten regional entities of both organizations established partnerships. German and Israeli union-owned construction companies invested jointly in projects in Israel. The union connections

extended to the position of a social attaché in both embassies. Through seminars, visits, and exchanges, German-Israeli union activities involved addressing common problems, both internal (bureaucratic organization) and external (economic climate; political, social, economic status; role of women and minorities), and fostering leadership and youth interaction. The unions promoted discussion of the Middle East conflict, and established connections to Palestinian unions.

Strong union relations withstood changes in government, deterioration in the financial health of the two organizations, and German union criticism of Israel's peace policy. When British trade unions called for a boycott of Israel in June 2007, the president of the DGB emphasized in an interview the durability of friendship with Israel that would continue "unbroken"; he reiterated solidarity with Israel when the issues reappeared in 2009.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, an effect of generational change on the intense personal ties that often predated the two countries has been noted.

Friendship Societies: The German-Israeli Society (*Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft*) has acted as umbrella and facilitator for much of the German societal contact with Israel since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965. Created in 1966 with an Israeli counterpart emerging in 1971, the society's leaders, including Adenauer, Bundestag president Eugen Gerstenmaier, and Social Democrat Carlo Schmid, guaranteed prominence. Manfred Lahnstein, former finance minister under Helmut Schmidt, was the society's president for many years, and Joschka Fischer served as vice president for a time. By 2009, the society could boast some fifty regional groups, including eleven in East Germany, and a membership of 5,500 whose dues supported the organization.

The German-Israeli Society's goals relate to reconciliation, understanding, and advocacy on Israel's behalf through publications, public affairs events, study groups, and declarations of support. Both the German and the Israeli societies identify their key challenge in nurturing a successor generation. An internal disagreement over Israeli policy on the Middle East conflict led to the 1977 creation of the German-Israeli Working Group for Peace in the Middle East (*Deutsch-Israelischer Arbeitskreis für Frieden im Nahen Osten*).⁸⁰

Youth and Student Exchange: German students and youth have been central actors in the learning and information process concerning Israel. In the mid-1950s, German students created German-Israeli study groups at eleven universities, and were a crucial factor in maintaining links between the

two countries. After the Six Day War in 1967, German student sympathies moved toward the Palestinian position, but student contacts nonetheless continued to develop through organizations providing study opportunities in both directions, such as the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*, DAAD) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (*Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung*).

Private contacts without German government funding began at the end of the 1950s. Commencing in 1960, the German federal government committed funds for youth exchanges with Israel. By 1969 there was a German-Israeli Mixed Commission of Experts involving the German Ministry for Youth, Family, and Health and the Israeli Municipalities Association. Preferring initially to allow private and local actors to take the lead in this highly sensitive area of young Israelis going to Germany or receiving young Germans, it was only in 1973 that the Israeli Ministry for Education and Culture would partner with the German federal government. Youth exchanges then covered high school and university students, as well as young professionals, and participants were drawn from a variety of functional spheres at both the federal and regional levels of private associations: sport, culture, politics, social volunteerism.⁸¹

As in other areas of relations, events in the Middle East starting in the 1990s, particularly the Gulf War and the first and second intifadas, negatively impacted youth exchange. Trips in both directions often were cancelled, although the programs rebounded and found new dynamism at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The bilateral rules governing youth exchange were revised in 1997 by the Mixed Commission in an assessment that called for greater coordination, better preparation of the participants and leaders, higher mutual financing, and more focused content. President Rau's February 2000 initiative for a German coordinating body, ConAct (under the aegis of the Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women, and Youth), further stimulated reform through seminars and workshops.⁸² As a new focus, trilateralization of the youth exchange to include Palestinians, Israeli Arabs, and Poles garnered mixed reviews. Proposals for the future included more information-oriented programs to combat the skewed image of Israel in the German media, and more joint channels for confronting the past.

By 2007, the decline in exchanges occasioned by instability in the Middle East had stopped: there were over two hundred non-school exchange programs for young people and young professionals, involving approximately

five thousand participants. Including Germans doing volunteer work or alternatives to military service in Israel and school exchanges, some ten thousand young people were participating in exchanges every year, with a federal government contribution of about €1.5 million. Overall, from the mid-1950s until 2006, at least five hundred thousand Germans and Israelis had participated in youth exchange programs. As part of the need to create a new generation of friendship between the two countries, there was a renewed commitment in 2008 to increase the number of programs, participants, and funding of state-sponsored youth exchange.⁸³ Created in 2007 following a commitment by the two heads of state on the occasion of forty years of diplomatic relations, the German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation (*Stiftung Deutsch-Israelisches Zukunftsforum*) is a private entity funded by the two governments to promote new networks among young adults principally via joint German-Israeli programs in culture, business, academia, and the media.⁸⁴

Education: Educational learning trips have not been restricted to youth. Since the early 1960s, the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*) and its regional counterparts have conducted study visits to Israel that have included adult participants from all walks of German life. After a normal attrition at the end of the 1980s, programs were reinvigorated in the 1990s through the participation of East Germans (parallel to a development in youth exchange). Despite the subsequent reduction in programs, study groups continue in Israel and exhibit, like the trade unions, "critical solidarity."⁸⁵ The federal and regional civic education agencies also publish literature on Israel. There were teacher exchanges, starting in the early 1990s, for example, between Israel on the one side and the *Länder* of Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia on the other. The inclusion of Palestinians was no less controversial for Israelis in adult programs than it had been for youth.⁸⁶

Language acquisition has been an issue in all forms of mutual education and knowledge, magnified in importance by the rapidly dwindling presence of the generation of Israelis who came from German-speaking areas (Jeckes or Yekkes).⁸⁷ With major encouragement from the Goethe Institute, interest in the German language has grown in Israel, with courses available privately and in some schools (though not integrated into the curriculum), starting in the mid-1990s. There has been discussion of creating a German-Hebrew international school in Jerusalem.⁸⁸

Hebrew has been taught less in Germany than German in Israel, but is available in some schools, in the Jewish high school in Berlin, and at

universities. Apart from a program at Humboldt University that was abandoned after German unification, there have been no Israel Studies programs in Germany to match the German/European studies programs at the universities in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Beer Sheva, whose financial support often comes from private German foundations. The DAAD has provided German professors at several Israeli universities and, since 2007, funds for European and German studies centers at the Hebrew University and the University of Haifa. In 2008, the German government created the Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities for young German and Israeli scholars at the Hebrew University.

The lack of widespread mutual language capacity has not interfered with the many higher education connections between Israel and Germany, which formally number more than eighty, impressive for a small country such as Israel where there are only six universities plus the Weizmann Institute of Science. The cooperative work between the latter and Germany has been a separate high point in a well-established web of scientific research links.

Science: As in many other fields, close ties in science—between private individuals and between their academic institutions, financed in large part by governments—preceded diplomatic relations. Hans Jensen visited the Weizmann Institute in 1957. Weizmann Institute scientists lectured in Frankfurt and Düsseldorf in the fall of 1959. A December 1959 visit by a delegation from the Max Planck Society (*Max-Planck-Gesellschaft*) to the Weizmann Institute marked the formal beginning of German-Israeli relations in science, but discussions between German and Israeli scientists of institutional links sparked some disagreement in Israel.⁸⁹

Science attachés in the two embassies later testified to the importance of science for bilateral relations. Private foundations, such as the Volkswagen Foundation and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, as well as public entities, such as the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*) and the German Academic Exchange Service, also have funded German-Israeli scientific research.

The scientific relationship grew steadily in numbers of participants (by the end of the 1990s some twenty thousand scientists) and funding (a German contribution of DM 54 million in 2000, for example). Five main structures have dominated: the Minerva programs (a subsidiary of the Max Planck Society), started in the 1960s and thereafter included a fellowship component and twenty-seven centers in seven Israeli institutions; cooperation between the German Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*) and the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technol-



Figure 4.5. Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel, and Hanan Bar-On, key actor in German-Israeli scientific relations. Courtesy of Weizmann Institute of Science

ogy, beginning in 1973 with a more applied science focus than the Minerva programs; the German-Israeli Foundation for Scientific Research and Development, created in 1986 to promote joint activities; the German-Israeli Project Cooperation in Future-Oriented Fields, established in 1997 to foster collaborative and interdisciplinary research, overseen by the German Research Foundation, which itself had supported Israel-related projects since the 1960s; and German-Israeli Industrial Cooperation, focusing on industrial research projects since 2000.⁹⁰

German and Israeli research ministries designated 2008 the German-Israeli Year of Science and Technology, which included more than seventy events in Germany and Israel subsumed under the title “Science as the Diplomacy of Trust.” The new ARCHES program (Award for Research Cooperation and High Excellence in Science) through Minerva focused on research by young, collaborative bilateral teams with an emphasis on the natural and engineering sciences, the life sciences, and the humanities. The original motive of scientific exchange was “compensation” for Germany’s crimes against Jews, but by the twenty-first century it had transformed into a desire for “equal partnership.”⁹¹

The legacy of a common scientific tradition between Germans and Jews facilitated the evolution of German-Israeli partnership, but the very nature of science, as an epistemic community, was a major stimulus.⁹² Moreover, there were highly practical reasons for German scientists' desire to work in Israel, with its special geographic and climatic conditions closed to German scientists at home, and its excellence in science and technology. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, few Israeli scientists had not worked with German colleagues or had not received German funding, and no field of science remained outside a German-Israeli purview.

The communiqué from the March 2008 joint German-Israeli cabinet consultations noted that twenty-five thousand German and Israeli scientists had worked together since the early 1960s. There are four main challenges for the next decades: triangulation to include more Arabs and Palestinians; greater joint project definition and implementation; the building of a successor generation; and a closer relationship between academic and industrial research. Observers have seen the ultimate test of the cooperation's effectiveness in often path-breaking results.

Sister Cities: Another area that predated diplomatic relations and then took off with the formalization of official ties was twinning of cities and towns. Again, the relationship has been privileged, with Israel occupying second place after the United States (100 to 117) in the number of non-European German twinings. Germany ranks first (100 out of 400) for Israel.⁹³ Paralleling the other societal areas examined so far, the strength of twinning relationships was evident in times of crisis, such as the 1991 Gulf War, with multiple expressions of solidarity.

Economics: Morality has sustained German support for Israel when political crises may have suggested distance to protect economic interests. Even as their dominant motivation is economic, leaders of DaimlerChrysler, Lufthansa, and Siemens all have expressed non-economic commitments.⁹⁴ Promotion of triangular relations among German, Israeli, and Palestinian economic players has been a way for these economic actors to support peace, also a prominent goal for the president of the long-standing German-Israeli Economic Association (*Deutsch-Israelische Wirtschaftsvereinigung*), Horst Teltschik. Like the latter organization, the forty-five-year-old German-Israeli Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Deutsch-Israelische Industrie- und Handelskammer*) has acted as promoter and facilitator for bilateral economic ties.⁹⁵ These private activities have been furthered by Israel's Trade Center in Berlin, an arm of Israel's Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Despite the precarious political situation in the Middle East and Israel's economic difficulties, the larger German companies have been attracted to Israel's transition to a high-tech economy, beginning in the 1990s. Siemens, Volkswagen, Bayer, and Deutsche Telekom, among others, made major investments and entered joint ventures. Nonetheless, there still has been more widespread Israeli investment in the German economy than the reverse. A further effort in 2005 to stimulate investment, through the promotion of start-up companies, was the creation of a German-Israeli research and development fund, modeled after a U.S.-Israeli foundation. The 2008 joint cabinet consultations included an important private economic forum of German and Israeli businessmen.⁹⁶

Active investment has been accompanied by a significant trading relationship. Since 2003, Israel has ranked as Germany's second-most important trading partner in the Middle East (before Iran and Egypt, and just behind Saudi Arabia). Since the 1960s, Germany has constituted Israel's most important trading partner in Europe and Israel's second-most important partner worldwide (after the United States).⁹⁷

Culture: Much of the interaction of German and Israeli societies, through formal organizations, complemented governmental efforts, often conducted within a government-to-government framework. Culture, however, the most sensitive area for Germans and Israelis, has been different. Knesset guidelines, beginning in the 1950s, severely limited cultural relations and opposed a cultural treaty between the two governments. The Israel Radio Orchestra could not introduce Wagner into its repertoire until 1974, followed in 1981 by the Israel Philharmonic. Not until 1989 was a protocol on cultural relations concluded. It was expanded in the 1990s to cover more areas of cultural interaction.

By the mid-1990s, activities included a joint German-Israeli writers' conference that led to a common volume in Hebrew and German, and by the time of the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations, the two sides were close to signing a cultural treaty, ratifying a contemporary reality of active and intense exchanges in art, the performing arts, film, literature, photography, design, and architecture, with over four hundred German and Israeli non-governmental actors. Israel's sixtieth anniversary in 2008 and Tel Aviv's centennial were occasions for the intensification of cultural exchange.

The Goethe Institute has been the key facilitative and funding organization, but many others have operated also at the federal and regional levels with the goal of fostering cultural exchange.

In addition to the Israeli restrictions on cultural ties, there were tensions from specific German missteps, such as the 1971 opening of the first German Culture Week in Israel on the anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. Despite the limitations and sensitivities, cultural relations survived the crises of the 1991 Gulf War, the 2002 Second Intifada, the 2006 Lebanon War, and the 2008 Gaza War. These events forced the cancellation of some exchanges, but there were genuine and successful efforts to maintain ties.⁹⁸

Conduits

The engagement of German political foundations in the German-Israeli relationship complements the activities of the German government, but these entities distinguish themselves most by acting as conduits for official interests in activities governments cannot undertake on a regular basis.⁹⁹ All six political foundations have offices in Israel. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES; 1978), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS; 1980), and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNS; 1983) are the oldest. The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS; 1998) and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS; 2009) are the most recent. KAS, FNS, and the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) are located in Jerusalem, implying support for Jerusalem as Israel's united capital. The FES, RLS, and HBS offices are located in Tel Aviv, implying the contrary.¹⁰⁰ Several of the foundations organized special programs for the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel in 2005 and for Israel's sixtieth anniversary in May 2008.

The FES has dealt with issues of the Jewish experience in Europe and the Middle East, but has concentrated on the peace process, particularly the need to build support at the grassroots level. The office has worked closely, therefore, with FES offices in the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon, as well as with the Brussels office, highlighting the role of the EU as a regional peace community and activating the Israeli-European Policy Network. The FES has been concerned with the role of the Arab minority in Israel, the religious right, comparative economic issues, and the role of women and youth, developing programs with a variety of NGOs, academic institutions, political entities at all levels, and think tanks. German-Israeli relations also have been covered, both for reasons of moral obligation and the national interest of German foreign policy; the focus has been dialogue between new generations.

The KAS, like the FES, has emphasized the weight of the past in its activities in Israel. In addition, it sees its role as building bridges: among Ger-

many, Israel, and Europe; to various groups in Israeli society; and between Israel and its neighbors in the region. The KAS has worked with its office in Ramallah on the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians. Comparative German and Israeli topics also have emerged. The KAS interacts programmatically with much of Israeli society—the judiciary, universities, women's groups, various ministries, Jewish-Arab organizations, Palestinian groups, and the Knesset. Institutionally, the KAS solidified its presence through the building of a Konrad Adenauer Conference Center in Jerusalem with funding from various German sponsors. Like the FES, it organizes programs on German-Israeli relations.

The HBS is building networks in Israeli society and Israeli politics with groups dealing with a twenty-first century agenda of the environment, gender, culture, and human rights. It saw the establishment of its office as the creation of a venue for critical and innovative debates and dialogues among Israel, its neighbors, and Germany. It also focuses on German-Jewish, German-Israeli, and EU-Israeli relations.

Through programming with a diverse set of NGOs, political institutions, and universities, the RLS centers its activities on German-Israeli and EU-Israeli open dialogues on German history, especially the Holocaust, and culture; the opportunities and challenges in civil society; human rights; education; the environment; and the peace process. It also promotes activities fighting anti-Semitism in Germany and Europe.

Like the FNS, HSS has a more regional orientation in the Middle East, but it does have a project office in Jerusalem to support rapprochement among Jewish, Arab, and Palestinian societal groups, and the peace process. Its main partners have been civil society organizations: Shatil (Israeli), Panorama, and Al Muntada (both Palestinian).

The FNS has a representative in Israel/Palestine, but its main regional office is in Egypt. The foundation addresses the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict and relations between Jewish citizens and the Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel. Like the other foundations, the FNS has a German-Israeli and EU orientation.

Competitors

Much of the activity of non-governmental actors in German-Israeli relations fell into the categories of catalyst, complement, or conduit, but on occasion societal actors were also competitors.

There have been three main examples of competition in the Israeli case: German scientists working in Egypt in the 1960s; the Action Reconciliation activities in the 1970s; and the German media and public criticism of Israel during the second intifada in spring 2002.

In a period of highly positive German-Israeli relations after the Suez crisis, President Gamal Abdel Nasser recruited German scientists to develop rockets for use against Israel, prompting a successful Israeli request to the German government for their dismissal from a government-funded Stuttgart research center. When Israel lodged a second complaint in 1963 on discovering that German scientists had moved to Egypt and were working on atomic, biological, and chemical weapons, the German government was less sympathetic, arguing that it could not stop private citizens' activities. Despite outcry from the CDU, SPD, and FDP in parliament, and highly critical German public opinion, the German government took no action. The issue was resolved by Mossad, the Israeli secret service.¹⁰¹

German scientists in Egypt caused a bitter debate in Israel over German-Israeli relations, with Ben-Gurion resigning and his successor Levi Eshkol issuing the severest verbal attack on Germany since the early 1950s. However, the incident and Germany's inability to stop the German scientists seem to have contributed to Erhard's decision to offer diplomatic relations to Israel in 1965.

In the mid-1970s, after some fifteen years of working in Israel to make amends for Nazi crimes, a number of Action Reconciliation volunteers began to involve themselves in questions of Palestinian rights and to be openly critical of Israel. The criticism of Israel was counterbalanced by the work of other members of the movement, but it caused concern within political elites in Germany and Israel.¹⁰²

A survey of the main German newspapers' reporting on the Middle East by the *Duisburger Institut für Sprach- und Sozialforschung* (Duisburg Institute for Language and Social Research) during the period from September 2000 through August 2001 revealed an anti-Israel bias at a time when the German government's position was even-handed regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The issue became a complicating factor in spring 2002 when media criticism seemed to increase and was accompanied by public anti-Israel demonstrations and by harsh attacks on Israel (deemed by some to be anti-Semitic) from the FDP's Jürgen Möllemann and the CDU's Norbert Blüm.¹⁰³ Foreign Minister Fischer responded by criticizing the one-sided view of Israel's detractors in Germany and Europe, maintaining his understanding of

Israel's security needs and his historically based moral commitment to Israel while also acknowledging the necessity for Palestinian self-determination.¹⁰⁴ Some non-governmental actors also came to Israel's defense.

Despite escalating criticism of Israel from some parts of German society, particularly after the second intifada erupted, Israeli sympathy toward the EU and member states in a 2007 survey ranked Germany second with 67 percent, behind only England (80 percent). Israelis were most sympathetic with the United States (85 percent). The unfavorable rating for Germany at 28 percent was in the same range as attitudes toward Italy, Switzerland, Spain, and Turkey (the United States and England received 14 percent and 16 percent). Two years later, in 2009, sympathy with Germany had hardly diminished at 65 percent, with 26 percent (down 2 percent) unfavorable.¹⁰⁵

Governmental Institutions

For the sake of maintaining cordial relations with the Arab world, Germany's early development of institutional ties with the Israeli government often occurred behind closed doors or in a quiet fashion, in contrast to societal relations where friendship was openly displayed from the onset. There was no overarching framework like the 1963 Franco-German Elysée Treaty. Instead, there were secret agreements, treaties in specific areas, and binational entities, all of which spawned regular visits of leaders and ministers for policy exchanges, coordination, and sometimes joint activity.¹⁰⁶

Non-governmental ties dominated the relationship until 1965, with three notable exceptions: implementation of the Luxembourg Agreement; secret military agreements in which Germany provided arms to Israel, beginning in the 1950s; and the special, unpublicized German arrangement for development aid to Israel, initiated in the 1960 meeting between Adenauer and Ben-Gurion at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. The latter two activities were expressly compensation for the absence of diplomatic relations.

The evolution of German-Israeli governmental institutions spans five periods: 1965–1980, when diplomatic relations facilitated the conclusion of numerous treaties and agreements; 1981–1989, when ties were consolidated and expanded to areas not previously covered; 1989–2004, when the reality of German unification meant new challenges, resulting in the proliferation of visits and new forms of institutionalization; the year 2005, the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic ties, a time of intense reflection when the two countries decided to focus on the joint definition of interests and on the future

as well as the past; and 2006–2009, when the degree of institutionalization exceeded anything before, all in connection with Israel's sixtieth anniversary. In all five historical periods, policy was like Janus, looking two ways: highly positive developments in bilateral ties and institutions, accompanied by either neutral or balanced policies toward the Middle East conflict, increasing criticism of Israeli policy in the occupied territories, and promotion of Palestinian self-determination. Germany always, however, emphasized Israel's right to exist. Throughout six decades, Germany was motivated in its institutionalization of ties with Israel by moral reasoning related to recent history, and by practical benefits in specific policy arenas.

1965–1980

During the initial period of diplomatic relations, at least fifteen formal agreements were reached in diverse areas: state tourism; customs penalties; economics; bilateral economic aid; international development aid; youth exchange; archival documents; costs relating to the administration of restitution; transportation and its various branches; coproduction of films; social security; professional training; mutual recognition of legal decisions in civil and trade arenas; double taxation; investment promotion.¹⁰⁷ Some areas of agreement required the creation of joint institutions, such as in economics, where the Mixed Economic Commission of the mid-1970s brought together government officials with representatives of trade and industry; or in youth exchange where a Joint Committee of Experts was created at the end of the 1960s. Other areas were highly informal, such as defense, and proceeded quietly at the same time that Germany officially ended its arms supply to Israel in 1965 and enunciated guidelines to prohibit German arms to “areas of tension” (*Spannungsgebiete*).

The official curtailment of arms in 1965, together with the earlier controversy over German scientists working in Egypt on weapons to be used against Israel, was one of the crises that impaired relations before formal diplomatic ties could be established. Formalization of political ties in May 1965 did not eliminate tensions in relations during this first period of institutionalization, but the available avenues to confront divisive issues multiplied. In the period until 1980, three crises tested the German-Israeli relationship: the assassination by Palestinians of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972; the Knesset elections of 1977; and the ongoing Arab economic boycott. All three involved Germany's position on the Middle East conflict.

After the hijacking of a Lufthansa plane, the German government released those responsible for the Munich murders, causing Israel to recall its ambassador, criticize Germany publicly, and cast relations as bleak. Willy Brandt's June 1973 visit to Israel—the first of an incumbent German chancellor, and one of more than a dozen official trips in this period—helped heal the rift significantly.

The 1977 elections meant the disappearance from government of the Israeli Labour Party, a calculable partner for Germany first led by Ben-Gurion, and the emergence of the Likud bloc, which was immediately hostile to the Federal Republic. Despite the consequent tensions in relations, four more bilateral agreements were concluded during the last four years of this period.

During this period, Germany sought to repair relations with the Arab world that had been damaged by the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. In addition to high-level visits to the area, growing economic aid to the Arab world, and increasing dependence on Arab oil, the German government chose not to introduce anti-boycott legislation, which would have prevented German companies from succumbing to the Arab threat of boycotting their economic ties with the Arab world were they to trade with Israel. To compensate for this apparent tilt toward the Arab world and against Israel, Germany showed significant preference to Israel in economic aid, and worked vigorously in the EC for trade advantages for Israel.

1981–1989

Compared to the previous period of extensive growth, the 1980s were a less active decade for institutionalization. Nonetheless, reconciliation progressed with the consolidation and rounding out of areas of policy interaction. Extant agreements and regulations, in youth exchange, transportation, and social security, were all extended; scientific relations were expanded. No new agreements were signed during the tenure of prime minister Menachem Begin, but Yitzhak Shamir concluded new agreements in agricultural research, intellectual property, and law, increasing the number of government ministries involved in institutional ties. At the end of the period, there were finally the first high-level governmental talks on culture (there had been talks at a lower level in 1982). The remarkable degree of closeness, in the short space of two decades, was registered by Chancellor Kohl on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of diplomatic relations, when he

highlighted governmental consultations, discussions, and visits (at head of government, head of state, and ministerial levels).¹⁰⁸

The 1980s were not without crises in the relationship, but they were always overcome. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Prime Minister Begin clashed over the Middle East conflict, with Schmidt supporting Palestinian rights during a trip to Saudi Arabia in April 1981. New governments in both countries helped ease tensions, but the Kohl government would experience considerable difficulty with Israel over German unification in 1989. For Kohl, unification was a crowning achievement. For prime minister Yitzhak Shamir a unified Germany was the “fourth Reich.”¹⁰⁹ The more tempered response of Israel’s foreign minister and Germany’s measured, multilateral handling of the process of unification contributed to a quick resolution as the decade ended, the two countries ever sensitive to their mutual needs.

1990–2004

Bilateral agreements covered many areas of mutual interest by 1990. The next fifteen years became a time of renewal and refinement of arrangements and regulations, tailored to a new post–Cold War era. At the beginning of this period, the German ambassador to Israel described the governmental relationship as “open” and “comprehensive.”¹¹⁰ By the end of the period, German officials were referring to “friendship.”¹¹¹ In addition to social security and youth exchange, three areas stand out: economics, culture, and defense.

Besides the March 1993 joint declaration regarding further cooperation in the general fields of economics and technology, and the revival of the Mixed Economic Commission, the major initiative in this period was the German government’s May 1993 anti-boycott decree, banning discrimination against Israel in private trade agreements between Germany and the Arab world. By 1996, Germany had ceased its development aid of 140 million DM per year to Israel (the latter clearly no longer a developing country according to criteria of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)), but funds for economic development still were channeled to Israel in other forms.¹¹²

The intergovernmental discussions on culture initiated in 1989 climaxed in the 2000 protocol on cultural cooperation. The two countries for the first time committed themselves to begin the preparation of a cultural treaty that would encase the multifaceted and expansive network of cultural exchanges and events.¹¹³

Military relations had continued despite the formal cessation of German arms deliveries to Israel in the 1960s. In this period, military relations achieved a new quality in terms of institutionalization and policy. Even though the end of the Cold War changed the strategic environment for both Germany and Israel, they still had overlapping, if not identical, interests, expressed in cooperation in military leadership and training, intelligence, and arms.¹¹⁴

For the first time, in 1992 and 1994 respectively, the German and Israeli chiefs of staff exchanged visits, inaugurating a plan for biannual meetings. Regular encounters of the leadership of the military's individual branches from both countries were instituted. Joint training was formalized as Germany had been providing support and financial help since the early 1980s. In 1995 Germany and Israel concluded an agreement for the mutual exchange of members of the military.

An important dimension of intelligence relations in this period was the active exchange of strategic and technical information between the intelligence services, particularly on terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. This connection was regular but not institutionalized. Exchanges between the two intelligence services occurred regarding Iran. Despite Israel's public concern with Germany's policy of constructive engagement regarding Iran, behind the scenes Israel requested, and received, German help with the abortive attempt to locate the missing airman Ron Arad.¹¹⁵

Beginning in the 1990s, German intelligence leaders played a major, innovative role in negotiating on Israel's behalf with both Lebanon and Hezbollah over the exchange of Arab and Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails for the remains of Israeli soldiers, culminating in a major deal in January 2004 carried out in part on German soil.¹¹⁶ It was particularly remarkable that Israel entrusted the fate of its soldiers to German negotiators.

Cooperation over weapons was much more public in this period than in the past. There were statements of "openness," for example by the German Ministry of Defense in 1992, and formal memoranda of understanding, for example between the two ministries of defense concerning Israeli procurement in Germany in 1993 and on joint activity on weapons technology, as well as research and development, in 1998.

The supply of weapons was mutual, with Israel providing Cerberus jammers to Germany from 1997 to 2001 (the initial deal started in 1978), and Germany furnishing Israel with three submarines over the course of the 1990s (financed by the United States, and spurred by the Gulf War). Yet,

stealth was still involved in German-Israeli military relations, at times causing political and bureaucratic fights in Germany. As in the past, there were also limits to Germany's responsiveness to Israeli requests, as in its ultimate refusal in 2002 to supply Fuchs armored personnel carriers, deeming them offensive weapons (there was no problem with provision of the defensive Patriot anti-missile systems).

While the amendments and new agreements were not as plentiful in the 1990 to 2004 period as in previous periods, visits at all levels were numerous in all fields, with heads of state/government and ministerial visits alone numbering almost fifty.¹¹⁷ There was a flurry of visits at the time of the Gulf War, the crisis in relations that began this period, when it was discovered that German companies had provided Iraq with the means to attack Israel, and when Scud missiles were used against Israel. Germany compensated Israel with various forms of relief and military assistance, softening Israel's public criticism.

2005: The Fortieth Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

Similar to the Franco-German celebration just two years earlier, the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2005 between Germany and Israel was an opportunity for reflection on past achievements and on the future trajectory, especially in bilateral institutions. The anniversary involved numerous events, including the exchange of visits by the two presidents and their speeches before the respective parliaments, a special German-Israeli garden party at the Schloss Charlottenburg in Berlin hosted by the two presidents for six hundred German and Israeli youth, a special concert of the Israel Philharmonic in Berlin, and numerous cultural and political events throughout the year in both countries.¹¹⁸ The fortieth anniversary prompted both positive and negative assessments by commentators, the former focusing on the dramatic fruitful degree of change compared to 1965 in a relationship still rooted in the Holocaust, and the latter pointing to the anti-Israel sentiments of German public opinion and the fading of the past.¹¹⁹

The most frequent term used by officials to characterize ties in this fortieth year was the "special relationship" (*Sonderbeziehung*), or relationship with a "special character" (*besonderen Charakter*), as expressed jointly by the German and Israeli foreign ministers and individually by various German and Israeli leaders.¹²⁰ Specialness had a dual character of darkness and light, for it derived in the first instance from the reality of the Holocaust, but addition-

ally from the connection forged over the abyss of that “rupture of civilization” (*Zivilisationsbruch*). As a result, Israeli society had a “schizophrenic” or “ambivalent” attitude to Germany, viewing Germany negatively due to the Holocaust, but also in positive ways.¹²¹

The first quality of specialness signified uniqueness, whereas the second denoted preferential relations that Germany and Israel each had with few other countries. History meant there could be “no forgiving and forgetting,” and that Israel was very sensitive to any manifestations of anti-Semitism, including the newer form linked to anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment. While flagging the activity of neo-Nazis and insisting that European governments, including Germany, do more to counter the new anti-Semitism, in his May 2005 speech to the German Bundestag and Bundesrat, the Israeli president also praised Germany’s efforts.¹²² Sixty years after the Holocaust it had become possible for Germany and Israel jointly to commit themselves to the fight against anti-Semitism.¹²³

The fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations provided the opportunity for frankness that attended a mature and realistic relationship. The Israeli ambassador to Germany expressed concern about a trend toward the “normalization” of relations in which the past became a footnote and in which Germans saw themselves as victims.¹²⁴ He dated this tendency first to German unification and then to Martin Walser’s 1998 characterization of the Holocaust as a “moral cudgel” (*Moralkeule*) used against the Germans. Both the German foreign minister and the Israeli president argued that Germany must maintain the distinction between victims and perpetrators as a way to counteract this trend.¹²⁵ The new normalization trend was distinct from the earlier German official use of the term for the establishment of diplomatic relations, a characterization Israel rejected in favor of “formalization.”¹²⁶

Criticism and concern were, however, only part of the relationship, and the Israeli ambassador and others also highlighted what united the two sides, what made Germany Israel’s second most important partner after the United States. The Israeli president went so far as to pronounce “historical reconciliation” between Germany and Israel.¹²⁷ After four decades, both sides testified to friendship and partnership, to relations built on trust.¹²⁸ Israel’s ambassador used the term “common destiny” (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*) to describe the relationship between the two partners, much the same way that de Gaulle characterized Franco-German relations as a community of fate.¹²⁹

Leaders in both countries identified common values and institutions as the links that bind. Both were Western, democratic, inspired by the rule

of law, and engaged in the fight against terrorism. The basic commonality of values permitted fruitful mutual learning about similarities and differences in the two societies, about how to face common challenges through comparative public policy analysis, whether on multiculturalism, transportation, the environment, science and technology, education, legal systems, or trade.¹³⁰ The past may have been the bedrock of the relationship, but the twenty-first century would also be a stimulus to defining and pursuing common interests, foremost security. Germany's understanding of Israel's military needs thus was demonstrated in one of the last gestures of the Schröder government: the decision to sell Israel, at a discounted price, two submarines. However, the German government would not allow the sale to Israel of Dingo armored personnel carriers, out of concern for their possible use against Palestinians.¹³¹

Common values could catalyze a relationship, but institutions provided proof that common values mattered. Chancellor Schröder deemed the institutional connections between Germany and Israel almost unparalleled.¹³² Ambassador Stein identified a complete range of bilateral institutions, with the exception of a cultural treaty, whose preparation was accelerated during the fortieth anniversary year.¹³³ Gert Weisskirchen, the SPD member of the Bundestag who served as OSCE Special Representative for Combating Anti-Semitism, recommended that the cultural treaty institutionalize history itself, to include the appointment of a joint German-Israeli historians' commission to consider the form historical consciousness and historical remembrance should take once the eye-witness generation passed from the scene.¹³⁴

In their joint article on the fortieth anniversary, foreign ministers Fischer and Shalom accented the role of young people as the future's interpreters of the past and as guardians of a robust relationship. Fischer proposed the creation of a German-Israeli Youth Council, comparable to the institutions that Germany has with France and Poland, to embed young people in the German-Israeli partnership. Building on the 2005 initiative of the German and Israeli presidents and of Foreign Minister Fischer and the Israeli ambassador to Germany, plans were developed for the German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation, a new exchange program to engage young leaders and potential elites. Germany contributed €24 million and Israel \$1 million to get it started.¹³⁵

Fischer and Shalom saw in German-Israeli relations a model, a "common search for solutions" to critical issues that could benefit the "entire international community," and specifically the Middle East. Fischer identified

democratization, a defining common value of Germans and Israelis, as a joint Israeli-European objective for the region.¹³⁶ On the occasion of Israel's Independence Day (*Yom Ha'atzmaut*) at the Berlin Philharmonic, May 31, 2005, Israeli President Moshe Katsav drew a further connection: "I hope, indeed I am sure, that one day we will have with our Arab neighbors comparably good relations in science, culture and youth exchange that we have with Germany."¹³⁷

2006–2009

During the period between 2006 and 2009, Angela Merkel served as the first chancellor from East Germany, which made more whole the ongoing German process of confronting the past and reconciliation. And Israel reached its sixtieth anniversary, occasioning still more institutionalization of relations in the form of bilateral cabinet consultations.¹³⁸ By 2009, Israeli officials referred to the relationship with Germany as "intimate," and recognized that Israel should treat Germany with "respect" and not "take it for granted."¹³⁹

Between 2006 and 2009, Germany continued to extend Israel policy preferences in military affairs and hostage mediation, notwithstanding a virtual alternation of praise and criticism of Israel. Reconciliation between Germany and Israel continued to mature, sixty years after mutual acknowledgement of the Holocaust.

When Germany's minister for economics and technology visited Israel in June 2006, he assured Israeli leaders that the Jewish state could count on continued German military support against a threat from Iran. He specifically vowed that, despite severe restrictions on Germany's export of dual use technology, Germany would try to fulfill Israel's wishes as a "preferential partner."¹⁴⁰

The idea of such preference, reserved for a small number of partners, was evident in two more military areas later that summer. In July, Germany and Israel signed an agreement for Israel to purchase two German submarines—for positioning in the vicinity of Iran—with one-third of the cost borne by the German government. Schröder's outgoing government in 2005 finally had agreed to the sale after repeated refusals due to Israel's purported outfitting of earlier German submarines with Israeli-made cruise missiles.¹⁴¹

The second manifestation of preference followed the August 2006 cease-fire in the Lebanon War between Israel and Hezbollah. In one of its hardest

foreign policy decisions since 1949, and after a vigorous political debate, the German government agreed to dispatch, as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeping mission, naval forces to the coast of Lebanon to interdict arms shipments for Hezbollah. Israel had sought Germany's participation, a request broadly accepted by Israeli society. Despite both governments' desire to avoid any military confrontation between German and Israeli military forces, there were tensions between the German navy and Israeli air force in October 2006 at the beginning of the German mission, but they were readily resolved.¹⁴²

Over the next three years, the close German-Israeli military relationship continued with visits, training, exchanges, and the presence of German troops in UNIFIL along the Lebanese coast, albeit in reduced numbers, but still as an expression of "Germany's historic responsibility toward Israel."¹⁴³ Germany characterized military relations with Israel in this period as especially "trusting" and "close,"¹⁴⁴ demonstrated once again in fall 2009 with the German purchase of Israeli drones for use in Afghanistan and the related, subsequent training of German soldiers in Israel, a first in the relationship, in preparation for a German foreign mission.¹⁴⁵

Israel continued to show enormous degrees of trust in the German Federal Intelligence Agency (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*) during the years 2006 to 2009, a trust rewarded repeatedly. In the second stage of intensive, UN-backed negotiations with Hezbollah (the first stage concluded with the successful January 2004 prisoner exchange), Germany arranged, in summer 2008, for the exchange of the remains of two Israeli soldiers for Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails and the remains of Lebanese who had infiltrated Israel.¹⁴⁶ By 2009, the German negotiator was onto the third phase of mediation, this time between Israel and Hamas for the release of the soldier Gilad Shalit, who had been captured in 2006.¹⁴⁷

Whereas the German government showed Israel preference during this period, the German public expressed growing criticism of Israeli policy, such as the Lebanon intervention. Anti-Israel opinion polls, media reporting, demonstrations, and declarations took place, although there were some pro-Israel activities.¹⁴⁸ The March 2007 analogy between Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto and Palestinians in Ramallah, drawn by two members of the Catholic Bishops Conference (*Deutsche Bischofskonferenz*) pilgrimage to the Holy Land, was one of the most controversial anti-Israel statements. The head of the Bishops Conference subsequently apologized for his members' behavior. The Catholic bishops' trip was balanced a month later by a much more posi-

tive visit to the Holy Land by the Council of the German Evangelical Church (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*).¹⁴⁹

The German government demonstrated its solidarity with Israel through frequent high-level visits. Merkel made three trips in the period between 2006 and 2009 (the initial trip very early in her first government), and foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier travelled to the Middle East six times in 2006 alone. Germany constantly underscored Israel's right to exist.¹⁵⁰ After the election of Hamas in January 2006, both German leaders were quick to insist on the three conditions for contact with Hamas: recognition of Israel; acceptance of established Israeli-Palestinian agreements; and renunciation of terrorism.¹⁵¹

The high point of Germany's reiteration of deep connection came in the first speech of a German chancellor (and the first of any head of government) to Israel's Knesset. Merkel, celebrating Israel's sixtieth birthday, hailed the "consolidation" of habits of preference and remembrance that constituted a special relationship and reconciliation between Germany and Israel over the previous six decades. She highlighted common values and trust binding the two countries despite the Holocaust's rupture of civilization (*Zivilisationsbruch*), which she termed a "moral disaster."¹⁵²

Separating herself from the possible rhetoric of the occasion, Merkel asked what it meant to have a "unique relationship" in concrete policy expressions, and how Germans should react to the reality "that a clear majority of European respondents say that Israel is a bigger threat to the world than Iran." She continued her questioning: "Do we politicians in Europe fearfully bow to public opinion and flinch from imposing further stricter sanctions on Iran to persuade it to halt its nuclear programs?" Her answer was clear and indirectly acknowledged the dualities underlying German attitudes: "No, however unpopular we make ourselves, that is precisely what we cannot afford to do."

To keep the memory of the Holocaust alive, Merkel argued that "thoughts must become words, and words deeds." Yet, her words did not always translate into deeds, and Israel criticized Germany for putting its considerable economic engagement in Iran ahead of Israeli interests. The German government vigorously condemned Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's questioning of the fact of the Holocaust and the legitimacy of the State of Israel, but moved only a minor distance away from Iran economically. Merkel called on German industry to limit its business with Iran, but Germany did not agree with the Israeli view that Germany should sever its trade relationship with Iran.¹⁵³



Figure 4.6. Chancellor Angela Merkel addresses Israeli Knesset, Jerusalem, March 18, 2008. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Kugler

Beyond Iran, Merkel's Knesset speech queried how to balance Israeli and German interests in the two-state solution for Palestine. The long-established policy of "balance" (*Ausgewogenheit*), attempting to secure Palestinian rights and self-determination through statehood, continued with new initiatives in 2008. They included concrete, practicable projects in culture, infrastructure, and schools in the Future for Palestine initiative with the Palestinian Authority; the German-hosted Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law; and Germany's focus on supply and infrastructure issues in Gaza.¹⁵⁴ In frequent visits, both Merkel and Steinmeier also nurtured relations with the Arab world more generally.

Merkel argued that the two-state solution was in Israel's security interest, and that Israel's security was of primary German interest. Yet, Germany was prepared to be public in its disagreements as to what was good for Israel, criticizing Israeli policy on the conflict with Palestinians, particularly Israeli

support for settlements.¹⁵⁵ Nonetheless, a new degree of institutionalization in the relationship, marking Israel's sixtieth birthday, proved that Germany's commitment to Israel remained robust and special.

Chancellor Merkel was accompanied on her March 2008 trip to Israel to honor the Jewish state's sixtieth anniversary by seven German cabinet members. She and prime minister Ehud Olmert chaired a joint session of the two cabinets, a first in the German-Israeli relationship.¹⁵⁶ Germany has such meetings with France, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Russia, but never before with Israel. Germany and Israel articulated binding values extending to "shared interests" in the face of globalization.¹⁵⁷ By profiling the partnership publicly the communiqué itself resulting from the joint consultations was a novelty.

In the past much of German-Israeli policy relations had been conducted out of public view. The communiqué, following the joint session and committing to annual cabinet consultations, reflected a blend of old and new: departures in some areas of policy and consolidation or expansion of existing ties in other areas.

The bilateral agreements emerging from the sixtieth anniversary expanded regular diplomatic exchanges, which started in the early 1970s, and created an annual Diplomatic Summer School for diplomats. The agreements intensified close cooperation on international terrorism, and broadened significantly existing programs for the exchange of officers and for field training.

Germany and Israel agreed to three new joint projects featuring the private sector: a high-level German-Israeli business event; German-Israeli investment and venture capital events; and projects involving both German and Israeli companies devoted to energy efficiency. There were also new agreements in science and technology, climate change, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and waste and water treatment. They moved beyond their 2005 commitment to share globally their experiences by agreeing to train jointly African agricultural irrigation experts.

Germany and Israel broadened exchanges of lawyers and judges and promoted joint seminars in all manner of legal issues while also expanding the exchange program between the two ministries of justice. These measures emphasized mutual learning, expanding on arrangements from the 1980s.

Youth exchange, noted in Merkel's Knesset speech, was a focus in the communiqué, including a commitment to greater funding. Merkel was anticipating the future of the relationship when the Holocaust generation will have disappeared and there are no longer eye witnesses. Promoting mutual understanding between young people in Germany and Israel, including

understanding of differences, is a government priority, combating negative images of Israel evident in German public opinion.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Sixty years after Israel's founding, Germany and Israel have espoused as a top priority joint international action, which relates to both the broader global environment and the narrower context of the European Community/European Union.

Global Influence

The United States, Adenauer understood, needed a rehabilitated Germany as part of the international coalition against communism, and rehabilitation included reconciliation with Israel, homeland of the displaced Jewish remnant. American input into Germany's policy on Israel was later apparent over arms supplies to Israel and over diplomatic relations.¹⁵⁸ The Hallstein Doctrine prevented diplomatic relations with Israel, as West Germany feared Arab recognition of East Germany, but, as Israel captured Soviet weapons in wars with its Arab neighbors, Germany took an interest in military relations with Israel.

Détente meant for Germany a growing embrace of the European Community and a modest distance from the United States. There was an inevitable impact on German-Israeli relations, accentuated after German unification as German-Jewish issues began to affect German-American relations. Still, the American Jewish Community dominated Holocaust-related compensation negotiations; the Israeli government played a secondary role.¹⁵⁹

Despite the subordination of Germany's Middle East policy to the EC, the special commitment to Israel continued. American and German Middle East policies remained complementary from the mid-1980s on (even during the Fischer-Schröder era of profound disagreement with the United States on a variety of other issues), and especially under Chancellor Merkel.¹⁶⁰

The demise of the Soviet Union had two impacts on German-Israeli relations. First, it meant an expansion of many bilateral programs to include East German participation. Second, it generated tension between Israel and the Jewish community in Germany as Jewish refugees leaving the former Soviet Union preferred Germany over Israel. Germany reacted by toughening its

immigration laws in December 2004, in part with input from Israel's Minister of Diaspora Affairs. Reconciliation with Israel, even at the beginning of the new millennium, was influencing Germany's external relations, but the migration law eventually was modified to reduce the impact on Russian-Jewish migration to Germany.¹⁶¹

German-Israeli Relations and the EU

Germany tended toward neutrality or balance in Middle East policy since the early 1970s, when the EC began to develop a common foreign policy that emphasized the Middle East and criticism of Israel.¹⁶² EC/EU support of Palestinian rights and a two-state solution was expressed in the declarations of Venice (1980), Berlin (1999), and Seville (2002); in the Road Map drawn up by the Quartet of the EU, the United States, Russia, and the UN (2002); and in the Brussels European Council Declaration on the Middle East (2008). This European approach concerned Israel deeply, although Israel seemed to be accepting the concept of two states.¹⁶³

Germany may have been unable or unwilling to change the basic direction of the EC's policy but pursued balance by, on occasion, limiting the EC/EU's impact, as in amending the language of the Venice Declaration and in guaranteeing compensation for Israel in the form of admission to the Fifth European Framework Programme for Research and Technical Development at the time of the Berlin Declaration. Germany also was more nuanced than other EU members, periodically abstaining or rejecting UN votes critical of Israel instead of adhering strictly to EU policy. On a variety of occasions since the early 1990s, Germany blocked the EU, for example on economic sanctions proposed to try to alter Israel's political and military policies.¹⁶⁴

During Germany's 2007 presidency of the EU, which Israel welcomed, Chancellor Merkel was committed to reviving the Quartet's role in the Middle East peace process and to intensifying Israel's relations with the EU. In October 2007, she initiated the EU's Action Strategy for the Middle East, and, in December 2009, Germany helped derail the EU effort to declare East Jerusalem the capital of any future Palestinian state.¹⁶⁵

Germany began advocating Israel's economic interests in the mid-1960s within the EC, emphasizing the importance of reconciliation for Germany's EC policies.¹⁶⁶ There were at least six major instances: the 1970 preferential trade agreement between Israel and the EC following Israel's abortive attempts for association status in the mid-1960s; the Free Trade Agreement of

1975; the 1986 modifications of the 1975 Agreement due to the EC's Mediterranean enlargement; the "special status" granted Israel at the 1994 Essen summit; the EU-Israel Association Agreement of 1995; and the EU-Israel Action Plan of December 2004.¹⁶⁷ The latter two initiatives also involved structured political relations. Israeli leaders publicly appreciated Germany's advocacy of Israeli interests in European integration.¹⁶⁸

The 2004 Action Plan was the most comprehensive agreement, reinforcing or opening up Israeli participation in the EU in industrial, science and technology, agricultural, and environmental programs. The EU had become Israel's principal trading partner. The commitment to deepening trade, investment, and economic ties covered the service sector, including financial services.

Under the Action Plan, Israel formally recognized the Quartet and the EU recognized Israel's right to "self-defense." The agreement expanded societal cooperation in education, migration, asylum, police, and judicial affairs. Finally, the EU and Israel agreed to work together through institutions and law to combat anti-Semitism, with the European Parliament viewing Germany as a model.¹⁶⁹ However, the EU's critical response to the Gaza War of 2008–2009 prevented the realization of an EU June 2008 commitment to upgrading the Action Plan.¹⁷⁰

During this twenty-first century flurry of activity, there was growing discussion in Israel of possible membership in the EU, with support from both political leaders and public opinion (in 2009, 69 percent of Israelis supported joining the EU).¹⁷¹ Most EU leaders, however, including German politicians, did not view Israel's membership as a possible option, although prominent German figures did call for a "privileged partnership" between the EU and Israel, suggesting the same status as Norway, or even full membership.¹⁷²

CONCLUSION

The transition in German-Israeli relations from enmity to amity in less than a generation is nothing short of miraculous. The two governments and two societies interacted in every conceivable way in an intricate process of reconciliation that began with confronting the history of the Holocaust in the early 1950s. History persistently defined reconciliation's moral tone, but both sides also focused on the present and the material needs that can bind two governments and two societies in areas as diverse as science and culture.

There was ample disagreement, especially over the Middle East conflict. Germany's commitment to Israel's survival had to be tempered within Germany's commitment to the EU. Nonetheless, Germany acted as Israel's steadfast advocate in the EC/EU and the strength of the bilateral relationship with Israel permitted Germany to act as mediator between Israelis on one side and Arabs and Palestinians on the other. Forces pushing Germany and Israel together were always greater than those that divided them. Personal relations between German and Israeli leaders, people of vision and courage, surmounted hostile domestic environments. Adenauer and Ben-Gurion concluded informal agreements based on personal trust, but, after the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965, governmental institutions proliferated and formalized relations. Societal institutions substituted for formal ties in the period before 1965, and have been a formidable dimension of relations ever since. As German (and European) public opinion became increasingly critical of Israeli policy in the Middle East conflict, institutional societal actors continued to demonstrate and promote solidarity with the Jewish state.

German-Israeli relations are a model of reconciliation, but the ability to maintain the intensity and integrity of the German-Israeli relationship in the future will depend on the commitment of new generations. Like their fore-runners, they will need to mix moral imperative with practical interests in the way that Adenauer and Ben-Gurion understood so well sixty years ago.

NOTES

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3. www.bundespraesident.de/en/-/5.622158/Address-by-Horst-Koehler_-Pres.htm; www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2005/PM%20Sharon%20Knesset%20speech%20on%20visit%20of%20German%20Pres%20Kohler%202-Feb-2005 (accessed March 3, 2005); Bundesregierung, "Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to the Knesset in Jerusalem," March 18, 2008, www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Reden/2008/03/2008-03-18-rede-knesset.html (accessed April 1, 2008).

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5. On the Schumacher and Heuss efforts, as well as an inadequate foray by Adenauer in 1949, see Lily Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984), fn 2, p. 47; and Markus Weingardt, *Deutsche Israel- und Nahostpolitik. Die Geschichte einer Gratwanderung seit 1949* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2002), 75–76.

6. *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, December 8, 1949; *Through Truth to Peace* (Hamburg: Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit, 1952).

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8. Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship*, fn 1, p. 83.

9. *The Times* (of London), January 18, 1951. Text of the March 1951 Note, Vogel, *The German Path to Israel*, 27–31.

10. Interviews, Israeli Embassy, Berlin, October 1 and October 2, 2002; Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem, December 14, 2009; Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, Tel Aviv, December 15, 2009. See also Dov B. Ben-Meir, deputy speaker of the Knesset, in *Twenty Years of Diplomatic Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel*, eds. Otto R. Romberg and George Schwinghammer (Frankfurt: Tribüne Books, 1985); Shimon Peres’s speech of January 25, 1996 in Munich in *Statements and Speeches* 19, no. 2 (New York: German Information Center, 1996); and Ariel Sharon’s speech (see note 3) on the occasion of President Köhler’s February 2005 address to the Knesset; the article by Ron Prosor, director-general of the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in *Haaretz*, January 31, 2005 (“Remember the Past, Shape the Future”); and the view of Israel’s first ambassador to Germany, Asher Ben-Natan, in Asher Ben-Natan and Niels Hansen, eds., *Israel und Deutschland. Dorniger Weg zur Partnerschaft. Die Botschafter berichten über vier Jahrzehnte diplomatischer Beziehungen (1965–2005)* (Cologne: Bohlau, 2005), 30.

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Germany's Relations with Poland

From Community of Disputes to Close Partnership

I was convinced that the same historical rank had to be accorded to reconciliation between Poles and Germans as to the friendship between Germany and France.

—Willy Brandt on his statement to the SPD party conference in March 1968 concerning recognition of the Oder-Neisse border¹

After the inauguration of Chancellor Willy Brandt's daring new policy toward Eastern Europe (*Ostpolitik*), German chancellors and foreign ministers consistently employed Franco-German reconciliation as a guide for German-Polish relations. They often copied institutional expressions of reconciliation. Examples include appointments in the respective foreign ministries of coordinators for German-Polish cooperation and a special German-Polish youth exchange organization.

Germany recognized the unique features of its relationship with Poland regarding history, most notably issues of compensation, territory, expulsion, and minorities deriving from World War II, all of which continued to animate ties in the twenty-first century. Civil society and political actors in the two countries differed at times vehemently over history, but the two governments increasingly attempted over time to fashion joint solutions for the disagreements. Assessing contemporary ties in 2005, the former Polish coordinator for German-Polish relations, Irena Lipowicz, characterized both developments—interests (*Interessengemeinschaft*) and disputes (*Streitgemeinschaft*)—as forms of community.²

In addition to the role of history and the nature of governmental and societal institutions, this chapter considers the contribution of leadership and the international context for the complicated evolution of German-Polish reconciliation, an achievement that overcame mutual isolation after World War II and the grim reality of “insurmountable barriers” to any relationship.³

HISTORY

History is more than merely a factor, but less than a dominant force, in shaping German-Polish relations after World War II.⁴ In the 2003 Danzig (Gdańsk) Declaration, German president Johannes Rau and Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski intoned: “The war unleashed by the unlawful Nazis . . . still influences relations between our two peoples.”⁵

The history of relations with Germany pervades Polish political life. During Poland’s fall 2005 presidential election campaign, then-mayor of Warsaw Lech Kaczyński invoked the conclusion of an investigation—launched to counter German expellees’ claims for compensation from Poland for property confiscated in what became Western Poland at the end of World War II—that the Nazis were responsible for massive destruction of Warsaw.⁶ During a visit to Berlin as president in March 2006, Kaczyński persisted in his criticism of German confrontation with the past, but he also demonstrated an eagerness to develop cooperation with the Merkel government based on common and complementary interests, suggesting historical memories did not preclude relations and reaffirming a pragmatic official Polish perspective that had started in the late 1960s.⁷

The Polish president and his brother Jarosław Kaczyński (the former prime minister was leader of the opposition Law and Justice party, *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (PiS)) were outraged in May 2009 by two German initiatives reducing the notion of Germans as perpetrators: an article in a major German magazine, characterizing the Poles as the Nazis’ willing helpers; and the CDU-CSU European Parliament election resolution, appealing for international condemnation of Germans’ post–World War II expulsion, including from Poland. This time it was prime minister Donald Tusk and his ruling Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) that took the pragmatic stance, by calling the CDU-CSU words “distasteful” but finding the PiS approach “insane politics.”⁸ In September 2009, on the seventieth anniversary

of the outbreak of World War II in Poland, both Germany and Poland made a commitment to remembrance.

The three categories of history—the past as stimulus, acknowledging grievances, and the past as present—explain both the highly public but frequently quiet ways in which history shaped German-Polish reconciliation.

The Past as Stimulus

In the first two decades after the end of World War II, West Germany and Poland were separated by mutual suspicion, the Cold War's competing power blocs, and absolute psychological and structural non-recognition.⁹ The immense Polish suffering of occupation during World War II, culminating in the loss of over 6 million Poles (3 million of whom were Jewish), fueled a widespread antipathy toward Germany, described uniformly by observers of the early non-relationship as “hatred” or “enmity.”¹⁰

The Polish government appeared to cultivate broad fears of a revanchist Germany, dedicated to the return of the “Eastern territories” ceded to Poland at the end of World War II, and memories of Germany's historical role in the denial of Polish nationhood beginning at the end of the eighteenth century.¹¹ The anti-Communist Adenauer government encouraged these fears, viewing Poland as a mere satellite of the Soviet Union, insisting on Germany's borders of 1937, and referring to the territories lost as under “Polish administration” (*unter polnischer Verwaltung*), with the aim of conveying a temporary state of affairs. The integration of between seven and eight million expellees was a major social objective of postwar German governments, while the competition for their political support shaped the activities of political parties across the ideological spectrum, including the SPD.¹²

The absence of political relations did not prevent relations of other kinds. Most important was the societal relationship between religious actors and institutions, which predated by at least a decade official political initiatives.¹³ Both Protestant and Catholic churches took initiatives. According to Erhard Eppler, the former president of the Protestant Church Council in Germany (*Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag*), the Protestant process of rethinking the relationship with Poland and the border question began with the 1954 Leipzig Church Council (*Kirchentag*), at which Klaus von Bismarck recognized the origins of expulsion from former German territories in Germany's wartime behavior and accepted the consequent material losses. A similar

German Catholic departure occurred soon thereafter with the invitation to Polish bishops to attend the German Catholic Church Councils of 1956 in Cologne and 1958 in Berlin.

The process of rethinking continued in the early 1960s, for example in the October 1960 sermon of Berlin's Catholic bishop Julius Döpfner, acknowledging Poland as Germany's victim and the severity of its wartime experience, the hardship of Germany's self-inflicted expulsion, and the need for serious German sacrifices (the border question) if Germans wanted peace with Poland. The 1961 eight-person Tübinger Memorandum of the Protestant Church called for an active foreign policy, including renunciation of the lost territories.¹⁴

The big breakthrough in societal relations came in 1965, first with the October 1 publication of the Protestant Church's paper on "The Situation of the Expellees and the Relationship of the German People to its Eastern Neighbors" (*Die Lage der Vertriebenen und das Verhältnis des deutschen Volkes zu seinen östlichen Nachbarn*), aiming to end the "political silence." A letter followed on November 18 from the Polish Catholic bishops, inviting the German bishops to the millennial celebration of Christianity in Poland, recognizing the suffering of Poles and also the expellees, and especially granting forgiveness and asking for forgiveness. German and Polish bishops had the opportunity to interact in Rome in 1965 during the Second Vatican Council, which seemed to encourage Poles to reach out.

Opposition in both Germany and Poland to these religious initiatives was significant. To compensate for the lukewarm response of the German Catholic bishops, the Bensberg Circle of Catholic intellectuals issued a further memorandum, using the language of reconciliation. These initiatives were grounded in a combination of moral reasoning regarding Germany's behavior in World War II and practical arguments about accepting the reality of Europe's postwar division as a prerequisite for new human contacts.

In line with the thinking of the German churches, Brandt advocated recognizing and respecting the Oder-Neisse Line (named after the Oder and Neisse rivers, forming Poland's western border with Germany after World War II) at the 1968 SPD party conference in Nuremberg. Brandt acknowledged time and reality dictated that "the German people desire and need reconciliation with Poland."¹⁵ His position derived in part from his sense of a less hostile Poland, expressed more than a decade earlier in the 1955 Polish decision to end the state of war with Germany, and in the 1958 plan of Polish foreign minister Adam Rapacki for a nuclear-free zone in Europe.

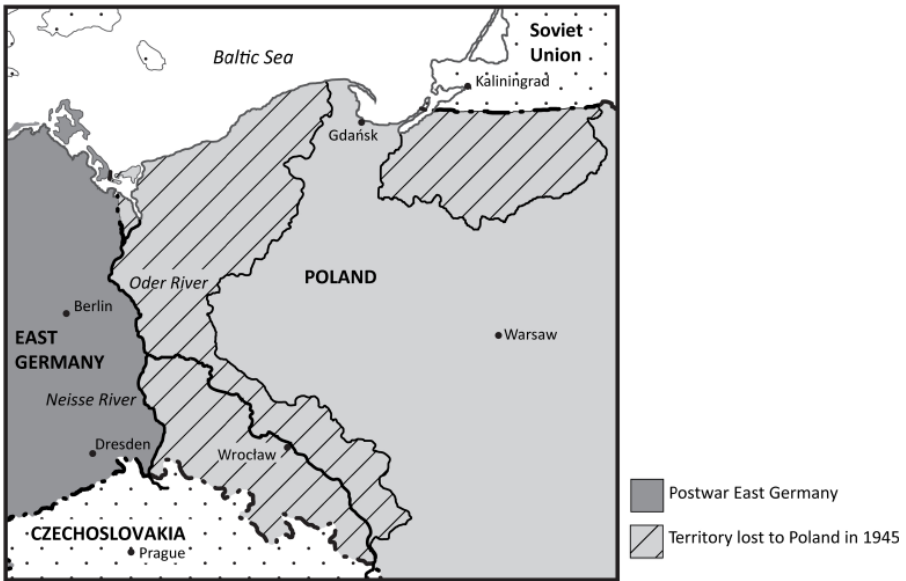


Figure 5.1. The Polish-German (Oder-Neisse) border after World War II. Courtesy of Bryan Hart

Acknowledging Grievances

Brandt's pragmatic approach, buoyed by a moral responsibility linked to Germany's past, led quickly to the December 1970 Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the People's Republic of Poland on the Basis for Normalizing Their Relations, which acknowledged Poland as "the first victim" of a murderous World War II and recognized the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's western border. The 1970 Treaty did not finalize the matter *de jure* as, according to the August 1945 Potsdam Agreement among the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union, formal recognition would have to await a peace settlement between the Four Powers and a united Germany. The 1970 *de facto* recognition, however, generated severe domestic criticism in Germany. Nor was the treaty with Germany welcomed enthusiastically in Poland, which wanted *de jure* recognition of the border.

De jure recognition of the border would have to await German unification, but did eventually come about in November 1990. The new treaty was preceded by the June 1990 Joint Declaration of the West German and East German parliaments on recognition of the border with Poland; the September 1990 Two Plus Four Agreement, which was not a peace treaty but did annul

Four Power responsibility for Germany; and the October 1990 declaration of German unification.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's hesitation on the border issue, largely in response to domestic conservative forces, caused extreme concern in Poland, and in his own cabinet. The 1970 Treaty's goal had been normalization, demonstrated concretely in the 1972 establishment of diplomatic relations, but was replaced in 1990 by the desire for "understanding and reconciliation." The 1970 Treaty included a Polish commitment to humanitarian issues connected to the German minority in Poland, particularly the reuniting of families. The 1990 Treaty was more reciprocal, containing German and Polish acknowledgement of suffering by both Germans and Poles as a result of expulsion and resettlement. The June 1991 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation referred to historical suffering and the need to protect German and Polish minorities, but also sought to recapture positive, cooperative elements from history as a way of structuring reconciliation in a new Europe. The 1990 Treaty defined the goal of reconciliation; the 1991 Treaty provided the means with institutions and fora across the societal spectrum on the Franco-German model.¹⁶

By the last decade of the twentieth century, the border question was no longer an issue, but two other historical disputes were—expulsion and material compensation. On expulsion, Polish foreign minister Władysław Bartoszewski, addressing the Bundestag in April 1995, did recognize the suffering of Germans: "We remember that [there were also] innumerable people of the German population who were affected and that Poland also belonged to the perpetrators."¹⁷

For its part, the German government accommodated some Polish compensation claims: the 1972 agreement for DM 100 million to Polish victims of pseudomedical experiments; the 1975 agreement (in exchange for the migration of 120,000 ethnic Germans from Poland) for DM 1 billion in government financial credit, and DM 1.3 billion for unrealized Polish pension payments during the Nazi occupation; and the creation in October 1991 of the German-Polish Reconciliation Foundation (*Stiftung Deutsch-Polnische Aussöhnung*) with €256 million for humanitarian assistance to various victims of Nazism.

The largest payment of German compensation, for slave and forced labor, came from the Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future Foundation (*Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft*). The foundation was set up by the German government and German industry in 2000 with a fund of DM 10 billion as a result of difficult negotiations between government and

industry and a variety of countries, including Poland, as well as the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. Most payments were made between 2001 and 2005, and Polish victims, mainly in the category of forced labor, represented 30 percent of the recipients (484,000) and 22 percent of the funds (almost €1 billion).¹⁸

The disbursement of monies to Polish victims through the German-Polish Reconciliation Foundation was marred by allegations of slowness and exchange rate problems incurred by Germany and of fiscal improprieties by Polish officers of the organization, but overall compensation to slave and forced labor was deemed a success.¹⁹ The joint declaration setting up the foundation reiterated President Rau's December 1999 statement recognizing the victims' enormous suffering, acknowledging the injustices perpetrated, and asking for forgiveness.

The moral rationale advanced by German leaders for the pursuit of negotiations over forced and slave labor was accompanied by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's pragmatic concern of countering American class-action suits and halting "the campaign against German industry and our country."²⁰

A further area where agreement was possible long after the historical events was in the upkeep of graves in Poland of German war dead from the First and Second World Wars. The Polish Minister of Culture and the German Ambassador to Poland signed an agreement with the force of international law in December 2003, formalizing the activities of the private German upkeep organization with its Polish counterpart.

Less success was registered in another area remaining from World War II, the return or restitution of confiscated, looted, and displaced cultural assets, considered emotional issues. Frustration defined German-Polish governmental negotiations over missing cultural assets that started in 1992 on the basis of the 1991 Friendship Treaty. The negotiations related to cultural assets taken from Poland by the Nazis, and to German cultural assets moved by the Third Reich to its eastern territories during World War II (to escape Allied bombing) and then appropriated by Poland after the war. A 2004 report of the German Foreign Office described negotiations with Poland as "very difficult," a finding borne out by a 2006 evaluation in an *Osteuropa* special on "Art in Conflict." Tensions flared again in 2007 when the German special ambassador for negotiations with Poland, Tono Eitel, renewed his insistence that Germany possessed rights under international law for the return of cultural property, and German observers referred to this property as the "last German prisoners of war."²¹

The minister for culture in the new Polish government, Bogdan Zdrojewski, felt that the cultural artifacts question could be resolved when other aspects of the relationship were stable. Nevertheless, there were some notable exceptions to the lack of movement, such as the 2000 return by Poland of a valuable Luther bible, and the 2001 return by the German Catholic Church of thousands of Church books. The president of the German Bishops' Conference termed the exchange "a significant step on the path to reconciliation and understanding between Germans and Poles."²²

Pressure on governments to act came from civil society, for example from the Copernicus Group (*Kopernikus-Gruppe*), a joint German-Polish Committee of the German Poland Institute (*Deutsches Polen-Institut*) and of the Polish Germany and Northern Europe Institute (*Instytut Niemiec i Europy Północnej*), which devoted its 2000 focus to displaced cultural assets. In 2006, one of the group's members, Klaus Ziemer, then-director of the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, drew on the experience of deliberations between German and Polish art historians to suggest a paradigm shift by developing the concept of "common cultural legacy" for sharing, rather than a national focus.²³

The Past as Present

Organizations

Acknowledging grievances involved significant public demonstrations by the German and Polish governments that the tone and language of the relationship were different from the past. This process was pushed in important ways by non-governmental organizations. Multiple non-governmental institutions (independent, with their own agendas, even though they may have received governmental funding) played primary roles in the quotidian exercise of facing up to the past. Several organizations stand out for their steadfast commitment to honoring the past: the German-Polish Textbook Commission (*Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkommission*) under the auspices of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research; the German Historical Institute in Warsaw (*Deutsches Historisches Institut*); and Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*). These organizations, like similar organizations in other bilateral relations of reconciliation, can be evaluated in terms of timing, goals, means, the nature of history, and effect.

Timing: The timing of the creation of German organizations dealing with Poland was largely determined by developments in the international system. The Cold War prohibited the full growth of Action Reconciliation and the German-Polish Textbook Commission, and precluded the establishment of the German Historical Institute before 1989. Early efforts demonstrated that some societal movement toward reconciliation was possible even during periods of political constraint. Poland, together with Israel, France, and the Soviet Union, was the geographic priority in the 1958 call of the German Protestant Church for the creation of Action Reconciliation, but the Cold War meant that its activities were very limited in Eastern Europe, and after 1961 they were carried out in Poland only by the separate Action Reconciliation of the GDR.

The deep thaw in the Cold War allowed for the 1986 establishment of Action Reconciliation's international meeting center in Auschwitz (a forerunner for the one set up in Israel two decades later). Action Reconciliation opened a country office in Cracow in 1996, after the end of the Cold War.²⁴ The post-1989 system transformation also permitted the German Historical Institute's 1994 opening in Warsaw.²⁵ Structural change in Cold War relations allowed a focus on forbidden topics in post-1989 German-Polish textbook deliberations, but the bilateral commission per se had been set up already twenty years earlier, in 1972, following the signing of the German-Polish Treaty.²⁶

Goals: Non-governmental organizations have aimed at building mutual knowledge and understanding, as well as removing stereotypes. They have sought to confront the past based on full recognition of the crimes committed by Germans against Poles, with Action Reconciliation focusing explicitly on expiating guilt and pursuing a "culture of remembrance." All three (Action Reconciliation, the Textbook Commission, and the German Historical Institute) have focused on replacing monologues of the early postwar period with dialogue and active communication. They have been motivated by a need for reconciliation between Germans and Poles, with Action Reconciliation using the term most frequently and most broadly (focusing on peace and conflict resolution globally in its meeting house in Auschwitz).

Means: A variety of means has been pursued. Common activities across all three organizations include meetings (conferences, lectures, seminars, and training sessions) and publications (books, articles, and newsletters) with different audiences: scholars and the general public for the German Historical Institute; educators, scholars, and *Land* officials responsible for

education for the Textbook Commission; and youth and Holocaust survivors for Action Reconciliation. All three give priority to activities that promote the “successor generation,” whether of scholars, educators, or activists and volunteers. The Textbook Commission built networks among scholars even during communism in Poland, and the fall of communism allowed greater efforts at networking, an activity also shared by the German Historical Institute through its meetings and fellowships.

Action Reconciliation undertakes volunteer work in Poland, including upkeep of historical sites such as former concentration camps (Auschwitz, Stutthof, and Majdanek) and Jewish cemeteries; internships in museums and memorials; organization and preparation of visits to concentration camps; and assistance to Holocaust survivors and physically and mentally challenged individuals in Poland. Like Beit Ben Yehuda-Haus Pax in Jerusalem, the international youth meeting center in Auschwitz is committed to encounters on a range of issues relating to both history and the future.

Action Reconciliation has issued statements on a variety of topics, such as its opposition to a Center for Expulsion in Berlin, where it identified the danger of minimizing or relativizing German guilt and of suggesting a counterpoint to the Holocaust memorial in Berlin. Action Reconciliation preferred a European discussion of the general topic of expulsion, not just the German case.

Though small in number (around twenty), Action Reconciliation volunteers have been active across Poland: Auschwitz, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Cracow, Łódź, Lublin, and Warsaw. Action Reconciliation trilateralized its activities in three directions: programs involving participants from Poland, Germany, and Ukraine; Poland, Germany, and Israel; and Poland, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The German Historical Institute and Action Reconciliation also expanded discussion by including Poland’s eastern neighbors in meetings, particularly Russians and Ukrainians.

The Nature of History: The Textbook Commission and the German Historical Institute have been expansive in their approach to history, from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, with increasing focus on the relationship of Polish and German-Polish history to the larger contemporary European context. They have included regional history and cross-border history, presenting German and Polish “compatible histories” while retaining differences. They neither neutralized nor harmonized the past.

The German-Polish Textbook Commission has dealt with geography as a companion to history, as has the Franco-German Textbook Commission.

World War II, an important focus for the Textbook Commission and the German Historical Institute, has been the priority for Action Reconciliation, especially the nature and consequences of the Holocaust.

In recent years, Action Reconciliation has addressed an area long taboo in Poland: Poland's own confrontation with the past, for example the 1941 murder of Jews by their Polish neighbors in Jedwabne. Action Reconciliation has focused on Polish victims' stories, both Jewish and non-Jewish.

After the fall of communism, the Textbook Commission and the German Historical Institute increasingly considered sensitive historical issues, such as the 1940 Katyń Massacre of Poles by Soviets, the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact to divide Poland, the postwar expulsion of Germans, and German minorities in Poland.

Effects: As in the French and Israeli cases, the effects of these organizations' activities are not readily susceptible to measurement. Judging by its publications (including translations from German into Polish and from Polish into German) and program participants, the German Historical Institute has been successful in providing scholarly analysis and building networks among German and Polish researchers. Its self-evaluation has presented success, and the fact that it was showcased in a major global discussion of reconciliation (the 2002 Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust) suggests positive external regard.

Action Reconciliation volunteers' activities speak to reconciliation at the personal level. The two foreign ministers referred to Action Reconciliation as one of the "stable pillars of German-Polish reconciliation" in December 2008 when they awarded it, together with the Foundation Kreisau for European Understanding (*Stiftung Kreisau für europäische Verständigung*), the German-Polish Prize that originated in the 1991 Treaty. Foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier emphasized that such organizations helped German-Polish relations overcome periods of "stagnation."²⁷

There are five objective markers of success in the creation and work of the German-Polish Textbook Commission, beginning with the creation itself of the first binational institution to demonstrate the concrete application of a new type of relationship. Second, despite the constraints imposed by Polish communism, Germans and Poles were able to arrive, as early as 1976, at a common set of recommendations for German and Polish history books. After a second edition in 1995, the commission developed a common teachers' manual (*Lehrerhandreichung*) published by nineteen German and Polish scholars in 2001 with both German and Polish editions. The manual offered,

for the first time, didactic observations. Following Steinmeier's 2006 initiative, the German-Polish Textbook Commission interacted with a binational group of experts and officials in developing a common German-Polish history textbook, with the first volume planned for 2013.²⁸

A third Textbook Commission success has been the mounting of over thirty scholarly conferences on topics from the recommendations and manual, often resulting in publications, and a fourth achievement was the creation of a constant German-Polish dialogue, the result of the nascent German-Polish normalization process embarked on by the 1970 Treaty but difficult during communism. And, finally, in addition to acting as a model for other German-Polish institutions, the German-Polish Textbook Commission has served as an example for other history-laden bilateral relations, notably in Northeast Asia.²⁹ For its various successes over more than three decades, the German-Polish Textbook Commission was awarded the German-Polish Prize.

Some of the Textbook Commission's success was criticized in Germany, particularly the 1976 recommendations, which were interpreted by expellees as presenting a pro-Polish perspective.³⁰ German federal states unevenly applied the Textbook Commission's recommendations, with particular resistance after 1989 in the new eastern German states of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg, and Saxony.³¹

All three organizations did not shy away from confronting sensitive historical issues, such as the expulsion of Germans from land ceded to Poland after World War II. The three organizations' respectful civility in dealing with disagreements and contending viewpoints on expulsion was not matched by conservative voices in both Germany and Poland, which were shrill and confrontational on expulsion, restitution, and reparations.

Restitution and Reparations

On several occasions after 1945, Germany addressed Poland's claims for individual compensation. However, in the second half of 2004, a separate issue of compensation began to complicate German-Polish relations: the threat by the Prussian Claims Society (*Preußische Treuhand*), an organization of German expellees, to file claims before Polish courts and European tribunals for German property expropriated by Poland following the expulsion of Germans from the territories that came "under administration of the Polish State" as a result of the August 1945 Potsdam Conference. When the issue was first raised, the Polish Sejm (lower house of parliament) responded

unanimously (with one abstention) by demanding reparations from the German government for World War II devastation.

The German and Polish governments reacted both separately and jointly to the initiatives of the Prussian Claims Society and the Sejm, demonstrating that official German-Polish understanding and reconciliation could not be derailed even by the thorniest of history issues. Various German political leaders opposed the expellees' claims, with the clearest statement coming from Chancellor Schröder during his August 2004 visit to Poland to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising: "We Germans know very well who started the war and who were its first victims. Therefore, there can be no room for restitution claims from Germany, for this would stand history on its head." Polish leadership had been looking for such a statement. The German and Polish governments repeated their opposition when the expellees finally lodged claims at the Strasbourg European Court of Human Rights in November 2006.³²

During Polish prime minister Marek Belka's visit to Germany in September 2004, the two governments reiterated their mutual rejection of German property claims, which according to Schröder should not be allowed to damage the "miracle of reconciliation." The governments created a German-Polish commission of legal experts, which concluded in November 2004 that German individual property claims were baseless under German, Polish, and international law.³³

The fall 2004 Sejm call for war reparations elicited firm opposition from the two governments. Polish foreign minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz labeled the resolution "unreasonable," and Germany's foreign ministry "reject[ed] all demands concerning compensation."³⁴ The Polish government shared the German government's view that Poland had renounced reparations claims in a 1953 agreement with the GDR that was repeated vis-à-vis West Germany at the time of the 1970 Treaty. Those supporting the Sejm resolution (including 64 percent of Polish public opinion) claimed that the 1953 renunciation was forced by the Soviet Union, which itself had never fulfilled completely its obligation under the 1945 Potsdam Agreement to provide Poland with reparations from its own allotment from Germany.³⁵

Some Polish observers suggested mutual relinquishing of German and Polish claims, but the so-called "zero-option" was opposed by other Polish observers as it "would de facto concede that Poles and Germans suffered to a comparable extent during the war, which would be immoral, but also unreasonable."³⁶ Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski reminded Germans

and Poles in September 2004 that “One should not forget who started this war!”³⁷ Prime Minister Kaczyński revisited a mutual relinquishing of claims, during his October 2006 trip to Berlin, but Chancellor Angela Merkel was opposed.³⁸ A year later, during the Berlin visit of new prime minister Donald Tusk, Merkel reiterated her government’s position that there was no validity to German claims against Poland, and, in October 2008, Steinmeier welcomed the decision of the European Court of Human Rights to reject the claims of the Prussian Claims Society. This ruling confirmed the German government’s view that issues of claims resulting from World War II were a closed chapter in German-Polish relations.³⁹

Expulsion

When the Prussian Claims Society was about to file for compensation in fall 2006, the Foundation for a Center Against Expulsion (*Stiftung Zentrum gegen Vertreibung*) was hosting an exhibition in Berlin on “Forced Paths” (*Erzwungene Wege*) that examined primarily the plight of German expellees after World War II, including Germans from what became western Poland, who numbered some seven to eight million with some three hundred thousand remaining as a German minority.⁴⁰ The exhibition, which looked only secondarily at non-German expulsions, opened a few months after a government-sponsored exhibition on the same topic at the German Historical Museum (*Deutsches Historisches Museum*). The Foundation for a Center Against Expulsion had been created in September 2000 following a June proposal by Erika Steinbach, the president of the Federation of Expellees and CDU politician, with the claim that it was propelled by the “spirit of reconciliation.”⁴¹

Poles saw the German motive differently and uniformly attacked both the aim and the architect, who was dubbed “the best-hated German in Poland.”⁴² Polish observers voiced deep concern about the exhumation of the expulsion issue, which they dated to the May 1998 Bundestag resolution deeming expulsion an injustice and a violation of international law. They also expressed personal disappointment with some CDU “doves of reconciliation” for their support of a Center Against Expulsion, especially because Polish historians for some time had been actively confronting the expulsion topic. In their view, the proposal for a center lacked context because the original causes of expulsion resided in German wartime behavior.⁴³ The issue of the center was a significant agenda item in visits by German and Polish leaders in the period after its proposal, and German officials in the Schröder government sought

to quell public emotions in deference to the considerable apprehension in Poland (and the Czech Republic).⁴⁴

German and Polish luminaries traded alternative proposals that suggested a location other than Berlin and included expulsions of other Europeans. The Schröder government's alternative to Steinbach's center, a "Network on Remembrance and Solidarity" (*Europäisches Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität*), highlighted a similar pan-European context of expulsion. It was created in Warsaw in February 2005 together with Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia (but not the Czech Republic), emphasizing reconciliation.⁴⁵

When Merkel became chancellor, she maintained her prior support of Steinbach's proposal for a Center Against Expulsion.⁴⁶ The November 2005 coalition agreement among the CDU, CSU, and SPD committed the government to "send an important signal also in Berlin . . . to remember the injustice of expulsion," but during Merkel's first visit as chancellor to Poland she insisted that, "The kind of memory [incorporated into the Remembrance and Solidarity Network] has nothing to do with relativizing history."⁴⁷ Merkel's minister of state for culture, Bernd Neumann, saw the government's exhibition on expulsion and that of the center as the possible centerpiece of a permanent commemoration of expulsion.⁴⁸

Most Poles did not share the German government's response to the issue of establishing a center and exhibitions. While Poles expressed regret for the excesses of the expulsion, and did not want to deny Germans the right to mourn, they were concerned that Germans neither acknowledged that Poles were also expelled (from territory that became Soviet after World War II) nor accepted that the Potsdam Agreement had sanctioned the removal of the German population to Germany. Polish observers were concerned about an attempt to "falsify history," and a likely confusion between cause and effect, between perpetrators and victims, a tendency labeled as "self-reconciliation" in the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*.⁴⁹

The proposal for a Berlin Center Against Expulsion reappeared in fall 2007 when Chancellor Merkel reiterated her support during the fiftieth anniversary of the Federation of Expellees. The governing coalition came to a preliminary agreement in late October 2007 for a documentation center in the German House (*Deutschland Haus*) in Berlin, under the aegis of the German Historical Museum. The cabinet finalized the decision in September 2008, but there was significant disagreement in the governing coalition and between Germany and Poland regarding the role to be played by Erika Steinbach. Finally, in April 2009 she was excluded temporarily from the

board of the new Foundation for Flight, Expulsion, and Reconciliation (*Stiftung Flucht, Vertreibung, Versöhnung*), which would act as the framework for the Expulsion Center.

The Polish response to the proposal for the Berlin center was the December 2007 proposal by the new prime minister, Donald Tusk, for an international Museum of World War II in Gdańsk, where the war had begun. Merkel's initial response was lukewarm, but the two sides continued bilateral discussions. During talks in February 2008, while emphasizing that it would not be involved officially, Poland agreed not to see the Expulsion Center as an "affront," to entertain the possibility of exchanging exhibitions and scholarly involvement, and to recommit itself to the European Network on Remembrance and Solidarity.⁵⁰

Historical issues, as with Germany's other partners, complicated relations with Poland, but they did not undo the basic structure of friendship and reconciliation. When compensation and expulsion issues were raging in 2006, the joint German-Polish "Copernicus Group" of leading experts on German-Polish relations emphasized the durability of the relationship, despite outward appearances; its value as a positive model for Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Lithuanian relations; and the need for a "common sense of responsibility and reason."⁵¹ As the non-governmental Copernicus appeal demonstrated, times of tension can be ameliorated, and times of friendship can be enhanced, by symbolic gestures, particularly by government acts.

Symbolic Events

Symbolic events can be divided into two periods: before fall 1989 and after. Despite the antagonistic reality of the Cold War, there were events before 1989 that demonstrated the desire to have relations markedly different from the confrontational and bitter past, and beginning in fall 1989, there were events that constituted "firsts" and denoted that major change had occurred or was underway.

At least eleven events between the mid-1950s and the end of the 1980s used the language (regret) or symbols (visits) of conciliation:

- the March 1958 speech at Warsaw University by Carlo Schmid, the Social Democratic vice president of the Bundestag, and his subsequent championing of diplomatic relations;
- Adenauer's August 1959 statement for the twentieth anniversary of World War II's outbreak;

- the June 1961 Bundestag request for normalization of relations with Poland;
- the exchange of letters between the Polish and German bishops in November and December 1965, and the meeting of German and Polish Catholic clerics in Rome;
- the February 1970 visit to Poland of a delegation of the umbrella German Federation of Trade Unions (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*) and the return visit of a Polish union delegation in July 1973;
- Willy Brandt's December 1970 kneeling at the memorial for the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, one of the best-known signs of reconciliation in any context;
- the January 1971 visit to Poland by Rainer Barzel, the head of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group;
- the February 1971 visit to Germany by a Sejm delegation;
- the December 1981 "Package Initiative" (*Paket-Aktion*), through which ordinary Germans demonstrated their help for Polish society after the promulgation of martial law;
- the December 1988 meeting in Poland of foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher with representatives of Solidarity (*Solidarność*) and of the Catholic Church; and
- the September 1989 joint declaration of German and Polish Catholics on the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.⁵²

There were also at least nine reconciliation "firsts" once major change was underway in Europe in fall 1989:

- the September 1989 inaugural address by the prime minister of the first non-Communist government in Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, calling for a breakthrough in German-Polish relations akin to the Franco-German relationship;
- the November 1989 mass jointly celebrated by Mazowiecki and Chancellor Kohl during the latter's trip to Krzyżowa (Kreisau) in Poland;
- President Richard von Weizsäcker's May 1990 visit to Poland, the first of a German head of state;
- President Roman Herzog's August 1994 address asking for forgiveness to the Polish commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising, the first of a German head of state;
- on the fiftieth anniversary of World War II's end in April 1995, the first speech of a Polish foreign minister, Władysław Bartoszewski, to the

German Bundestag, an event the president of the Bundestag deemed “an invitation of the German people to the Polish people”;

- the first speech of a German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, to the Polish Sejm in July 1995;
- the first speech of a German president, Johannes Rau, to the Sejm in April 2004;
- President Horst Köhler in July 2004 making Poland his first country visited; and
- Chancellor Schröder’s August 2004 speech to the Polish commemoration of the Warsaw Uprising’s sixtieth anniversary, the first by a German head of government.

Symbolic occurrences can also convey negative sentiments. For example, Kohl’s first choice for the location of the mass with Mazowiecki was the former Annaberg, which was rejected by the Poles because the Nazis had memorialized there the Germans killed during the 1920–1921 uprisings.



Figure 5.2. President Roman Herzog addresses fiftieth anniversary commemoration of Warsaw Uprising, Warsaw, August 1, 1994. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Reineke



Figure 5.3. Polish Foreign Minister Władysław Bartoszewski addresses German parliament, Bonn, April 28, 1995. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Schambeck

Kohl's insensitivity to Polish feelings was comparable to two negative symbolic incidents in German-Israeli relations, the 1971 opening of the first German cultural week in Israel on the anniversary of *Kristallnacht*; and Kohl's statement during his 1984 trip to Israel that the "grace [innocence] of being born late" (*Gnade der späten Geburt*) limited his responsibility for the past. Kohl's symbolic misstep with Poland did not prevent, however, his broader sensitivity to Poland's historical plight, which stood out in his leadership and the leadership of his predecessors.

LEADERSHIP

Communism's "formal" impersonal diplomacy, as Helmut Schmidt described it, made difficult friendly relations between German and Polish leaders.⁵³ Adenauer's personal antipathy for Communist leaders did not help.

Nonetheless, in subsequent years there were significant exceptions. Willy Brandt wrote extensively about Władysław Gomułka, the first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (*Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza*), and Józef Cyrankiewicz, the Polish prime minister, suggesting that seeing the person and the human face behind the Communist leader eased the December 1970 Warsaw discussions that led to the German-Polish Treaty. Brandt concluded that, "I and my companions were deeply moved by our stay in Warsaw." He described warmly discussions fifteen years later with president Wojciech Jaruzelski and his wife, who spoke "perfect German."⁵⁴ An emphasis on the human dimension brought with it Brandt's constant recognition of Polish suffering at the hands of Germans, and a degree of understanding for the commitment to communism.

Schmidt similarly understood the bitterness of the past dictated by German behavior and the Communist path chosen by Polish leaders, which informed his refusal to denounce Prime Minister Jaruzelski's December 1981 imposition of martial law. German public opinion and international commentary did not agree with him, but he viewed Jaruzelski "first as a Polish patriot, second as a general, and only third as a Communist."

Schmidt developed close relations with Edward Gierek, first secretary of the Communist Polish United Worker's Party. He deemed Gierek one of his friends, a rarity with Communist leaders, finding Gierek "a reliable partner in personal terms" and someone with whom he developed a relationship of "trust" built over repeated meetings. Schmidt considered personal, one-on-one and open discussions with Gierek during the summer 1975 Helsinki meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as central for the conclusion of the October 1975 agreement between Germany and Poland.

Four years later Schmidt, determined to make a trip to Poland a "private" affair more conducive to negotiation than a public display might be, borrowed Eric Warburg's yacht to sail to Gdynia on the Baltic Sea. In the early 1980s, Schmidt trusted Gierek to convey to the Soviet Union the German chancellor's concern about Soviet SS-20 missiles and about the American hostages in Iran. The Schmidt-Gierek friendship outlasted the two leaders' time in office, and involved their wives, following the example of Anne-Aymone Giscard and Loki Schmidt.⁵⁵

Kohl found it difficult to develop close personal relations with Polish leaders before Mazowiecki became prime minister, but still tried to go below formal diplomacy's surface by using other friendly partners, such as

François Mitterrand and George Bush, to convey German interests to Polish leaders or to provide personal assessments of them and Polish society. Even though he was slow to move on final recognition of the German-Polish border, Kohl recognized Polish historical concerns about Germany.

Kohl's ability to pursue friendlier relations with non-Communists was evident in his more cordial relations with Mazowiecki, whose registering of a "feeling of brotherhood" at the joint November 1989 Krzyżowa mass made their physical embrace authentic and a symbol of a new German-Polish relationship.⁵⁶

Both Chancellor Schröder and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer enjoyed friendly personal relations with their counterparts Leszek Miller and Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, and were entertained in their homes. While such avenues of communication did not remove differences completely, they did allow "open" discussion.⁵⁷

As an East German who had grown up in the GDR near the Polish border and whose academic work had involved interaction with Polish scientists, Angela Merkel was unique among German chancellors in her ability to connect with Polish leaders on a personal level. The common physics profession eased her interaction with the new Polish prime minister, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, during her December 2005 Warsaw trip, as did her acknowledgement of the personal dimension in all aspects of politics.⁵⁸

When relations were tense between Germany and Poland in spring 2007, Chancellor Merkel's husband and President Kaczyński's wife were included in the private portion of the chancellor's trip to the Polish president's vacation home. Close associates of President Kaczyński referred to the personal chemistry between the two leaders, which had started to develop during President Kaczyński's March 2006 visit to Berlin.⁵⁹ Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński also highlighted the possibility of good personal relations in his October 2006 trip to Germany.⁶⁰ Yet, as in other country cases of German diplomacy, personal pique, not personally directed, can also influence official relations, as demonstrated by President Kaczyński's cancellation of the July 2006 Weimar triangle meeting following the satirical, ad hominem criticism of the two Kaczyński brothers by the German newspaper *die tageszeitung*. No German leader was responsible, but personal relations were not enough to overcome a perceived public humiliation.

The long-standing personal connection (since the early 1990s) between Angela Merkel and prime minister Donald Tusk aided the fall 2007 improvement in Germany's relations with the new Polish government. Tusk was

born in Gdańsk (Danzig), spoke German, and was a Germanophile, while not in any way forgetting Polish suffering at German hands. Good personal relations between German foreign minister Steinmeier and Polish foreign minister Radosław Sikorski, developed during 2008 reciprocal trips involving their spouses and home visits, facilitated policy discussions.⁶¹

German leaders' personal appreciation of Poland's fears and needs was evident among German heads of state. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, starting with Richard von Weizsäcker, German presidents made relations with Poland a priority for reasons related to their background: von Weizsäcker had participated in the invasion of Poland in September 1939 and, as president of the German Protestant Council (*Evangelischer Kirchentag*), was involved in the church's seminal October 1965 publication on expulsion; Roman Herzog, Johannes Rau, and Horst Köhler all emphasized with religious conviction history's importance and the need for reconciliation. Köhler was born in Polish territory that the Nazis were trying to Germanize during World War II. His first trips abroad after being elected and re-elected president were to Poland. Von Weizsäcker had a long-standing friendship with Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Rau and Köhler both enjoyed special relations with Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski (who visited Germany more than twenty times), demonstrated for example in Rau's September 1999 meeting with the Polish president in the middle of the Oder bridge and in Köhler's September 2005 joining of hands with his Polish counterpart on the Westerplatte peninsula where World War II had begun.

The personal pairings of top leaders were complemented by individuals on both sides whose visionary ideas and practical initiatives kept German-Polish reconciliation a priority: in Germany, Ernst Majonica, Carlo Schmid, Karl Dedecius, Berthold Beitz, and Marion Dönhoff; in Poland, Leopold Tyrmand, Stanisław Stomma, Andrzej Szczypiorski, and, most notably, Władysław Bartoszewski and Jan Józef Lipski, both opponents of the Third Reich and of communism in Poland.

At the end of the Cold War, President von Weizsäcker highlighted the role of personal contacts in keeping the German-Polish relationship alive in the old, Communist order: "Private hospitality and relations of trust between communities bear witness to a fundamental emotional consensus. . . . People often precede politics and smooth the path."⁶² The development of German-Polish non-governmental institutions during communism, and their proliferation thereafter, were threads of reconciliation that could remain constant, even when leadership changed.

INSTITUTIONS

Non-governmental Institutions

Foreign Minister Steinmeier spoke in 2006 of the vitality of societal connections between Germany and Poland: "Reconciliation can occur only in conversations between people. This dialogue began to develop in the 1970s . . . from the energy and passion of [small groups] of citizens on both sides."⁶³ After 1989, these early ties became a "common civil society between Germans and Poles,"⁶⁴ and appeared in all four roles non-governmental actors can play with respect to governments: catalysts, complements, conduits, and competitors. In the first two categories, involvement was active not only for German but also for Polish actors, an unusual development in any Communist society frozen in the Cold War.⁶⁵

Catalysts

Non-governmental engagement previewed official political relations. Four areas were exemplary: economics, religion, politics, and student affairs.⁶⁶ Already in 1948 there was a trade agreement between Poland and the three Western zones of Germany, and in 1963, in the framework of the "small steps" approach of foreign minister Gerhard Schröder, Germany and Poland exchanged trade representatives. Private German industry leaders such as Otto Wolff von Amerongen and Berthold Beitz visited Poland in the 1950s and 1960s at Adenauer's behest.⁶⁷

Even though German church efforts for reconciliation in the 1950s and 1960s were criticized by expellee groups, German politicians, and media, "the spiritual dialogue . . . could not be stopped."⁶⁸ A key Polish actor in the anti-Communist opposition after 1956 was the Club of Catholic Intellectuals (*Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej*, KIK), led by figures such as Mazowiecki and Bartoszewski, who later became prime minister (1989) and foreign minister (1995; 2000) and shaped Poland's new, post-Communist German policy. Other KIK members were Krzysztof Skubiszewski, as Mazowiecki's foreign minister one of the architects of post-1989 Polish policy toward Germany; and Mieczysław Pszon, who became Mazowiecki's advisor on Germany.

KIK interacted with the secular, leftist, post-1968 opposition movement, including Adam Michnik, the leading member of the Committee for Workers' Defense (*Komitet Obrony Robotników*, KOR) and after 1989



Figure 5.4. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher honors Krzysztof Skubiszewski (right), a member of the Polish Catholic Intellectuals Club during communism and foreign minister after 1989, Weimar, August 28, 1991. Courtesy of Bundesregierung

the editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, a leading Polish newspaper; and Bronisław Geremek, a former Marxist who would become foreign minister from 1997 to 2000. Both influenced post-1989 Polish ideas about Germany. The Catholic Bensberg Circle was an important German interlocutor for these groups.

Lay Catholics were active through the Sign Association (*Znak*), a parliamentary group from 1956 to 1976. The Polish Catholic bishops had been unable to accept the German bishops' 1950s invitation to visit Germany, but *Znak* members were able to visit Germany in the 1950s and later.⁶⁹ According to Willy Brandt, official and lay church initiatives amounted to a "process of psychological relaxation" that smoothed Germany's political journey eastward.⁷⁰

The 1960s relations between churches in Germany and Poland flourished thereafter and were still vibrant in 2009.⁷¹ Cooperation was exhibited in joint statements, for example on the 2005 fortieth anniversary of the exchange between the Catholic bishops in Germany and Poland, and the German Protestant Church's paper on expulsion. Both new joint documents lauded reconciliation, referred to shared religious values, and argued for unvar-

nished truth in dealing with history and active remembrance. A similar focus defined the joint German-Polish Catholic bishops' statement in September 2009 on the seventieth anniversary of World War II, and German and Polish Protestant Church hierarchy joined in an ecumenical religious service in Poland to commemorate the war's outbreak.⁷² The underground political press in Poland and in exile offered opinions on German-Polish relations in a variety of publications, and espoused a political realism that contributed to Foreign Minister Skubiszewski's post-1989 concept of "community of interests" (*Interessengemeinschaft*) between Germany and Poland. Poles also published in German newspapers. Writers challenged the Communist interpretation of Germany as revisionist and amnesiac; addressed the Polish expulsion of Germans; and viewed unification as a desirable goal.

Scientific and university contacts between German and Polish scholars and students established significant relations, but not until the 1980s. Georg Ziegler created in 1984 the German Society for the Promotion of Polish Students in Germany (*Gemeinschaft zur Förderung von Studienaufenthalten polnischer Studierender in Deutschland*). He had excellent connections to the CDU in Germany and to the Polish church hierarchy and lay leaders. After 1989, he would work in the German embassy in Warsaw.⁷³

Complements

Ties expanded between Germany and Poland with the signing of the 1970 German-Polish Treaty, and the 1972 establishment of diplomatic relations. They included formal scientific and university exchanges, and more media attention, even as tensions remained between the two governments over German reparations and German minorities in Poland.⁷⁴ Thereafter, German-Polish governmental agreements, especially those of 1975 and 1991, provided either a legal framework or a political impetus for new societal institutions.

Political Parties: Contacts between the SPD and the Polish United Workers' Party on the one hand, and between the FDP and the Democratic Party (*Stronnictwo Demokratyczne*, SD) on the other, began after the 1970 Treaty.⁷⁵ Following the Franco-German model, after 1989, an active German-Polish parliamentary group emerged in the Bundestag, and there were frequent meetings between the Sejm and Bundestag presidents and German and Polish parliamentary committees to intensify relations and deal with history. In the Bundestag's sixteenth legislative period (2005–2009), some

eleven joint meetings took place in Germany or Poland of the foreign affairs committees of the Bundestag and Sejm. In 2009, there was a variety of joint parliamentary activities to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of 1989's monumental changes.

Friendship Societies and Fora: Regional German-Polish societies were created in the early 1970s with the goal of reconciliation with Poland. By 2009, they numbered over fifty, with more than three thousand members. A parallel development in the 1970s was the twinning of cities, starting with Bremen and Gdańsk in 1976. By 2008, there were over six hundred town and municipal twinings, and there were trilateral interactions among French, German, and Polish towns and municipalities.⁷⁶

By 1986, the individual friendship societies were organized into an umbrella federation, which published the dual language magazine *Dialog*; organized conferences and meetings; lobbied for German-Polish relations; and maintained contacts with the Polish-German societies in Poland. Like the German-Israeli Society and the Franco-German societies, the Federation of German-Polish Societies serves as the bilateral friendship organization, a goal enhanced by top German politicians' engagement in its leadership. Like the counterpart organizations in the French and Israeli cases, the Federation also has shown solidarity in times of crisis, for example in its petition, during the spring 2007 history debates, in support of German-Polish ties and for Germany taking responsibility for its past.⁷⁷

The 1975 German-Polish governmental agreement led to the 1977 creation of the German-Polish Forum (*Forum Bundesrepublik Deutschland-Volksrepublik Polen*), guided thereafter by the German Council on Foreign Relations (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik*, DGAP) and the West Institute in Poznań (*Instytut Zachodni*). The forum was charged with enhancement of German-Polish relations, while the DGAP organized study groups and discussion groups on Poland and the bilateral relationship, since 2007 in the Robert Bosch Center for Central and Eastern Europe (*Zentrum für Mittel- und Osteuropa der Robert Bosch Stiftung*).⁷⁸

Culture: The intergovernmental agreement on culture that followed the 1975 German-Polish agreement furthered exchanges, although the Polish actors were state-controlled. After 1989, despite administrative, financial, and bureaucratic problems relating to the Polish transformation, cultural relations proliferated, encased in a variety of bilateral agreements (the latest one from 1997). Active ties exist in art, music, theater, film, and literature, involving unilateral performances and shows as well as joint bilateral en-

deavors. Poland is also a target of multilateral undertakings, for example in the writers' meetings of the French-German-Polish Weimar Triangle, and Polish participation in ARTE, the Franco-German cultural channel.⁷⁹

The Goethe Institute, which opened an office in Warsaw in 1990, has been the main official facilitator of cultural exchange and language acquisition.⁸⁰ As early as 1974, and following its tradition of furthering Franco-German relations, the Robert Bosch Foundation has been the most important private source of program support for German-Polish cultural understanding, involving journalists, educators, and other professionals. The foundation also has been central to language promotion, as it has been with France.⁸¹ Starting in 2009, the German Foreign Office, Goethe Institute, and German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*, DAAD) have promoted the German language through the tours of five "German cars" across Poland. The drivers of the cars give talks about Germany and the German language at their numerous stops.⁸²

Cultural relations, particularly literature and language, were the priority for many decades of the German Polish Institute (*Deutsches Polen-Institut*) in Darmstadt, inspired on the occasion of the first German-Polish Forum in 1977 by Marion Dönhoff and Karl Dedecius (its first president and director). In 1999 the institute's ambit expanded to cover politics and scholarship, and, in 2008, began to focus on teaching Polish in German schools. As with the German-Polish Societies, the institute's general promotion of relations with Poland has been interspersed by more specific efforts at solidarity during difficulties in the relationship, for example, the bilateral Copernicus Group's appeal for reason and responsibility in 2006 and 2007 to defuse tensions over a Center Against Expulsion.⁸³

Education: Academic exchanges through specific university connections are older than any government-sponsored exchanges, dating to the early 1970s, with funding by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (*Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung*) and the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*). The German Academic Exchange Service opened an office in Warsaw in 1997 to promote scholarships for German students in Poland and Polish students in Germany.

Combining the university and scientific institutions, there are almost eight hundred cooperative ventures between Germany and Poland. One of the most visible expressions of cooperation and reconciliation has been the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt-Oder, in which one-third of the students are Polish. The Collegium Polonicum is a cross-border, academic



Figure 5.5. Marion Dönhoff receives the German Peace Prize, Frankfurt, October 17, 1971, a decade before she became the first president of the German Polish Institute. Courtesy of Bundesarchiv/Gräfinholt

institution managed jointly by the European University Viadrina and the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poland.

Science: Cooperation in science and technology dates back at least to a November 1989 governmental agreement. Activities have developed in fields as broad as the environment and climate, biotechnology, health, and information technology, and have been boosted by joint science and technology projects in the German-Polish Year 2005–2006. Poland's EU connections have provided new possibilities for joint endeavors, particularly through the German-Polish Research Association (*Deutsch-Polnischer Forschungsverbund*), created in 1997. A 2008 intergovernmental agreement and the framework of the German-Polish Science Foundation (*Deutsch-Polnische Wissenschaftsstiftung*), with €50 million in funds, have stimulated

further cooperation between students and scientists, especially in joint projects. As is the case for Israel, Germany has been one of the most important partners in science and technology for Poland.⁸⁴

Economics: Trade expanded in the 1970s with the growth in German-Polish societal relations, advanced by a variety of German private organizations and German government guarantees and incentives. After the Cold War, trade intensified and Poland, Germany's second largest neighbor, became Germany's most important trade partner in Central and Eastern Europe, the largest market among new EU member states. Germany became Poland's most important trade partner, accounting for one-third of Polish trade. Only France, the Netherlands, and the United States were investing more in Poland. An active German-Polish Chamber of Commerce (*Deutsch-Polnische Industrie- und Handelskammer*) in Warsaw was established in 1994 to facilitate economic relations through meetings, trade fairs, publications, training, and consulting. Poland's 2004 entry into the EU has alleviated some technical barriers to trade, amplified the interest of Germany and Poland in each other's market, and expanded cooperation regarding Polish workers in Germany.⁸⁵

Youth Exchange: The 1991 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, building on political and economic agreements from the 1970s and the 1989 cultural and educational agreements, was the major source of institutional consolidation and creation for the international partnership. It reaffirmed the textbook enterprise's importance and institutionalized youth encounters in the German-Polish Youth Office, modeled after Franco-German experiences (mutual knowledge and understanding; bilateral cooperation and reconciliation; binational administration). From the German-Polish Youth Office's creation in 1993 through 2006, some 48,000 youth exchange events in Germany and Poland took place, involving some 940,000 Germans and the same number of Poles. In 2009, there were 106,972 Germans and Poles engaged in youth and school exchanges.⁸⁶

Unlike the Franco-German youth exchange programs, there was an ongoing issue of sufficient funding from the German and Polish governments for youth exchange. Yet, Foreign Minister Steinmeier proposed in 2006 a common German-Polish history textbook, and a German-Polish school in Berlin to complement the one in Löcknitz near the Polish border. A trilateralization of youth exchange programs has developed among Germany, Israel, and Poland to confront the historically fraught relationship between Germany and its Jewish population and between Poland and its Jewish

citizens. As a vehicle for mutual learning, there have been programmatic efforts to combine German-Polish and Franco-German exchanges as well as German-Polish and German-Czech programs.

Minorities: The June 1991 Treaty spawned the fall 1991 creation of the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation (*Stiftung für deutsch-polnische Zusammenarbeit*), based in Warsaw and funded by the portion of Polish debt from the 1975 agreement that was not written off by the Kohl government. By 2001, when funds began to dwindle, the foundation had supported some 4,600 projects, most of them in Poland, dealing with the German minority there, particularly cultural, educational, scientific, environmental, and economic contacts, as well as town twinnings and language acquisition. The foundation did not open an office in Berlin until 2009.⁸⁷

In a major departure, the 1991 Treaty specified the principle and practice of minority rights, both for the German ethnic minority in Poland and the Polish ethnic minority in Germany, including freedom of ethnic, cultural, religious, and language expression. After 1991, in addition to self-regulation in education and culture, the Polish government accorded its German minority the right to political representation nationally and regionally, and together with the German government established in 1998 the House for German-Polish Cooperation (*Haus der Deutsch-Polnischen Zusammenarbeit*) in Gliwice.

The number of ethnic Germans has been estimated at between three hundred thousand and six hundred thousand, with most concentrated in Upper Silesia (*Oberschlesien*). This minority community at the beginning of the twenty-first century encountered identity issues as a diminishing young population displayed a limited commitment to tradition.⁸⁸ Yet, it became entangled in the fraught relationship between Germany and Poland's nationalist government of prime minister Jarosław Kaczyński, who accused Germany in 2006 of pursuing an assimilation policy toward its Polish minority (estimated by the Polish government as two million in size) and threatened the loss of German minority rights in Poland.⁸⁹

By 2004, there was so much activity between German and Polish societies that the two foreign ministries named coordinators for German-Polish cooperation (following the pattern with France, and with the United States), and launched a common website (again copying the Franco-German model). The multiple and deep connections were manifested in the foreign ministries' designation of 2005–2006 as the German-Polish Year, with a host of societal and cultural exchanges, public affairs events, and a subsequent electronic German-Polish Calendar (*Der Deutsch-Polnische Kalender*).⁹⁰

Conduits

The role of German political foundations always has been to facilitate political and societal relations, but the agenda changed after 1989. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation was not “a direct instrument of SPD governments” in the 1970s, but its connections to Polish journalists, research institutes, educational institutions, and fellowship recipients was actively welcomed by the German government. The foundation became a useful source of information for the government about political and social developments in Poland when official relations were only slowly developing in heavily circumscribed channels.⁹¹ Similarly, CDU governments after 1982 benefited from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation’s contacts, not only in church circles, but also with the Polish government.

After 1989, all five German political foundations active in Poland emphasized democratization, but also reconciliation.⁹² They could be openly partisan in Poland in a way the German government could not, and the German embassy in Warsaw drew on their unique capacity for political monitoring.

In November 1989, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) was the first political foundation to open an office in Warsaw, emphasizing Polish political, economic, and societal trends, particularly institutional developments in civil society and decentralization. The KAS has promoted German-Polish dialogue around Christian Democratic values, and developed programs on Polish integration into NATO, the EU, and the new Europe. The foundation’s main instruments have been meetings, publications, exchanges, fellowships, and delegations with a variety of universities, think tanks, and political entities.

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) opened its office in Warsaw with high priority in 1990, due to Poland’s geographic distinctiveness as Germany’s biggest eastern neighbor. The FES’s work has centered on the social market economy, democracy, and pluralism; expert economic and political advice; Poland’s integration into NATO and the EU; various projects in Silesia; and confronting history with former forced laborers. It has engaged both governmental and non-governmental actors, such as ministries, regional and local administrations, political parties, parliamentary committees, universities, research institutes, regional economic promotion agencies, youth groups, Solidarity, and individual trade unions. The FES has pursued its goals through events, publications, exchanges, fellowships, and visits of German politicians.

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNS) office opened in Poland in 1991 with a focus on political education, rule of law, democratization, civil society, and marketization through public events, training workshops, and publications with various foundations and research institutes. By 2007, there was no longer an office in Poland, and activities were organized from other FNS offices (from Kiev, then Prague). Like the KAS and the FES, the Naumann Foundation has focused on European integration, particularly EU enlargement to the east.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) opened its office in Warsaw in April 2002. Projects on women, ecology, civil society, sustainable development, and EU enlargement have dominated its agenda with Polish counterpart organizations.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) has never opened an office in Warsaw. Instead it has focused on conferences and publications as vehicles for civic education, the transmission of Christian values, and European integration through its German headquarters and offices in Moscow and Brussels.

Competitors

Three cases of competition between German civil society actors and the German government are noteworthy: German expellee attitudes regarding the Oder-Neisse line in the 1960s and 1970s; non-governmental activity during the emergence of the Solidarity union movement in Poland; and German expellee calls from 2000 on for a Center Against Expulsion, featuring Germans as victims.

Prior to 1966, the Expellee Federation (*Bund der Vertriebenen*, BdV) had rejected official Polish sovereignty over the Oder-Neisse line and the territories to its east. As a new Ostpolitik of reconciliation and rapprochement emerged in the 1966 Grand Coalition, the BdV launched fierce attacks against the government, reinforced by its tight relationship with the CSU and, initially, with the CDU. Expellee condemnation of Ostpolitik grew with the new SPD/FDP government's conciliatory and status quo-oriented policy in 1969. The signing of the Eastern treaties, including with Poland, aroused deep political divisions between government and opposition and within SPD-FDP government; influenced by the expellees, many CDU and CSU deputies abstained during ratification.

Some 60 percent of public opinion had supported the SPD-FDP government's reconciliation and rapprochement policy with Poland at the beginning

of the 1970s. Ten years later, however, in 1981, German society opposed the German government's policy of tepid response to the emergence of Solidarity and the imposition of martial law in Poland.⁹³ In the 1970s, the Bensberg Circle (following its earlier role as catalyst) and a group led by Bernhard Vogel (as president of the Central Organization of German Catholics) had built extensive relations with Polish dissidents, such as Adam Michnik and Władysław Bartoszewski, and church and lay groups, and now activated their connections. During martial law, German private citizens sent over two million care packages and considerable funds to Poland, acts long remembered positively by Poles. Such generosity was repeated during the Polish floods of 1997 and reciprocated by Poles during the German floods of 2002.

During martial law, individual German unions and the umbrella German Trade Union Federation supported Solidarity, albeit without uniformly trumpeting this functional and technical support publicly. Extensive networking by non-governmental actors intensified in the early 1980s and contributed to the evolution of the German-Polish "community of interests" (*Interessengemeinschaft*) in the 1990s.⁹⁴

Reconciliation proceeded vigorously between societies and between governments starting in the early 1990s, but it did not prevent German expellees from causing tensions in relations by demanding attention for their history (see *Restitution and Reparations* and *Expulsion*). The Schröder government's initial response to Erika Steinbach's proposal for a Center Against Expulsion was lukewarm, downplaying the competition from the CDU politician.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, expellee challenges to government policy persisted and found allies in political luminaries such as the SPD's Peter Glotz.

In spring 2002, the minister of state for culture adjusted the government's earlier response by proposing an information center on expulsion but with a European, rather than German, focus. In the fall, the candidacy for chancellor of Edmund Stoiber, Bavaria's CSU minister-president, elevated the issue into a major Bundestag debate. Stoiber already had provoked Poles in a June 2002 address to the East Prussian expellee association, calling for rescission of the Polish Bierut decrees of 1945–1946 that had dealt with expropriation and expulsion of German minorities for their wartime activities.⁹⁶ The German government eventually surrendered to expellee demands in 2005 when Chancellor Merkel lent support to the idea of a center recognizing German expellees from Poland (and Czechoslovakia).

Pejorative stereotypes and indifference toward Poles more generally were manifest in German society, well beyond the complaints of expellees,

early in the new century, leading some observers to call for a new mutual familiarization between the younger generations in both countries.⁹⁷ Yet, by 2009, public opinion polls revealed a reversal in German attitudes and Polish fears, attenuated perhaps by the less nationalistic foreign policy of the Tusk government and Merkel's conciliatory approach to Poland beyond the Expulsion Center. On five vital sympathy measures, Poles in 2008 responded positively to Germans in various social settings: 63 percent (as boss); 61 percent (as son- or daughter-in-law); 65 percent (as close friend); 72 percent (as neighbor); and 75 percent (as coworker), much higher than in 2000. Germans' sympathy for Poles in 2009 registered similarly good numbers compared to 2000: 57 percent (as boss); 57 percent (as son- or daughter-in-law); 64 percent (as close friend); 82 percent (as neighbor); and 84 percent (as coworker).⁹⁸

Governmental Institutions

After 1970, Germany and Poland created an array of bilateral governmental institutions. Although analysts differ over the vibrancy of German-Polish relations in the new millennium, and the long-term impact of the two formal frameworks for institutional development (the Treaties of 1970 and 1991), there was consensus that a "dense network" of bilateral governmental organizations obtained compared to the relative absence of governmental connections in the period from 1949 to 1969.⁹⁹

There are four discernible periods for the expansion of German-Polish institutional ties: 1970–1989, when the 1970 Treaty's new legal framework produced new institutions that were circumscribed by Polish communism; 1989–2000, the "golden years" of phenomenal bilateral growth in institutions, particularly following the 1991 Treaty; 2000–2007, when the relationship was tested by differences between the two governments; and 2007–2009, when the Merkel government and the new Tusk government reinvigorated institutional ties and developed a closer partnership.¹⁰⁰

1970–1989

Most German-Polish institutionalization took place in the 1970s. The primacy of economics from the preinstitutionalization period continued and seven main economic agreements in this sphere were concluded between 1970 and 1977. The October 1970 economic agreement on "The Promotion

and Easing of Trade and the Extension and Deepening of Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation” set up a bilateral Mixed Economic Commission with government and economic representatives. Each successive agreement both widened economic and technical interaction and deepened the specificity within spheres. Trade increased, but there were natural limits to economic exchanges between capitalism and communism. By decade’s end, Germany had become Poland’s most important creditor.¹⁰¹

Shortly after the first economic agreement, following difficult negotiations, Germany and Poland concluded the “pathbreaking” 1970 Treaty on the Basis of Normalizing Their Relations.¹⁰² In addition to broaching (but not resolving) questions about the border and the German minority in Poland, the treaty recommitted the two sides to economic and technical cooperation, leading to diplomatic relations in 1972 and the beginning of a normalization process, whose terminus would be the removal of obstacles to expanding relations in all fields, including cultural and humanitarian questions concerning ethnic Germans in Poland.¹⁰³

The Polish government did not have the same allergic reaction as Israelis did to the term “normalization,” but did make clear that the process meant a German “moral duty” to deal with the past. For the Polish government “normalization” ultimately could occur only when World War II’s outstanding issue of compensation to Polish forced labor was resolved. The language of the 1970 Treaty did not contemplate “reconciliation,” and Chancellor Brandt limited his use of the term to relations between peoples, not between states.

German and Polish leaders seem to have had exaggerated expectations for the 1970s, and they were disappointed. Nonetheless, the treaty provided a framework for “constant consultations at the political level,” which enabled Schmidt and Gierek to engage six working groups in realizing an October 1975 agreement that provided German compensation (without calling it “reparations”) for lost Polish pension payments from World War II and German government financial credits in exchange for the migration of ethnic Germans from Poland.

Poland would have to wait another twenty-five years for the resolution of forced labor compensation, and, despite an agreement on cultural cooperation concluded during Gierek’s June 1976 visit to Bonn (including the creation of a Mixed Commission to manage cultural exchanges), an actual cultural treaty embedding German cultural institutions in Poland would emerge only after 1989. By the end of the 1970s, “stagnation” in German-Polish relations became dominant politically and in economic affairs.¹⁰⁴

Solidarity's emergence and subsequent martial law in Poland triggered a crisis in relations at the beginning of the 1980s. Out of concern for the survivability of its policy of "Change through Rapprochement" (*Wandel durch Annäherung*) with the Polish government, Schmidt opposed both sanctions and moral or political support for Solidarity. Instead, Schmidt pursued a policy of "stabilization," which meant no major bilateral institutional innovations with the Polish government, but continued economic aid. The subsequent Kohl government pursued a similar policy of stabilization, but also "damage limitation" and open support of Solidarity.¹⁰⁵

1989–2000

The transition in Poland from communism to democracy attending the Mazowiecki government in August 1989 ushered in a new "breakthrough" period for German-Polish institutional relations. Kohl had signaled already in July 1989 that the time was "ripe" for "long-term" and reliable reconciliation, and Mazowiecki responded in his inaugural speech two months later. In calling for "real reconciliation" between governments, Mazowiecki acknowledged that the two societies already had achieved much more than their official representatives. Both Kohl and Mazowiecki saw Franco-German ties as a template and Kohl also referred to German-Israeli relations as a model.¹⁰⁶

Whereas Poland's dramatic change in government augured well for German-Polish relations, Germany's change—the unification of East and West, beginning with Kohl's Ten-Point Plan—initially provoked ambivalent reactions in Poland. On the one hand, members of the opposition in Communist Poland had indicated support for eventual German unification as early as the 1970s and now were in positions of influence. On the other hand, there was governmental and public fear of being sandwiched again between two giants—Germany and Russia—and great consternation at Kohl's neglect of the border issue.

Poland preferred a slower pace for German unification and a more integrated Europe, but came to realize that unification could mean *de jure* recognition of the Oder-Neisse border, and so made its support of unification conditional on resolution of the border. By 1990, there was sufficient external and internal pressure to force Kohl's hand.¹⁰⁷ German leaders later recognized Poland's role in bringing about the democratization that ultimately helped end Europe's division.¹⁰⁸

During the phenomenal institutional growth between Poland and Germany from 1989 to 2000, there were three main expressions of a changed world: the conclusion of treaties; the creation and realization of a framework for government-to-government consultations and visits; and the establishment of a special relationship among Germany, Poland, and France in the form of the “Weimar Triangle” (*Weimarer Dreieck*).

Chancellor Kohl's November 1989 trip to Poland (interrupted by the fall of the Berlin Wall, but resumed) resulted in a joint German-Polish declaration announcing eleven governmental agreements that “increased considerably the possibilities for understanding and reconciliation”: youth; science and technology; health and medical sciences; protection of capital investments; the environment, land, and forests; institutes for culture and scientific-technical information; regular consultations of foreign ministers/foreign ministries (and intensified “contact and cooperation” between other ministries); civil and criminal legal procedures; consulates general in Cracow and Hamburg; and exchange of defense attachés. There was also agreement on economic and financial/credit issues, and a “decisive breakthrough” on cultural exchange, including, finally, reciprocal minority cultural rights. The agreements constituted the “normalization” that had been the goal of the 1970 Treaty.¹⁰⁹



Figure 5.6. Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Chancellor Helmut Kohl at joint mass, Krzyżowa, Poland, November 12, 1989. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Schambeck

The June 1991 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation went beyond the reconciliation of 1989 to concrete steps of “close and peaceful cooperation,” including the creation of bilateral government commissions, such as the German-Polish Government Commission on Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation and the German-Polish Youth Office, mirroring (but smaller than) the Franco-German Youth Office.

The 1989 framework for regularized consultations was broadened into consultations between the heads of government as often as needed, at least every six months; foreign ministers and their top bureaucrats at least once a year; heads of other ministries, including defense, and their key subordinates, regular contact. The official visitor exchanges between Poland and Germany after 1991 were “incredibly intensive.”¹¹⁰ Joint German-Polish meetings of heads of government, together with several cabinet ministers, began in 1997; by 2006, eight such government-wide meetings had occurred. The Polish foreign minister referred, in April 1990, to a “community of interests” (*Interessengemeinschaft*) during tense relations before the conclusion of the German-Polish treaty accepting Poland’s Western border, which soon manifested itself in the August 1991 creation of the Weimar Triangle.¹¹¹ The French, Germans, and Poles were now to collaborate, particularly in pursuit of EU membership for Poland.¹¹²

Supporters of the Weimar Triangle pointed to its uniqueness in international affairs: consisting of neither treaty nor international agreement, a significant informal, consultative mechanism for stock taking and crisis management. As Polish president Kaczyński described it: “It was established almost eight years before Poland joined NATO and thirteen years before Poland entered the EU. It played a large and very positive role in both processes.”¹¹³ In 2006 alone there were ten ministerial meetings convened under its auspices.

Critics viewed the Triangle as skeletal, exuding ritual, lacking dynamism and financial wherewithal, a figurehead. Where advocates saw equality of rights and responsibilities, naysayers noted Poland’s subordinate position. Where supporters saw complementary interests or the resolution of differences, detractors identified fundamental divergences of motives and interests. Where supporters saw a genuine triangle, critics identified three sets of bilateral relations.

Those viewing success emphasized the numerous activities of both governments (central and regional levels) and civil societies (town and city twin-

nings, youth exchange, sports clubs, cultural groups, higher education, and commerce associations). Those who saw failure bemoaned a lack of intensity.

For those who considered the Triangle successful, the best examples of effectiveness were complementary or coordinated action in a variety of hot spots: the three countries' troops in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Congo; political support for emerging democracy in Ukraine; and the realization of the Triangle's original goal of Poland's EU membership. Critics, by contrast, referred to deep differences over Iraq; the potential for the Triangle being viewed as hegemonic by other EU member states; and disputes over Turkish membership and over Russia.

2000–2007

The period following the “golden years” of the 1990s was “frosty.”¹¹⁴ Rifts over historical issues of restitution, reparations, and expulsion in the first half of this period had elicited joint responses from the Polish and German governments to defuse tensions. The Kaczyński twins' installation as president (Lech, December 2005) and prime minister (Jarosław, July 2006) introduced in Poland a heavy dose of populist nationalism with frequent public criticisms of Germany over history.¹¹⁵ Historical references colored Polish government language regarding the natural gas pipeline between Germany and Russia (according to Poland's defense minister, similar to the German-Russian 1939 division of Poland in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact),¹¹⁶ and the lampooning of the twins in the Berlin newspaper *die tag-eszeitung* (according to Poland's foreign minister, reminiscent of the Nazi propaganda screed *Der Stürmer*).¹¹⁷

The accumulation of historically based tensions between Germany and Poland between 2005 and 2007 led observers to characterize relations as in “crisis” or an “ice age.”¹¹⁸ Yet, analysts differed over whether this period constituted a temporary negative phenomenon in an otherwise solid reconciliation, or a permanent movement away from partnership. Observers emphasizing the ingrained nature of differences saw only ritual, while those who perceived temporary interruption stressed the strength of societal ties; the periodic squabbles in a family; and a “community of fate” in policy interests.¹¹⁹

Public Promotion of Reconciliation: Analysis of three aspects of German and Polish government behavior during the 2005 to 2007 downturn

bears out the more optimistic scenario of reconciliation: the continuity and purpose of bilateral visits; the style and substance of statements about the relationship; and the nature of proposed solutions to disputes and policy actions in the rest of the relationship. With the exception of President Kaczyński's cancelled participation in the July 2006 Weimar Triangle meeting (officially due to health), a regular exchange of visits by heads of state and government proceeded, including President Köhler (August 2005 and May 2006), Chancellor Merkel (December 2005 and March 2007), President Lech Kaczyński (March 2006), and Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński (October 2006). Sections of the two cabinets met regularly, six times between 2000 and 2006; and foreign ministers and defense ministers met frequently. The uniform purpose, even for Poland, was improving and deepening the German-Polish relationship, developing friendship between partners, and understanding problems.¹²⁰

The German government used visits to be non-confrontational and patient in style, and some Polish leaders tried to be less confrontational as well. In March 2006, in honoring President Lech Kaczyński, President Köhler noted that, when good neighbors experience differences, those disagreements could be dealt with in open discussion, a theme reprised by the Polish president and Chancellor Merkel.¹²¹ Very open talks took place when Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński visited Germany in October 2006; both sides sought to be "honest" and "constructive."¹²² Soberness and pragmatism were accompanied by references to "partnership" denoted by "trust" and "friendship" and German sensitivity to history. During her December 2005 trip to Poland, Chancellor Merkel underlined that "German-Polish reconciliation belongs to one of the most treasured achievements in our common history since the war." In her March 2007 Warsaw University speech, she referred to an "indestructible network" between two countries, who shared common values of "freedom, justice, solidarity and human rights."¹²³ Merkel suggested a growing German-Polish leadership role in the EU.

Despite the difficulties of this period, Germany and Poland announced an official "German-Polish Year" for 2005–2006, under the patronage of the German and Polish presidents. The German-Polish Year sought to reconnect and engage anew the two societies in culture, science, research, civic education, and the economy.

The December 2005 creation of a joint German-Polish working group on energy was followed by Chancellor Merkel's October 2006 suggestion of Poland's "right to access" to the European gas market, and to supplies

by western countries in a “threat.” The European Council’s March 2007 “Energy Policy for Europe” Action Plan, produced during Germany’s EU presidency, included reference to the “Power-Link between Germany, Poland, and Lithuania.”¹²⁴

There were other examples of mutual problem solving: dialogue between the German and Polish ministers for culture, starting in 2006, over the Center Against Expulsion, and resolution of financing problems in youth exchange programs in the October 2006 talks between Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Kaczyński, when Poland agreed to unfreeze its contribution.

Germany and Poland created new institutions in response to history problems. In late 2004 (effective 2005), they appointed Coordinators for German-Polish Inter-Societal and Cross-Border Cooperation (*Die Koordinatoren für die deutsch-polnische und grenznahe Zusammenarbeit*) in the two foreign ministries, showcasing the relationship locally and regionally. The first Polish coordinator, the diplomat Irena Lipowicz, resigned in May 2006, however, after the populist leader of the Polish Self-Defense (*Samobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej*) party joined the government. Her successor, Mariusz Muszyński, then publicly criticized Germany on the eve of Chancellor Merkel’s March 2007 visit to Poland, and by August 2007 was involved in verbal brickbats with the long-time German coordinator, Gesine Schwan, president of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt-Oder. The Tusk government’s appointment of Władysław Bartoszewski as Polish coordinator in late 2007 helped reduce tensions.¹²⁵

Quiet Diplomacy: Detailed and often quiet policy cooperation in three arenas—cross-border activity, the environment, and defense—supplemented public institutional responses to broad and specific problems and reinforced reconciliation. The German-Polish Government Commission for Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation and its various working committees (*Deutsch-Polnische Regierungskommission für regionale und grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit*), created in 1990, brought together federal and regional officials in an effort to monitor, promote, and coordinate activities spanning the border. Reflecting the degree of cooperation experienced throughout the life of the commission while downplaying neither problems common to borders nor the administrative differences on each side of the border, the eighteenth annual meeting in October 2007 highlighted a joint police and customs office in Schwetig; cooperation on natural disasters; cross-border rescue squads; transportation links; and cross-regional employment and housing markets. The accumulation of cooperation habits led to a

“cross-border relationship of trust” that was significant during tense relations between national governments.¹²⁶

Interaction on the environment was important in German-Polish activities on the border, and it extended to the national institutional level. The German-Polish Environmental Council (*Deutsch-Polnischer Umweltrat*) deriving from the 1989 intergovernmental agreements, involved both federal and regional officials, and utilized special commissions and working groups. The council’s April 2006 twelfth meeting focused on the German-Russian natural gas pipeline, and on the perennial topics of coordinating environmental policy in the two countries, such as climate protection; transboundary transport of pollutants; waste management; nature conservation; and the German-Polish Boundary Waters Commission. The 2007 entry into force of the agreement on transboundary environmental impact assessment furthered the environmental agenda.¹²⁷

Intense bilateral military cooperation between Germany and Poland continued unabated during public tension between the governments during the 2005 to 2007 period. By this time, the military relationship was well into its mature stage after Poland’s 1999 NATO entry. German-Polish practical cooperation in military training comprised the Multinational Corps North-East among Germany, Poland, and Denmark (inaugurated in 1994); the planned EU Battle Group among Germany, Poland, and Slovakia (initiated at the end of 2004); active cooperation between the Polish Tenth Tank Cavalry Brigade (outfitted with German Leopard tanks) and the Seventh German Tank Division until July 2006, with the First German Tank Division thereafter; and ongoing exchanges and partnerships between the German and Polish military, including the Leadership Academy of the German Armed Forces (*Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr*) and the Polish Academy for National Defense.¹²⁸

The period from 2000 to 2007 was not easy in German-Polish relations, yet beneath the surface of tension there was a broad band of cooperation, agreement, and institutionalization. By the end of the Kaczyński government in fall 2007, the prime minister appeared less closed to constructive engagement with Germany. The relationship was maturing, as explained by Ambassador Marek Prawda: “Reconciliation isn’t a purpose in itself, like the eternal harmony cannot be a realistic goal. Reconciliation should much more provide the language and cooperative framework for the management of diversity.”¹²⁹

2007–2009

The new Tusk government opened fully in late 2007 a new stage of collaboration, without ignoring “natural” differences, and the German government welcomed the new era. The chairman of the Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee, Ruprecht Polenz, suggested as a gesture a bilateral increase in funds for the German-Polish Youth Office. Germany’s coordinator for German-Polish cooperation anticipated a “détente” in relations. Foreign Minister Steinmeier proposed a council of wise men to advise on improving relations, particularly over historical issues. Prime Minister Tusk’s December 2007 first official visit to Berlin occasioned new commitments and an atmosphere of “friendship and trust,” but did not immediately erase differences over the Center Against Expulsion or the German-Russian pipeline agreement.¹³⁰

In this period, memories—history—began to recede as an irritant. The Polish government decided in February 2008 to accept a Center Against Expulsion in Berlin but, in March 2009, was able to block temporarily Erika Steinbach’s direct and formal role in the center’s profile.¹³¹ At the same time, history was integrated into the mainstream as a natural part of the relationship, for example the June 2008 Tusk-Merkel discussions regarding a World War II Museum in Gdańsk; Foreign Minister Steinmeier’s February 2009 announcement of financial support for the repair of the Auschwitz memorial site; the May 2009 joint declaration of the two countries’ culture ministers institutionalizing the European Network on Remembrance and Solidarity; and the May 2009 opening of a major exhibition in the German History Museum in Berlin to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of World War II and contemporary friendship.¹³²

German and Polish officials demonstrated the relationship’s importance and the centrality of communication through regular visits that the German Foreign Office deemed “an expression of close partnership”: Chancellor Merkel (June 2008; September 2008; December 2008; June 2009), Foreign Minister Steinmeier (April 2008), President Köhler (July 2009), Prime Minister Tusk (December 2007; February 2009; July 2009).¹³³ In these encounters and in general statements, there was constant reference to the character of relations (a need for reaffirmation after the public downturn of 2000–2007) and recognition that friendship meant the acceptance of divergences.

In addition to frequent mention of “close” partnership and the goal of intense practical reconciliation akin to Franco-German “permanent understanding,” a new German elaboration of “normality” emerged. Rather than avoiding tough questions, such as their mutual history, normality meant the capacity to address all issues openly. Policy differences could be understood and managed through a process of dialogue and a willingness to engage.¹³⁴ Poland underscored pragmatism, the relationship’s resilience, and its potential to act as a model for the rest of Europe.¹³⁵

Beyond the new tone, there was a new practical agenda for joint policies, whether the EU’s Eastern Partnership; the coordinated initiative regarding Ukraine; energy security and climate (see below); or a new balance between economic competitiveness and social justice. There was, too, a new institutional development: a return to the more comprehensive joint cabinet meetings that had given way to narrower consultations under Prime Minister Kaczyński.¹³⁶ There was intensification of cooperation in cross-border matters, the environment, and defense.¹³⁷

During his December 2008 visit to Berlin, Polish foreign minister Sikorski had noted that discussion was changing from “fewer and fewer problem issues” to “more and more common European issues.”¹³⁸ As with bilateral ties, both differences and commonalities characterize German-Polish interaction in the multilateral EU.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

“International context” refers to both the larger global setting and the specific framework of the EU.

Global Influence

Together with indigenous historical reasons, the Soviet Union, the Soviet bloc, the Warsaw Pact, and Comecon all precluded Poland’s reconciliation with Germany from the end of World War II until Ostpolitik of the 1960s and 1970s made some government ties possible. Détente, then *perestroika*, in the 1970s and 1980s, permitted major, institutionalized departures in German-Polish reconciliation between societies and governments, but German governments were still mindful of Soviet and Communist interests,

expressed most dramatically in Germany's acceptance of early 1980s martial law in Poland.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Soviet bloc, and the Soviet Union's unraveling meant Poland and Germany were no longer constrained, neither structurally nor psychologically, from pursuing expansive reconciliation. Yet, as Russia was refinding its regional and global roles, it again impacted German-Polish reconciliation.

Germany and Poland viewed Russia differently: Poland saw its former hegemon as a potential military, economic, and political threat. Germany looked at Russia as a partner or potential partner, deeming institutional engagement and embedding (*Verflechtung*), as in the German-Russian gas pipeline, preferable to containment.¹³⁹

German-Polish divergences on Russia also affected the EU. When Russia boycotted Polish meat (lifted in December 2007), to Germany's consternation Poland used its veto to prevent renewal of the EU's Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia.¹⁴⁰

Polish concerns and differences with Germany over Russia continued under Tusk, especially regarding Russia's 2008 negative reaction to eventual Ukrainian and Georgian NATO membership and Russia's invasion of Georgia. However, after fall 2007, Poland was more open to mending ties with Moscow, and Germany more willing to intercede with Russia on Poland's behalf, as in navigation of the Baltiysk/Piława Strait.¹⁴¹

While distancing itself from Russia, Poland openly admired the United States, which Poland saw as the steadfast champion of democracy and independence during communism and after 1989.¹⁴² Unlike France and Germany, who united over Iraq, Germany and Poland separated over the war, in which Poland was a key military participant.¹⁴³ Similarly, the Polish government (unlike public opinion) under the Kaczyński twins supported American proposals to station missiles in Poland, a source of friction with Germany, which was concerned with Russia's reaction.¹⁴⁴ The pre-fall 2007 differences with Germany over the United States carried over to the EU where Poland expressed concern about the scope and depth of European Security and Defense Policy, for it considered NATO the premier security organization.

The Tusk government after November 2007 moved closer to Germany and away from the United States on Iraq and missile defense. However, its attitude toward missile defense changed when Russia invaded Georgia, and

in August 2008 it promptly agreed to an American installation in Poland. The issue became moot when the Obama administration scrapped the plan.¹⁴⁵

EU Membership

German-Polish relations became part of a complex web, influencing others and being influenced by them. Russia and the United States as external powers influenced the nature of German-Polish reconciliation, which in turn affected EU developments. The German-Polish relationship has shaped EU policies, particularly the community's policy of enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe. Out of moral obligation deriving from the past and a strategic desire for stability to its east, Germany was Poland's chief advocate for EU membership, manifested already in the Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation in the early 1990s. Through the various stages of EU membership, Germany was Poland's staunchest and most consistent advocate. The German political goal of "confidence-building" for Poland did not change in 1998, but with the new Schröder government Germany felt increasing pressure to protect domestic economic, bureaucratic, and regional interests.¹⁴⁶

Once Poland's EU membership was certain, in 2003, integration's impact on the German-Polish relationship was clarified as Germany and Poland diverged not only on military issues related to the United States and Russia, but also in political and economic arenas.¹⁴⁷ Yet, the utility of German-Polish partnership outside the EU moved the two parties to resolve differences inside the EU, including on a central question of EU reform and efficacy, namely the calculation of votes in the Council of Ministers. Already in December 2003, at the Brussels summit, Poland voted against the Franco-German proposal to institute a double majority (a percentage of member states and a percentage of the EU population) for fear of discrimination against small countries. Poland preferred adherence to the 2001 Nice Treaty, in which (with major German support) it had been awarded twenty-seven votes, slightly fewer than the big countries' assignment of twenty-nine. Even though Germany and Poland could not resolve the issue in their bilateral dealings, both sides recognized their relationship's centrality and the need to avoid outward disagreement.¹⁴⁸

Following the first Constitutional Treaty's demise with negative votes in the 2005 French and Dutch referenda, Poland insisted on the Nice voting arrangement. Consistent with its nationalist rhetoric, the Kaczyński government offered as a counter proposal a complex arrangement in which

votes would be proportional to the square root of population. In June 2007, as Germany tried to cement EU agreement on the reform treaty, the Polish government invoked history, arguing that, if Poland had not lost 6 million in World War II, there would be no question of it constituting a major population with attendant large votes.¹⁴⁹

This time, the extra German effort to persuade Poland worked. Poland agreed to the double majority starting in 2014, after the agreement on the EU budget for 2014–2020, and with a special clause to enable a blocking minority. Poland also succeeded in obtaining an energy solidarity statement in the reform treaty. A year later, the Tusk government and Germany demonstrated solidarity in moving forward the Lisbon Treaty's ratification, despite the negative vote in Ireland.¹⁵⁰

The EU budget was the second major area of German-Polish divergence in the EU during the Jarosław Kaczyński government. Germany and France pushed for a cap on the EU budget until 2013, which would impact negatively beneficiaries such as Poland and Spain. Nonetheless, again with Poland's nationalist government, a resolution was possible in December 2005 when Germany agreed to forgo €100 million in the budget to Poland's benefit. At the time, Chancellor Merkel called the deal "a good gesture" for the sake of German-Polish relations' "essential significance." The Polish foreign minister declared the arrangement a "wonderful gesture that one cannot measure in Euros."¹⁵¹ The June 2007 agreement on the new voting system's implementation ensured Poland's ability to block attempts to cap the budget until 2014.

The formula of divergence combined with cooperation in economic affairs also applied to the Tusk government. In March 2009, despite German opposition to an Eastern European plea for an aid package to mitigate the effects of the economic and financial crisis, the Polish prime minister rallied EU members to avoid protectionism, an initiative that resonated with Chancellor Merkel.¹⁵²

The Tusk and Merkel governments were able to reach convergence on two additional areas in the EU: the environment, and policy toward the East. When coal-dependent Poland organized a fall 2008 coalition to block an EU climate and energy agreement by seeking exceptions to the reduced carbon emissions provisions, it looked to Germany for support, which was demonstrated subsequently in the December 2008 bilateral talks. Tusk saw the Polish-German capacity for cooperation despite differences as a model for the rest of Europe.

By the time of the December 2008 Brussels EU summit to deal with the climate and energy package, Merkel's concern about the package's negative effects on German heavy industry placed her solidly in the Polish camp, arguing for partial derogations. The joint German-Polish approach avoided a Polish veto of the package while achieving the goal of tempering its impact on certain industries.¹⁵³

Already in the short period of its EU membership, Poland has played a key role in the EU's response to political transformation in Ukraine. There were differences between Germany and Poland concerning Ukraine's EU membership, although they agreed on the general issue of Ukraine's partial integration into EU structures through the Ukraine-EU Action Plan, and through negotiations over an Association Agreement ("Enhanced Agreement"), which began in March 2007. German-Polish leadership regarding Ukraine, one of the first areas German foreign minister Steinmeier suggested for cooperation with the Polish government in fall 2006, was a natural given the intersecting histories among the three and common contemporary political, economic, and security interests. The April 2009 EU initiative to coordinate economic and financial aid to Kiev and the June 2009 joint visit of the Polish and German foreign ministers to the Ukrainian capital were key examples of cooperation.¹⁵⁴ Broader EU policy toward their eastern neighbors was a priority for both Germany and Poland, manifested in Germany's support for the EU's Eastern Partnership with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine that was sponsored by Poland and Sweden and actualized during the Czech presidency of the EU in 2009.¹⁵⁵

German-Polish relations within the framework of the EU were still in their early days in 2009. Although they manifested both conflict and cooperation, reminiscent of the vicissitudes in their bilateral partnership outside the EU, they also revealed an alliance of consequence in EU affairs. Tusk's greater willingness to compromise than his predecessor, sometimes favoring the greater EU's welfare over Polish nationalism, emphasized Poland's EU commitment and the value of partnership with Germany.¹⁵⁶

Polish leadership on issues such as the EU's *Ostpolitik* could provide a degree of practical equality within the EU, beyond the structural equality of rights and responsibilities conferred with membership. As with France, the sense of symmetry between Germany and Poland was an important ingredient of reconciliation.

CONCLUSION

Willy Brandt characterized his path-breaking 1970 trip to Warsaw as an obligation to “mount a historical test-bed on behalf of [my] fellow countrymen.”¹⁵⁷ Forty years later, it was clear by any standard that Brandt and his successors met and passed the test. By 2009, German and Polish leaders used the language and action of reconciliation and partnership, and societies fully engaged one another in a rich and robust fashion.

Friendship did not mean the disappearance of history or memory. Whether the border issue (before 1990) or restitution, reparations, and expulsion (since 2000), the past always has encumbered relations. However, by 2009 solid mechanisms impossible during the Cold War generally channeled the disruptive emotion of the past. History as commemoration or as prologue for a positive present and future became an essential characteristic of the relations between Poles and Germans.

The Cold War prevented institutionalized conflict resolution, but societies reached out, promoting important personal ties, symbolic acts, and formal societal connections. The connections of Polish religious and dissident forces with Germany during communism proved essential catalysts for German-Polish relations and Polish policy toward Germany after 1989. Societal actors became significant conduits for and complements to official behavior that were subsequently embraced within formal governmental agreements that then, in turn, spawned new links across German and Polish societies.

Bilateral governmental institutions, patterned after the Franco-German case, became plentiful. Their quiet, quotidian actions stabilized government relations, even when the surface was anything but calm. The continuity of scheduled official visits helped overcome apparent political crises, and the bilateral ability to confront and manage differences carried over to the EU, where Germany and Poland began carving out a proactive contribution, especially with regard to the former Soviet states. Brandt's inscription at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw in December 1970 resonated four decades later: “In memory of the dead of the Second World War and of the victims of violence and betrayal, in the hope of an enduring peace and of solidarity between the nations of Europe.”¹⁵⁸

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Germany's Relations with the Czech Republic

From Community of Conflict to Predictable Friendship

The age in which good patriotism was transformed into wicked nationalism against neighbors and led to destructive European fraternal wars lies behind us. Just as Germans and French have overcome it together, that should be the case between you and us.

—Richard von Weizsäcker, Prague, March 15, 1990¹

Of the four detailed country cases in this book, Germany's reconciliation with Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic² is the most recent. Unlike in Communist Poland, where reconciliation began despite the Cold War before the fall of the Berlin Wall, reconciliation with Czechoslovakia was effectively impossible until the grip of the Soviet Union and a hard-line Communist regime were broken. Consequently, reconciliation's institutionalization with the Czechs has lagged behind, but not only because of the international context. To the extent that Germany perceived a hierarchy of international victims, Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic was last on the list. Germans tended to believe that Czechs endured less physical suffering, loss of life, and material damage than other Nazi victims.³

Czech President Václav Havel's attitude toward Germany, when taking office in December 1989, was more forgiving in the initial stage of reconciliation than the attitudes of French, Israeli, and Polish leaders. Havel was also contrite about Czech misdeeds in the expulsion of Germans from Czech lands after the war. Yet, German-Czech relations were defined more as a "community of conflict" (*Konfliktgemeinschaft*) (a term coined by Czech historian Jan Křen)⁴ than the "community of interests" defined for Poland.

From the beginning (the early 1990s), there were constant disputes over compensation questions on both sides; the expulsion of Sudeten Germans; and the Czech Beneš Decrees and related law of 1945–1946 that sanctioned expropriation and expatriation of Sudeten Germans and exonerated those Czechs involved in expulsion's excesses.

By 2008, Czech-German conflict was largely over, replaced by a focus on interests. The rapid transition to friendship was the more remarkable because of intensely negative sentiment in the past. As Czech president Havel registered during German president Johannes Rau's 2002 trip to Prague: "As a result of this twelve-year process [since 1990] relations between our two countries are excellent, most probably better than they were previously."⁵

HISTORY

On the tenth anniversary of the German-Czech Declaration in January 2007, a Czech official said, "Germany and the Czech Republic remain conscious of the tragic chapter of their history. At the same time, they are firm in shaping their relations in terms of understanding and reciprocal amity."⁶ Thus was history to be treated by the partners, as painful memories inspiring pragmatism.

As described in "The Past as Stimulus," the past's hold and the Cold War precluded fundamental cooperation between Germans and Czechs. In "Acknowledging Grievances," very little development occurred before the end of the Cold War. In "The Past as Present," even though the Czech Republic's relationship with Germany is the least mature, the German-Czech Historians' Commission has been unique and path-breaking.

The Past as Stimulus

For much of the period from 1945 to 1989, Germans and Czechs were separated physically and psychologically because of the Cold War and because of a complicated thousand-year history of coexistence, in which Germany would not recognize Czech independence or nationhood and Czechoslovakia had difficulty accommodating its German minority.⁷ Their mutual past was of both "connection" and "distance," with coexistence destroyed by the 1938 Munich Agreement.⁸ The subsequent German occupation was characterized by Nazi atrocities, of which the June 1942 liquidation of the Czech village of Lidice, what Czech president Václav Klaus called "a monstrous crime," was

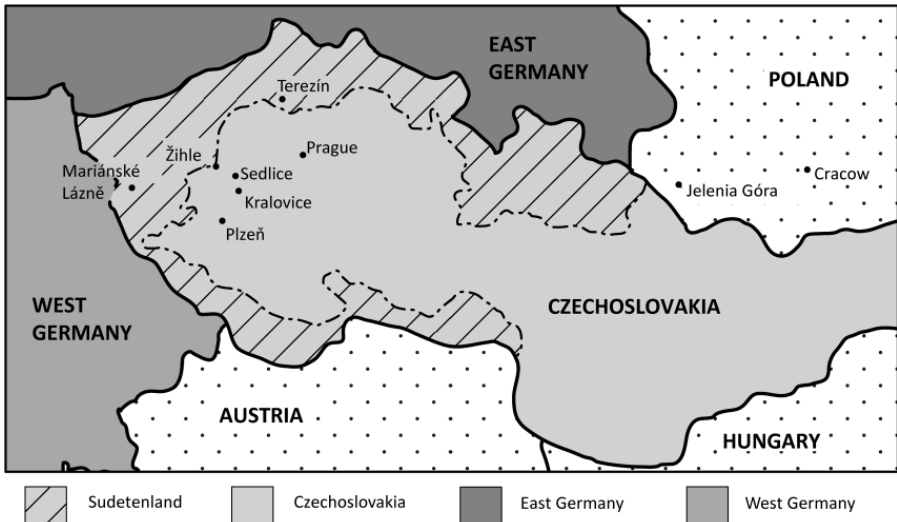


Figure 6.1. The Sudetenland annexed by Germany in 1938 and returned to Czechoslovakia after World War II. Courtesy of Bryan Hart

the nadir.⁹ Observers have referred to “darkness,” “distrust,” “bitter experiences,” “enmity,” and “pathological hatred.”¹⁰

After 1945, fears of German revanchism and aggression were widespread in Czechoslovakia, available to the Communist government to bolster state identity within the Soviet bloc. In Germany, Konrad Adenauer devoted no particular attention to Czechoslovakia, but his successor, chancellor Ludwig Erhard, did. He declared in June 1964 that the Munich Agreement was invalidated by Hitler and that the Federal Republic harbored no territorial designs on its neighbor, a historical interpretation reiterated in his “peace note” of March 1966.

The Czech response to Erhard chided the German government for insufficient sensitivity to Nazi behavior and World War II history, and for inadequate internalization of the 1945 Potsdam Conference that redrew borders and permitted transfers of German populations from Poland and Czechoslovakia.¹¹ Chancellor Kurt-Georg Kiesinger’s December 1966 government declaration was more sensitive, without altering Germany’s position that it had responsibilities to the Sudeten Germans.¹²

A real, though cautious, shift in Germany’s acceptance of its history came with the conceptual and practical activities of foreign minister Willy Brandt, institutionalized in the April 1968 Prague visit of Egon Bahr (Brandt’s trusted advisor) to Alexander Dubček, first secretary of the Communist

Party, to sound out the possibilities of “normalization.”¹³ The Czech democratization process, crowned by the 1968 “Prague Spring,” encouraged both sides, but it collapsed with the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. Reconciliation between Germany and Czechoslovakia would be retarded for two more decades.

Germany did not want to impair relations with the Soviet Union over Czechoslovakia, especially because the Soviet justification for intervention labeled German overtures at new relations with Czechoslovakia “revanchist.” Havel commented two decades later: “I still vividly recall how, in the early seventies, a number of my West German colleagues and friends avoided me for fear that contact with me—someone out of favor with his government—might needlessly provoke that government and thereby jeopardize the fragile foundations of nascent détente.”¹⁴

Notwithstanding government timidity, concerns about Soviet reactions to German support of Czech democratization did not deter an active exchange between German and Czech cultural figures, particularly writers, which continued with Czech dissident forces after the Prague Spring’s demise, leading to long-term networks (see *Catalysts* under “Non-Governmental Institutions”). The small Czech dissident movement around Charter 77 (*Charta 77*), whose manifesto appeared in West German newspapers in January 1977, contained religious and moral elements, partially originating in the November 1945 Czech Catholic bishops’ pastoral letter that regretted expulsion and a collective guilt application to all Sudeten Germans for their war-time behavior against Czechs.¹⁵

The Sudeten German Catholic Ackermann Community (*Ackermann-Gemeinde*), founded in 1946, was committed to German-Czech reconciliation. Even under communism’s severe constraints, some secret activities occurred in Czechoslovakia and common goals were articulated in Germany, for example the joint 1985 Passau statement of German and Czech Catholics on the fortieth anniversary of 1945.¹⁶ The German Catholic Conference of Bishops (*Deutsche Bischofskonferenz*) had some contact with Czechoslovak Catholic leadership, particularly with Cardinal František Tomášek, who was under house arrest.

The German Protestant Church (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*) developed connections in the 1950s and 1960s aimed at reconciliation with the Protestant Church of Bohemian Brethren, including visits by leading theologians such as Martin Niemöller and lay leaders such as Gustav Heine-mann (the later president of Germany). The crushing of the Prague Spring,

however, severely impacted all manner of religious contacts between Germany and Czechoslovakia.¹⁷

The brutal 1968 invasion made Czechoslovakia more inaccessible to the West than any other state in the Soviet bloc. Nonetheless, after the 1970 German-Polish Treaty and the 1972 FRG-GDR Treaty, Germany was ready to approach Czechoslovakia for a new relationship.

Acknowledging Grievances

Observers described as “thorny” the negotiations leading to the 1973 Prague Treaty on Mutual Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic; Chancellor Willy Brandt noted the “emotionally charged problem of the 1938 Munich Agreement” that had ceded the Sudetenland to Germany.¹⁸ “Normalization,” incorporated in the 1970 German-Polish Treaty, was absent from Germany’s first formal effort to address the past with Czechoslovakia. Yet Brandt considered the overture to Czechoslovakia in the same terms as the Polish treaty.¹⁹

The compromise between the German *ex nunc* position—the Munich Agreement was originally valid until Hitler occupied Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939—and the Czechoslovak *ex tunc* position—the Agreement was invalid from the very date of its signing—left each side to retain its own legal interpretation. The German position meant Sudeten Germans became German citizens as a result of the November 1938 Reich Citizenship Law (i.e., before the invalidation of the Munich Agreement), and therefore had an international legal claim, as foreigners, to compensation from Czechoslovakia for expropriation after the war. This interpretation also protected Sudeten Germans, as German citizens, from charges of treason under Czech domestic law. The Czech position meant that, as Czech citizens (due to the invalidation of the Reich Citizenship Law following from the original negation of Munich), the Sudeten Germans had no international legal claim to compensation and restitution.²⁰

The 1973 Treaty’s preamble recognized that “The Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938 was imposed on the Czechoslovak Republic by the National-Socialist regime under the threat of force,” and in Article 1 indicated that “The Federal Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic consider the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938 invalid under the terms of this treaty with respect to their mutual relations.”²¹ The CDU/CSU opposition in Germany criticized the treaty for its compromise on the

Munich Agreement interpretation, even though the treaty also acknowledged that the joint declaration on the Munich Agreement did not provide a legal basis for material claims of Czechoslovakia or its citizens, leaving open one of the most contentious issues between the two countries.

The 1973 Treaty was much clearer on the issue of territory: the two sides recognized the “inviolability of their common border,” clarifying early a topic that bedeviled the German-Polish relationship until German unification. The treaty also committed the two sides to cooperation in economics, culture, science and technology, higher education, sport, and transportation, but this institutional dimension would be harder to implement than with Poland due to the doctrinaire Czechoslovak Communist government’s limits on societal exchange after 1968.

It took nearly twenty years after the 1973 Treaty for Germany and Czechoslovakia to acknowledge formally their grievances in the February 1992 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation. The Czech treaty emphasized the goal of “friendship and reconciliation” and recognized the “numerous victims of tyranny, war and expulsion . . . and the immense suffering of many innocent people.” It balanced references to the difficult past with references to “the centuries-long tradition of common history.” There was no new interpretation of the 1938 Munich Agreement, but there was acknowledgement that the Czechoslovak state had never ceased to exist since 1918. Germany and Czechoslovakia committed to the rights of the German minority in Czechoslovakia and of persons of Czech and Slovak heritage in Germany. Finally, there was an ambitious (and still unfulfilled) agenda of institutionalization across many areas of policy and societal interaction. Accompanying letters between the two foreign ministers confirmed the exclusion of property questions.²²

Czech-German negotiations to address the 1992 Treaty’s shortcomings took five years, due to foot-dragging by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Prime Minister Václav Klaus and bitter domestic debates in both Germany and the Czech Republic.²³ Emphasizing the notion of a positive past and the goal of reconciliation, the 1997 German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and Their Future Development broke new ground by understanding the difference between “cause and effect in the sequence of events”: “The German side acknowledges Germany’s responsibility for its role in a historical development which led to the 1938 Munich Agreement, the flight and forcible expulsion of people from the Czech border area and the forcible breakup and occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic.” Germany also recognized

that Nazi violence against Czechs contributed to the postwar expulsion of Sudeten Germans by Czechs.

For its part, the Czech government regretted both the excesses involved in the expulsion of Sudeten Germans and the law that exonerated those involved. Looking beyond history, the two sides expressed their commitment “that they will not burden their relations with political and legal issues which stem from the past,” while still recognizing that there were different legal interpretations of that past.²⁴ President Havel formulated the declaration’s significance—that it enabled Germans and Czechs to free themselves from historical prejudices and demands in their search for truth about the past while not forgetting.²⁵

Already in November 1989, Václav Havel, the dissident writer not allowed to go to Germany to receive a prize, had written to President Richard von Weizsäcker: “I personally condemn the expulsion and transfer of the Sudeten Germans after World War II and consider it immoral.”²⁶ In his April 1997 Bundestag speech, Havel reiterated that Sudeten Germans were welcome in the Czech Republic and that their connection with the country must be honored.

Acknowledging Czech culpability in the Sudeten German expulsion was linked to the person of Havel and his moral philosophy. Yet, by August 2005 the Czech government itself was ready to offer an apology (and a related documentation project), though to a more focused group: those anti-Fascist Sudeten Germans who were forced out, or suffered other reprisals, at the



Figure 6.2. Czech President Václav Havel addresses German parliament, Bonn, April 24, 1997. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Reineke

same time as those who had supported the Third Reich's destruction of the Czechoslovak state.²⁷

The 1997 Declaration created a German-Czech Future Fund (*Deutsch-tschechischer Zukunftsfonds*) whose projects would cover humanitarian programs, particularly for Nazism's victims. Until 1997, Czechs were the only victims of Nazism who had received no compensation from Germany, neither before nor after 1989.²⁸ After 1998, Czech victims also received compensation through the Central and Eastern European Fund, whose creation the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany negotiated with the Federal Republic.²⁹ From 2001 on, the Remembrance, Responsibility, and Future Foundation paid out 5 percent of its funds (€210 million) to Czech victims of forced labor, who constituted 4 percent of the total number of recipients.³⁰

Beginning in 1973, the German government slowly recognized the grievances Czechs harbored, and did so publicly in treaties and declarations. Between the Prague Spring and 1989 there was no societal concomitant, but, after 1989, organizations that confronted history on an everyday basis, often in a quiet manner, were able to thrive.

The Past as Present

Organizations

Two organizations have stood out in confronting the past: Action Reconciliation³¹ and the German-Czech Textbook Commission.³² The Czech Republic, like Israel, does not have a German Historical Institute, but it does showcase an important novelty, the German-Czech Historians' Commission (*Deutsch-Tschechische Historikerkommission*).³³

Timing: Features of the international system impacted the timing for the establishment of organizations devoted to encountering history. Action Reconciliation was the earliest, commencing its activities in the mid-1960s, followed by the first German-Czechoslovak textbook discussions (within a UNESCO framework) in 1967, in Braunschweig, demonstrating that some contact was possible during communism. The Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968, however, abruptly terminated the dialogue. There were informal contacts concerning textbooks between Czechoslovak and German scholars, but no textbook conference was possible in Prague until 1988. West German volunteers from Action Reconciliation reappeared in the Czech Republic only in 1993.

Other conferences took place after 1989, but bureaucratic constraints, occasioned by Czechoslovakia's dissolution, meant a formal German-Czech Textbook Commission was not instituted until 2002, with its first meeting in Dresden. The Historians' Commission was a creation of the new post-Communist era when the German and Czech foreign ministers blessed it in 1990 as a German-Czechoslovak institution (after 1993 there were separate Czech and Slovak commissions with Germany).

Goals: The reciprocal acquisition of knowledge promotes acceptance and tolerance. Detailed recognition of German crimes against Czechoslovakia and of Czech deficiencies in the expulsion of Sudeten Germans provides the basis for a new German-Czech coexistence. Action Reconciliation in the Czech Republic strives for reconciliation most explicitly in dealing with German guilt, while all three actors (Action Reconciliation, the Textbook Commission, and the Historians' Commission) have increased the dialogues and networks so central to the process of reconciliation.

Means: Encounters (conferences, lectures, seminars, and training activities) and publications (scholarly volumes, articles, and newsletters) have been common means of all three organizations. In addition, the Historians' Commission and Textbook Commission use jointly framed research by established scholars and stipends for younger scholars to establish dialogues and evaluate the past. Both commissions have worked to relieve the relationship's asymmetry, as there has been more Czech interest in Germany than the other way around.

In the Czech Republic, Action Reconciliation has replicated its activities in France, Israel, and Poland, with volunteers providing social services to Holocaust survivors and socially marginalized groups, such as Roma and mentally and physically handicapped persons; and rendering upkeep and pedagogical support at the former concentration camp of Theresienstadt (Terezin). The Historians' Commission has been involved publicly, as in its 1996 statement lowering the number of Sudeten German casualties caused by expulsion; its 1996 outline of German-Czech history during the negotiations on the German-Czech Declaration; and its 2002 statement that the German-Czech relationship should not be reduced to disagreements over the Beneš Decrees.³⁴

The Nature of History: The Textbook Commission and the Historians' Commission have employed the broadest conception of history, going back centuries, but also have focused on World War II and previously taboo topics such as expulsion. The Textbook Commission has emphasized national

histories, but also placed Czech history in an Eastern and Central European context. The Historians' Commission additionally has stressed German-Czech history through 1989. Action Reconciliation's origin as a response to the Third Reich has meant a central focus on World War II, Nazism, and the Holocaust. Whereas the Textbook Commission's goal has been the "improvement and harmonization" of history content, the Historians' Commission's purpose has been greater "compatibility" of the two histories.³⁵

Effects: The effect of these organizations' activities can be discerned, albeit partially. Action Reconciliation's activities have resulted in individual and personal reconciliation, whereas the Textbook Commission and the Historians' Commission have registered professional success in two areas: the establishment of transnational epistemic communities of scholars and researchers; and the production of scholarly works—with twelve volumes put out by the Historians' Commission by 2009, and nine volumes associated with informal and formal textbook encounters since 1968. Germans proposed a common German-Czech history book in 2008, but it met resistance from prominent Czech leaders and historians.³⁶

In both specific and broad areas of reconciliation the Historians' Commission is now seen as a model for bilateral, joint confrontation with the past in other contexts.³⁷ It screened and then lowered the number of Sudeten German losses in the expulsion (from 250,000 to 15,000 to 25,000); and devised appropriate terminology ("wild expulsion" for the period before the Potsdam Conference, "transfer" of population for the post-Potsdam period).³⁸ Nonetheless, the issues of expulsion and restitution would burden intergovernmental relations in the period after 1989.



Figure 6.3. Detlef Brandes, German historian and member of the German-Czech Historians' Commission. Courtesy of Detlef Brandes

Restitution and Expulsion

German compensation to Czech victims of Nazism materialized, albeit in delayed and complicated fashion. Sudeten German claims for restitution and compensation, and the attendant demand for rescission of the Beneš Decrees (the basis of the Czech postwar expropriation and expatriation), have never been satisfied. The German and Czech governments largely have demonstrated political unity in responding to expellee claims.

Czech prime minister Miloš Zeman, during his March 1999 visit to Germany, deemed the Beneš Decrees defunct without challenging their original legitimacy (repeated by Prime Minister Vladimír Špidla in a June 2003 Göttweg speech). Zeman and Gerhard Schröder announced that neither Germany nor the Czech Republic would support Sudeten German claims, and that the Czech Republic would not launch claims against Germany.³⁹

During an October 2004 visit to Prague, Schröder noted that Germany would not support Sudeten German property claims filed at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, out of respect for the Czech government's wish for non-interference.⁴⁰ The next month, during Czech prime minister Stanislav Gross' visit to Germany, Schröder declared that the German-Polish legal commission's conclusion of no validity for German expellee claims against Poland also applied to Sudeten German claims against the Czech Republic.⁴¹ Angela Merkel, shortly after becoming chancellor and during Czech prime minister Jiří Paroubek's December 2005 visit to Berlin, repeated her predecessor's position of no German government support for Sudeten German property claims.⁴²

Despite the rejection of claims by the two governments, beginning in 1999 there was a bilateral effort to provide a gesture in the form of assistance to elderly Sudeten Germans who had remained in Czechoslovakia and had been discriminated against by various Communist regimes in Prague. However, ultimately the Sudeten German social service agency's application to the German-Czech Future Fund (set up by the 1997 Declaration) was rejected. The fund cited its original intention to help Czech victims of Nazism and not Sudeten Germans. Nonetheless, Sudeten Germans did benefit in small ways from the fund's activities.⁴³

The larger topic of expulsion, beyond compensation, animated German-Czech relations following the Federation of Expellees' 2000 proposal for a German-focused Center Against Expulsion (see chapter 5), and the Czech prime minister's January/February 2002 inflammatory statements. The Schröder-Fischer team publicly opposed the center to Czech audiences.⁴⁴

Czech leadership denounced the proposal for a Center Against Expulsion in Germany. Prime Minister Špidla was concerned, in August 2003, about confusion between “cause and effect.” In September, he advocated the creation of a European center in Sweden for the study of the causes and consequences of World War II; and in October he referred to a German expulsion center’s major deficiency of ignoring the “broader historical and international context.” Špidla defended the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia as a necessary, stability-oriented, postwar exercise, but acknowledged that sixty years later it might be seen as unacceptable.⁴⁵ Špidla’s admission of a plausible change in perspective did not resonate well with a wide spectrum of Czech society for, with the exception of some scholarly consideration, the Czech role in expulsion had been confronted minimally.⁴⁶ President Klaus and former President Havel joined the opposition to a German expulsion center.⁴⁷

For conceptual, financial, and bureaucratic reasons the Czech Republic did not join the European Network on Remembrance and Solidarity (the Schröder government’s 2005 response to calls for a German Center Against Expulsion), although Prague was involved in preparatory meetings. In May 2006, Prime Minister Paroubek referred to Czech “fears of lumping all victims together,” and in September 2006, Foreign Minister Alexandr Vondra called the center “an unfortunate step.” When the Merkel government decided in March 2008 on a documentation center, Czech prime minister Mirek Topolánek was critical, and announced the Czech Republic’s unwillingness to participate.⁴⁸

The second expulsion event that bedeviled German-Czech relations was Czech prime minister Zeman’s January 2002 reference to Sudeten Germans as a pro-Nazi fifth column. He said expulsion was justified, refused to apologize, but emphasized his remarks had not applied to all Sudeten Germans. A month later in Israel, he advocated the expulsion of Palestinians on the model of Czechoslovak expulsion of the Sudeten Germans.⁴⁹

Many German politicians, including the foreign minister and chancellor, denounced Zeman for his notion of collective guilt. Whereas Fischer was able to proceed with his planned February 2002 visit to Prague to defuse tensions, Chancellor Schröder cancelled his trip, scheduled for March 2002, for fear of domestic political fall-out in both countries as they prepared for imminent national elections.⁵⁰

The disagreements remained complicated. The German government warned the CSU and Sudeten Germans not to link EU membership for

the Czech Republic to rescission of the Beneš Decrees (see below, “Non-Governmental Institutions—Competition”).⁵¹ In May 2002, Interior Minister Otto Schily reminded Sudeten Germans that Czechs were the first expellees in 1938 when they were forced out of the areas annexed by Germany following the Munich Agreement.⁵²

By September 2003, expulsion no longer dominated relations and Schröder was able to visit Prague. Fischer articulated a sense of the past similar to President Havel's: “We must remember history without becoming its prisoner.”⁵³ Schröder, and his Czech hosts, emphasized a balance between past and future: “The discussion about the past should continue, but it cannot dominate and overshadow the future.”⁵⁴ Eighteen months later, again in Prague, Schröder argued against confusing cause and effect: “The causes [of the expulsion] were occupation and war, and they were perpetrated by the Germans.”⁵⁵ During Schröder's May 2005 visit, both he and Czech prime minister Paroubek criticized Bavarian minister-president Edmund Stoiber's inflammatory speech at the recent annual meeting of the Sudeten Germans. Merkel later shared Schröder's view that the 1997 Declaration was the cornerstone of relations when she visited Prague in 2007 for the declaration's tenth anniversary.⁵⁶

A history of mutual recriminations over a history of mutual expulsions complicated reconciliation for Germans and Czechs. Leaders stepped forward. On a variety of occasions, both German and Czech leaders made it clear in policy statements that the past would not impede reconciliation.

Symbolic Events

Most symbolic events in German-Czech relations that featured history directly (through identification or commemoration) and indirectly (by embracing a new future) occurred after 1989. However, there were two major occurrences before the end of Czech communism in which Czechs initiated historical reconciliation with Germany. The first was Charter 77's March 1985 “Prague Appeal” on disarmament and European unification, which supported the “taboo” of German unification.⁵⁷ The second was Havel's November 1989 letter to President von Weizsäcker where he effectively apologized for the way Sudeten Germans were expelled, an apology he repeated on Czech television in December, just before becoming post-Communist Czechoslovakia's first president.⁵⁸

When former dissidents became political leaders, both symbolic acts—endorsing German unification and regretting expulsion—informed the new

Czech government's policy toward a united Germany. Unfortunately, as with the Polish bishops' 1965 letter, these initiatives undertaken by the victim provoked a negative reaction: no response from the German government and a renewed expellee claim for compensation.

There were several "firsts" as Czechs and Germans addressed their complex relations:

- Havel's choice of East Berlin and Munich as the first sites of his foreign policy activities in January 1990;
- The first visit of a German president, von Weizsäcker, to Prague in March 1990 on the anniversary of the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia. He spoke at the same location where the Nazi Protectorate was signed into being in 1939;
- Havel's April 1997 address to the German Bundestag on nationhood, homeland, and reconciliation, the first by a democratic Czech leader;
- President Roman Herzog's April 1997 address to the Czech Parliament on forgiveness and reconciliation, the first of a German head of state;⁵⁹
- President Havel's first official "state visit" to Germany in May 2000 (he had been eighteen times since 1990, but not at this level of protocol). He and President Rau "declared that the Beneš Decrees would not burden Czech-German relations."⁶⁰

History was a focal concern directly addressed on many additional occasions:

- The September 2003 award from Czech victims of Nazism to Chancellor Schröder for his initiative on slave and forced labor;
- The May 2005 joint visit of Schröder and Paroubek to the concentration camp of Theresienstadt;
- The August 2005 official recognition, sixty years later, of the death of eighty expellees by the Czech town of Ústí nad Labem;
- The November 2006 historians' conference in Ústí nad Labem, with the participation of leading politicians, for the first time on the fate of anti-Fascist Sudeten Germans after World War II;
- A related September 2008 conference and exhibition on "Forgotten Heroes" (*Vergessene Helden*);
- The April 2007 joint German-Czech planting of a Linden tree, a Czech symbol, at Lidice to complement the 2002 planting of an oak, a German symbol, at the same location; and



Figure 6.4. President Richard von Weizsäcker with Czech President Václav Havel, Prague, March 15, 1990. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Schambeck

- The June 2008 joint ceremony of Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Topolánek commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Prague Spring.

There were symbolic events affirming a new relationship through indirect historical reference:

- The December 1989 joint cutting of the frontier wire at Rozvadov/Waidhaus by German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Czech foreign minister Jiří Dienstbier;
- The April 1991 forward-looking ten-point “Prague Theses” of Foreign Minister Genscher and Foreign Minister Dienstbier on European security and European institutions;
- The October 1995 joint attendance by President Havel and President Herzog at the German-Czech Historians’ Commission in Dresden;
- The September 1996 joint appearance of President Havel and President Herzog at the German-Czech youth forum in Polička.

There were other, symbolic events diagnosing misunderstandings between the two countries, calling for acceptance of the past, and promoting



Figure 6.5. Czech Foreign Minister Jiří Dienstbier and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher meet after cutting the German-Czech frontier wire at Waidhaus/Rozvadov, December 23, 1989. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Wegmann

dialogue: the 1995 Charles University lecture series organized together with the German publisher Bertelsmann, entitled “Conversations between Neighbors,” involving Václav Havel and Hildegard Hamm-Brücher (February); Jiří Dienstbier and Kurt Biedenkopf (April); Milošlav Vlk and Angelus Waldstein (June); Jiří Gruša and Antje Vollmer (October); Josef Zieleniec and Günter Verheugen (November); and Václav Havel and Richard von Weizsäcker (December).⁶¹

LEADERSHIP

The 1995 Charles University lectures indicated the depth of friendship and personal rapport between individual Czech and German leaders, possible only after 1989. Before, communism’s antiseptic and closed nature and the lower German priority for Czechoslovakia (at least as compared to Poland) made extensive personal contact impossible. Chancellor Schmidt wrote at length about his private trip as an SPD Deputy to Czechoslovakia in 1966, but otherwise noted that his view was “incomplete” and that he “never got

to know the country more closely.”⁶² Brandt, his predecessor in the chancellorship, had visited privately in 1936 and 1947, but had the opportunity for fuller observations only in December 1973 when the Mutual Relations Treaty was signed. Brandt referred to President Ludvík Svoboda’s “cordiality” and to Gustáv Husák, the leader of the Communist Party, as “an agreeable person to talk to,”⁶³ but appreciated the constraints under which Svoboda and Husák operated and the inherent limits on their relationship.

Chancellor Kohl’s January 1988 visit to Czechoslovakia, the first of a German chancellor in fifteen years, helped him see Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal’s personal, surprisingly “self-critical” side. He also used the opportunity, reluctantly granted by the Czech leadership, to maintain his friendship with Cardinal František Tomášek.⁶⁴ Kohl’s foreign minister Genscher also insisted on visiting Cardinal Tomášek frequently before 1989 while developing “a warm personal relationship” with the German-speaking Czech foreign minister Bohuslav Chňoupek “despite all our differences.” Genscher derived from their relationship insight into Soviet thinking and the opportunity to convey messages to the Soviets. First as a journalist, then as foreign minister, Genscher enjoyed very close ties with the Czech journalist and dissident Jiří Dienstbier, who would become Czech foreign minister after 1989, enabling them to “achiev[e] [so] much together,” including successful negotiation of the 1992 Treaty.⁶⁵

Personal ties played a role in enabling the very difficult and lengthy negotiations over the 1997 German-Czech Declaration. Observers noted back channels between Günter Verheugen and Miloš Zeman (both Social Democratic leaders), and between Antje Vollmer (Green Party Vice President of the Bundestag) and Milan Horáček (advisor to the Czech president, émigré to Germany, and also a German Green), during this period. Vollmer and German President Herzog had close connections to President Havel, as Havel had with former President von Weizsäcker, the latter friendship guaranteeing an open line of communication between the two countries since 1989.⁶⁶

At later times of tension between the Czech Republic and Germany, for example after the 2002 expulsion controversies, the friendship between Chancellor Schröder and Prime Minister Špidla, who were on a first-name basis, contributed to restabilizing political relations. Schröder also had a close personal relationship with Prime Minister Paroubek, another Social Democrat.⁶⁷ Chancellor Merkel had fond memories of her student days in Prague, which contributed to her frankness with Czech leaders during their differences on EU issues in the period from 2005 to 2008.⁶⁸ However, negative personal

sentiments between leaders added to tensions, for example between Chancellor Kohl and Prime Minister Klaus regarding the 1997 German-Czech Declaration, whose conclusion accordingly became a drawn-out process.⁶⁹

INSTITUTIONS

Non-governmental Institutions

In her October 2008 Charles University speech, Chancellor Merkel praised non-governmental actors' contribution to the German-Czech relationship, singling out educational exchange: "Over the years hundreds of Czech and German high school students, university students, academics and scientists have participated in programs of the DAAD [German Academic Exchange Service]. . . . This has brought our people closer."⁷⁰ The intensity of educational exchange was replicated in many other examples of societal interactions between the two countries.

Catalysts

Czech communism's doctrinaire and hermetically sealed nature after 1968 precluded the early development of institutions and personalities with connections to Germany. The major exception was Charter 77, which foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier later lauded as an inspiration for German unification.⁷¹ Soon after Charter 77's inception, members of the Czechoslovak dissident movement, like its Polish counterpart, began to reflect on Germany, culminating in the 1985 Prague Appeal that endorsed Germany's right to self-determination and unification. Dienstbier's early 1980s concept of a united Europe revolved around German unification, and was converted into practice when he became foreign minister. Havel saw the resolution of the German question—in the form of a confederation—as the heart of a process dissolving the two-bloc European system.⁷² When von Weizsäcker visited Prague in March 1990, Havel's ideas as a dissident about Germany translated into optimism about the future of German-Czech relations:

[This] could be the beginning of a new act in the 1,000 year-old Czech-German drama, in which the themes of tension, discord and struggle have been constantly and indivisibly knit together with the themes of fertile coexistence and



Figure 6.6. Alexandr Vondra (left), a Czech dissident under communism and negotiator of the 1997 German-Czech Declaration, with Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, Prague, May 7, 2009. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Bergmann

deep mutual influence. In this new act, the latter group of themes could finally, after the bitter experience of the recent past, predominate over the former.⁷³

Other pre-1989 Czech dissidents who would help develop Czech-German policy included Jiří Gruša, ambassador to Germany from 1991 to 1997; Alexandr Vondra, foreign policy advisor to Havel from 1990 to 1992, later negotiator of the 1997 German-Czech Declaration, subsequently foreign minister, and then deputy prime minister; and Petr Pithart, Czech prime minister from 1990 to 1992.⁷⁴ Gruša had lived in Germany as an exile from 1982 until 1990.

Complements

Germany and the Czech Republic formally set as a goal the enhancement of non-governmental activity. Already in 1973 the Treaty on Mutual Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic called for “the extension of neighborly cooperation in the fields of economics, scholarship, science and technology, culture, the environment, sport and transportation.” Regularized, institutionalized relations in the areas specified by the 1973 Treaty, however, would have to await the end of the Cold War. A long-term economic agreement was concluded in

1975. The April 1978 Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between the two countries permitted a modicum of exchange.

Friendship Societies: The German-Czechoslovak Society, the equivalent of the bilateral friendship associations in the French, Israeli, and Polish cases, was established in 1983, promoting societal and political rapprochement through a modest visit and dialogue program, and facilitating connections for German businessmen with Czech counterparts and with the Czech government. Town twinnings were established before 1989, but were limited, the first in 1970 between Lorsch and Giebova, with thirteen more in the period before German unification. The fourteen before 1990 became over three hundred town and communal twinnings by 2006. There is a German-Czech website, supported by the German Foreign Office and the Robert Bosch Foundation, that encourages German-Czech cross-border partnerships, especially in the context of the EU.⁷⁵

By 2009, the German-Czech/Slovak Society, headed by prominent Germans from the political and economic elite, focused on high-level events and long-term projects in culture, economics, politics, and societal relations.⁷⁶ Another private foundation, the Brücke/Most Foundation, created in 1997, has been devoted to reconciliation through the promotion of societal connections in a variety of fields, and tapped into political and academic prominence in its leadership.⁷⁷

Culture: The cultural activities organized by both the German-Czech/Slovak Society and the Brücke/Most Foundation were part of an extensive network of German-Czech cultural relations embraced first by the 1990 agreement on the mutual establishment of cultural and information centers, then by the 1992 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, and finally by the 1999 Treaty between Germany and the Czech Republic on Cultural Cooperation.⁷⁸ There were also agreements on cooperation in culture (and education) between the Czech Republic and the states of Bavaria, Saxony, and Baden-Württemberg.

Cultural activity has included performances, exhibitions, and management in music, theater, film, and art, involving unilateral and bilateral engagements, events, and exchanges, as well as joint projects. Observers pointed to the density of cultural links; cultural activity's capacity for vibrancy despite political downturns in German-Czech ties; and a common cultural heritage.⁷⁹ In 2008, the German government renewed its commitment to cultural vibrancy by German and Czech non-governmental actors through the extension to the Czech Republic of its "Zipp" program with Central and

Eastern Europe, entailing interdisciplinary comparisons of the years 1968 and 1989, and of German and Czech ways of life, as well as a celebration of Franz Kafka's 125th birthday.

The Goethe Institute has been the key official facilitator of societal interaction for culture and language acquisition. Founded in 1990, the Goethe Institute in Prague also has served as coordinator for regional activity in Central and Eastern Europe.⁸⁰ The Robert Bosch Foundation, too, supported cultural and language programs, while training journalists, diplomats, teachers, academics, students, cultural managers, writers, translators, civic education/public administration participants, and non-profit executives, with a special emphasis on young professionals.⁸¹ Despite greater symmetry in border areas, there was much larger Czech interest in learning German than German interest in learning Czech.⁸² German had occupied a unique role in Czech history as the language of prominent writers, such as Kafka, as celebrated in the Prague House of Literature (*Prager Literaturhaus*), created in 2004 and funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Brücke/Most Foundation, and the Bosch-supported translation and publication into German of thirty-three volumes of Czech literature.

Education: The Robert Bosch Foundation's support of student and academic engagement in German-Czech relations has constituted an important element of a broader definition of culture involving a number of actors. There has been an active, formalized relationship between German and Czech institutions of higher learning, with some 240 cooperation arrangements sustained through the German Conference of Institutions of Higher Learning (*Die deutsche Hochschulrektorenkonferenz*). While offering a much more modest product, the bilateral German-Czech course of study at Regensburg University/Prague Charles University is reminiscent of the Franco-German university in Saarbrücken in its goal of joint education.⁸³

A key facilitator of study by Germans and Czechs in the other's country has been the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*, DAAD) with an office in Prague. It has supported fourteen short-term German professors to teach German studies at Czech universities. The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*) also have promoted studying in the two countries.

Connections between the German Ministry of Education and Research and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport have embraced cooperative research on information technology, bio-technology, health, the

environment, and materials.⁸⁴ The Collegium Carolinum in Munich with its library and special collections, built up since the center's origin in 1956, has focused on critical scholarship and the elimination of prejudice through multiple activities of prominent German and Czech scholars.⁸⁵

Youth Exchange: A third cultural element articulated in the 1992 and 1999 Treaties was youth exchange, governed institutionally by a coordinating body, Tandem, with offices in Regensburg and Plzeň following a 1996 governmental agreement to promote, facilitate, monitor, and train. Tandem provides recommendations to the federal and regional ministries in the two countries.⁸⁶ Tandem created an Internet site for German and Czech youth interested in the other country, yet, for all its efforts, it engaged only six thousand participants in youth exchange in 2009.⁸⁷

School partnerships between Germany and the Czech Republic for spending a school year in the other country have been an important supplement to the youth exchange programs. The German-Czech secondary school program in Pirna, started in 1998, is a unique example of bilateral school interaction.

Economics: The 1992 Treaty promoted commercial exchange as a priority, and extensive economic ties developed thereafter, with an additional boost from the Czech Republic's EU membership in 2004. Observers admired how economic relations remained excellent and insulated from other disturbances during times of political difficulty, such as the negotiation of the 1997 Declaration and the 2002 expulsion issues. By 2009, Germany was the Czech Republic's most important trade partner, accounting for some 30 percent of Czech trade, and the Czech Republic had become Germany's third most important trade partner in Central and Eastern Europe, after Russia and Poland. In the period 1993 to 2009, Germany provided some 25 percent of total foreign direct investment in the Czech Republic, the second most important country after Holland.⁸⁸ Non-governmental institutions joined the German government in promoting and facilitating private commercial exchanges: the German-Czech and German-Slovak Economic Association (*Deutsch-Tschechische und Deutsch-Slowakische Wirtschaftsvereinigung*), founded in 1990, with offices in Frankfurt, Prague, and Ostrava; and the German-Czech Chamber of Industry and Trade (*Deutsch-Tschechische Industrie- und Handelskammer*), founded in 1993 in Prague.⁸⁹

Cooperation on issues of Czech workers in Germany opened up after the Czech Republic joined the EU. Cross-border activity concerning Czech labor has been significant. Common economic and socioeconomic challenges fac-

ing German and Czech unions because of an expanded EU and globalization have been the focus of German-Czech trade union contacts, particularly on the border in fora such as the Interregional Trade Union Council Elbe-Neisse, which also involved Poland. Labor market issues have linked Bavaria and the Czech Republic in the EURES partnership framework (the European Job Mobility Portal promoted by the European Commission), involving federal and regional governments and private actors.

Minorities: The 1992 Treaty embraced protection of the German minority's rights in Czechoslovakia and of Czech citizens' rights in Germany. Of the 150,000 Czechs who left their homeland after the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion, about 55,000 went to Germany and 34,000 stayed there.⁹⁰ Some 100,000 members of the German minority left Czechoslovakia between 1950 and 1989. The 40,000 remaining make up a much smaller community than the German minority in Poland and are more dispersed and less organized.⁹¹ However, in contrast to Poland, the German minority has enjoyed more powerful and effective links with the German political elite, particularly the CSU and Sudeten Germans in Bavaria. By contrast with Poland, during the Cold War the German minority in Czechoslovakia generally did not complicate bilateral relations.

The 1968 Prague Spring had recognized ethnic Germans as a minority, but the dwindling German population faced sparse opportunities for cultural identification through language and education. It felt ongoing pressure to assimilate. By 2009, the two main German minority organizations in the Czech Republic each had only five thousand members and were divided and essentially without political representation.

Both Czech and German governments have supported German minority activity in newspapers, German-language education, and social associations. While the German minority was not discriminated against officially, anti-German sentiments were still present, as displayed in the debates over the 1997 German-Czech Declaration and the public support for Prime Minister Zeman's 2002 critical remarks on Sudeten Germans (see "Restitution and Expulsion").⁹²

Political Parties: The 1992 Treaty recognized exchanges between political actors as a vehicle for building German-Czech relations. These activities proliferated in a variety of channels: German and Czech bilateral political party interactions, i.e., between the SPD, FDP, CDU, and Green Party and their Czech counterparts or like-minded parties; joint deliberations in the context of the main parties' international and European political party organizations;

relationships of individual German politicians to their ideological compatriots; and parliamentary exchanges, including at the leadership level and through the Bundestag's German-Czech parliamentary group. Due to ideological differences, a major constraint for conservatives was the lack of institutionalized relations between Václav Klaus' Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*, ODS) and the CDU, except for pragmatic contacts when the ODS was in government.⁹³

Churches: Church activities were singled out for promotion by the 1992 Treaty. Cardinal Tomášek's January 1990 characterization of Czechoslovak behavior during the expulsion of Sudeten Germans as a "stain on our national honor" and call for friendship prompted a declaration of the German Catholic bishops' conference two months later on moral obligation and forgiveness, which in turn generated a September 1990 Czechoslovak bishops' response rejecting Czechoslovakia's collective guilt treatment of Sudeten Germans after World War II. Relations thrived after 1992 with frequent exchanges and periodic statements on significant issues in German-Czech relations, for example the 1995 joint statement of the German and Czech bishops on the fiftieth anniversary of World War II's end.⁹⁴ After 1989, the Catholic Ackermann Community mounted full-scale discussions and programs with Czech religious leaders and intellectuals, often partnering with the Czech Bernard Bolzano Society.

Catholics did not have an exclusive claim to reconciliation through religion. An important exchange of Protestant letters began with the November 1995 Czech missive on "Reflections on the Problem of Sudeten German Migration," and was followed by the German Protestant Church's November 1996 "Reconciliation between Czechs and Germans" and November 1998 "The Fence of Separation Has Been Torn Down," which resulted from discussions with Czech Protestants to find a common history. The friendship and reconciliation initiatives between the Protestant churches led to the 2003 signing of an agreement to cement relations.⁹⁵

German-Czech Future Fund and Discussion Forum: After the 1992 Treaty, the 1997 German-Czech Declaration was the final institutional framework regulating and promoting societal ties. Societal linkages predated the declaration and were much better than political relations at that time, but the declaration established new connections that "became the undergirding of reconciliation."

One such organization was the German-Czech Future Fund (*Deutsch-Tschechischer Zukunftsfonds*) (the "Fund") whose Czech and German heads

have emphasized the importance of exchanges and meetings in which difficult issues such as expulsion could be aired and in which emotional attitudes toward the past could be balanced by common interests. Jointly funded by the German and Czech governments, the Fund's activities have looked both to the past—help for the elderly, establishment and management of sanatoria, upkeep of monuments and cemeteries, translations of diaries and memoirs, and promotion of minorities—and to the future—youth encounters, cultural events, scholarly exchanges, environmental initiatives and cross-border cooperation, and language instruction. Preference in programming has been accorded to humanitarian assistance and care for Czech victims of Nazism. A binational administrative council makes funding decisions, and a binational secretariat based in Prague runs the organization. In 2007, the two governments renewed the Fund for another ten years.⁹⁶

The Fund is responsible for the new German-Czech Discussion Forum (*Deutsch-Tschechisches Diskussionsforum*) and its youth organization, the German-Czech Youth Forum (*Deutsch-Tschechisches Jugendforum*). As with the Historians' Commission before it, the Discussion Forum's membership was contested at the outset, although this time from the Czech side, which did not participate in the first July 1998 meeting due to the preponderance of Sudeten Germans in the German delegation. Significant progress was made thereafter with more balanced delegations. A binational coordinating committee and then an advisory board of academics and politicians, headed by prominent German and Czech politicians, have met regularly to assess German-Czech relations, to flag problem areas, and to prepare the Discussion Forum's annual conference, which brings together a wide range of professions.⁹⁷ The German Council on Foreign Relations (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik*) was the principal organizer of the yearly conference. Since 2007, and funded mainly by the Robert Bosch Foundation, the council also has a Center for Central and Eastern Europe that includes programs for young professionals, diplomats, and scholars from the Czech Republic.⁹⁸

Conduits

German political foundations have been active in the Czech Republic, complementing official behavior and functioning as conduits since 1990. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) established an office in Prague in 1990 to promote Czech-German dialogue, particularly in the regional setting

of the European Union; and to encourage political and societal discussions of democracy, pluralism, rule of law, and economic development. Partners have included trade unions, the Czech Social Democratic Party, ministries, parliament, local and regional governments, universities, journalists, and foundations. Research and publications, discussion groups, conferences, short-term expert advice, study opportunities, and visiting delegations have constituted the main activities. The office provided a forum for politicians during the contentious debates over the German-Czech Declaration.⁹⁹

The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) opened an office in 1990 in Prague, the foundation's first office abroad. Its main focus has been democratization, sustainable development, agriculture, and gender issues, and more recently energy, environmental questions, and the EU. With partners such as civil society groups, think-tanks, universities, and the Czech Green Party, it has provided information and furthered German-Czech relations through dialogue and publications. The HBS office performed a major function during the negotiation of the German-Czech Declaration as a forum for differing positions.¹⁰⁰

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) set up its Prague office in 1991, with three purposes: to convey to Germans the complexities and subtleties of Czech politics and society; to initiate discussions with Czech partners on the role of values, the nature of civil society, and privatization; and to counter nationalism by emphasizing European identity and the necessity of the EU political and economic framework. Activities have involved expert advice, publications, meetings, student and youth exchanges, and information trips for German and Czech elites. Partners have included political parties from the center to the right, Czech universities, think-tanks, and the media. The KAS helped keep alive discussions over the 1997 Joint Declaration when government support in Germany and the Czech Republic wavered. Its influence on Czech liberal conservatives in general, however, was less than the influence of the FES and HBS where there was greater ideological compatibility with their Czech interlocutors.¹⁰¹

Three other foundations had a less ambitious presence in the Czech Republic. The Friedrich Naumann Foundation's (FNS) project office in Prague has promoted the rule of law, liberal values, and market economy practices through political dialogue at all levels, political advice and education, meetings, and publications. The FNS work was complicated by the splintering of liberal political groups following 1989. Its main partner is the Liberal Insti-

tute in Prague. The Prague office also has overseen activities in Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) began its work soon after 1989 and aimed to improve Czech administrative structures, particularly at the communal level, and to help build Czech democratic institutions in the framework of the EU. Its partners have included the Ministry of the Interior, police departments and academies, and the Bernard Bolzano Foundation and Sudeten Germans.

The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS) has never established an office in the Czech Republic. It has conducted its Czech activities from its Warsaw regional office, with an emphasis on its partnership with civil society actors on Czech involvement in the EU at all levels of the integration process relating to social justice, economic and societal transformation, gender issues, globalization, and regional development.¹⁰²

Competitors

Beginning in 1945, approximately three million Sudeten Germans were expelled from Czechoslovakia. By 2009, approximately one million lived in Bavaria, the largest concentration.¹⁰³ Legally, all German governments since 1949 deemed Sudeten German expulsion and expropriation to be violations of international law.¹⁰⁴ Yet, in political terms, German governments did not seek to undo the perceived legal injustice in the two ways deemed appropriate by Sudeten German leadership: rescinding the 1945–1946 Beneš Decrees and associated Czechoslovak law that permitted expropriation and expatriation and exonerated Czechoslovak excesses during expulsion; and championing property claims against Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic.¹⁰⁵ Even though Merkel, first as CDU chairwoman and then as chancellor, highlighted the expellees' plight and promoted a Center Against Expulsion, she came out against property claims and did not focus on the Beneš Decrees.

Sudeten German leadership (Sudeten German Homeland Association, *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*, SL), in its constitutional challenge to the 1973 German-Czech Treaty, vociferously opposed German government policy. After 1989 and the fall of the Berlin Wall, open opposition was continuous. The 1990 Czechoslovak restitution law's deliberate exclusion of Sudeten German claims (dating applicability after February 25, 1948, the date of the Communist takeover) and insistence on claimants'

Czech citizenship and permanent residence galvanized expellee calls for rescission of the Beneš Decrees and satisfaction of claims.¹⁰⁶ SL desires for a resolution of claims were not realized in the 1992 German-Czech Treaty, but the expellees did influence the treaty's omission of claims by Czech victims of Nazism and prevented the inclusion of a clause annulling their own property claims.¹⁰⁷

When CSU politicians subsequently pushed for abolition of the Beneš Decrees, Czech President Havel, with Czech political and societal support, articulated a two-part Czech rejection that defined the Czech position thereafter: "They stressed that the Beneš Decrees had been the product of specific conditions after World War II and remained an inherent part of the Czech legal order. Their abolition, they argued, would lead to legal chaos and could undermine the stability of the Czech Republic."¹⁰⁸ A parallel, third Czech argument noted that expulsion was sanctioned by the August 1945 Potsdam Agreement among Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

The Czech Constitutional Court reaffirmed the Beneš Decrees' constitutionality in 1995 in the Dreithaler case brought by a Sudeten German; in a 2002 joint resolution, the Czech parliament upheld the decrees.¹⁰⁹ Sudeten German claims were rejected by the European Court for Human Rights in December 2005; Sudeten Germans tried again with the UN Human Rights Committee.¹¹⁰

The Sudeten Germans could not stop the 1997 Declaration (there were only twenty votes against it in the Bundestag), but their opposition slowed the negotiations considerably. The SL deemed the declaration unacceptable, felt left out of the negotiation, saw the text as a false depiction of history, and found Czech regret over expulsion's excesses insufficient. The SL characterized expulsion as "genocide"; a decade later expulsion as genocide was the theme of the 2006 fifty-seventh Sudeten German rally.¹¹¹ While it could not bring about rescission of the Beneš Decrees, the SL did realize one goal: at the press conference after the Declaration's signing in Prague, Chancellor Kohl insisted the property claims issue was still open.¹¹²

Sudeten German leadership and its supporters, such as Bavarian CSU minister-president Stoiber, used SL annual rallies to reiterate views on the Beneš Decrees and property claims, and to vivify long-held plans for a Sudeten German museum in Munich.¹¹³ Sudeten Germans were also quick to comment critically or make a stand when there was a political opening, such as the January 2002 negative remarks by Czech prime minister Zeman about Sudeten Germans; the March 2003 opening of a Sudeten German office in Prague; the June 2005 description by President Klaus of expulsion as "a

preventive measure”; or the summer 2005 erection by the Czech government of a monument for President Beneš outside the Czech foreign ministry.¹¹⁴

The postwar generation of leaders (born in Germany of expellee parents) was less critical of the 1997 Declaration and of Czechs, and by March 2006 a new approach of mixing the old critical arguments about the Beneš Decrees, expulsion, and property claims with reconciliatory language was evident in a major SL memorandum.¹¹⁵ This change was due, at least in part, to the Czech side's 2004–2005 reconciliation efforts, including planning for the Collegium Bohemicum, a cultural-educational institution devoted to German-Czech relations in Ústí nad Labem; the plaque to Sudeten German victims in the same town; and the Czech government apology to Sudeten German anti-Fascist victims in the Czech Republic. The SL memorandum called for dialogue between the Czech government and the Sudeten Germans. The suggestion was rejected, however, by Czech prime minister Paroubek, for whom the only interlocutor was the German government, and termed a “provocation” by Czech president Klaus.¹¹⁶

The SL calls in 2007 for dialogue, combined with familiar criticism, met with continued refusal from Paroubek's successor, Mirek Topolánek. Yet, SL leader Berndt Posselt considered Topolánek “the first Czech Prime Minister to have politely excused himself for not going to attend the [SL annual] meeting.” Czech foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg already had gone further, deliberately using the word “expulsion” (rather than the milder “transfer”) in referring to the Sudeten German fate after World War II.¹¹⁷

The new CSU minister-president of Bavaria, Günther Beckstein, allied as his predecessor with the SL, had visited Prague officially in September 2007 (which Minister-President Stoiber never did) when minister of the interior, but he did not change German expellee positions on the Beneš Decrees, nor did the Czechs relent. Topolánek did not respond to Posselt's call for a German-Czech “truth commission” on the Beneš Decrees, nor to Posselt's later suggestion (as a member of the European Parliament and SL leader) that the Czechs use the EU presidency as a vehicle to rescind the Beneš Decrees.¹¹⁸

The Sudeten Germans had sought before to link rescission of the Beneš Decrees to the Czech Republic's EU membership. By the time the 1997 Declaration had been negotiated, the SL had taken abolition of the Beneš Decrees to the European Parliament with threats to block Czech EU membership if the decrees were not revoked. Initially, the European Parliament had listened, issuing resolutions in 1999 and 2001 on whether the Beneš

Decrees were in compliance with EU law and the Copenhagen Criteria (for membership), and commissioning an international legal opinion. German officials, however, insisted there should be no history-related conditions for Czech membership.¹¹⁹

After Prime Minister Zeman's January 2002 remarks on the Sudeten Germans, the European Commission also became involved. Both the European Parliament and the Commission ultimately concluded that the Czech Republic was in compliance and the Beneš Decrees did not prevent EU enlargement.¹²⁰ However, the CSU in the European Parliament did vote against Czech membership.¹²¹

The public discord over history generated concerns among German and Czech observers about the divisions between Czech and German societies. They put their faith and optimism in the development of ties between the youth in the two countries.¹²² Despite the negative actions the Sudeten Germans had initiated against the Czech Republic, Czech public opinion was not opposed to the relationship with Germany. Whereas the number of Czechs who considered relations with Germany "rather good" had declined in February 2002 by 16 percent compared with a year earlier, a majority still was favorable. Three years later, in August 2005, four-fifths of those polled registered a positive response to relations with Germany, despite unchanging belief in the legitimacy of the expulsion of Germans and the illegitimacy of any compensation to Sudeten Germans.

Doubts about Germany receded with time. By 2009, 80 percent of respondents deemed relations with Germany good, with only 15 percent viewing them as bad. Sixty-five percent of Czechs opposed rescission of the Beneš Decrees, with 27 percent having no opinion. Half of respondents saw Sudeten German expulsion as justified, whereas 36 percent considered it unjust.¹²³

Governmental Institutions

Constraints arising from the East-West divide retarded governmental as much as societal ties between Czechoslovakia and Germany until 1989. However, there was some sporadic, earlier institutionalization. An early 1950s official trade agreement was augmented in 1967 with the establishment of trade missions, following negotiations rendered difficult and "erratic" by the disagreements over the Munich Agreement and the then-contemporary issue of West Berlin's status. The Treaty on Mutual Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was concluded

in December 1973, although its goals generally were unfulfilled. The trade agreement before the 1968 Prague Spring, and the Mutual Relations Treaty after, were pragmatic, prompting a “correct, but cool” relationship dealing with double taxation in 1980, the environment in 1987, and boat traffic in 1988. Nonetheless, there was also a softer diplomacy revealed in the 1978 cultural cooperation agreement.¹²⁴

After 1989, institutional and policy relations developed in three phases: 1989–1996, defining the relationship and the parameters for dialogue, but producing numerous agreements; 1997–2004, new frameworks for dialogue within a persistent historical shadow; and 2005–2009, when a new pragmatism propelled institutional and policy relations.¹²⁵

1989–1996

The post-Communist era began with a surge of optimism stimulated by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the triumph of the “Velvet Revolution” (November 16–December 29, 1989). Already between the end of September and early November 1989, Czechoslovakia had contributed to German unification by permitting passage to West Germany of East Germans who had fled to the West German embassy in Prague. The vast majority of Czechs accepted the initiation of German unification on November 9, 1989 with “unequivocal support,” as President Havel expressed in Berlin on January 2, 1990: “Germany can be as large as she wants to, as long as she stays democratic.”¹²⁶

Havel’s November and December 1989 apologies to the Sudeten Germans were part of this mutual optimism, but failed to generate a positive political response—not from the German government, not from the Sudeten German expellees, nor from Havel’s fellow Czechs.¹²⁷ Once the initial euphoria attending the Cold War’s demise dissipated, the post-1989 period was marked by political ambivalence. Domestic political actors in neither country were yet invested in the relationship. Continuing structural asymmetry, manifest in the difference between a large Germany and a small Czechoslovakia, was magnified by the separation with Slovakia.

The conclusion of the 1992 Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation hardly resolved all issues between the Czech Republic and Germany, and the phase through December 1996 was termed a “political standstill.”¹²⁸ Negotiations over the German-Czech Declaration were difficult and caught up in domestic politics in both countries. The Czech Social Democrats felt the proposed text did not draw a “thick enough” line under

the past; the Communists and Republicans saw it as a “national disgrace” and “servile”; and the Jewish victims of Nazism felt ignored.¹²⁹

One public attempt to define the relationship’s parameters was the lecture series “Conversations between Neighbors,” held at the Charles University in Prague throughout 1995, with prominent Czech and German public figures. It was there that President Havel referred in February to Czech ties with Germany and Germans as not just another diplomatic topic, but “part of our fate, even of our identity.”¹³⁰ Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel’s March 1995 government declaration to the Bundestag was part of the attempt to shape the relationship by taking direct issue with President Havel’s February speech, as was Prime Minister Klaus’s response to the March 1995 German-Czech bishops’ statement and Chancellor Kohl’s speech in the Bundestag on June 1.¹³¹

Three main themes emerged from the statements of Kinkel, Klaus, and Kohl:

- (1) the need to talk publicly and honestly about issues in the relationship to achieve reconciliation and look to the future;
- (2) the necessity to recognize both negative and positive aspects of the past that had locked the two countries in a symbiosis; and
- (3) the requirement that confrontation with the past be mutual.

There was essential unanimity on the first theme, but not on the other two, which raised, indirectly, the question of whether there was equal suffering on the Czech and German sides during World War II and its aftermath. Many Germans intimated parity and equal blame, whereas Czechs saw the origins of suffering in the Munich Agreement and German occupation of Czechoslovakia, hence in German behavior, even while regretting Czech excesses. The generally difficult narrative about expulsion was compounded by a lack of understanding on both sides about the practical issues of compensation (Nazi victims and Sudeten Germans) and of the growing Sudeten German/CSU calls for rescission of the Beneš Decrees. The relationship was still one of monologues.

Despite the obviously unfulfilled need in public between 1989 and 1996 for clarification of historical perceptions and political commitments, privately and quietly German-Czech relations were developing multiple, potentially secure institutional links. The 1992 Good Neighborliness Treaty created a framework for heads of government and cabinet ministers, including defense and foreign ministers and their senior bureaucrats, to meet at

least once a year, although neither the Kohl nor the Klaus governments did so. The German and Czech presidents and foreign ministers were more active in meeting, for example in 1996, with the two presidents jointly urging speedy signature of the German-Czech Declaration.¹³²

The treaty intensified the work of existing mixed commissions while providing for new ones, such as the German-Czech Joint Environment Commission (*Deutsch-Tschechische Umweltkommission*), created by the 1996 environmental protection agreement. Additionally, there were multiple agreements before (thirteen in number) and after (thirty in number) the 1992 Treaty in a variety of policy areas: culture, transportation, diplomatic representation, forestry, nuclear security, investment, science and technology, youth exchange, labor, organized crime, border issues, tourism, the environment, social services, customs administration, water. Already in this period there were military ties: the March 1993 agreement between the two defense ministries spelling out areas of cooperation, including security policy, training, planning, and arms control; and joint maneuvers in November 1994.¹³³

1997–2004

The second period of institutionalization commenced with the signing of the German-Czech Declaration on January 21, 1997.¹³⁴ It clarified relations and constituted a “psychological act” that would now permit more openness.¹³⁵ The text contained statements of mutual regret about the past, but also an acknowledgement of the 1938 Munich Agreement as the initial step from which other injustices on both sides followed. Silent about the Beneš Decrees and compensation, the declaration did create the German-Czech Discussion Forum and the German-Czech Future Fund, which provided institutional frameworks for subsequent contemplation of historical issues. Both sides now used the term “reconciliation,” albeit much less frequently on the Czech side (where the preference was for the term “straightening,” *narovnání*).¹³⁶ Czechs tended not to emulate the German usage of the term “normalcy” after the declaration’s signing.¹³⁷ Both sides deemed the 1997 Declaration the basis of relations, and celebrated its tenth anniversary with a Czech exhibition in the German Foreign Office. Additionally, as a foundation of better ties, the Czech government cited the March 1999 history statements by the two heads of government, with Schröder indicating that claims questions were closed politically and Zeman announcing that the Beneš Decrees were defunct (while still legitimate).

The Czech Republic's asymmetrical position with respect to Germany was addressed both structurally and psychologically through the Czech Republic's joining NATO in 1999 and the European Union in 2004. In both organizations, equality of membership was a guiding principle. There was also more symmetry in terms of reconciliation. Foreign Minister Kinkel compared German-Czech relations with German ties to France, Poland, and Israel:

It cannot be right that we succeeded in restoring friendly relations with these countries and peoples, but the efforts for good neighborly relations with the Czech Republic continue to meet with obstacles. It must be possible to make progress here.¹³⁸

Yet, on the same occasion, Kinkel noted Czech opposition to Sudeten German representation in the coordinating committee for the German-Czech Discussion Forum, and voiced an assumption (which would be dashed, at least in this period) that the German-Czech Future Fund would deal in the same manner with German hardship cases (read "Sudeten German") as they had employed for Czech victims of Nazism.

Despite the real progress in relations represented by the 1997 Declaration, the period from 1997 to 2004 was marked by the ratcheting up of antagonism over historical issues: the provocative call by Steinbach in 2000 for a Center Against Expulsion; Zeman's negative remarks about Sudeten Germans in 2002; followed by the EU's intervention later in 2002 on the Beneš Decrees.

These historical topics galvanized and preoccupied the political elite in both countries. On the surface they disrupted an otherwise "sound" relationship, and it appeared that institutionalization had been "overrun by events."¹³⁹ Yet, the very public high-level visits in both directions, and the more low-key conclusion of bilateral agreements, more accurately suggest the intensity and resiliency of German-Czech relations. Political relations were "stable" and "better than they seemed."¹⁴⁰

The pace of visits by heads of state and government and the foreign ministers of both countries started slowly in 1997 (three), but by 1999 there were seven. In the particularly difficult years of 2000 to 2003, there was a total of twenty high-level visits, including by heads of government and functional ministers spanning the policy spectrum. In those years, there were at least twenty visits of various committees of the two parliaments.¹⁴¹

In the first part of this period (1997–2000), discussions of leaders focused on the importance of the 1997 German-Czech Declaration; the pace and con-

tent of the slave and forced labor negotiations that began in May 1999; and the gratitude Germany felt for Czech contributions to German unification, expressed, according to Chancellor Schröder, in active German support of Czech EU membership. Contentious topics, such as illegal Czech immigration into Germany, were on the agenda. The Beneš Decrees and Sudeten German property claims, however, hardly appeared, especially with the new SPD-Green government in Germany after October 1998 with an ideological counterpart in the Czech Social Democratic government of Miloš Zeman (elected in July 1998). Both distanced themselves from CDU-CSU and SL efforts to revive discussion of the Beneš Decrees' rescission.¹⁴²

Despite the difficult moments during the latter part of the period (2001–2004)—Prime Minister Zeman's negative remarks about Sudeten Germans and the cancellation of Chancellor Schröder's March 2002 visit—political visits at the highest levels continued (eight in 2004 alone). Instead of resentment, efforts at resolution of problems and relaxation of tensions and identification of interests characterized the bilateral dialogue.¹⁴³ A preference for future-oriented, problem-free language on both sides became apparent with the Špidla government in July 2002. It continued with the new Czech Social Democratic prime minister after July 2004, reciprocated by Schröder and Foreign Minister Fischer publicly rejecting the idea of a Center Against Expulsion.¹⁴⁴ Schröder insisted the German government would not support SL property claims and Fischer stated that the February 2004 Czech parliament honoring of Beneš through special legislation would not burden relations.¹⁴⁵

Leaders did not shy away from serious divergences over practical matters. Germany wanted the Czech Temelín nuclear plant closed, and planned a long transition after EU membership on the free movement of Czech labor. New institutions were created in 2002 to deal with general cross-border crime, and in 2003 to address child prostitution. An agreement in 2000 for reciprocal assistance came to the Czech Republic's rescue during severe flooding in summer 2002.¹⁴⁶ Overall, there was extensive institutionalization through twenty-nine bilateral agreements between 1997 and 2004, with highlights in cross-border issues, social security, cultural cooperation, and the military sphere.

Regional partners in Germany and the Czech Republic also entered agreements, in 2002 and in 2004 between Chemnitz/Oberfranken and Karlovy Vary, and in 2002 between the Czech Republic and Baden-Württemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia. There were also new agreements for the exchange of diplomats, following less ambitiously the example set by the Franco-German

relationship, and the creation of a German training program for diplomats from Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁴⁷

2005–2009

The most recent period in German-Czech relations began effectively in spring-summer 2005 with the reciprocal reconciliation statements by Chancellor Schröder and the Social Democratic–led Czech government. Schröder fixed the causes of expulsion in German occupation and war. The Czechs abandoned a policy of collective guilt by apologizing to Sudeten German anti-Fascists. Czech officials continued to express their opposition to the planned Center Against Expulsion in Berlin, but the criticism was that of a friend.¹⁴⁸

The public, reciprocal removal of history issues enabled a focus on interests and pragmatism, renewed with the change in government in Germany in 2005 and in the Czech Republic in 2006 when Conservatives came to power in both countries.¹⁴⁹ Both sides saw bilateral relations as problem-free, despite significant disagreements over the EU, particularly on constitutional issues and the approval of the Lisbon Treaty, and on U.S. plans for missile defense in the Czech Republic and Poland.¹⁵⁰ The dominance of EU issues reflected the growing maturation of the relationship.



Figure 6.7. Tomáš Kosta, survivor of Theresienstadt concentration camp, comforted by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, Terezín, May 17, 2005. Courtesy of Bundesregierung/Bergmann

The characterization of ties, the number and content of visits and other discussions, the institutionalization through bilateral agreements—all spoke to a deepening reconciliation. One demonstration of change was the joint article in the *Tagesspiegel* and *Mladá Fronta* by the German and Czech foreign ministers in December 2007.¹⁵¹ According to Czech foreign minister Alexandr Vondra, the era of “getting to know one another and perhaps wanting to convince the other side” lay in the past. The German ambassador to the Czech Republic, Helmut Elfenkämper, described the period as one of “upward movement with small bumps along the way, which sometimes arise out of differing interests. But then [the upward movement] continues.”¹⁵² German and Czech leaders repeated this assessment, underlining common values and common interests, trust, and a process of “reconciling with one another.”¹⁵³ Vondra even suggested that German-Czech relations “represent wherever possible a model of reconciliation between European neighbors.”¹⁵⁴

Top-level visits (foreign ministers, chancellor/prime minister, presidents) were plentiful in this period, amounting to some thirty occasions from 2005 through 2008, and were considered by Czech officials a measure of the relationship's significance.¹⁵⁵ Chancellor Schröder alone had visited the Czech Republic seven times before his departure in fall 2005, and, for Merkel, visits to the Czech Republic (three times between 2007 and 2008) were something of a homecoming—three times during her training as a physicist in the GDR she was a research intern in Prague, and had learned to speak Czech. In the Czech Republic, she was the most popular foreign statesman in 2008.¹⁵⁶ Functional ministers and parliamentary committees kept up an intensive, complementary dialogue.

EU issues dominated discussions during this stage of relations, but there were two important bilateral considerations, coordinating foreign policy and cooperating on the border. Foreign policy coordination revolved around the Balkans, Russia, European neighborhood policy, energy policy, Afghanistan, and the Middle East.¹⁵⁷ The Czech-German border is the longest for both countries and therefore an inevitable preoccupation. Problematic issues included, especially, illegal German dumping of waste in the Czech Republic, which drew attention in visits during 2006 and was elevated to written and verbal discussions between the two foreign ministers, the two environment ministers, German regional environment ministers, and the German chancellor and the Czech prime minister. So much cooperation and interaction enabled Germans and Czechs to defuse

the issue and reach a solution through bilateral institutions, including regularized regional cooperation between the Czech Republic and both Bavaria and Saxony, and the German-Czech Environment Commission, which condemned illegal dumping and brokered an agreement.¹⁵⁸

Problem solving on the waste issue was but one of many cross-border subjects on the agenda of the bilateral Environment Commission, which had its ninth meeting in July 2008. The commission addressed energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, clean air, industrial accidents, water management (including of the Oder and Elbe rivers), parks management, and environmental protection and safety. The latter issue became particularly contentious as the Czech Republic was reluctant to conclude a bilateral agreement (in the past, the main problem had been the Temelín nuclear power plant located near the German border). Both federal and *Land* representatives (from Bavaria and Saxony) participated in the commission and its seven working groups, whose activities included exchanges of ideas, coordination, and joint projects. Some issues also involved trilateral discussions among Germany, the Czech Republic, and Poland, for example mitigating the effects of brown coal industries. There was intensive bilateral cooperation on the adoption and implementation of EU environmental law by the Czech Republic.¹⁵⁹

The Czech Republic's December 2007 inclusion in the EU Schengen area (no border controls) accelerated general cross-border activity between Germany and the Czech Republic, and led to a German-Czech Joint Police and Customs Center, whose activities included the investigation and pursuit of criminal activity. Border agreements between German and Czech regional entities, for example the Chemnitz and Dresden areas with Ústí nad Labem in 2007, committed the two sides to the promotion and intensification of cooperation on tourism, economics, transportation infrastructure, agriculture, environmental protection, culture, science, education, and sport.

Beyond the environmental and general cross-border activity, significant military ties between the two countries intensified in the period between 2005 and 2008. Initiatives included a January 2007 new servicemen and staff exchange agreement for educational purposes; weapons sales agreements; the German defense minister's May 2008 visit to Prague; Germany's provision of operational command for the Czech-Slovak EU battle group starting in 2009; and plans for a German-Austrian-Czech EU battle group in 2012.¹⁶⁰

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The End of Communism

The international environment—the larger global context of the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States and the particular regional setting of the EU—strongly influenced the evolution of German-Czech relations. Parallel to the German-Polish case (as both Poland and Czechoslovakia were members of the Warsaw Pact until it disbanded with the end of the Cold War), German-Czech relations were impeded by Czechoslovakia's tight integration into the political, economic, and security structures of the Soviet bloc. The August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland (with minor participation of the GDR) was followed by the harsh, recentralizing policies of the new first secretary of the Communist Party, Gustáv Husák, and firm allegiance to the Soviet Union.

The Cold War's end and the Soviet bloc's collapse opened the German-Czech relationship to reconciliation. However, Russia continued to influence the new partnership, for Germany and the Czech Republic differed on general approaches to the post-Soviet state. Whereas Germany, dependent on Russian gas and positive about the Russian market, pursued a strategy of political and economic engagement with Russia, the Czech Republic was much more wary and inherently distrustful following physical subjugation to the Soviet Union. Topolánek instantly believed the Kremlin was jubilant when his government was toppled by a vote of no-confidence in March 2009.¹⁶¹

Sometimes the Germans and Czechs agreed about Russia, sometimes not. When the Czech Republic had major delivery problems with Russian oil via the Druzhba pipeline in July 2008 (either due to technical difficulties or as retaliation for the Czech Republic's signing of a radar installation deal with the United States), the German minister of economics called Russian behavior "unacceptable," but continued his own energy discussions with the Russians. The Czechs were making up a temporary shortfall in oil via the IKL pipeline from Germany, anticipating that, in ten to twenty years, Germany would supply most of their oil. In January 2009, when Europe endured gas supply problems due to a dispute between Russia and Ukraine, after initial reluctance, Czech Prime Minister Topolánek, as EU president, negotiated an agreement between the two disputants, aided by the intervention of Chancellor Merkel and Foreign Minister Steinmeier.¹⁶²

When Russia invaded Georgia in August 2008, Germany and the Czech Republic shared the view that the territorial integrity of Georgia was the primary concern, but they differed in the harshness of their criticism of Russia. Germany emphasized the need to keep lines of communication open; the Czech Republic stressed Russia's culpability, remembering the 1968 crushing of the Prague Spring. The Czechs advocated EU engagement. Germany and the Czech Republic together spearheaded the October 2008 convening by the EU of an international donors conference for Georgian reconstruction.¹⁶³

Whereas energy issues and the Georgia war revealed cooperation mixed with differences in degree between Germany and the Czech Republic, the question of NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine demonstrated a fundamental difference. Sensitive to Russia's objections and citing political instability in both Georgia and Ukraine, at the April 2008 Bucharest summit Germany opposed NATO expansion to these two countries. Germany continued with this position at the December 2008 Budapest Foreign Ministers Summit, this time allowing for possible membership in the long term. The Czech Republic, from the outset, vigorously supported membership for Georgia and Ukraine, aligning itself with the Bush administration.

Czech wariness about Russia was accompanied by staunch strategic alliance with the United States. Signing on to the January 2003 letter of support for the United States on Iraq and sending troops were significant expressions of Czech allegiance, as was the general support for NATO (which it joined in 1999) as the "hard" security institution and a public skepticism about ESDP's political potential. Germany did not line up with the United States, did not send troops to Iraq, and favored development of ESDP.¹⁶⁴

The Czechs formally joined the U.S. anti-missile shield, even though substantial portions of Czech society opposed it. As the plan developed, the Obama administration wanted to see the system's efficacy before commitment, and the Topolánek government did not bring the agreement up for parliamentary ratification at the risk of political rejection. With grave doubts about the shield, Germany pushed to include Russia in the missile plan as a way to overcome Moscow's strong opposition. Once the Obama administration concluded it needed to find alternative locations to Poland and the Czech Republic, the disagreement between Germany and the Czech Republic faded away.

The Forum of the EU

EU issues came to replace in a constructive and significant way the problems of history that had marred bilateral relations through 2004. Both sides were at pains to mitigate the effects of asymmetries in status (big versus small) and to accommodate one another.¹⁶⁵ Germany was a major advocate of Czech membership of the EU, clearly enunciated already in the 1992 Friendship Treaty, for “normative, stability and (to a lesser extent) security motives as well as (to an even lesser extent) economic motives.” German support never wavered, notwithstanding the environmentally unsound Temelín nuclear reactor issue or the Sudeten German effort to make membership hinge on rescission of the Beneš Decrees.

The commitment to the EU was unmistakable in the article authored by the German chancellor and the Czech and Polish prime ministers on the occasion of the two countries' May 2004 entry into the EU: they referred to a united Europe as the “guarantor of peace and stability.” However, Germany was under domestic pressure at the end of the 1990s from interests seeking to protect market positions from eastern enlargement, forcing Germany to become more hard-nosed in the EU negotiations. At the same time, Germany provided the Czech Republic with bilateral economic and technical assistance to help prepare it for EU membership.¹⁶⁶

The reality of EU membership exposed differences between the Czech Republic and Germany over economic, constitutional, and foreign policy questions. Yet, in all three areas, Germany and the Czech Republic openly searched for agreement or compromise.

Agricultural issues and free movement of labor were especially contentious in the EU membership negotiations between Germany, on one side, and Poland and the Czech Republic on the other. Production quotas, standards, and direct payments were resolved largely through Franco-German compromises that resulted in limitations on the first, strictness on the second, and a ten-year transition on direct payments.¹⁶⁷

On free movement of labor, the solution was “transitional measures” or restrictions, the so-called “2+3+2 year arrangement” in which old member countries would declare at the end of each period whether they would open up their labor markets. Germany was intent on adhering to the maximum transition of seven years (until 2011), despite consistent Czech befuddlement

and entreaties for lifting the barrier, offering arguments about the EU's principle of free movement and the small number of Czechs involved. The best Germany would do was an occasional market opening for highly qualified specialists when it encountered a deficit.¹⁶⁸

The restriction on Czech labor migration to Germany was balanced by the German-Czech efforts to manage in a positive sense cross-border economic (and sociocultural) activity in the EU Euroregions (transnational entities between two or more contiguous EU countries), including short-term work opportunities, investment, and resource development and allocation. By 2009, there were three bilateral German-Czech Euroregions: Elbe/Labe; Erzgebirge-Krusnohori; and Egrensis; and two trilateral Euroregions: Neisse-Nisa-Nysa (also including Poland); and Bayerischer Wald-Šumava-Mühlviertel (including Austria).

Germany and the Czech Republic broadly agreed on responses to the global economic and financial crisis that began in 2008, emphasizing resistance to protectionism and excessive state intervention. Germany was against any pan-European bailout plans, including special support for Eastern European member states, as was the Czech Republic.

While the Czech Republic held the six-month EU presidency, the Topolánek government was toppled, in March 2009. Germany had supported the Czech EU presidency, and renewed its support with Topolánek's ouster, maintaining with the new caretaker government the hotline that had been established between Foreign Minister Steinmeier and the past Czech foreign minister Schwarzenberg.¹⁶⁹

In finding praise for the Czech EU presidency when others voiced criticism, Steinmeier identified a number of successful Czech foreign policy initiatives. Germany and the Czech Republic worked closely together in the EU on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and on the Eastern Partnership. When Steinmeier undertook an initiative on Gaza in January 2009, he involved the Czech presidency. When French president Nicolas Sarkozy tried to take over European initiatives regarding the Gaza crisis in February 2009, it was Germany that literally took Prime Minister Topolánek to the emergency summit meeting in the region (on Chancellor Merkel's plane).¹⁷⁰ Both Germany and the Czech Republic were at the forefront of advocating Israeli interests in the EU and pushing new initiatives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.¹⁷¹

The Eastern Partnership to strengthen the EU's relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine was a Polish-Swedish initiative that then became a Czech priority during its EU presidency. The

significance for Germany of the Eastern Partnership was registered in the participation by Chancellor Merkel in the May 2009 Prague summit meeting organized by the Czech presidency with the six countries.¹⁷²

Despite their differences over the EU, Germany and the Czech Republic tried vigorously to thrash out an understanding and to find areas of cooperation, cognizant of how important the EU was to both of them for domestic and foreign policy. The focus on the EU allowed them to combine past and future, as Merkel made clear in her October 2008 speech in Prague:

Today we are neighbors, who are able to reconcile with one another. . . . We want to and must confront our past. Only then can we succeed in placing the future on a solid foundation. But we also do this in the knowledge that our future is linked to the success of the European integration project.¹⁷³

The EU Constitution

Germany and the Czech Republic differed on constitutional issues, clearly by the December 2003 failure of the constitutional summit in Brussels. Foreign Minister Fischer had been a main advocate for efficiency-driven reform, but the Czech side opposed proposals for a new voting system (the double majority of a percentage of member states and a percentage of the EU population), a permanent president of the Council, and the abolition of one commissioner per country, seeing in all these schemes an assault on the small member states.¹⁷⁴ Despite Czech president Klaus's implacable objections to the EU and this divergence of positions, Germany consistently solicited Czech views, drawing on the now well-established bilateral relationship to discuss the issues with Czech counterparts.

During Germany's EU presidency, Merkel's major objective was resuscitation of the constitutional reform process. Bilateral exchanges between the Czech Republic and Germany on constitutional issues occurred at the levels of head of state, head of government, and foreign minister. Merkel and Topolánek had "constructive" discussions in January, despite ongoing differences. Merkel calmed down an irate Klaus, and produced a milder than intended Berlin Declaration in March 2007 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the EU's founding Rome Treaty, without reference to "constitution." In April she met with Klaus, their third meeting in three months, and invited also former German president Herzog, as some of his views on the EU's challenge to European democracy resonated with the Czech president.

Even Klaus agreed on the need for dialogue rather than monologues and praised Merkel's efforts to kindle debate and seek compromise.¹⁷⁵

As additional German-Czech negotiations continued through mid-June 2007, Czech leaders wanted a return of some EU competencies to the national level and a strengthening of the rights of national parliaments. They reiterated their opposition to the planned voting system, thus supporting the Polish view that led to a compromise at the June 2007 Brussels summit, involving postponement of the new voting system until 2014.¹⁷⁶ Despite some misgivings, and pockets of domestic opposition, including from his own party, Czech prime minister Topolánek did sign the December 2007 Lisbon Treaty during the Portuguese presidency.

Ratification of the treaty was slowed in the Czech Republic (and Germany) by challenges to its constitutionality, and the lack of clarity concerning President Klaus's willingness to sign it. He insisted on a Czech opt-out from the Charter of Fundamental Rights as a way of protecting Czech property rights from Sudeten German claims.¹⁷⁷

CONCLUSION

When greeting German president Richard von Weizsäcker at the Prague Castle on March 15, 1990 (the fifty-first anniversary of the Nazi occupation) President Václav Havel's charting of the "genuine opposite pole of that long-ago and painful visit" focused on "a great horizon of potential cooperation."¹⁷⁸ Almost two decades later, Havel's hope for fundamental change had become reality. His optimism was no longer uniquely his own, and was instrumental in overcoming many obstacles. There had been firm domestic opposition in Germany and the Czech Republic, entrenched views on history, conflicting interests, and a probing search for a new language for the bilateral relationship.

History was not forgotten in this process of positive change, but was insulated by myriad institutional connections. The German-Czech Declaration was an important public marker of how history issues could be addressed mutually (joint regret for German wartime behavior and Czech immediate postwar acts); used constructively (Sudeten German compensation claims set aside politically by both countries while retaining differing legal perspectives); and developed practically (the compensation to Nazi victims as a group in the German-Czech Future Fund).

Institutional progress at the governmental and societal levels did not match the depth and intensity of German relations with Poland, France, or Israel, but it was nonetheless extraordinary and by 2009 accelerating. Dialogue had replaced monologue, and offered a low-key, reliable, and quotidian example of cooperation and problem solving. It required political leadership and moral courage, and even the most skeptical element in Germany, the Sudeten German leadership, seemed willing to countenance at least a positive direction. The SL position had been competitive with German government policy, but gave way with generational change.

Reconciliation did not necessarily mean harmony, but it did mean a willingness to trust, listen, and look for joint interests. The multilateral EU served to muffle the bilateral antagonisms of a harsh history and permitted differences to be mediated peacefully and positively. By 2009, "community of conflict" no longer defined the German-Czech relationship. It was now marked much more by the friendship and togetherness President von Weizsäcker had sought on his trip to Prague in March 1990. With the end of the Cold War came the end, in critical respects, of the Second World War as well.

NOTES

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For a focus on GDR-Czech relations, see Jan Pauer, "1968: Der 'Prager Frühling' und die Deutschen," in Brandes, Kováč, and Pešek, *Wendepunkte in den Beziehungen*. Details of contemporary events available at Germany Embassy in Prague: www.prag.diplo.de/Vertretung/prag/de/Startseite.html; Czech Embassy in Germany: www.mzv.cz/berlin/; and at www.tschechien-portal.info and www.collegium-carolinum.de/links/links_deutsch.html.

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Comparison and Prescription

This book has advanced a theory of reconciliation, then tested it in practice through four detailed case studies—Germany’s partnerships with France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic after World War II and the Holocaust. This final chapter compares key elements across the four cases and then applies the theory and lessons beyond Germany, to the other leading perpetrator of World War II, specifically Japan’s relations with China and South Korea.

COMPARATIVE LESSONS

Over the course of six decades, from 1949 to 2009, Germany developed extensive societal and governmental ties with former enemies in a process (also a policy and strategy) of reconciliation, as summarized in the comparative timeline appendix. The four partnerships reveal compelling similarities—the importance of history, leadership, institutions, and international context—but also differences—mainly in intensity. A deep sense of history galvanized each of these relationships at the beginning, but also was present throughout the reconciliation process as a constant reminder of the new relationship’s roots; as a channel for active remembrance on the part of governments, societal groups, and individuals; and as a source of discord.

History, or memory, is not its own framework because it is inevitably and always shaped by perception. There were at least two versions of what might have been the same story in each of these partnerships. Governmental

leaders on both sides of the national divides required the vision and courage, both political and moral, to find common versions of history upon which they could build comprehension of the future together. They converted passing policies into durable institutions that could survive the vicissitudes of domestic and global pressures. And as leadership came and went, the enduring commitment to a new relationship of reconciliation, in each case, was expressed in the creation of these bilateral institutions.

Institutional durability was as visible across societies as it was between governments. Bilateral non-governmental institutions were vital elements of reconciliation from the very outset of the path to amity. The disputes of the Cold War, ideological and territorial, could not prevent convictions about history from propelling German reconciliation with its most prominent victims.

History

“History” has been a central element in all four cases of reconciliation, albeit with different nuances. At the beginning of the Franco-German and German-Israeli relationships after World War II, there was an inescapable weight of the past, causing a punitive attitude toward Germany in France and silence in Israel. The unlocking of relations by 1950, in part because of the Cold War, did not mean the disappearance of the past, in Israel in the form of the Holocaust and in France with the specter of perceived German hegemonic ambitions. In both cases, the societal and governmental arguments for new relationships were framed in moral terms, with the present as an antidote to a gruesome past. History, hence, became a “stimulus” for contemporary ties.

For Poland and Czechoslovakia, it was centuries-old, complicated, and often negative history, culminating in World War II and German occupation, that precluded new ties. Not until the early 1970s Cold War thaw was movement toward reconciliation possible. Yet, in both examples, societal actors (as in the other cases, most notably religious groups) crafted moral reasons for change, despite the Cold War’s ideological divide and because of history.

Religious movement toward reconciliation preceded government policy in every case. For Israel, spiritual ties took the form of interfaith connections, whereas in the other three cases international ties developed within religious groupings of Protestants and Catholics.

Over the course of their relationships with Germany, “history” has placed Poland and the Czech Republic between France and Israel, between “history” as a factor and “history” as dominant in shaping relations. In all four

cases, whether it was societal actors or officials advocating a new approach (French, Polish, and Czech examples) or demanding a change in German behavior (the Israeli case), it was the victim who took the initiative.

The German government responded quickly to opportunities for dialogue, acknowledging grievances rooted in history, whether in a form of apology (Adenauer's September 1951 statement to the Bundestag, offering negotiations with Israel); in a statement of regret (the January 1997 German-Czech Declaration); in multilateral agreements (the 1954 London and Paris Agreements); or in bilateral agreements (all four cases). These recognitions and uses of history and its consequences to engage former foes also frequently contained statements of contemporary, pragmatic interest.

In all cases except Israel, there was mutual acknowledgement of grievances, although Germany generally was sensitive enough not to equate the misdeeds of others with Germany's World War II crimes. French collaboration during the war and the excesses of Polish and Czech expulsions of Germans at war's end eroded modestly the moral, high ground of Germany's prospective partners. In the Israeli case, there was never even a suggestion of German grievance against Jews and, as with France, Germany admitted its culpability by the early 1950s. In the Polish and Czech cases there was limited acknowledgement, and only twenty years after World War II; fuller acknowledgement came after 1989.

In all four relationships, there was domestic opposition to reconciliation in both partners. Uniformly, monetary compensation was an expression of acknowledgement of grievances, but payments were spasmodic (except for the French case), and extremely late for Czech victims. Compensation issues, originating in private interest groups, have continued to animate German-Polish and German-Czech relations, as has the expulsion of Germans. Governments, however, have acted jointly or cooperatively on compensation issues, and have agreed to disagree in a friendly fashion on expulsions.

There are continuing governmental efforts to adjust for the past, and especially for societal preoccupations. Anti-Semitism in Germany has not disappeared, but it is not pervasive and German and Israeli governments work closely together to monitor and try to prevent it. The concern of some elements of French society that 2004 was too soon for inclusion of Germany in D-Day celebrations was addressed quickly by both governments, permitting the ceremonies to go ahead.

Territorial issues were resolved quickly between France and Germany (1956 ceding of the Saar to Germany) but slowly between Germany and

Poland (the November 1990 German recognition of the Oder-Neisse border) and only *de facto* in German-Czech relations (there are still different German and Czech legal interpretations of the date when the 1938 Munich agreement annexing the Sudetenland became invalid, although a clear agreement on its basic invalidity).

Debates about history, then, have constituted part of the fabric of relations in all these bilateral partnerships during the last six decades. But history has served more as a periodic irritant, authenticating relationships and demonstrating their survivability and strength at times of crisis, than as a straitjacket.

Non-governmental organizations, besides religious organizations, tend to presage official reconciliation. They continuously acknowledge and try to heal historically based grievances. Three main organizations stand out in all four cases: bilateral textbook commissions; Action Reconciliation/Peace; and German Historical Institutes or their equivalent. The France-focused organizations were founded first in the 1950s and early 1960s; the Israel-centered ones in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s; and those dealing with Poland and the Czech Republic fully only after 1989, although even during communism in these two countries there was a modicum of activity.

In addition to the goals of promoting a “confrontation with the past” and a “culture of remembrance” (either directly or indirectly), these organizations are dedicated to reconciliation, with an emphasis on young people. The means they have chosen include encounters, exchange, publications, and, in the case of Action Reconciliation, political activism and volunteerism. History is conceived broadly, although World War II and the Holocaust are common topics. Sensitive historical issues are not avoided.

These organizations have been effective in creating networks of scholars and societal actors (all three); in elevating the place of history via publications (textbook commissions and historical institutes/historians’ commissions); in reaching recommendations (textbook commissions); in providing models for other international partnerships (textbook commissions; historical institutes/historians’ commissions); and in reaching personal reconciliation (Action Reconciliation/Peace).

Both official and societal actors are engaged in the periodic symbolic acts that address history directly through commemoration or indirectly through affirmation of the new relationship in these four partnerships. Whether official or societal, there have been numerous “firsts,” constituting a breakthrough that adds to the symbolism of the event. In all cases, except that

of Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic, symbolic events started already in the 1950s and continue today. In the Czech case, there were two important symbolic events in the second half of the 1980s, but the rest occurred only after 1989. In both Poland and Czechoslovakia, the changes emanating from the fall of the Berlin Wall allowed for a series of “firsts” that had not been possible under communism. In the Israeli case uniquely, symbolic acts have involved manifestations of solidarity at times of crisis.

Leadership

Domestic opposition was addressed directly by political and societal leaders in all four cases. Differences in policy perspectives could be mitigated by the basic personal rapport or chemistry between leaders in each country. Participants have referred to a psychological resonance, personal connections that made leaders open to understanding the perspective and philosophy of the other party.

In all four reconciliations, political leaders’ shared vision was crucial, evident early on in the French and Israeli cases, and only after the fall of communism in the Czech and Polish cases, although the latter revealed some exceptions before 1989. In addition to political leaders, other figures stand out in the Israeli example (Israeli ambassadors) and in the Polish case (German presidents). In all cases, personal and political connections spanned policy areas, with the French case being the most extensive (due to the physical proximity, institutional framework of the 1963 Elysée Treaty, and shared context of the EC/EU) and the Israeli case being the most deeply psychological. In all partnerships, there was a regularity of contact, most developed in the French example.

The personal touch of diplomacy often seemed decisive. In addition to a joint multilateral setting, in each case, critical roles were played by the involvement of family members and the use of leaders’ private homes for meetings.

German chancellor Helmut Schmidt notes the general phenomenon of overcoming policy differences with French president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing due to “profound personal openness.” Foreign minister Joschka Fischer’s ability to negotiate effectively with Yasser Arafat in June 2001 was due to the trust placed in him by Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon. Chancellor Angela Merkel’s ability to defuse tensions with Poland in the period from 2005 to 2008 was due to her good personal relations with both

Kaczyński twins. The significant personal trust between a variety of German and Czech political figures made possible compromises over the 1997 Declaration. And bad personal relations can impact the course of ties, for example between de Gaulle and Erhard, between Schmidt and Begin, and between Kohl and Klaus.

Institutions

Non-Governmental Institutions

Non-governmental, or societal, institutions have been a mainstay of reconciliation at the beginning of new relations, throughout the life of reconciliatory ties, and at times of crisis. To create a web of ties both vertically and horizontally, most aspects of societal life must develop institutional ties between partners, including religion, the economy, education, science, culture, and sports. In the Israeli and Polish cases especially, significant societal interaction predated diplomatic relations.

These societal institutions develop a variety of roles vis-à-vis governments, but always function the same across all the different bilateral relations: as catalysts, complements, conduits, and competitors. As catalysts, German societal actors were propelled by a sense of moral obligation to shape new relations. With France, Israel, and Poland, religious groups were particularly important.

Where religious or spiritual actors were also politicians, as in Germany's relations with France and with Israel, there were additional pragmatic motives in Germany's need for rehabilitation and a return to the "family of nations." The religious actors already were embedded in their own societies in all cases but Israel, where new organizations had to be created. The difference between the Polish and Czech cases is attributable to the minimal role of the church in communist Czechoslovakia.

In the French and Israeli cases, new institutions that cut across society were significant. Activity was both public (exchanges of letters, newspaper articles, lectures) and behind the scenes (Moral Rearmament's Caux retreat; the Inter-Parliamentary Union; the Second Vatican Council). In all four cases, societal actors set agendas, and in all cases except the Czech Republic influenced both rhetoric and reality. Uniformly, public figures took on leadership roles, and found allies in the other country.

Parallel to their role as catalysts, private actors have complemented intergovernmental relations, galvanized by motives of moral obligation and a desire to confront the past. They also have been driven by pragmatism, whether in commerce, scientific exchange, or minority rights.

Organized ties have occurred in multiple spheres, creating dense networks of societal connections. The Czech case lags behind the others. The Cold War prevented it, and Germany accorded it less priority than the other cases. Connections in specific fields have been accompanied or embraced by more general friendship organizations. Religious ties continue to be central, as do party connections, trade union links, youth exchange, cultural encounters, education ties, and economic relations. Collectively, they constitute the essential elements of reconciling populations.

German non-governmental actors have been respected institutions predating their involvement in bilateral relations (for example, the German Council on Foreign Relations, DGAP); when new, they have been led by prominent and esteemed political figures. Further growth in societal ties, embracing a new, millennial generation, could be hampered by the limits of mutual language acquisition.

Some organizations are physically present, institutionalized in the other country (for example, the German Goethe Institute), whereas others are involved in periodic exchanges with counterpart organizations (for example, trade unions), and still others function as bilateral institutions (scientific relations with Israel and with France), sometimes regardless of nationality (for example, youth exchange with France and Poland).

The collection and dissemination of information continue to be primary activities, as does agenda setting. Bilateral friendship associations with France and Israel originated with private individuals. Polish and Czech friendship associations followed government initiatives.

Most of the political foundations acting as conduits are present in all four countries, usually with a full-scale office and sometimes with a smaller project outlet. The foundations are sensitive in general to the historical background of Germany's relations with France, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic, as reflected in their programs, but they are also future oriented, setting the bilateral relationship in a larger regional context, whether the European Union or the Middle East. Bilateralism is not lost but is expressed in new ways, such as comparative public policy, often a sign of international maturity.

Physical presence confers advantages in acting as a conduit: regularized contact across the political spectrum, deep networks, expertise, and exchanges. The close relationship between the home offices, which are ensconced in the German political landscape, and the foundations' foreign offices enhances the capacity for influence. In providing expert advice, the foundations are proffering indirect Western models for political and economic development.

Much of the foundations' activity entails information gathering and dissemination. Hosting delegations in both directions permits them to play an agenda-setting role both at home and in the host country, and opens the opportunity for exerting policy influence in both places. They provide a crucial link between parties and government both at home and abroad. Political parties can also act as conduits, as demonstrated in the Israeli and Czech examples in periods of crisis, but it appears it is the foundations which perform the day-to-day work that renders them significant instruments of reconciliation.

In the three country cases where non-governmental actors competed with governments, German NGOs were motivated by what they saw as a moral imperative, except regarding German scientists in Egypt where the involvement was much more instrumental. All of the cases were played out politically. German NGOs saw dereliction in official German positions and sought to counter them through changing official policy or through their own initiatives to counteract official policy.

The German government has responded inconsistently to NGO competition, countering the NGO; refusing to change policy; revealing political embarrassment; renewing commitment to a disputed policy; folding to the opposition by altering policy. The latter is exceptional, counteracted by compensating behavior of the German government to the other government in a different policy arena. In all cases, the German government felt and recognized the challenge, thereby augmenting the profile of the competing organization. Like crises in governmental relations, these challenges from NGOs presented an opportunity to work through difficulties and authenticate reconciliation.

As the Federal Republic of Germany began its foreign policy activities in the early 1950s, populations in France, Israel, Poland, and Czechoslovakia displayed open animosity to Germans. Sixty years later, in all cases, hostility has transformed into positive attitudes of friendship.

Governmental Institutions

In all four country cases, reconciliation has involved the evolution of durable institutions that usually emerge from general, open, and bilateral treaties and agreements, although in the case of Israel they were (except for the initial Luxembourg Reparations Treaty) secret in the 1950s and 1960s prior to formal diplomatic relations. All of the frameworks refer to reconciliation as a goal. Institutionalization in the French case is the most developed, followed by Israel and Poland, with the German–Czech Republic relationship being the least developed. In all cases, institutionalization at the government level followed the development of societal ties. Germany saw developing institutions freely as part of the “normalization” of relations of reconciliation.

The length and timing of the stages of institutionalization—circumscription, growth, consolidation, reevaluation—differ across the four cases. Circumscription was most obvious in Germany’s relations with Poland and Czechoslovakia, but even during communism there were institutional ties, particularly in the economic and technical fields.

Growth, consolidation, and expansion have meant that institutional connections span all areas of policy, with economics, defense, culture, youth exchange, science and technology, and the environment featuring in all four cases, and usually involving multiple bilateral treaties or agreements in specific functional spheres. The cultural arena has been difficult in Germany’s relations with both Israel and Poland. An emphasis on regionalism and cross-border ties occurs with France, Poland, and the Czech Republic. All cases reveal parliamentary exchanges, guaranteeing that political bodies are engaged in the relationships.

Consolidation as an expression of maturity is clearest in the French and Israeli examples, is discernible in the Polish case, and is present to a lesser extent in Germany’s relations with the Czech Republic. Reevaluation was occasioned by significant anniversaries in the French and Israeli cases, and by important changes in government in the Polish and Czech cases.

Jointness is a feature of institutionalization in six ways:

- the creation of joint institutions;
- the joint contemplation of domestic policy issues;
- the fashioning of joint policies toward third countries and issues;
- the articulation of goals and philosophies via jointly written media articles, for example by foreign ministers;

- the activities of formal coordinators on each side; and
- the formal and mutual exchange and secondment of bureaucrats to the other partner's various ministries.

Joint institutions most often take the form of councils, commissions, and fora with the most elaborate expression being the joint meetings of cabinets, now practiced in the Franco-German, German-Israeli, and German-Polish cases. Joint consideration of domestic policies entails the exchange of ideas and of best practices. Joint policies toward topics and countries outside the bilateral relationship emerge as a sign of reconciliation's maturity, most visible in Franco-German relations, but also active in German-Israeli ties for awhile, and appearing more recently in the German-Polish and German-Czech cases.

Other manifestations of joint policies are joint diplomatic representations (cohabiting in the same building abroad) and joint visits to third countries, appearing most frequently in the Franco-German case, with some signs in the German-Polish case. The maturity of cooperation also leads the parties to view their bilateral relationship as a model for other pairs in the international system, as happens in all four cases. Joint articles published by government officials can be found in all four.

Relations coordinators are active in the foreign ministries of the Franco-German and German-Polish partnerships. Exchange and secondment are most refined and extensive in the Franco-German relationship, involving several ministries, but are also evident in German-Israeli, German-Czech, and German-Polish examples.

Regular and intensive bilateral visits are an important dimension of the political and policy character of reconciliation. All parties identify such visits as central to publicizing the significance of relations, and foreign ministers and heads of state or government give priority to visiting the other country when assuming office. The frequency of visits at the highest levels tends to be spelled out in the general framework to relations. Visits remain active at times of crisis.

Political crises have punctuated all four relationships, engendered either by domestic politics, leadership clashes, or by international events. German unification was a special, defining test. Rather than derailing relations, crises present an opportunity for reaffirmation of reconciliation as problems are worked through, either at the top of government or in the bureaucracies. Contention is part of reconciliation, not its counterpoint. The

difference with prereconciliation relations is that, in reconciliation, mechanisms exist for confronting, removing, or containing crises. Disagreements are “differences among friends.”

Surmounting difficulties in relations often has been expressed in new institutional arrangements, such as the Blaesheim Process with France; the foreign ministries’ coordinator positions with Poland; the joint cabinet consultations with Israel; and the hotline with the Czech foreign minister.

At times of crisis but also more generally, the language utilized to characterize the relationship is significant. “Reconciliation” has been used most frequently in Franco-German and German-Polish ties, but recently is also employed in German-Israeli and German-Czech relations. “Partnership,” “trust,” and “common values” also become part of reconciliation’s lexicon as relations mature. Throughout the relationships, hard interests have accompanied moral imperatives, but, as relations mature, “interests” and “common interests” are addressed publicly and jointly. In all cases, there are allusions to the inextricable links of “fate” or “destiny.”

International Context

All four reconciliations have been affected by the broader international context of the United States and Soviet Union/Russia and the narrower environment of the EC/EU. The United States provided one of the important stimuli for new Franco-German and German-Israeli relations after World War II; today it remains a channel of support for German-Israeli ties, but U.S. policy in Iraq has been at odds with Franco-German coordinated or joint thinking. While supporting the reality of a larger Europe after 1989 and the attendant German-Polish and German-Czech movements toward reconciliation, the United States has been a source of divergence in both these relationships.

The emergence of the Soviet bloc drew Germany and France, as well as Germany and Israel, closer together in the 1950s. The fact of the Soviet bloc prevented Germany’s reconciliation with Poland and Czechoslovakia because of the limited contact both countries had with the outside world (especially the Czechs), and the German government’s reluctance to engage fully with dissident voices in Eastern Europe during *détente*.

After the fall of communism, Franco-German cooperation with Russia was a clearer possibility, realized, for example, in the triangular policy toward the United States on Iraq. The demise of the Soviet bloc also impacted

German-Israeli relations positively. Russia is no longer perceived as a full military threat by Poland and the Czech Republic, but memories of Soviet behavior shape their negative views of the new Russia, leading to divergences with Germany and to staunch support of the United States.

The EC/EU framework has had the longest effect on Franco-German reconciliation, cocooning the relationship at the beginning and stimulating joint proposals on all manner of policy thereafter, despite frequent initial Franco-German differences. This model of cooperation and divergence may show the way for German-Polish and German-Czech relations as they evolve since Poland and the Czech Republic became EU members. In both the Polish and the Czech examples, Germany was an early and consistent advocate and midwife in the membership process, although the Czechs at times felt that Germany perceived them as second-class citizens. Poles and Czechs have important differences with Germans over fundamental issues in the EU, but they are able to manage those differences and also identify significant areas of common interest and joint activity, particularly in foreign policy. As in the French case, the EU provides a venue for addressing and potentially working out questions of power and symmetry in German-Polish and German-Czech relations.

For German-Israeli ties, the EU also provides this dual character of tension—over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—and cooperation—with Germany's unwavering support for Israel's structural economic and technical association with the EU and a German brake on the EU's criticism of Israel. With three of Germany's partners as EU members and Israel as close associate, the EU provides the main international forum in which Germany has to balance, manage, and try to avoid rivalry among its four reconciliation partners.

PRESCRIPTION: LESSONS FOR JAPAN?

Like Germany in Europe, Japan in Asia after World War II recovered economically faster and more completely than any of the countries it had conquered and occupied.¹ Unlike Germany, however, Japan did not regain a role of leadership in its geographic region. Germany's strategy of reconciliation won it a respected return to the family of nations, surrounded by partners dependent but not fearful, responsive but not resentful. Japan, which made no discernible effort to reconcile with the enemies it made for itself and was

as resentful of them as they were of Japan, established vital economic relations but without the acknowledged leadership that its economic superiority might have cemented. It seems fair to surmise that Japan without reconciliation would be destined to be without real friends, and without conferred leadership in Asia.

The Growing Relevance of the German Experience for Japan

In 2008 and 2009, a series of historical issues renewed a continuing definition of the public space of Japanese–South Korean and Japanese–Chinese relations: the revisionist essay of General Toshio Tamogami; Prime Minister Taro Aso’s acknowledgement of the use of slave labor in his family’s war-time mine; new flare-ups in the long-standing territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu and Takeshima/Dokdo islets; Japanese ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine; and Japanese government approval of another amnesiac history textbook whitewashing Japan’s World War II aggression.

These developments could be viewed as part of yet another episode in the periodic eruption of history-related problems that have affected Japan’s bilateral ties openly since 1982, with the anticipation that they will ebb and flow depending on domestic and international circumstances. Alternatively, these events could be understood as contaminants that severely impede Japan’s foreign policy, but that also could augur fundamental change.

In late 2009 a profound shift in Japanese politics suggested possible change for Japan throughout Asia, especially in relations with China and South Korea. Yukio Hatoyama, the prime minister of Japan from September 2009 until June 2010, chose to entertain the possibility of a paradigm shift in how Japan deals with those countries, offering signals even before he was elected.

In a June 2009 visit to the Republic of Korea as head of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), when elaborating on his vision for an East Asian or Asian-Pacific Community, Hatoyama drew on the Franco-German experience of creating a regional organization for embedding their relationship of permanent peace. After assuming office, Hatoyama’s first visit to Seoul, instead of Washington, DC (usually the first foreign destination for a new Japanese prime minister), and his pledge that neither he nor any of his cabinet members would visit the Yasukuni Shrine where Class A war criminals are honored, announced his interest in Japan’s Asian neighbors generally and his interest more specifically in reconciliation.

Hatoyama's election proclaimed generational change and the physical disappearance of some conservative, nationalist, and right-wing forces in Japan opposed to reconciliation. Not everyone in Japan's older generation is irreconcilable. There is evidence of a growing differentiated view among some conservatives, for example the Yomiuri Shimbun's War Responsibility Reexamination Committee, and Tsuneo Watanabe's criticism of ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. The combination of a new generation, and a new political party in power, and a divided older generation, has been reflected in public opinion surveys, where "the affirmative view of the war . . . is being rejected by the wider society."²

Asia with an unreconciled Japan has become a region progressively dominated by China. China protests loudly that it is a developing country devoted to peace, but its growth has stimulated enough regional fear to have countries throughout the region solicit more American engagement. Renewal of the United States as an Asian power to offset the weight of China exposes, at the least, the vacuum created by Japan.

In the last decade, scholars and practitioners seeking to understand the power of history issues in Asia and the possibility of reconciliation with Japan have looked increasingly to Germany's experience with a foreign policy of reconciliation. The literature on Northeast Asian reconciliation that considers the German case is burgeoning, but it is limited in four significant ways: (1) references to Germany often are glancing or anecdotal;³ (2) elaboration centers on single topics, such as memory, narratives, textbooks, education, or territorial disputes, largely ignoring the many other examples of Germany's non-governmental bilateral institutions and most of the governmental illustrations;⁴ (3) the most developed arguments for learning from the German case alight on either Franco-German or German-Polish relations, excluding the rich lessons provided by Germany's partnerships with Israel and the Czech Republic, the two cases where history issues in fact have been the most challenging and instructive; (4) even where there is a fuller treatment of Germany, the understanding of the German model of reconciliation is flawed, overestimating harmony and perfect peace as a goal, and underestimating the considerable obstacles, crises, and vicissitudes that have accompanied these long processes of bilateral peace making.

Particularly notable in Jennifer Lind's work, a leading example of the emerging awareness of German foreign policy as instructive for Asia, is the assumption that there has been no backlash to the German government's confrontation with the past. While not as ferocious as the right-

wing backlash in Japan, there was intense German opposition to government and societal reconciliation on many occasions and in every case. The key lesson to be learned from those German experiences is that political and moral vision by German leaders successfully challenged the opposition and thereby authenticated and strengthened reconciliation. Political and moral avoidance do not contribute to reconciliation.⁵ Where reconciliation is a deliberate strategy, even foreign policy itself, as with post-World War II Germany, confrontation with opponents is as vital for leaders as confrontation with the past.

Japan cannot reconcile with Northeast Asia by copying Germany, but the German experience in Europe may confer many lessons. Thomas Berger highlights three key differences between Germany and Japan: in historical experiences; in Allied involvement in shaping new narratives; and in the international and regional settings in which the two countries evolved from pariah status after World War II.⁶ Yet, as Berger points out, the two countries face the same challenge of confronting the indelibility of the past at a time when history issues are high on the global agenda. As Japan began showing a political will and commitment to grapple with the past, Germany could teach how to seize opportunities and overcome hurdles in the process of reconciliation.

The Four Dimensions of Reconciliation and the Japanese Case

Hatoyama's government was very short lived, but some of his reconciliation initiatives seem to be durable. Once reconciliation became Germany's foreign policy, it ceased to matter very much which party was governing. Reconciliation became *raison d'état*. The first gestures of Hatoyama and his immediate Democratic Party successors (governing into September 2011) cannot yet be thought to define Japan's *raison d'état*, but some steps may prove irreversible. Japan may be embarking, through reconciliation, on a new role in Asia.

The illustrations of new Japanese thinking about reconciliation, at least within the Democratic Party leadership, can be examined with the same model applicable to Germany. The process in Northeast Asia will require patience and leadership in an environment of in-grown skepticism and deep tradition. Yet, as the German experience demonstrates, small initial steps can yield to larger strides even when "many stones are scattered on the path" of reconciliation.⁷

History

The Hatoyama government intended to be proactive regarding the past, as expressed in the prime minister's statement to the South Korean president during a September 2009 meeting at the UN: "The new Democratic Party of Japan has the courage to face up to history."⁸ Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada repeated this perspective in his commitment to the 1995 statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, acknowledging Japan's past aggressive behavior in the region. In the February 2010 report of a joint Sino-Japanese history study, endorsed by the two governments, for the first time Japan agreed to use "aggression" to characterize its behavior toward China from 1937 to 1945.⁹

There was still no agreement about the number of Chinese killed in the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, but the history study is an auspicious start for which there are useful lessons in the way the German-Czech Historians' Commission has proceeded, including its willingness to entertain differing perspectives on history within a framework of ongoing dialogue and engagement. Similarly, in a February 2010 visit to South Korea, Foreign Minister Okada expressed his regret for the Japanese occupation of Korea.¹⁰ The reasoning of Prime Minister Hatoyama and Foreign Minister Okada appears both philosophical and pragmatic, the need for a new approach to a rapidly growing China.

Three specific historical disputes impede reconciliation: rights and demands of victims' groups, including Korean (and, to a lesser extent, Chinese) sex slaves ("comfort women") and slave laborers; textbooks; and territorial disputes. As an opposition party, since 2000, together with the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party, the DPJ initiated repeatedly bills in the Diet to address the emotional and material needs of "comfort women." Yet, the Japanese legal system proved unbending in its rejection of Korean and Chinese victims' claims, arguing that the compensation issue had been made moot by postwar Sino-Japanese (Joint Statement) and Japanese-South Korean (1965 treaty) agreements.¹¹

Whether apology will take the form the victims require—a resolution of the Diet, not just of the government—remains unclear, but two aspects of the German slave labor case are relevant. First, the passage of time (six decades for Germany) mitigates neither the victims' pain nor the perpetrators' responsibility for action. Second, pragmatic motives (American lawsuits) had to be joined by moral imperative (President Johannes Rau's

apology and request for forgiveness) to make the German slave labor negotiations successful.

The general issue of apology appears to dominate the debate about appropriate Japanese initiatives. In all four German cases, the government faced significant domestic opposition to reconciliation overtures, including acknowledgement of grievances (a form of apology), yet the government persevered in an affirmation of the genuine desire for reconciliation without major domestic consequence.

Germany also demonstrated that legal formalities do not preclude a government from making extralegal political exceptions: first, in its decision in the 1950s to initiate reparations negotiations with Israel, a country that did not exist at the time of the Holocaust; and second, in the “special funds” it created on various occasions for individual victims who were excluded from German domestic compensation legislation.

Japanese textbook characterization of the past continues to divide Japan and her regional neighbors, although Hatoyama tried to moderate the tone.¹² At the same time, the Democratic Party’s first foreign minister was quick to suggest a government-sanctioned common history textbook among Japan, South Korea, and China to build on the existing trilateral work of scholars.

Critics of the idea of a common textbook point to the fact that it took six decades for France and Germany to write and use a government-sponsored common history book. They overlook the fact that there were path-breaking achievements long before the common book emerged: the early creation of a Franco-German textbook commission and the conclusion already in 1951 of a “Franco-German Agreement on Contentious Questions of European History.” The commission periodically produced recommendations for the teaching of history and geography.

The Franco-German experience was not unique: even during communism in Poland, the German-Polish textbook commission was created and issued recommendations for teaching history. Similar commissions have produced results in the German-Israeli and German-Czech cases. The product is important, but the process of confronting the past together with the goal of airing differences, and not history’s homogenization, is a reconciling end itself.

Territorial issues actively divide governments and societies in Northeast Asia.¹³ Prime Minister Hatoyama pushed for speedy negotiations for a treaty that would bring about joint development of undersea resources between China and Japan, and saw the Dokdo/Takeshima islands as contested between

Japan and South Korea (rather than belonging to Japan). Nonetheless, observers were rightly skeptical of any rapid movement and, therefore, of the prospects for reconciliation of territorial disputes.

The German-Polish case is instructive here: it was not until German unification in 1990 that Germany recognized *de jure* the Oder-Neisse border with Poland, although it had been recognized *de facto* in 1970 as part of Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik. During the intervening twenty years, Germany and Poland were building important governmental and societal networks even as Poland's desire for *de jure* recognition of the border went unfulfilled.

A final dimension of "history" is the occurrence of symbolic events that can either propel or impair the chances of reconciliation. Past visits to the Yasukuni Shrine clearly disturbed China and South Korea. Hatoyama not only promised not to make such visits, but acted quickly on his commitment. When over fifty Japanese lawmakers visited the shrine for the annual fall festival in October 2009, no member of Hatoyama's cabinet participated. South Korea's president proposed a Seoul visit of Japanese Emperor Akihito for the centennial of Japan's annexation of Korea, and Hatoyama planned a visit to Nanjing to apologize for the 1937 massacre, with a reciprocal visit of Chinese president Hu Jintao to Hiroshima as an expression of Chinese peaceful aspirations.¹⁴ Electoral and parliamentary politics disrupted all of these plans, but the joint process of trying to fashion symbolic events is itself part of reconciliation.

Leadership

Hatoyama was the first Japanese leader with an eye on reconciliation. It is too soon to tell whether he will have had an enduring impact. *The New York Times* editorialized on September 4, 2011, about Yoshihiko Noda, the third Democratic Party prime minister: "His unrepentant nationalism—he argues that Japan's World War II leaders were not war criminals because they were convicted by an international court, rather than a Japanese one—will further fan tensions with China and South Korea." Nonetheless, to some extent Hatoyama changed the tone and perhaps the overall direction of Japanese foreign policy. His emphasis on *yu-ai* (fraternity, friendliness) represented a new departure, encompassing cooperation and mutual respect while recognizing differences.¹⁵ Hatoyama specifically used this term to characterize his goals vis-à-vis China, including to the East China Sea as a "sea of fraternity" rather than a "sea of conflict,"¹⁶ and he met soon after his election with South

Korean and Chinese leaders at the UN in New York, in Seoul, and in Beijing for trilateral meetings, and in Thailand for the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) meetings, all within a month.

South Korean and Chinese leaders have been looking to Japan for leadership in reshaping relations,¹⁷ yet in the German cases it was often leaders in the victim countries, for example Robert Schuman in France and Václav Havel in Czechoslovakia, who made overtures concerning reconciliation. Notwithstanding resentment throughout Asia, it does not seem that Asian victims have initiated the process of reconciliation the way European (and Israeli) leaders did. Perhaps they did not see a need, but perhaps now they do.

Institutions

The 2009 trilateral meeting among Japan, China, and South Korea in Beijing was only the second time leaders of the three Asian antagonists had met outside the APT meetings (the first time was in December 2008 in Japan). The joint statement that emerged gave a clear indication of intentions, with agreements to “1) build mutual trust in the political field, 2) deepen economic cooperation taking full advantage of high complementarities of the three economies, 3) expand people-to-people exchanges, 4) develop regional and sub-regional cooperation, and 5) actively respond to global issues.” They also agreed to confront together “sensitive issues,” meaning the past.¹⁸

Three immediate challenges identified for continued deliberation by the three leaders were economic cooperation, the environment, and North Korean denuclearization, all practical issues. The long-term perspective included a plan for a free trade area. The senior-level diplomatic dialogue, launched in 2007, then met in February 2010 to implement the Beijing summit’s conclusions. Additionally, South Korea has pushed for security to be part of trilateral deliberations. As they seek to develop trilateral cooperation, the Weimar Triangle, created among Germany, France, and Poland, could provide a useful example for South Korea, Japan, and China.

Bilaterally, in the Sino-Japanese and Japanese-Korean relationships, both “high” politics (security, defense) and “low” politics (economics, environment) have defined agendas. There were numerous official and bureaucratic visits in the first six months of the Hatoyama government, including discussions with South Korea and China on food safety, economic cooperation, green technologies, and North Korea. Franco-German and German-Israeli reconciliation experiences indicate the early priority

on defense and economics, whereas the German-Polish and German-Czech examples point to the importance of economic and technical issues during communism and defense only after the end of the Cold War, when the parties were no longer obliged to be on opposite sides.

In his October 26, 2009, major policy address to the Diet, Prime Minister Hatoyama emphasized the active role of citizens and society in his new vision of politics. This development might have begun to counter the Japanese argument that German reconciliation's central role for civil society cannot be replicated in the Japanese case, where non-governmental actors have been anemic.

As Hatoyama began reaching out to South Korea and China, non-governmental organizations began playing a role. The first China-Japan–Republic of Korea Business Summit was held in Beijing in October 2009, highlighting the role the private sector can play in new commercial and trade connections. Prior to his trip to Beijing, the chairman of the Japan Business Federation impressed on Hatoyama the need for an intensification of economic relations with China, while protecting Japan's intellectual property rights. China is now Japan's largest trading partner, surpassing the United States. South Korea has emerged as Japan's third most important trading partner, after China and the United States.

Just before Hatoyama's visit to Seoul in October 2009, more than thirty civil society groups (including "comfort women" and slave labor representatives) welcomed the prime minister's views on history, while repeating their demands for apology and compensation. At the end of October, the citizens' group Japan Network on Wartime Sexual Violence Against Women reminded a meeting of DPJ Diet members of their concerns. At the meeting, the DPJ's Megumi Tsuji underlined the cost of inaction for Japanese plans for an East Asian Community: "If we don't solve this problem, it would be impossible for Japan to speak out to East Asia on an equal footing."¹⁹ When Korean "comfort women" mounted their nine hundredth protest before the Japanese Embassy in Seoul in January 2010, Japanese civil society groups in Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka organized signature collection drives to support the victims' goals.²⁰

Hatoyama's overtures to China and South Korea may have unleashed pent-up societal and economic forces, while signaling to Asia a "new" Japan. Even as Noda's nationalism may disappoint those who hoped Hatoyama represented something altogether new for Japan, much has survived Hatoyama's initiatives. Prime Minister Naoto Kan apologized to Korea for Japan's

occupation and colonial rule; Japanese cabinet members continued to stay away from the Yasukuni Shrine, with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda promising to continue what Hatoyama started, a reversal of his own position; and Japan welcomed aid from China and South Korea following a devastating earthquake and tsunami. But Noda also declared no interest in compensation for “comfort women” and expressed worry about Chinese military power in the region. The process of reconciliation was not advanced by Noda’s ascension as prime minister, but it was not fully retarded, either.

Hatoyama did not last long enough to become Japan’s Adenauer, a first effective leader marrying morality and pragmatism to redefine Japan’s place in Asia, but his brief leadership did seem to stimulate important symbols of reconciliation. Nature’s crippling of Japan’s economy and infrastructure may extend the life of Hatoyama’s overtures, capturing mutual sympathies in the region.

International Context

Japanese leadership in Asia was Douglas MacArthur’s dearest wish and has always been a cornerstone of U.S. policy in Asia. The American calculus of Japan’s role in the Cold War enabled Japan to brush history aside, protected by the United States. It has taken more than sixty years and the end of the Cold War for the first notions of fundamental change.

Hatoyama’s gestures of reconciliation in the region had to have been welcome, but his pursuit of a more equal economic and security relationship led to a stalemate over the relocation of the U.S. Futenma military base in Okinawa and a more general anxiety in Washington over Japanese leadership and the future of relations with Japan.²¹ Noda swiftly reversed the trend begun with Hatoyama to redefine relations with the United States, but doubts reverberated in Washington whether Noda was capable of the economic leadership Japan would require to assert leadership in Asia.

Noda did not appear likely to reverse the first gestures of reconciliation, nor did he seem a likely prime minister to pursue reconciliation as a policy. Certainly Hatoyama’s effort to reset relations with the United States complicated matters. According to Foreign Minister Okada, the United States would not be part of the East Asian Community (EAC), which concerned American observers. Yet, relying specifically on the Franco-German model (the 1950 Schuman Plan) that led to the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 and the European Economic Community in 1958, the EAC

proposal appeared to involve an ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China, South Korea) arrangement. It now appears supplanted, however, by a U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Bilateral reconciliation and regional reconciliation are reasonable companions. Japan's interest in the region is not unlike the European experience, particularly in the development of the intergovernmental European Free Trade Area.

As Hatoyama's government started to put its reconciliation rhetoric into practice, it might have benefitted from the German experience that divergence, debate, and dissension are natural parts of relations of reconciliation, and that crisis is necessary to test and authenticate new relationships. Reconciliation is distinguished from lesser partnerships by its ability to manage differences in a cooperative framework. Whether a new Japanese government will yet resume the process, and learn from these lessons, remains unknown, but the future of Japanese leadership likely depends on it.

NOTES

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Appendix

Comparative Timeline of Germany's
Reconciliation with France, Israel, Poland,
and Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic, 1945–2009

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL	FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
	• Founding of Dokumente/ Documents • Founding of International Liaison and Documentation Office		
	• French participation in Speyer synod • Germans and French meet in Caux		
	• Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg created		
• First societies for Christian-Jewish co-operation founded			
			• Heuss and Schumacher address Germany's past
	• First twinning: Ludwigsburg and Montbéliard	• Schuman Plan • Pleven Plan	
• German-Israeli trade union ties begin			
• Peace with Israel movement begins • Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting of Germans and Israelis	• Franco-German agreement on textbook issues	• Adenauer visits France for first time as chancellor	• Israel's Notes requesting compensation from Germany • Adenauer's Bundestag speech
		• Contractual Agreements	• Conclusion of Reparations Agreement

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL		POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
• Czech Catholic bishops regret expulsion of Germans		1945	POTSDAM AGREEMENT	POTSDAM AGREEMENT
• Creation of Sudeten German Ackermann Community		1946		
		1947		
		1948		
		1949		
		1950		
		1951		
		1952		

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL	FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
• First of Erich Lüth's 6 trips to Israel as "unofficial ambassador"		1953	
		1954	
		FAILURE OF EDC • London and Paris Agreements • Cultural Agreement	
	• Franco-German Chamber of Commerce created	1955	HALLSTEIN DOCTRINE
• German student study groups on Israel begin		1956	• Saar Treaty
• Beginning of SPD-Mapai ties	• Working Group of Franco-German Societies created	1957	CREATION OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITY • German-Israeli military ties begin • Ollenhauer speech in Israel
• Action Reconciliation founded. Israel is in founding Declaration		1958	• Adenauer-de Gaulle meeting in Colombey
• Max Planck Society delegation to Weizmann Institute		1959	• German army purchases weapons from Israel
• Informal youth exchanges begin		1960	• Adenauer-Ben-Gurion meeting in New York

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL	POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
	1953		
	1954		
	Leipzig Protestant Church Council speech on expulsion and border		
	1955		
Collegium Carolinum established in Germany	German Catholic bishops invite Polish bishops to attend Church Council in Cologne		
	1956		
	1957		
	1958		
	Action Reconciliation mentions Poland in founding Declaration		
	1959	Adenauer statement on 20th anniversary of WWII outbreak	
	1960		
	Döpfner sermon on Poland as victim		

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL	FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
EICHMANN TRIAL IN ISRAEL • Action Reconciliation begins activities in Israel	• Action Reconciliation's first project in France: Reconciliation Church in Taizé	1961	
		1962	• Agreement against double taxation
	• Creation of Franco-German Youth Office	1963	
	• German Historical Institute in Paris created	1964	CRISIS OVER GERMAN SCIENTISTS IN EGYPT
		1965	• German-Israeli diplomatic relations
• German-Israeli Society created		1966	• Agreement on economic cooperation and development aid
• Founding of German-Israeli Chamber of Commerce		1967	
		1968	

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL	POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
	• Tübinger Memorandum of Protestant Church on lost territories	• Bundestag request for normalization of relations with Poland	
		• West German trade mission opens in Warsaw	
	• German Protestant Church paper on expulsion • Polish Catholic bishops' letter to German bishops		
• First German-Czech textbook discussions	• Action Reconciliation delegation from West Germany visits Auschwitz		
		• Brandt speech recognizing Oder-Neisse border	• Bahr visits Prague • PRAGUE SPRING • CRUSHING OF PRAGUE SPRING

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL		FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
	• First bilingual education opportunities in 3 German states	1969		• Mixed Committee of Experts on Youth Exchange • First visit of a Knesset delegation to Germany
		1970		• First visit of Israeli foreign minister to Germany
• First German Culture Week in Israel • Tel Aviv Institute for German History established	• Creation of Franco-German Youth Office	1971		• First visit of German foreign minister to Israel • Agreement on joint film production
	• Creation of Franco-German schools	1972	• 19th Summit meeting	MUNICH OLYMPICS
		1973	• 22nd Summit meeting	• First official contact on youth exchange • Science & technology agreement • Brandt visits Israel
• Israel Radio Orchestra plays Wagner for first time		1974		
		1975	• 26th Summit meeting	• First Israeli prime minister visits Germany • Creation of Mixed Economic Commission
		1976		

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL		POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
		1969		
• First town twinning: Lorsch–Giebova		1970	• Brandt kneels in Warsaw • German-Polish Treaty	
	• German Federation of Trade Unions visits Poland	1971	• Polish parliamentary delegation visits Germany	
	• German-Polish Societies established	1972	• German-Polish diplomatic relations	
	• German-Polish Textbook Commission established	1973		• German-Czech Prague Treaty
	• Polish union delegation visits Germany	1974	• German-Polish credit/migration agreement • German-Polish cultural agreement	• German-Czech long-term economic agreement
	• Robert Bosch Foundation starts activities in Poland	1975		
	• First German-Polish textbook recommendations • First twinning: Bremen–Gdansk	1976	• Gierek visit to Bonn	

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL	FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
• First twinning: Wuppertal and Beersheva		1977 • Summit meeting	• Agreement on mutual recognition of court decisions
• Goethe Institute in Tel Aviv established • FES opens in Tel Aviv		1978	
	• Franco-German Society for Science and Technology created	1979	• Transportation agreement • ABOLITION OF GERMAN STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS ON MURDER
• Koebner Center for German History opens • KAS office in Israel opens	• KAS office opens in Paris • Exchange of young adults for training and apprenticeships	1980 • Agreement on joint production of films	• Double taxation agreement
• Formal German-Israeli Textbook Commission begins	• Organization of Franco-German Societies established	1981	
	• Creation of CIRAC	1982	
• FNS office in Israel opens	• First Franco-German youth parliament	1983 • Mitterrand speech to Bundestag	
		1984 • Mitterrand and Kohl together in Verdun	• Kohl visits Israel

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL	POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
CHARTA 77 IN CZECHO- SLOVAKIA	German-Polish Forum created	1977	
		1978	German-Czech Cultural Cooperation Agreement
		1979	
	"SOLIDARITY" UNION IN POLAND EMERGES	1980	
	"Package Initiative" from Germany to Poland	1981	MARTIAL LAW IN POLAND BEGINS
		1982	German foreign minister meets representatives of "Solidarity" and church
German-Czechoslovak Society established		1983	
	German Society for Promotion of Polish students in Germany	1984	

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL		FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
- Goethe Institute in Jerusalem established - German-Israeli textbook recommendations	FES office opens in Paris	1985		- First visit of a German president to Israel - Agricultural agreement
		1986	- Agreement on scientific exchange - Exchanges between diplomats begin	Creation of German-Israeli Foundation for Research and Development
		1987		First visit of an Israeli president to Germany
	Franco-German textbook recommendations	1988	25th anniversary of Elysée Treaty. New institutions created	
	Bundestag-Assemblée Nationale exchange of interns	1989	- Council on Environment created - Agreement for Franco-German brigade	Protocol on cultural relations
- Teacher exchanges begin - German language taught in some Israeli schools		1990	GERMAN UNIFICATION Common overtures on CFSP	GERMAN UNIFICATION
Fritz Bauer program begins	Creation of ARTE, jointly operated TV network	1991	Creation of Weimar Triangle	Kohl and Genscher solidarity with Israel in Gulf War
	Creation of Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin	1992		German chief of staff visits Israel

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL	POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
• Prague Appeal of Charta 77 • Joint statement of German and Czechoslovak Catholics		1985	
		1986	
		1987	
• German-Czechoslovak textbook conference in Prague		1988	
FALL OF BERLIN WALL • Havel contrite on expulsion	• Joint declaration of German and Polish Catholics • KAS opens office in Warsaw	FALL OF BERLIN WALL • Raft of German-Polish agreements • Kohl-Mazowiecki joint mass in Poland	FALL OF BERLIN WALL • Joint cutting of frontier wire
• Goethe Institute opens in Prague • FES and HBS open offices in Prague • Idea for joint Historians' Commission	• Goethe Institute opens in Warsaw • FES opens office in Warsaw	• German president visits Poland • German-Polish border treaty	• Havel visits East Berlin and Munich • von Weizsäcker to Prague
• KAS office opens in Prague	• Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation established	DISSOLUTION OF SOVIET UNION • German-Polish treaty on Good Neighborhood • Creation of German-Polish Reconciliation Foundation	DISSOLUTION OF SOVIET UNION
		1991	
		1992	• German-Czech treaty on Good Neighborhood

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL		FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
• Against Forgetting created		1993		• Joint declaration on economics and technology
		1994	• German soldiers participate in French national holiday	• Israeli chief of staff visits Germany
• German-Israeli writers' joint publication		1995	• Franco-German arms agency created • Mitterrand speech to Bundestag	• Mutual exchange of military officers
		1996	• Franco-German brigade soldiers to Bosnia-Herzegovina	• Israeli president addresses Bundestag
• German-Israeli Project Cooperation in future-oriented fields		1997		• Germany begins providing Israel with submarines
• HBS opens in Israel		1998	• Franco-German office in Banja Luka	
	• Idea for Franco-German university in Saarbrücken	1999	• Franco-German Center for Police and Customs created • Schröder address to Assemblée Nationale	
• Initiative for "ConAct" Coordinating Committee for Youth Exchange	• Franco-German Film Academy inaugurated	2000	• Blaesheim Process decided after Nice EU Summit	• President Rau's speech to the Israeli Knesset
• Learning from History begins	• Language buses recruiting students to learn other language	2001		• Foreign Minister Fischer negotiates between Sharon and Arafat

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL		POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
• Action Reconciliation volunteers in Czech Republic • German-Czech Chamber of Trade and Industry created	• Creation of German-Polish Youth Office	1993		• Defense agreement
	• German Historical Institute in Warsaw created • German-Polish Chamber of Commerce created	1994	• President Herzog speech in Warsaw • Germany and Poland military training in NATO	
• Czech Protestant Church statement • German-Czech Catholic bishops' statement		1995	• Foreign Minister Bartoszewski speech to Bundestag	
• German Protestant Church statement • German-Czech Historians' Commission outline of history	• Action Reconciliation begins work in Poland	1996		• Agreement on youth exchange • German-Czech Environment Commission
• Brücke-Most Foundation created • German-Czech Future Fund established	• German-Polish Research Association established	1997	• German-Polish joint cabinet consultations begin	• German-Czech Declaration • Herzog and Havel parliamentary speeches
		1998	POLAND JOINS NATO • German and Polish presidents meet on Oder bridge • President Rau statement on slave and forced labor	CZECH REPUBLIC JOINS NATO • Cultural Cooperation Agreement • Czech statement on Benes Decrees • Schröder statement on claims
	• DAAD opens office in Warsaw • Copernicus Group statement on displaced cultural assets • Foundation for Center Against Expulsion established	1999		
		2000	• Creation of Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation	
	• German-Polish teacher's manual	2001		

ISRAEL SOCIETAL	FRANCE SOCIETAL		FRANCE OFFICIAL	ISRAEL OFFICIAL
		2002		• Solidarity with Israel speeches of Fischer and Schröder
	• Franco-German Youth Parliament on 40th anniversary • Franco-German Day instituted	2003	• 40th anniversary of Franco-German Treaty including joint ministerial consultations	
• Creation of Action Reconciliation Ben-Yehuda-Haus Pax meeting house in Jerusalem		2004	• Schröder participates in 60th anniversary of D-Day	• Prisoner exchange with Lebanon, negotiated by Germany
• German-Israeli youth event in Berlin for 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations		2005	• Merkel's first foreign visit is to Paris	• 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations
	• First Franco-German common history textbook appears	2006	• 7th Franco-German Ministerial Council	• German troops as part of UNIFIL on Lebanese coast
• German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation established		2007		
• Martin Buber Society of Fellows established at Hebrew University • German-Israeli Year of Science	• 2nd volume of common history textbook appears	2008	• Merkel and Sarkozy dedicate de Gaulle Memorial • German and French ministers visit Japan together	• Merkel and cabinet joint consultations in Israel • Merkel addresses Knesset • 2nd prisoner exchange
• Decision for new German-Israeli Textbook Commission • RLS opens office in Tel Aviv		2009	• Decision on stationing German troops in France • Merkel participates in WWI commemoration	• 3rd phase of German negotiations over prisoner exchange

CZECH SOCIETAL	POLAND SOCIETAL		POLAND OFFICIAL	CZECH OFFICIAL
- German-Czech Textbook Commission inaugurated - German-Czech Historians' Commission statement on historical disputes	HBS opens office in Warsaw	2002		- Zeman remarks on Sudeten Germans - Fischer visits Prague - Cross-border crime institution
Czech victims of Nazism award to Schröder		2003		Schröder visits Prague
Prague House of Literature created	Prussian Claims Society threatens to file compensation claims	2004	POLAND JOINS THE EU - President Rau speech to Sejm - Schröder participates in 60th anniversary of Warsaw Uprising	CZECH REPUBLIC JOINS THE EU
Ústí nad Labem recognition of expellee deaths	Joint statement of German and Polish bishops	2005	- Coordinators for German-Polish Cooperation begin work - Merkel visits Warsaw	- Joint Schröder-Paroubek visit to Theresienstadt - Merkel statement on claims - Czech government apology
		2006	- New German-Polish defense relations - President Kaczyński and P.M. Kaczyński visit Germany	
Tree planting in Lidice		2007	- German decision for documentation center on expulsion - Polish Prime Minister Tusk proposes Museum of WWII	Merkel visits Prague
- Proposal for German-Czech history textbook - Joint ceremony 20th anniversary of 1968 Prague Spring	German-Polish common history textbook discussions start	2008	- Merkel visits Poland - Agreement on German-Polish Science Foundation	- German-Czech military relations expanded - Merkel and Topolánek visits
	- Joint statement of German and Polish Catholic churches - Joint statement of German and Polish Protestant churches	2009	Merkel visits Poland	- Foreign Minister Steinmeier visits Prague - Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg visits Germany - Prime Minister Fischer visits Germany

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About the Author

Dr. Lily Gardner Feldman is currently the Harry & Helen Gray Senior Fellow at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS) at Johns Hopkins University, where she directs the program in Society, Culture, and Politics. Dr. Gardner Feldman served as the first research director of AICGS for five years and briefly as its codirector. She has been a senior scholar in residence at the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University. She has a Ph.D. in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Before moving to Washington, DC, Dr. Gardner Feldman was an associate professor of political science at Tufts University and a research associate at Harvard University's Center for European Studies, where she cochaired the German Study Group and coedited *German Politics and Society*. She was also a research fellow at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs, where she cochaired the Seminar on the European Community and undertook foreign policy research in the University Consortium for Research on North America.

Dr. Gardner Feldman has published widely in the United States and Europe on international reconciliation, German foreign policy, German-Jewish and German-Israeli relations, non-state entities as foreign policy actors, the EU as an international actor, and Canadian-U.S. relations. She has lectured on Germany's foreign policy of reconciliation in the United States, across Europe, and in Japan and South Korea.

