



# MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

„Right-Wing Extremist Movements in a Global Comparison“

Verfasser

Christian Rödiger, B. A.

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Master of Arts (M. A.)

Wien, 2013

Studienkennzahl lt.  
Studienblatt:

A 066 805

Studienrichtung lt.  
Studienblatt:

Globalgeschichte und Global Studies

Betreuerin / Betreuer:

Prof. Dr. Hans-Heinrich Nolte

# Structure

1. Introduction .....	3
2. General Aspects	
2.1 Comparison as a Method in Historical Science .....	5
2.2 Right-Wing Extremism and the Globalized World .....	14
3. Ku Klux Klan	
3.1 The American Background .....	36
3.2 The History of the Klan .....	46
3.3 Ideology .....	53
4. Kahanism	
4.1 Israel, Zionism and the Jewish Religion .....	59
4.2 Meir Kahane and the Movement .....	71
4.3 The Kahanist Ideology .....	78
5. Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang	
5.1 The Special Case of Belgium .....	85
5.2 History of the Party .....	89
5.3 Ideology .....	93
6. Conclusion .....	96
7. Bibliography .....	102
8. Sources .....	108
9. Statement of Authorship .....	109

# 1. Introduction

Right-wing extremism is a topic, which has a lot of historical importance, but it is a current problem as well. From a historical perspective, fascism and national socialism were one of the elemental reasons for the Second World War, the greatest war ever fought. Even though it looks like we are far away today from horrible events like that, xenophobic movements exist all over the world. Right-wing populist parties gain in some European nations a lot of power, like in Hungary or Austria. In other parts of the world, like in Russia or South Africa, there are movements which may not be powerful in politics, but show their power on the streets with violent actions against foreigners and anybody who does not fit in their view of the world.

In this work, we will take a look at three right-wing extremist movements: at first the American Ku Klux Klan, after that the Israeli Kahanist movement and finally the Belgian separatist party Vlaams Belang (former Vlaams Blok). Even though their level of publicity differs, they all have or had official institutions and/or registered political parties. Furthermore, they were all chosen from different continents and different cultures of the world, with the aim to have a kind of a global perspective. Of course this does not mean, that we cover the whole globe. The amount of research objects was chosen due to the requirements and limits of this paper. The question is, how much do three ultra right-wing movements from very different parts of the world differ in their ideology, actions and national background? Or to ask the other way around, how similar are they?

This work should be seen therefore as a case study for a global perspective on right-wing movements. Further works could easily choose other examples for right-wing extremists as well or turn around the topic and take a look on left-wing extremist movements. In fact, every kind of political movement could be researched. When taking a look on other works<sup>1</sup> it becomes clear, that right-wing parties are often compared, which are nearby and therefore probably more similar to each other. There exists useful literature about European right-wing parties. This might be a result of the fact that Europe has a lot of these parties and at the same time a lot of universities where research is done. Maybe it is also just due to the fact, that people like to compare things which are close to them – culturally and geographically. The motivation for this work was therefore to try to compare movements which might be close on a political scale, but geographically far away from each other and surrounded by different political environments.

Another motivation to choose three movements from three different continents was to go away from a eurocentric view on the topic. This does not mean, that we do not consider European

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<sup>1</sup> Like Gingrich 2006.

movements. By choosing the Vlaams Belang as an research object this thought becomes obsolete. What is meant here is that right-wing extremism is too often a term, which seems to be just connected with Europe. This might be a result of the historically powerful European right-wing nations, especially Nazi-Germany, or for other reasons. Nevertheless it seems to be seldom, that people consider terms like “fascists”, “right-wing extremists” or even “Nazis” with nations outside of Europe. With the belief that xenophobia is a global behavior, a next logical step is to put in movements outside of Europe. To compare objects on such a global level does not make the research easier, but harder and maybe the outcome might not be as rich as whether we would continue to compare geographically close movements like the German NPD and the Austrian FPÖ. In the globalized world we are living in, migration becomes more and more a global issue. Events which increase mass migration, like wars or economical development, are no longer of regional, but more and more of global importance due to the global migration flows. Therefore a global comparison is an appropriate method for a research on the topic.

This paper is structured in four big topics. At first, we will take a closer look on some general aspects. This will be on the one hand the comparison as a method in historical science and on the other hand an overview about different aspects of right-wing extremism. After that, the next three big topics are our case studies. As already said in the beginning, we will deal chronologically with the Ku Klux Klan, followed by the Kahanist movement<sup>2</sup> and the Vlaams Belang. In the end our findings will be concluded.

All in all, this work is mainly based on literature, because of different reasons. Because of language barriers it was not possible to read Hebrew sources like the writings of Meir Kahane or deeper going programs of the Vlaams Belang. Fortunately, there exist a lot of translated literature from Hebrew into English or even German.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, it was hard to find useful sources, which were not already cited in other literature before and often in a bunch of them stressed out enough. The issues in the historical science for Ku Klux Klan, Kahanism and Vlaams Belang are not issues related to sources. In recent times there is no discussion in sciences about sources for this topic, but the whole discussion is based generally on literature, which is why we follow this way as well. This does not mean, that we did not use any sources, but they are more an addition to the bigger context. In this paper we will stress out the national environment of the movements and compare them as well. The hypothesis is, that movements are a reaction of their or to their environment and therefore the circumstances for the movements are nearly as important as themselves.

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<sup>2</sup> In the literature there are different names for this movement. Since neither "Kahanist" nor "Kahane" movement are definite names, they are both allowed and describe exactly the same. If authors just speak of the political party "Kach", then they do it because they are just using the party as a topic, but not the movement before or after. Since this paper deals with more than just the Kach party, we prefer to talk about Kahane/Kahanist movement.

<sup>3</sup> Like Sand 2010.

## 2. General Aspects

### 2.1 Comparison as a Method in Historical Science

In daily life, a comparison is often an apparently easy operation to point out differences and similarities between two or more objects. As a scientific method in history, this meaning does not change dramatically. An important point is that a comparison has to follow scientific rules as well as any other method. Due to that requirement, some historians refused to accept comparisons as legal scientific methods in history, because of different concerns about the methodological background. These concerns are pointed out in an article of Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt. Especially Kocka is known as a profound representative of the Bielefeld School, connecting social, historical and political science. The article is not only a good introduction into the topic of comparison as a method in history, but also a call for more acceptance of it in historical scholarship. The authors assign to the comparison a huge potential for showing up new perspectives of a topic and thus leading to new research questions. They even argue, that topics can have aspects, which can only be researched with the method of comparison. Not only the comparison itself might be helpful for creating new knowledge, but also some side affects. When comparing objects, the view on the topic is different, whether we would tell a separated story of each of them. The created special emphasized way of looking at the objects that way may, following Kocka and Haupt, so attract others to take a deeper look at the objects or to choose other objects for comparison. Also, naming an object historically unique like the Holocaust, is impossible without having compared the object with other ones. Singularity only becomes visible when a comparison shows that. On the other hand, a comparison can also do the direct opposites: by comparing an objective, which is considered as historically singular, to other objectives and finding out that the supposed singularity does not exist, we can prove the similarity of objects and correct wrong assumptions. This can also show the possibilities and similarities of historical processes in different nations, times, cultures and so on.<sup>4</sup> Kocka and Haupt point out well here, that comparison has not only the right to exist as scientific method, but even has own qualities which other methods can not offer.

The importance of the environment of right-wing movements is a core topic of this Master-Thesis. This leads to the question, whether the method of comparison is a good choice for us. Kocka

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<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Kocka / Heinz-Gerhard Haupt: *Historischer Vergleich: Methoden, Aufgaben, Probleme. Eine Einleitung*, in: *Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt am Main and New York 1996, p. 12-13. (= Kocka/Haupt 1996)

and Haupt explain for that point, that comparison is especially useful for taking a look not only at the objectives, but also at the factors around. A comparison is seldom just a description of the objects of interest, but has to consider external influences as well. This leads in the best case to a deeper and more profound research result.<sup>5</sup>

Besides all this positive effects, we have to admit that comparisons have a high potential of creating controversies. One of the biggest controversy in historical scholarship in the last decades, which was based on a comparison, was the *Deutscher Sonderweg* debate.<sup>6</sup> Widely discussed in many nations, it shows different aspects of the comparison as method, which should be considered by every research. First of all, for the most topics we choose we have a variety of objects to compare. In the most cases we can not compare them all and not even a greater number of them. We can see this problem also in this paper: even though our comparison is called global, because of its international view, we can not take a look at all or even a majority of the right-wing movements in the world. Therefore we call it case study, knowing that the outcome can vary when taking different examples. No matter what we will see in the next chapters about our three right-wing extremist movements, we can guess that the content would be somehow different, whether we would take other objects for comparison. For the *Deutscher Sonderweg* debate Kocka and Haupt ask what the outcome might be, whether Germany would not have been compared to Western European nations, but to South or Eastern European ones.<sup>7</sup> This question can not be answered, as long as we will not do exactly this comparison.

The subjectivity of a comparison begins, as we see, with the selection of research objects, but it does not end with it. In fact, every comparison is full of subjective decisions, which we have to make before starting to compare. Not only the objects, but also the aspects we want to concentrate on, the space of time, sources, literature and much more depend often on the decision of the scientist. Kocka and Haupt point out two interesting aspects for every historical comparative attempt: similarity and synchronization. The similarity aspect means, that objects of comparison have to have at least some things in common, because otherwise a comparison will fail. This might sound first very simple, but it shows that objects have to be chosen carefully do to the research question. Even objects which seem so be similar at the first look, can turn out to be a bad choice whether they fail to be useful for the research question. On the other hand, one might fail in comparing two objects which are that much different and no useful results can be presented. The second point we mentioned, the aspect of synchronization, is also important for every historical

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<sup>5</sup> Kocka/Haupt 1996, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 15. The content of the debate will not be explained here, because it is not of interest for this paper. More important for us are the aspects of comparison which it shows.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

research. Depending on the topic and research question, the question might occur whether the objects should be compared in the same time period or era, or whether they should be compared in other aspects. It is correct when Kocka and Haupt write here, that neither the synchronized nor the non-synchronized way is a priori the better solution, because their meaning can depend heavily on the aim of the scientist.<sup>8</sup>

What does that mean for our topic? Basically, we have two possibilities to look at the three movements. We could choose to compare them within a special time period, for example the last decade. The other possibility would be to compare them independently from the period and thus do a non-synchronized comparison. This solution is much better for us, since the movements were not highlighted at the same time and their activities vary heavily through the decades. For the moment, this explanation should be enough, because we will see the outcome in the later chapters. It is important to remember, that this comparison could also be done synchronized, but then with a different and in our opinion unconvincing outcome.

Whatever we compare and expect, we have to accept that there is no such thing as the perfect comparison. Not only because of the subjectivity of the researcher, but also due to impossibility of a total comparison of every single aspect between the objects.<sup>9</sup> In this paper, we concentrate especially on the ideology and history of the movements and how their environment influences them. Even within the topic and with the same objects, one could also do a different kind of comparison, for example by concentrating more on organizational structures, internet appearance or contacts to other right-wing groups. The number of objects for research is also a subjective choice, which we made due to requirements of scientific and spacial background. To put this point in another way, we could say that the less cases we have, the more precisely we could look at every single one, but the more cases we have might lead to a more useful outcome for the meaning of a bigger topic.

A last point which should be mentioned here from Kocka and Haupt is less a scientific one, but more one with meaning outside of scholarship. The daily use of the term comparison has to be rated critical. For some reason, a lot of people guess that comparison means automatically to equalize two or more objects. Whether the objects have obvious differences, then people might refuse to compare them. This wrong usage of the term comparison becomes dangerous, when objects of different character are compared. Kocka and Haupt point out the problem well:

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

“Es geht beim Vergleich um Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede. Vergleichen heißt mithin nicht Gleichsetzen. Dieser Hinweis mag im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs überflüssig sein. Aber im allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch und in der öffentlichen Diskussion schwieriger Zeitfragen wird Vergleich des öfteren mit Gleichsetzen verwechselt”<sup>10</sup>

Even without reading the next chapters, we might expect differences for our three examples due to geographical, cultural or historical reasons. The movements might be all extreme right-wing in their ideology, but we can guess that this ideologies might differ for different reasons and in various aspects. Should it be forbidden then to compare them? The answer has to be no. A comparison is always a process, where similarities and differences are pointed out. It should never be the function of a scientist to compare objects because of the personal will to find similarities or differences. The scientific duty is to collect information about every result of the comparison and then interpret it under scientific requirements.

One of the latest approaches for transnational and global studies is the *Histoire Croisée*, developed by the French historians Bénédicte Zimmermann and Michael Werner. Influenced by the French social science and earlier theories in global history scholarship, Zimmermann and Werner want to overcome the traditional national state focused perspective of the historians. Comparison is an important aspect in their theory. While in the past normally just the objects were in the center of attention for a research, the authors now want to put the position of the researcher himself into attention. This means that not only the research objects, but also the own and determined perspective has to be compared with other possible views to create a multiperspectival view. Zimmermann and Werner justify their theory with the huge impact globalization had in the last two decades on humanities. In fact, they attest the globalization to be the most influential event on social and a lot of other kind of science for our era. Due to the changes in the world, the methods and ways socio-historical knowledge is produced have changed rapidly, they argue. Especially reflexivity became a much more important part of research.<sup>11</sup>

An interesting point in this theory is that not only the objects are investigated, but the author becomes a research object as well and in the best case by investigating his own determination, environment and thus personal limitations. The *Histoire Croisée* approach was introduced in the early years of the current century, but basic ideas already presented in the mid of the 1990's. Werner and Zimmermann argue that they were calling for more interaction between different disciplines of

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10 Kocka/Haupt 1996, p. 9.

11 Michael Werner / Bénédicte Zimmermann: *Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity*, in: *History and Theory*, 45/2006, p. 30-50, p. 30. (=Werner/Zimmermann 2006)



social science and for overcoming the traditional comparison on a national level for years.<sup>12</sup> Even though that is true, they were not the first ones calling for that in scholarship. Therefore they should be seen more as successors of scientists who already tried to establish a global perspective for objects and methods in social science and humanities decades before, like Fernand Braudel or Immanuel Wallerstein. This does not mean that Werner and Zimmermann are simply copying ideas, but when talking about *Histoire Croisée*, it has to be clear that basic ideas of global historical approaches already existed before. Therefore we can see *Histoire Croisée* as an advanced try to create a tool, with which the scientists are able to explain the complicated globalized world and its current issues. What makes the theories of the two French scientists so special, is first of all the massive emphasis of self-reflexion and a perspective, which is independent from the origin of the author and therefore to put behind the euro-centrist perspective:

*“Histoire croisée breaks with a one-dimensional perspective that simplifies and homogenizes, in favor of a multidimensional approach that acknowledges plurality and the complex configurations that result from it. Accordingly, entities and objects of research are not merely considered in relation to one another but also through one another, in terms of relationship, interactions, and circulation”*<sup>13</sup>

We can see here that Werner and Zimmermann especially criticize the traditional social science and humanities for their one-dimensional approach, which leads to simplification and homogenization. As a solution they call for a view based on multiple perspectives during the research. Also, they want to focus on interactions between the compared objects, because through that the objects would influence each other and thus the character and attributes of them get influenced as well. The theory of *Histoire Croisée* is not only an interesting new approach, but also an up to date reaction to a changing world. The aim of social science and humanities is to explain current and historical events as well as possible. Therefore, whether the world changes then we as scientists have to react on that as well to be still able to explain the events around us.<sup>14</sup>

Even though the theory might be useful in theory, in practice we have to ask ourselves how useful it is for our topic. Our right-wing movements act first of all within their national borders. Even by having international contact to other right-wing movements, we can guess for example, that the antisemitic Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Kahanist movement will never work

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<sup>12</sup> Werner/Zimmermann 2006, p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>14</sup> Bruce Mazlish: *Die neue Globalgeschichte*, in: Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte, 1/2002, Peter Lang, p. 11-22, p. 13. (= Mazlish 2002)

together. On the other hand, also following the ideas of Werner and Zimmermann, interaction between objects does not have to mean that they work together or act directly to each other. Indirect actions can be as influential as direct ones, but might be harder to find out. For example, whether a Klansman kills a member of a minority in the USA, the direct impact might be that the minority organizes itself in a paramilitary resistance group. This even happened when the Black Panthers were founded to protect the black population in USA as a reaction to violence against this minority. An indirect impact of our example could be, that minorities in other nations – and in a globalized world this could happen on every continent of the world – radicalize themselves or are somehow also influenced by the actions of Klansmen in the USA. Events do not need to happen in a globalized world anymore near or within national borders to influence people.

What would Werner and Zimmermann say to this example? Unfortunately, in the cited text they give us no examples to back up their concepts. Even though this is a result of the theorist nature of their text, they create because of that sometimes a lack of usefulness for the *Histoire Croisée*. Even though we agree with the need of a modern approach for researching a globalized world, we can also see some problems in this theory. It is for example hard to believe, that one can really have a true multidimensional and objective view on an object. We are all determined somehow by the environment around us, by personal opinion and experiences. It is only worth to try to see things from a different perspective, but always with the knowledge that we are restricted as an individual to language, culture and other aspects. Therefore the demands of *Histoire Croisée* should be seen as an advice and guideline, but not as a one-hundred percent realistic option. The limits of *Histoire Croisée* become also clear, because the authors miss to give deeper advice how to reach the goals of the theory. By criticizing older scholarship models and presenting new ideas, they do an important first step, but giving the base for oncoming new research is not enough. The character of their model is yet too general and it might need more explanation from them or more case studies following their model to get a better idea how it works in practice.

As already said, the method of comparison is for Werner and Zimmermann very important. This is why they also discuss some aspects and problems of it. Basically, they call for more comparisons in scholarship, because that would point out interactions and transcultural transfers better.<sup>15</sup> Here again they position themselves against the traditional nation state history approach. At the same time, they point out five problems which occur at any comparison:

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<sup>15</sup> Werner/Zimmermann 2006, p. 32.

- 1.Position of the observer
- 2.Scale of comparisons
- 3.Object of comparisons
- 4.Synchronic/diachronic problems of historicization
- 5.Interaction between objects of comparison<sup>16</sup>

As we can see, some of these points are already discussed by Kocka and Haupt. Werner and Zimmermann do not add decisive aspects to this discussion, but concentrate more on the problem of the position of the observer.<sup>17</sup> The biggest difference between the two author pairs is that Werner and Zimmermann call for a multidimensional perspective of the observer, while Kocka and Haupt accept that there is no perfect comparison due to personal limitations. For aspects like scale of comparison and the choice of the observer for the objects, the opinions are quite similar. All in all, the *Histoire Croisée* is an interesting and important addition to the already well argued position of Kocka and Haupt. Sometimes being too general and maybe unrealistic, it shows general problems of past and present historical research and is a base for future studies.

The last point we will discuss in this chapter is an interview of the magazine *Ab Imperio* with Matthias Middell, who is an initiator of the Global History Master study program at the University of Leipzig and who concentrates on the method of comparison in his studies as well. Middell also starts to explain the importance of globalization for the world and thus for scientific research. He especially pronounces the importance of new nation buildings and organizations like the EU, NAFTA or African Union, which bring nations much easier together in alliances than in former centuries. Also, he concentrates on the approximation of cultures, which has rose rapidly because of technical, economical and political aspects of the globalization.<sup>18</sup>

In comparison he sees a useful and natural way to deal with complicated topics as much as we use comparisons in our daily lives. Like Werner and Zimmermann he points out the role of the person who compares and remembers of important questions behind every comparison:

*“Comparison is a cultural technique we constantly use in everyday life, therefore it is only natural that it also enters historiography: first, comparisons made by historical actors themselves cannot but become objects of historical analysis, and force us to answer questions such as who compared what, at what time, for what purpose, and what were the results of this intellectual operation?”*<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Werner/Zimmermann 2006, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Matthias Middell. The Centrality of Comparison, in: *Ab Imperio*, 2/2007. p. 1-20, p. 6. (=Middell 2007)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

In opposites to Werner and Zimmermann, Middell argues that the aim to overcome circumstances is as much illusory as reaching total objectivity. Instead of trying that, he recommends more reflexivity by the authors and the public as well. At the same time he calls for a new research about the past by use of his recommended reflexivity.<sup>20</sup> This argumentation and demands are realistic and helpful. What is somehow dispensable is the call for new negotiations about the past. In every era historical topics are discussed and reinterpreted again. Therefore all interpretations and research about the past is always under the influence of methods, ideologies and other circumstances of the current era. So when Middell calls for new research on historical positions, he simply asks for using current methods and especially more reflexivity to review historical events. No matter how progressive one might use Middell's useful ideas, the outcome will be an early 21<sup>st</sup> century comparison. What we call today modern might be seen in the future as antiquated or too much influenced by big impacts on the environment of scientists, which is for the social science and humanities the globalization at the moment. Middell points out shortly but correctly that the changes of globalization are not just a change, but also a challenge for scientists to deal with and that the method of comparison is helpful in that way:

*“Therefore, not only the everyday experience of cultural differences, but the pressure to adjust and equalize within larger entities together require a much more intense reflection of differences and similarities. Thus, comparison and a more reflective understanding of transfer processes have become increasingly important to understand and act in the present-day world”<sup>21</sup>*

The a priori subjectivity of every comparison is accepted by Middell, basically for the same reasons as Kocka and Haupt pointed out. Neither can the choice of compared objects, nor the time scale and other decisions be made objectively, since there is no single objective solution for a comparison of historical objects. Also, there exists no single defined scale for comparisons, which makes asymmetric comparisons as much possible as symmetric ones. Different perspectives are not bad, but show different influences on the author, who therefore projects this influences on the objects and the comparison. With enough reflexivity and enlightened reading, this subjective influences can even be an addition for the scholarship.<sup>22</sup> Middell should not be misunderstood here as a relativist who is fine with all kinds of subjectivity, but as a realist who accepts the limits of every researcher. What Middell does not say, is how we can decide between a scientific good and bad comparison.

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<sup>20</sup> Middell 2007, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

Here we can just say, that a comparison has to fulfill the same scientific requirements as every other work and that the elements of it like used literature, sources, research question etc., vary as much from work to work and topic to topic like in every other kind of scientific work.

We have to conclude that the method of comparison is not for every topic and for all objects the best or even a possible choice. Scientists will be confronted with topics, which might be better researched with other methods. Comparison is not the methodological answer to all scientific problems, but a very useful one for a lot of them – and the best for our topic.

## 2.2 Right-Wing Extremism and the Globalized World

Political movements are always categorized within a political spectrum. Basic categories reach from left over middle and up to right-wing parties and groups. Inside that definition, there exist of course a lot of attributes a movement can have, which can not be easily put to one of these three general categories. Also, every category is split up in sub-categories like radical, progressive, liberal and many more. The general scale and circumstances of definition also vary from country to country. For example, while in Germany the liberal party FDP is considered especially as a liberal economic party, the Austrian FPÖ is just by name a pendent. The FPÖ is, in opposition to the FDP, mostly known for their nationalist and populist character and not for any kind of market liberal point of view. This is just one example how parties of similar names and – just in theory – same political spectrum can vary. The same counts for movements and other positions within the political spectrum, like right-wing extremism. Therefore it is important that we take a look on different aspects of right-wing extremism before we discuss our three cases in the following chapters.

To find the roots for right-wing extremism and nationalism is complex. The basic requirement for nationalism, the nation state, became since the French Revolution more and more the normal form of states in Europe and other parts of the world.<sup>23</sup> For the establishment of the nation state, a national homogeneity and clear borders were important. Minorities within the state had to accept a dominant culture, religion or other aspects of the ruling majority.<sup>24</sup> Even though the nation is the basis for the oncoming nationalism and its extremist forms, it is not automatically connected to right-wing extremism. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the time when most nation states were founded, racism and xenophobia were much less or at least much different than today. This might be also a result of the much more homogenous societies of that time, when the population of a European country was not confronted by a massive immigration processes like we have today. Just by time, the overemphasis of the own nation and nationality created an extreme form of nationalism, which led finally to the right-wing extremism we know today.<sup>25</sup>

To make a clear distinction between political spectrums is sometimes difficult and so is the distinction between nationalism and patriotism. Patriotism is often defined as a legitimate love of one to the own country, while nationalism is seen as an aggressive assertion over proclaimed national interests. This traditional definition is criticized by parts of the scholarship, like John

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<sup>23</sup> Mommsen, Wolfgang J.: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism*, in: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism in Liberal Democratic Societies*, Paragon House, St. Paul 1993, p. 1-18, p. 3. (= Mommsen 1993)

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

Breuilly.<sup>26</sup> He is one example for a critic of this definition, without presenting a better one. Instead of that, he tries to show how nationalism could rise as an ideology. Following his explanation, patriots were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France and England people who basically wanted to reform the political system to establish more democracy. This historical meaning changed over the decades and centuries. Today patriotism and especially nationalism is more considered with authoritarian political ideas or conservative democratic opinions. On the other hand, the democratic ideas of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were different from our democratic practice today. In a time when most parts of Europe were ruled by kings and had no democratic constitution, it was already progressive and even dangerous to demand democratic rights. Still, nowadays political achievements like the equal voting rights for men and women were not always part of the patriotic/democratic followers. For Breuilly, the fact that the term patriot means originally something totally different, namely a person who demands political reforms, is a reason for criticizing today's definition of patriotism.<sup>27</sup> This is a quite weak argumentation, because it is a common process, that terms change in their meaning due to historical circumstances. Also, social science and humanities have always to deal with definitions which are just accepted as one, but not a final way to find the truth. Unlike research in natural sciences, we have to deal with the behavior of humans, their changing social environment and thus an interpretation of unrepeatable processes. Therefore it would be better to say, that the term patriotism has changed over the centuries, but that patriotism is still a term which is clearly definable – as clear as it is possible for an historical term. To take another example, the term of democracy is also not definable for his whole historical meaning, because characters of democratic societies changed heavily over the time. The democratic ancient Athens was not of same democratic character as the democracies of the western world today.

Breuilly points out also some arguments which are less problematic. In his opinion nations are social constructs and the citizenship is a very important part of this construct. This is widely accepted in scholarship. He also points out, that nations just work with homogenous religion, language and culture. Breuilly argues, that a nation state does not need to have all three parts in a homogenous way, but at least one of them.<sup>28</sup> This is true for most of the nations states in the world, even though there exist some examples, which are heavily heterogeneous in some ways. Nations like Switzerland, Canada or India have a variety of spoken and official accepted languages. Other nations, like Nigeria, contain a multifarious number of religious groups, with no clearly dominant one. But even though these examples show, that variation on the level of homogeneity within nation

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26 Breuilly, John: *Nationalism and the State*, in: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism in Liberal Democratic Societies*, Paragon House, St. Paul 1993, p. 19-41, p. 19. (= Breuilly 1993)

27 Ibid., p. 20.

28 Ibid., p. 36.

states exist, most nations stick together by some kind of national agreement in social, cultural or political way. Breuilly points out, that even in heterogeneous nations a strong nationalism can exist:

*“Nationalism works because, under such conditions, it is a very persuasive way of describing the form of oppression and exploitation in order to create unity amongst a diverse set of groups occupying a particular territory, and also of prescribing a solution”*<sup>29</sup>

Within this quote the critical position of Breuilly to nationalism becomes clear. For him, nationalism is also connected with occupation and exploitation. Looking back to history, it has to be said that he often enough is proven right. On the other hand it becomes clear, that nationalism or at least patriotism can have positive effects on society, because of its effectiveness to unite people within national borders, even though the methods might be questionable.

Other authors are less critical to the general background of nation states. Wolfgang J. Mommsen argues, that the national identity itself is nothing bad, because it can give the people security and order in their life.<sup>30</sup> He also takes a look on current events and emphasizes that the model of culturally and ethnic homogenous nation states begins to change, especially in wide parts of Europe, because some nations are facing massive immigration. This should not be misunderstood as a general critique to immigration or even a right-wing point of view, but Mommsen simply wants to show the importance of the new generated influences and cultures by the immigrants as a result of the global migration processes.<sup>31</sup>

Not only because of singular immigration processes for every country, but also because of historically grown societies and their differences within, the reaction to new cultures and foreign influences can differ heavily and thus can the right-wing reaction. The theory of historically grown societies and cultures as collective identities was presented especially by Samuel Huntington and his *Clash of Civilizations* approach. For him, the world is separated into different culture zones, which create a similarity from the inside. The cultural borders mark therefore the boundary to the outside and foreign parts of the world. Conflicts exist mainly on the borders of the cultural zones, where the different cultures meet. The clash between them exists because of their difference which leads to the case, as Huntington argues, that people of different cultures do not fit together. In his point of view, Huntington does not ask for a change of these cultures or for overcoming possible clashes. The historically grown cultures should respect each other and try to live in peaceful coexistence,

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<sup>29</sup> Breuilly 1993, p. 33.

<sup>30</sup> Wolfgang J. Mommsen: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism*, in: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism in Liberal Democratic Societies*, Paragon House, St. Paul 1993, p. 1-18, p. 14. (= Mommsen 1993)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 17.



which is for every single one of them the most useful way to act.<sup>32</sup> Huntington's theories were widely discussed in scholarship, with both agreement and heavy criticism. However, some of the latest conflicts seem to disprove his theories. Even there are conflicts which are influenced by cultural differences, like the ongoing Palestinians-Israeli conflict, the majority of conflicts worldwide is still fought for other reasons, than mainly cultural ones. The current revolutions in the Orient, the civil war in Syria or the Georgian-Russian war were all not fought between culturally different powers – following the cultural borders Huntington defines.

That a lot of people are afraid of the influences of other cultures in a globalized world is also an effect of the ongoing migration processes. A typical fear of some people is that the own culture will fade away and at some point, also in connection with an ongoing global homogenization of lifestyle, a global mono culture will exist.<sup>33</sup> But again, the fear of the change of the own culture comes in this case from the fear of migration and the global equalization of daily and work life, of the dominance of global brands, the English language or the dominance of cultural aspects like Hollywood for the movie industry. The overemphasis of the own culture and the separation of it to other cultures let often forget that even within a nation and cultural territories – no matter which boundaries we see here as the true ones – huge differences can exist. How Albrecht Koschorke points out correctly, every society is full of differentiations, no matter how homogenous or heterogeneous. The huge number of possible differentiations and their combination possibilities lead to an uncountable amount of possible discrimination and advantage possibilities:

*“Es gibt ja im sozialen Raum eine große Zahl von potenziellen Differenzierungen, die sich keineswegs decken, sondern teils verstärken, teils schwächen, sich vielfältig überlagern, kreuzen, zuwiderlaufen usw. Im Prinzip sind solche Merkmale unendlich kombinierbar. Also ist es entscheidend, welche Differenzen aktiviert oder akzentuiert werden (z. B. 'Rassemerkmale') und welche insignifikant, sozial inaktiv bleiben (z. B. Links- versus Rechtshändigkeit in den meisten Kulturen)”*<sup>34</sup>

Why is that important for our topic? To compare the right-wing extremist movements with each other, we also have to know which kind of differentiations they discriminate, or better to say against which kind of people they are. Do they distinguish people for racial, religious, social or other

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32 Albrecht Koschorke: *Wie werden aus Spannungen Differenzen? Feldtheoretische Überlegungen zur Konfliktsemantik*, in: *Kulturen der Differenz – Transformationsprozesse in Zentraleuropa nach 1989*, V&R unipress, Vienna 2009, p. 151. (= Koschorke 2009)

33 Marin Trenk: *Weltmonokultur oder Indigenisierung der Moderne?* In: *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte*, 1/2002, Peter Lang, p. 23-39, p. 24. (= Trenk 2002)

34 Koschorke 2009, p. 251.

reasons? How are these parts of discrimination connected? Koschorke presents us the example of the American Civil War. He argues that rifts within a nation and therefore between culturally close groups can be created as well. Despite speaking the same language and having the same skin color – the huge majority of political and social leaders was white in that time – the rifts within the nation were big enough to lead to a war.<sup>35</sup> That Koschorke points out the importance of inner attitudes within a nation and the conflict potential it has might look simple on the first view, but at the same time it is important to remember that when we deal with right-wing movements, to look for racism is not enough. There might exist other kinds of attitudes which are fought by the movements we will have a look at.

While Huntington's model is heavily focused on the international level with cultural territories that are much bigger than single states, newly developed global history theories are more reflexive on the different levels of cultural influences. One historian who deals with the influences of global cultural transformations is Bernd Hausberger. In his article he describes the ongoing growing importance of organization structures and therefore the declining power of national borders.<sup>36</sup> In opposites to Huntington he does not distinguish between cultural areas, but emphasizes the importance of the complex relationship between the global, regional and local level. Hausberger recommends to research this levels for every single research object, because of their singular character. Foreign policy does not follow cultural attitudes but is a reaction of the challenges of the globalization with all its political, social and economical changes. The tendencies are for Hausberger mostly supranational, but he does not emphasize a special importance of any cultural borders.<sup>37</sup> Especially useful is the progressive view he has on global history and its meaning for our time. In opposites to other authors, like Francis Fukuyama whose *End of History* approach is more than jeopardized when looking on current events in the world,<sup>38</sup> Hausberger sees global history not as a short story of globalization as an historic event, but as the attempt to describe the current era we are all living in – the era of globalization. Therefore the global historical point of view is the most modern one within historical science and especially created for and needed to explain the current world events. Because all eras are limited in their length, the global history approach shares the same destiny. Global history is not the last, but today's view on the world from an historical

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35 Koschorke 2009, p. 251.

36 Bernd Hausberger: *Wann und wo passiert Globalgeschichte?* In: Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte, Martin Meidenbauer, 1/2007, p. 11-36, p. 11. (= Hausberger 2007)

37 Ibid., p. 11-13.

38 Nameley the decline of the USA, the rise of China and semi-democracies like Russia or the strong Fundamentalist movements in the Muslim world. All in all, the world did not become totally convinced by the model of liberal democracies and the end of the Cold War did not lead to some kind of end of history. Even though none of one knows what the oncoming century brings, we can clearly see that the liberal democracies are just partially successful and adopted by other states.

perspective. At the same time, Hausberger defines terms like world regions, civilizations and nations as highly constructed terms with limited usage and length:

*“Weltregionen, Zivilisationen, Kulturräume und Nationen sind hochgradig diskursive Konstrukte. Sie besitzen als solche aber eine rekonstruierbare Geschichte mit einem Anfang und vielleicht auch schon mit einem Ende”*<sup>39</sup>

Everything which has an end must have had a beginning. A justifying beginning for nations and nationalist often lies within a national myth. No matter whether we talk about modern nations or empires which faded away long time ago, a lot of them have national myths which tell about their creation. For the Roman Empire, it was Romulus and Remus, German nationalists used Herman as defender of Germany and even some of today's nations connect their history to mythical heroes or idealize historical persons, like it happens with Atatürk in Turkey. The role of myths is reviewed differently in scholarship. For some scientist they play an important role for nation building. This view is sometimes connected with the hypothesis that modern nation states are just mutations of older nations and tribes, which leads in connection with a national myth to a feeling of unity.<sup>40</sup> The different evaluation of myths in scholarship is also an result of the different meanings of them in history. Mythical roots do not lead automatically to extremism and the idealization of leaders does not produce people of nationalism. On the other hand, as we already have seen, the line between patriotism and nationalism is thin and one of the things which can have a decisive effect is an ideology.

The research about special cases of ideologies or ideology as a historical term itself is a huge topic and can not be presented here in its whole spectrum. What we want to do now, is to take a look at different approaches towards researching ideology, because the comparison of the ideologies will be a central topic for us when discussing our three chosen right-wing extremist movements. A very useful study about different types of ideologies was done by Kurt Lenk, who sees the term ideology as a often used one in the last decades, not only in social science anymore.<sup>41</sup> At first he discusses the theories of Karl Marx about ideologies. Following his ideas, ideologies can not be created intentionally but are a result of the political and material circumstances. Ideologies always follow particular political and economical interests due to the time, which means, following Marx,

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<sup>39</sup> Hausberger 2007, p. 31.

<sup>40</sup> Bruno de Wever: *Die Flämische Bewegung. Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung*, in: *Nationale Bewegungen in Belgien. Ein historischer Überblick*, Waxmann, Münster (et. al.) 2005, p. 73-105, p. 103. (de Wever 2005)

<sup>41</sup> Kurt Lenk: *Rechts, wo die Mitte ist*, Nomos, Baden-Baden 1994, p. 27. (= Lenk 1994)

that they are historically changing in their content, but not in their meaning: to stabilize an economic and political system against elements which might change this system to keep the status quo:

*“Ihr Inhalt ist ein historisch sich stets wandelnder; ihre Funktion jedoch ist stets die gleiche: Stabilisierung der eine Zeit bestimmenden ökonomischen und politischen Verhältnisse, ihre Abdichtung gegen Erfahrungen und Vorstellungen, die diese sprengen könnten – im Interesse jener, die an der Aufrechterhaltung des Status quo interessiert sind”<sup>42</sup>*

By looking back in history, we can see that this is one important part of ideologies. Historically important ideologies like national socialism or communism always had arch enemies they wanted to fight, to establish and stabilize their own systems. We could now count the main enemies of communists and national socialists, or basically just say that they were against nearly everybody who acted against their propaganda and ideology, even whether it was just supposed. On the base of the argumentation of Marx, Lenk tries to define different types of ideologies. For him, ideologies can be successful whether the supporters have the power to institutionalize ideologies. Or to say it with other words, they have to control organizational structures within the state, like the legislative process or the government. This is the way an ideology can become powerful. To stay powerful, they have to cover at least the needs of a part of the population.<sup>43</sup> These arguments are central and important to keep in mind while discussing ideological movements, no matter of which political attitude. It is impossible to define how much state power and how much support from the population an ideology needs to become powerful and stay in charge. This does depend on the circumstances within the state and not only on quantitative but also qualitative level of the support and institutions. Following Lenk's hypothesis, there exist four kinds of ideologies:

1. *Rechtfertigungsideologien* (justification ideologies)
2. *Komplementärideologien* (complementary ideologies)
3. *Verschleierungsideologien* (cover-up ideologies)
4. *Ausdrucksideologien* (expression ideologies)<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Lenk 1994, p. 30.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

Lenk separates them in many points, but mainly by their level of rationalism. The most rational ones are the Rechtfertigungsideologien. Lenk points out economic liberalism as one example for it and demonstrates the importance of rationality for the ideological argumentation. The aim of this kind of ideologies is to fulfill given premises as best as possible for the majority of people. Lenk argues that especially the liberal ideas of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> should be seen as examples of these ideologies. A central topic is the progression towards a better future and positive economic challenges. Rechtfertigungsideologien are mostly free of radical ideas and prefer coexistence with instead of annihilation of other cultures and possible competitors. This kinds of ideologies do accept the social reality and do not want to change it radically. Komplementärsideologien are also seen as rational ideologies, but with a bit less rationalism and more emotions. They also accept the social reality in general, but want to change it more radical. Lenk counts nationalism to this kind of ideologies. The nationalist, following the author, act rational but believing emotionally instead of following empirical proofs like the followers of the Rechtfertigungsideologien. Komplementärsideologien have an emotional core, which is their most irrational element, but their kinds of justification for actions are still rational, by accepting the emotional core as reality. This emotional core is in the case of nationalism the national myths, which we already discussed. Antisemitism and racism are seen as Verschleierungsideologien. Here the use of scapegoats to redefine social grievances is important, while rationality does not play a big role. Hate objects are used as a valve for the anger about social grievances, without pointing at the real core of the problem but just at the scapegoats. The victims are usually the minorities of the society, simply because they have less power and can not defend themselves against the ruling majority. Verschleierungsideologien do not present a objective view on socio-economic problems and differentiate because of their origins and not their real qualities within the society. Therefore, people are separated from birth on, which justifies at the same time the rule of one people, nation or race over another. The main difference between Verschleierungsideologien and the last one, the Ausdrucksideologien, is the missing attempt to at least justify the own actions. Instead of presenting a model for justification, Ausdrucksideologien simply believe in a world separated in good and evil and of course the followers of this kind of ideology see themselves as the good part in the world. They separate the rest of the globe in friends and enemies with nothing in between. The own society is designed to have no more social classes or casts. While forcing the inner integration that way, this ideologies lead automatically to outer expansion and aggressivity. A feeling of unity within the own borders and as a people community is central for this kind of ideologies. These highly irrational and aggressive theories, where just national myths and biological factors are accepted as arguments, are mainly a product of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and a extreme form of Komplementärsideologien and

Verschleierungsideologien. Lenk reckons imperialism and national socialism to this last form of ideologies.<sup>45</sup>

These definitions are discussable and we do not need to agree with all of the arguments and examples the author presents. For example, the difference between Verschleierungsideologien and Ausdrucksideologien is very thin and that antisemitism and racism are part of national socialism makes the separation even more difficult. Also, there exist different forms of the examples sometimes. Imperialism may have a common background for the different imperial powers in history, but its justification varies from time to time. Lenk's definitions can not precisely categorize all ideologies, but the idea to separate them by their level of rationality and other general ideas of him might be useful to discuss the character of different ideologies.

By researching ideological movements, it is not enough to take a look at ideologies, but we also have to discuss political social movements in general. Edwin Amenta and his colleagues present one definition for them:

*“We define political social movements as actors and organizations seeking to alter power deficits and to effect social transformations through the state by mobilizing regular citizens for sustained political action”*<sup>46</sup>

This short definition gives a basic idea, without answering all important questions. First of all it is not clear what are regular and in opposites to that irregular citizens. Is a political party a political social movement? whether yes, what is the difference then between a party, a protest group or terrorist organizations? What separates “regular” citizens from irregular ones? Also, the term power deficits should be understood as a relative one. What might be interpreted by one as unfair power conditions, is for other people a just system. This becomes especially clear, when we think of the general conflict of democratic and authoritarian groups. While the one wants equal power to all people and an elected parliament, the others prefer a strong leadership with less or no democratic elements. Therefore the given definition is not wrong, but in some aspects too general for separating political social movements from other institutions and organizations.

After presenting the short definition, the authors continue to explain how political-social movements work. These types of movements concentrate more on legal actions like demonstrations,

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<sup>45</sup> Lenk 1994, p. 32-36.

<sup>46</sup> Edwin Amenta / Neal Caren / Elizabeth Chiarello/ Yang Su: *The Political Consequences of Social Movements*, in: *The Annual Review of Sociology*, 36/2010, p. 287-307, p. 288. (= Amenta et. al. 2010)

civil disobedience or lawsuits.<sup>47</sup> This would mean for our three organizations that whether they have a terrorist character, they can not be seen anymore as political social movements. If they have a mixed character of legal and illegal actions, then it is questionable how they can be categorized. The authors answer the question how effective these movements can be, with the mixed opinions in scholarship, which reach from very powerful to nearly powerless. Unfortunately, this part keeps very general and does not present different examples. The hypothesis of the authors is, that not only the number of mobilized people but also the material mobilization is very important, first of all the financial support. This hypothesis is on the one hand important to remember, but on the other hand also obvious.<sup>48</sup>

A problem of the text is its general character, which might be also due to the fact that research on social political movements is harder than on other organizations, because the state of source is often a problem. Interesting is the argumentation of the authors, that political social movements do not have to be successful with their demands, but that sometimes the reached publicity is worth more for the future. Also, state actions do define current existing movements or lead to the establishment of new ones with adjusted character. Even though the influence of movements is hard to measure, the most important aspects are the high mobilization of people, which leads to a mass of followers, and the political influence, which can but does not has to be achieved by the size of the followers. To gain political success, having massive support in the population is just one way. If we think of examples like lobbying, it becomes clear that there are also other ways to achieve political power. Therefore social political movements can matter in different ways.<sup>49</sup>

A short categorization of right wing movements is presented by Ami Pedahzur. Following his argumentation, there exist three different kind of right-wing organizations: political parties, social movements and violent organizations.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately, Pedahzur does not present any argumentation for this categorization or define the differences between the structures. On the one hand, this leads to unexplained terms, but on the other hand, Pedahzur's text deals mainly with a different topic. Instead of concentrating on right-wing movements, he is discussing the reaction of democratic societies towards them. The central question for him is, how a democracy can effectively defend itself against right-wing tendencies and how much influence it should execute for

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47 Amenta et. al. 2010, p. 288.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid., p. 290-296.

50 Ami Pedahzur: *Struggling with the Challenges of Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism within Democratic Boundaries: A Comparative Analysis*, in: *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 24/5, 2013, p. 339-359, p. 341.  
(= Pedahzur 2013)

that on the society. He points out the classical conflict between guaranteed democratic rights like freedom of speech functions of the state, like the protection of human dignity. Similar problems are discussed since centuries, when Alexis de Tocqueville, John Locke or John Stuart Mill published about this problems.<sup>51</sup>

Pedahzur differentiates between three kind of democracies: militant, defending and immunized. Militant democracies are often under heavy attack from enemies who are threatening their existence. The impact on the democratic society is heavy, so that the state is harming his enemies even on the cost of democratic and liberal rights. The attack on the antidemocratic enemies is more important as the effort on a better socialization and thus the possible solution to destroy the roots of the antidemocratic behavior. A defending democracy is closer to the liberal tradition. Even against mighty antidemocratic enemies, the state normally respects the democratic rights for all members of the society. Under heavy attack the democratic boundaries might change a little bit, but never up to a point which is characteristic for militant democracies. Immunized democracies are the most liberal ones of these examples. The agenda of the state is to execute as few power as possible inside society and thus not even harm antidemocratic enemies. Possible damage of a state intervention against enemies within are seen as too high, which is why this kind of democracy is based heavily on checks and balances within a strong civil society.<sup>52</sup> The benefit of Pedahzur's democracy categorization for our topic lies withing the research of the environment of our three right-wing movements. With this approach it becomes clear, that the compared objects are also influenced by the behavior of the democratic society in which they live.

In the same text Pedahzur argues that *“Xenophobia, stereotypes, racism, and even violence should thus be regarded as almost structural parts of the modern democratic society”*<sup>53</sup>. At first, this might sound terrifying, but with a closer look on democratic – and of course antidemocratic – societies all over the world we have to agree to this view. Pedahzur does not mean with this sentence that he welcomes this circumstance, but no matter whether one like it or not it has to be accepted. At the same time the combined mentioning of xenophobia, stereotypes, racism and violence makes clear that they are or can all be connected. The question is how much they are or maybe even have to be a part of right-wing extremism. What we will do now is to take a closer look at and discuss the character of this political point of view, without aiming to present a final definition.

A first separation must be made between the different kind of right-wing movements. To call

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51 Pedahzur 2013, p. 339.

52 Ibid., p. 340.

53 Ibid., p. 354.



a movement or party right on the political scale, does not mean automatically, that they are connected with anti-democratic ideas or xenophobia. A light form of right-wing attitude is conservatism, which should not be mistaken as a right-wing extremist ideology. Conservative movements are “*movements that support patriotism, free enterprise capitalism, and/or a traditional moral order and for which violence is not a frequent tactic or goal*”<sup>54</sup>, even though this might have changed partially nowadays. So even though patriotism plays an important role, a conservative movement sticks to peaceful methods for keeping a traditional lifestyle under a capitalist economic system. In many ways, conservative movements are not even close to extreme forms of right-wing organizations, because these right-wing extremists are “*movements that focus directly on race/ethnicity and/or promote violence as a primary tactic or goal*”<sup>55</sup>. Another difference between these two groups, even though a more arguable one, is that extreme right-wing movements are mostly known for what they are against. They act with open hate and discrimination against minorities, homosexuals, current politicians in power and other parts of the society, but fail to present better solutions and own ideas for a positive development of the state.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand one could also argue that by presenting what a movement is against, it automatically presents in return for what it stands for. Whether a movement is for example anti-gay, anti-communist and xenophobic, it is highly likely to be sexually conservative and only accepting heterosexuality, pro for some kind of capitalist market based economy and for a homogenous society within its borders. As already mentioned at the beginning, the traditional categorization on the political scale into right, middle and left leaves a lot of space within the three groups and can even be imprecise enough to confuse.

An often discussed aspect in scholarship, but also in public life, for this issue is the closeness of right-wing and left-wing extremist groups, which are sometimes summarized and thus simplified as extremist of same character. Against this point of view is Christoph Butterwegge, a left-wing author. Butterwegge is criticizing the social-historical debates about extremism and totalitarianism as not differentiated enough. They would just try to classify movements and actions on a political scale, but not try to explain the roots of left- and right-wing ideology and thus fail to differentiate between them.<sup>57</sup> Butterwegge separates left- and right-wing first of all by their different enemies. Democracy and socialism would be the main enemies of the right-wing, while the left-wing is

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54 Kathleen M. Blee / Kimberly A. Creasap: *Conservative and Right-Wing Movements*, in: Annual Review of Sociology, 36/2010, p. 269-289, p. 270. (= Blee/Creasap 2010)

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., p. 271.

57 Christoph Butterwegge: *Linksextremismus = Rechtsextremismus? Über die Konsequenzen einer falschen Gleichsetzung*, in: Rechtsextremismus und Gender, Verlag Barbara Budrich, MI 2011, p. 29-41, p. 32. (= Butterwegge 2011)

mainly against capitalism.<sup>58</sup> This might be true for many movements of this two political scales, but not for all. As much as right-wing movements can also be against capitalism, left-wing ones can be for a kind of capitalism as well, even though not for a free market but with interventions of the state to create a social market economy. It is also Butterwegge's mistake that he sees comparison as a way to equalize things – which is a wrong approach as we discuss in chapter one. The author tries everything to avoid a right of existence of a comparison between left- and right-wing extremism. With a lack of real arguments, he simply writes:

*“Strittig ist bloß, welchen Erkenntnisgewinn ein Vergleich bringt, der Feuer mit Wasser vergleicht und beide womöglich auch noch gleichsetzt”*<sup>59</sup>

As already discussed in the chapter before, a comparison does not need to compare objects which are even close to each other. The popular connotation to not compare apples with pears is for the historical scholarship as useless as Butterwegge's fire and water example. Even if we find mostly differences between two objects, a small amount of similarities is enough to justify a comparison. For right- and left-wing extremism, this few similarities are given in the extreme character for both on the political scale and for the simple fact that they are a measurable object for political ideas and ideologies. A comparison between both extremist forms might even promote a better understanding of the differences between right- and left-wing extremism. In this paper we discuss similarities and differences between different right-wing extremist movements, which is why we want to stop the discussion between left- and right-wing comparisons now. To analyze left-wing extremist movements in a global perspective would be as legitimate as is it for their right-wing pendants.

There exist a lot of ideologies, movements and parties which are part of the right-wing extremist approach. But even within the thing corset of right-wing extremism, there exist differences which lead to partially different opinions within the spectrum. Therefore the characteristics of right-wing extremism can just basically be described with the preference of a strong authoritarian leadership, the hostility to liberalism, communism and socialism and the belief of being a guardian of a national identity, racial purity, religious union, historical destiny or something similar.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>59</sup> Butterwegge 2011, p. 33.

<sup>60</sup> Paige Whaley Eager: *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists. Woman and Political Violence*, Ashgate, Burlington 2008, p. 71. (= Eager 2008)

How difficult it can be to use a term correctly or to even define a term, is emphasized by Matthew N. Lyons and his example of the term fascism, which is a part of the right-wing extremist ideologies. At the beginning, Lyons is stating that “*Fascism is an important political category, but a confusing one. People use the word fascism in many different ways, and often without a clear sense of what it means*”<sup>61</sup>. Even though he is correct in this point, we have to remember that Lyons has, as the magazine he wrote for, a left-wing approach to the topic and is mostly discussing socialist and Marxist points. The author sees fascism as a tool of the capitalist system and part of the regression within this system. A basic question for him is what the differences between the regressions of fascism and other capitalist systems are. Besides his early neo-Marxist argumentation, his presentation about the character of fascism is useful and much more balanced. Socialist and Marxist approaches concentrate more on ruling classes of fascism and not the people or smaller movements.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, this approaches are less useful to use, because we will not compare fascist states, but organizations which are not in charge of any national parliament and have in general a different character than historical fascist leading parties.

Fortunately, Lyons does not just stick with past left-wing scholarship, but presents an own interpretation of the rise of right-wing movements in the last two decades. The reasons for this rise are mainly the collapse of the Soviet bloc and counter movements against left-wing revolutionary groups, plus the influence of religious fundamentalism in some parts. Also, he criticizes the acceleration of the capitalist globalization, which led to mass migration processes and the erosion of traditional institutions. With the decline of the Soviet bloc, the living standard became suddenly worse for the majority of the people within the former USSR. This led to increased criminality and the connected search for scapegoats due to the frustration about the economic situation.<sup>63</sup> For the counter movements there exist enough examples on the world, which do exist long before the decline of the Soviet empire. The radical right-wing troops of the Contras in Nicaragua, who became well known because of the affair with the same name in the 1980s, are just one example.

Lyons makes clear from the beginning on, that there is no singular definition of fascism, but that its character still has to be discussed to understand this political idea and its danger better. As part of the right-wing extremist political views, characteristics of fascism often overlap with other ideologies. The difference between nationalism and fascism is for Lyons before all the idea of national rebirth. While nationalism just concentrates on mythical origins, fascism also tries to partially go away from these traditions and emphasizes a new state and society. Fascism is seen here

61 Matthew N. Lyons: *Two Ways of Looking at Fascism*, in: *Socialism and Democracy*, 22/2, 2008, p. 121-156, p. 121. (= Lyons 2008)

62 Lyons 2008, p. 121.

63 Ibid., p. 123.

as an extreme form of nationalism, where the modernist part makes the biggest difference.<sup>64</sup> It is also pointed out that since the 1960s right-wing movements work more and more together on an international level. As examples the author points out the *National Socialist German Workers Party-Overseas Organization (NSDAP-AO)* and the *World Union of National Socialists (WUNS)*.<sup>65</sup> This is especially interesting, because right-wing movements do overemphasize the nationality and importance of own solid borders. Still they seem to be able to cooperate with other nations all over the world. The question here of course is how deep these connections are and how they are justified ideologically. An organization like the KKK might cooperate with white Europeans, but it is hard to imagine that the antisemitic Klan will cooperate in any way with the Jewish right-wing extremists of the Kahanist movement.

Another important development Lyons mentions is the increased influence of fundamentalism on right-wing movements. Since this growth the borders between fascist, right-wing and fundamentalist movements become more and more fuzzy. At the same time, Lyons criticizes the excessive use of the term fundamentalism around the last years, without getting clearer about this point. He concludes, that fascism is today much more modern and less bound to national borders than it was 75 years ago.<sup>66</sup> By asking whether we can still call it fascism if it changed so rapidly and combined with new influences like fundamentalism, the complexity of this one term and its character becomes clear. Historical terms are always a result of the scholarship and circumstances of the time within a society. Therefore it is no problem that we can not clearly define fascism, but it is necessary that we accept his complex character, which he shares with other right-wing extremist forms. In the following parts Lyons becomes more general and tries to explain the character of right-wing movements. He identifies the main method of every right-wing movement in intensified oppression against movements, which demand more equality and freedom for all people within a society. An important term for him is populism, which he defines as a form of politics with the aim to rally masses of people with some form of anti-elitism.<sup>67</sup> This short definition might be too general for deeper research, but shows the general character of populism. It is not bound to any kind of politics, but more a method some movements use constantly and some just from time to time.

By combining his views on right-wing extremism and populism, Lyons finally creates a description of current movements. Their aim is, he argues, the creation of a mass anti-elitist movement, which often covers racist conspiracy theories and which accepts violence as a tool

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>66</sup> Lyons 2008, p. 146.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

against the enemies. Right-wing extremist movements divide the society into producers and parasites, even though some people are, because of their biological origin, automatically seen as parasites, while people of the same race can still be excluded from being accepted as producers, whether they are of different ideological background. If the movement comes to power, then they clearly celebrate and favor one nation, ethnic or religion, while discriminating others or even attacks them. For mass and small organizations at the same amount, rituals have an important meaning. The organizational structures are marked by a top-down control and strict supervision over all institutions. Individual right, pluralism, equality and democracy are rejected and national rebirth is seen as the first step towards a glorious future. This is often connected with the demand for more territory and the destruction of enemies, which can be other nations, races, cultures and so on.<sup>68</sup> At the first look, this description seems to be a bit overloaded or questionable. But as a general guideline for right-wing extremist movements it is very useful, because it reflects the most aspects of this kind of movements. Even though we might be confronted with right-wing organizations which have some differences to that description, the majority of this attitudes fits for them as well.

What makes research about right-wing extremist movements important for our society, is their gain of power over the last decades. Not only in European countries like Norway and Belgium, but also in other countries like Canada or Israel, the growing power of right-wing parties is a significant event. Sometimes they even became a part of the government, as it is or was the case in Switzerland, New Zealand or Austria. On the other hand, as Pippa Norris points out, extremist parties failed to reach success, even though the circumstances seemed to be good for them, like in Sweden, USA or Great Britain.<sup>69</sup> Norris work is a research on the factors which help right-wing movements to gain success. She emphasizes that their success is independent from a lot of factors and national characteristic, which are seen as ideal for improving the power of the movements. It seems like that there are no ideal factors, because right-wing movements grew in catholic and protestant, liberal and conservative, welfare, democratic and former communist nations. Easier to figure out the factors of which the right-wing profits, is the fact that in 1980 just half a dozen extreme right-wing movements existed in western democracies, while today we face a multiple amount of them.<sup>70</sup>

Norris is also presenting a characterization of extremist right-wing parties. Following her argumentation, their most special aspect is the negativism. Instead of being for something, they are basically against the current politics and government, without presenting any real solution or policy

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<sup>68</sup> Lyons 2008, p. 149.

<sup>69</sup> Pippa Norris: *Radical Right. Voters and Parties in the Electoral Market*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005, p. 3. (= Norris 2005)

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 4-6.

for current problems. Promoted ideas are often unrealistic and full of populist rhetoric and resentments against minorities.<sup>71</sup> Ideology is very important for the parties and the people, and therefore the possible electors, are addressed very clearly with extreme paroles and demands. Extreme right-wing parties do not try to gain success in the most parts of the society, but depend on a huge success in a the extreme right-wing electoral market and a partial success in a mid right-wing sector. To secure their successes over a long run, a party needs a good working organizational structure. Otherwise the success might be lost in the next election and the party will return to insignificance. Following Norris, right-wing extremists are somehow able to organize themselves well, without having a huge financial or human resource support.<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately the author is missing here to present some examples and thus to prove her hypothesis.

In general, Norris is not worried about the rise of the right-wing powers, because their influence is still small. She is presenting ten reasons for the rise of the right-wing parties around the last decades:

- “ 1. *A postindustrial economy.*  
 2. *Dissolution of established identities, fragmentation of the culture, multiculturalization.*  
 3. *The emerge of growing salience of the sociocultural cleavage dimension.*  
 4. *Widespread political discontent and disenchantment.*  
 5. *Convergence between the established parties and political space.*  
 6. *Popular xenophobia and racism.*  
 7. *Economic crisis and unemployment.*  
 8. *Reaction against the emergence of New Left and/or Green parties and movements.*  
 9. *A proportional voting system.*  
 10. *Experience of a referendum that cuts across the old party cleavages* ”<sup>73</sup>

Some of these presented reasons seem to be quite logical, while some look at the first view discussable. For example, that a dissolution of established identities and cultures plus an economic crisis can promote xenophobia, is widely accepted. Other reasons like the proportional voting system and the postindustrial economy itself should be explained better to the reader. Unfortunately this does not happen. Therefore we will not discuss all the points here, but leave it up to the reader and further research, which should be based on empiric examples and statistics.

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>72</sup> Norris 2005, p. 28.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

What Norris presents in a much better way is the relation between immigration and xenophobia. By comparing different European and also some non-European nations, she points out in a convincing way, that the absolute number of immigrant and the percentage of immigrants of the whole population of a country are not automatically related to the general xenophobic opinion of the population. The amount of immigration does not create racism by itself. Also, the success of right-wing extremist parties is not representative for xenophobic tendencies within in the society. To take one example of her, in nowadays Germany, right-wing extremists have no big success. They never entered the national parliament and are even on the regional level not a constant factor of politics. Still, following the polls, Germans are average in xenophobic opinion. On the other hand, in Austria, where the level of xenophobia is nearly the same, right-wing extremism had and has constant success in national and regional politics<sup>74</sup>.

We could easily criticize Norris for using single aspects like migration, success of right-wing parties or the economic situation for her research of the success of the extremist. On the one hand, the success of a party of one politics in a country is always a singular event, due to cultural, historical and political differences between all countries. On the other hand, Norris is deconstructing popular explanations of right-wing success by using data collected in polls and elections. As a final result it becomes clear, that the rise of the far-right can not be explained easily and is has to be researched for every example again and again. Popular monocausal explanations which argue that immigration and a bad economic circumstances favor automatically right-wing parties are untenable, whether we look at the examples presented by Norris. They might be two factors who can turn electors from the middle to the far-right part, but they have to be seen always in the national context and under the special circumstances.<sup>75</sup> This is why in this work, we first take a look on the specifics of the nations and then discuss the national right-wing extremist movement itself.

Another point which has to be mentioned for modern right-wing extremism is the impact of fundamentalism on it. Hans-Heinrich Nolte is giving a short and useful definition of the term fundamentalism:

*“Fundamentalismus meint also die Bedingungslosigkeit eines Glaubens, der sich allein auf Glaubenssätze bezieht und keine Argumente aus dem Alltag, aus den Umständen gelten lassen will. Er hat zwar eine innere Bandbreite, fundamentalistische Aussagen sind aber jenseits der Ränder nicht verhandelbar”*<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 166-169.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>76</sup> Hans-Heinrich Nolte: *Weltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhundert*, Böhlau, Bonn 2009 (bpb edition), p. 65. (= Nolte 2009)

The compatibility of fundamentalism and right-wing extremism is possible, because of different similarities. As a lot of right-wing extremists, fundamentalists do not believe in facts and arguments, but in unprovable hypothesis. For both kinds of thinking, there exist some inner differences, but the main content is not negotiable and free of any kind of critic. Religious and political fundamentalist share the same kind of thinking, no matter what the content of their program is. For example, as Nolte points out, fascism also has its important historical role in global history because of its irrationality. Instead of an consciousness, the act itself is more important. A central term for fascism is the sovereignty of the nation. Without that sovereignty, a state building is not accepted as a nation. For fascists, this means mostly that a nation has first of all to conquer older lost territories or new ones, for gaining more living space, resources, power or glory. Battles and fights are not seen here as the last act of political will, but as a normal and everlasting part of life.<sup>77</sup>

How can religious fundamentalism and other forms of extremism then work together? Overemphasizing the importance of the nation does not exclude forms of religious extremism as well. Especially for nations, which see themselves as national buildings for a special religion, like Iran or Saudi-Arabia, religious and political extremism can fit together well. The role of religion within extremist movements is not the role as a counterpart, but as an addition to the rest of the non-religious ideas. In other words, a religious fundamentalist can also be a political fundamentalist at the same time and of course one can be as well just fundamental in a religious or political way. This makes the subject of extremism more various, even though the borders can overlap quickly and thus it might be hard for us sometimes to categorize extremist movements.

Some people like Francis Fukuyama believed in the rise of western democracy as the world leading form of government and thus in a secularization of the world. As Stella Rock argues, religions and religious fundamentalism rose in the last decades heavily, no matter whether in a highly developed nation like the USA or less developed ones like the countries of the Middle East.<sup>78</sup> Even though she might be correct with this hypothesis, it has also to be admitted that this depends on the world region. On the one hand, the last decades were full of religious conflicts, but on the other hand, a lot of nations show signs of secularization processes, which becomes visible in a declining number of registered believers for example. All in all we can say, that a lot of countries and their religious institutions face a conflict between modernization and religious tradition, which can lead to totally different results, no matter whether peaceful or not.

Rock continues to point out that religion is seldom the sole of conflicts, but often just used

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<sup>77</sup> Nolte 2009, p. 72-73.

<sup>78</sup> Stella Rock: *Introduction: Religion, Prejudice and Conflict in the Modern World*, in: *Patterns of Prejudice*, 38/2, 2004, p. 101-108, p. 101. (= Rock 2004)



for justification or to draw a curtain over the real reasons of a conflict, which are much more often of political and economical background. The importance of spiritual things like material goods, natural resources or trading routes are today as important as back then in history.<sup>79</sup> To classify a conflict as a religious one is thus not easy. The question is when we see movements as religious fundamentalist or conflicts as religious conflicts. Rock might be wrong when she writes that religion can never be the sole of conflicts, since there are some conflicts which can hardly be explained as mainly political or economical. When Muslims and Christians in Nigeria or Palestinians and Jews on the Temple Mountain in Jerusalem fight and kill each other, then we have to ask ourselves whether religion can not really be the sole of conflicts, even though political and economical interests exist do surely exist in these conflicts as well. As an historical example, we can also think of the discussions in scholarship about the role of religion and the general character of the Thirty Years War. And of course, as Rock points out well, monolithic religions are inherent within themselves and are interpreted since their beginning in many different ways. If one really wants to find a passage in a holy book for violence, then they will be successful. Topics of the holy books reach from peaceful to very violent, like in the Old Testament when the prophet Elijah slays hundreds of priests of Baal, or in the New Testament when it is written in Matthew 10:34 that Jesus came “*not to bring peace, but a sword*”<sup>80</sup>.

The last point we want to discuss is terrorism. This is, like religious fundamentalism, a possible addition to every right-wing extremist movement and does not stand in opposition to any right-wing extremist thoughts, even though it does also not have to contain them. Terrorism can come from any kind of political extremism and the right-wing spectrum is just one of them. A first interesting aspect is figured out by Rock, who writes that the term *terrorist* is just a label of the victims and main enemies of terrorist attacks. Terrorists do not consider themselves as such, but often describe themselves as freedom fighters or warriors for a just idea, by use of actions which are considered by them as maybe violent, but nevertheless just and necessary.<sup>81</sup>

A more detailed work on terror is given by Mark Jurgensmeyer. At first he identifies the main aim of terror in terrifying people. Coming from the Latin word *terrere*, which means to frighten or terrify, this seems to be quite obvious. This means that terror concentrates primarily on taking away the basic feeling of safety from people. A central aim of terror groups is to show that public safety can not be granted totally and that civilians can not move safe all the time through public space. The response of the public to terrorist acts is not a side effect, but a central interest of

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>80</sup> Rock 2004, 101.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 105.

terrorist groups. Sharing Rocks point of view, Jurgensmeyer defines terror and terrorists as terms, which are given by victims and never by the offenders. What distinguish terrorist groups from military ones is the missing military aim. Since they mostly fight against a stronger force, like the regular army of a state, they have seldom the power to conquer bigger territories or defeat the power they are against on the battlefield.<sup>82</sup> This counts for many terrorist groups, even though not for all. If we think back for example to the time of the Afghanistan Civil War, the Taliban also started as a terrorist group, but were quickly strong enough to conquer huge territories, until they took over the power in Kabul and established a national government. In the western world, it was thus seldom the case until today that terrorist groups could seriously compete with the national armies. One of the few examples where a terrorist group had seriously influence on the politics of a western nation can be found in Ireland, at the time of the Irish War of Independence 1919-1921. What makes terror so hard to fight, is the unofficial character of its organization, its guerrilla tactics and the support of at least small parts of the population and thus its half civil and half military character. This is what makes terrorist groups powerful, even though whether they might just have a small amount of support. No matter how strong a terrorist group is, we have to remember that they might not think in the ways of a regular army with military plans, but they have always an aim, which is connected with the liberation or occupation – that depends on the point of view – of a special area, or which is connected with the change of the social and political conditions within a territory.

Jurgensmeyer points out that terror is done mostly by extremist groups and a desperate attempt to gain publicity and influence.<sup>83</sup> The question here is, whether terror can even be done by a non extremist group, because terror itself is an extreme way to act, as Jurgensmeyer points out correctly. But even though whether we might find non extremist groups, which permit terrorist acts, it should be clear that terror is a first of all an aspect of extremist and thus important when we take a look on our three right-wing movements. One of Jurgensmeyers central research topics is religion within a sociological sphere. Therefore he is also connecting in his work the role of terrorism within religion. He identifies violence as a close part of religion since their existence and discusses some examples like martyrs, the crusades or holy wars in general. He also emphasizes that many great thinkers in human history have dealt with this problem, without finding a final answer until today:

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82 Mark Jurgensmeyer: *Terror in the Mind of God. The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, University of California Press, Berkeley (et al.) 2000, p. 5. (= Juergensmeyer 2000)

83 Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 5.

*“One of the haunting questions asked by some of the great scholars of religion – including Émile Durkheim, Marcel Mauss, and Sigmund Freud – is why this is the case. Why does religion seem to need violence, and violence religion, and why is a divine mandate for destruction accepted with such certainty by some believers?”<sup>84</sup>*

The ambiguous character of terrorists, that they are bad people for the one and heroes for other people, is not the only interesting aspect about terrorist movements. As Jurgensmeyer points out, terrorist acts might be permitted often by a lone person or a small group, but it is seldom a lone or small act. Not only the consequences on human life, economical damage and politics can be huge, but also the organization behind the terrorist attack. Mostly there exists a network of people working and planning together for a long time. Also, the influence of extremist groups can be immense, even though they might not work together directly. The cooperation within the network reaches from direct support or even taking part in the terrorist attack down to indirect influence like extremist propaganda. For our topic this means that the parties and movements, or better to say their members, can be directly involved in terrorist groups or they can influence them, even though they never met them, never had contact to them and maybe did not even want to influence them in a terrorist way. The influence of propaganda for terrorists is huge, because it needs a great believe in the own violent actions and the just character of them, even though people get hurt and killed. A terrorist needs internal conviction and the feeling of legitimization, no matter whether to God, a nation or other subjects with should justify the own actions. Right-wing movements and their propaganda can play thus here an important role, no matter how direct their contact to right-wing extremist terror groups really is.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

### 3. Ku Klux Klan

#### 3.1 The American Background

The USA are a special nation in many ways. No matter whether we look back in history or take a look at the United States today, we can see many singular characteristics. One of these characteristics was the whole story of their establishment. When the Puritan pilgrim fathers came to America, they saw themselves quickly as people chosen by God, whose mission is to establish an “*American Israel*”<sup>85</sup>. At the beginning most of the pilgrims came because of religious reasons and just few of them because of economic ones. After they had been victims of persecutions in many parts of Europe, they expected to live in this new territory in peace and free of religious discrimination.<sup>86</sup> Of course this does not rank among for all of the settlers. The belief of the superiority of the new land, as a nation chosen and preferred by God, was not a mass ideology until the United States of America were established in 1776. Since then the comparison of America with the ancient holy Israel as a promised land was a widely accepted event. Boundaries of the new state were not seen as a matter of political interests of the nation and its neighbors, also because there was no real danger by them, but simply as a matter of God's will. A kind of manifested destiny was accepted by wide parts of the intelligence and population as part of the character of the USA. The frontier to the West seemed to be open and just God should be able to mark where the future borders of the United States should end. The natives who were living in these territories were more and more fought, until their today's poor situation was created. Wide parts of the USA were since their existence characterized by a religious nationalism, which can hardly be found again in the western world of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>87</sup>

Even liberal poets of the American Revolution, who demanded a democratic republican order for the new state, overemphasized the meaning of their country and the unique character it had for them. Philipp Frenau, a poet of such character wrote in 1772:

*“A new Jerusalem, sent down from heaven, Shall grace our happy earth – perhaps this land, Whose ample bosom shall receive, though late, Myriads of saints, with their immortal king, To live and reign on earth a thousand years, thence called Millenium. Paradise anew Shall flourish, by no second Adam lost, No dangerous tree with deadly fruit shall grow, No tempting serpent to allure the*

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85 Steven Grosby: *The Nation of the United States and the Vision of Ancient Israel*, in: *Nationality, Patriotism and Nationalism in Liberal Democratic Societies*, Paragon House, St. Paul 1993, p. 49-76, p. 59. (= Grosby 1993)

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid., p. 62.

*soul From native innocence – A Canaan here, Another Canaan shall exceed the old [...] And such America at last shall have When ages, yet to come, have run their round, And future years of bliss alone remain*”<sup>88</sup>

We have no absolute numbers how many Americans felt this way in the mid and end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but following Steven Grosby it was the general thinking of the majority of the intelligence and widely accepted in public. Frenau is here an example of widely, even not totally accepted thinking of that time for a lot of Americans.<sup>89</sup> With this knowledge, it is easier to understand how the officials of the USA could declare the conquest and proselytization of the West as a holy mission. Nevertheless this shows the early religious fundamentalist and arrogant character of the United States. Even though being a Republic with a progressive constitution and by example for many future movements, which were for example active in the French Revolution, an imperialist character was from the beginning on a part of the system of the USA.

Very critical to the foundation and ideological politics of the early United States is William Pfaff. He pronounces the unique character of the American history and therefore the early nationalist character, which the nation has until today:

*“Die amerikanische Nation ist anders als die anderen Nationen. Ihr Nationalismus ist der einer ideologischen Nation. Ihre Geschichte ist eine Geschichte für sich. Sie läßt keinen Vergleich mit anderen zu, und deshalb ist sie von allen großen Nationen die nationalistischste”*<sup>90</sup>

These harsh words contain some problems and should be questioned critically. Through the last history is has to be proofed how nationalist other nations were, and whether we think back to the dictatorships in Germany, Italy, Spain and other nations, we have to seriously ask whether the USA were really the most nationalist one all the time. Also we should not forget, that the United States were more a coalition of different states than a central organized nation state. The freedom of the single states was greater than in other countries and so were the differences. On the other hand, whether we compare the USA with democracies and not authoritarian or totalitarian nations, the nationalism seems to be unique in its quantity.

What Pfaff points out better and more balanced, is the role of ideology for the foundation of the USA. He argues that the United States created an own ideology and that they had to, because

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<sup>88</sup> Grosby 1993, p. 66.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> William Pfaff: *Die Furien des Nationalismus. Politik und Kulturen am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Eichborn, Frankfurt am Main 1994, p. 173. (= Pfaff 1994)

all nations before were grown by a long history. The American history was too short to create a feeling of legitimized unity and could not look back to real historical or mythological events and persons. Only the successful War of Independence could bring justification for the existence of the state, but did not dissolve the social differences within the country. In opposites to other former colonies of Great Britain, like later Australia and Canada, the USA made their own existence violently and did not get it on the way of negotiation from their former colonial power. This led to the need of a strong ideology and at the same time to the overemphasis of the meaning of the nation, which effects were already discussed in chapter one.<sup>91</sup> This shows also, that nations can substitute national myths with new elements, like a successful war, and that these elements do not have to be back in the past for long time, but can be events of the current generation.

The the last step for the USA to finally became a nation was the Civil War, Pfaff argues. Since then the reunited nation always wanted to be a moralistic leader in the world. At the same time they continued their highly imperialistic maneuvers and deepened their view on themselves as being the chosen nation of the world. This exceptionalist views were the big difference from USA to other nations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even though other imperialist nations were assured too that they have to bring their higher culture to their colonies, like the famous “*am deutschen Wesen soll die Welt genesen*” slogan shows, the USA were the only power which was that much assured of their singularity in the world, while in Europe the cultural level was mostly seen as equal.<sup>92</sup> The biggest influence on the US view on the world and the own meaning had the so called *Social Gospel*, which is a Christian protestant view on the world and the life of people. It says that men can overcome the evil in life by developing their own existence and the environment around. For many of the religious in the mainly protestant USA, their own country was the best example. The immense development of industry, territory and power throughout the whole 19<sup>th</sup> century was for many a clear sign that their country is the reincarnation the Social Gospel itself. They also achieved highly moralistic points on the political scale, a lot of rights for the people in comparison with other states and a high living standard. For many, the life in the United States changed much faster than for the Europeans, who lived since decades or even centuries in monarchies without republican rights. By leaving out a deeper thinking about the historical reasons for that, many Americans overemphasized the meaning of their country and achievements. This lead for religious people to the belief, that it is their duty as a true Christian to spread the American system around.<sup>93</sup>

Reginald Horsman is also an expert for the history of the early United States of America, but concentrates more on the origins of American racism. He assigns the American intelligence of the

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91 Pfaff 1994, p. 174.

92 Ibid., p. 194-195.

93 Ibid., 195.

19<sup>th</sup> century a high progressiveness, but also an argumentation, which is mainly based on rational racism. The arguments themselves were mostly of biological or cultural natural emphasizing the superiority of the white Americans over other races.<sup>94</sup> There were different ideas from intellectuals how to deal with the situation with the Indians. Some thinkers simply saw them as a vanishing, subhuman race. Other were a little bit more progressive and believed the Indians could survive whether they accept the white protestant culture and mix their blood with the blood of the superior white one. Also, the American scholarship of that time had different ideas about the origins of the races, mostly saying that Americans are heirs of the central Europeans or just of the Anglo-Saxons, which were again heirs of the Caucasian race. This Caucasian race was from all time on the dominant one in the world and highly cultured ancient races like the Egyptians were a part of it. That Egypt was at that time also full of people of dark skin who helped building the pyramids, which were of high interest for the American intelligence, was totally left out. In the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this theory was improved and the legend of the sub-race of the Anglo-Saxons was created. These people were still be seen as a part of the Caucasian race, but the best one within. People of the United States, and of course just white ones, where again of this Anglo-Saxon race and therefore the superior race in the world. This biological superiority, the fundamentalist protestant ideas and the achieved social benefits were the core of the American supremacy feelings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>95</sup>

Racial discussions became from the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the leading topic for American science. If races exist or whether people even have different abilities to for culture and intelligence was never a topic in this discussion. The questions were just how many original races existed, who low the other races like Indians and blacks were or how the superior Caucasian race is split up in itself. Like already shown on the example of Egypt before, the whole human history was interpreted and rewritten again under the leading factor of racial aspects. A last huge impact on the discussion had the theories of Charles Darwin, especially his work *On the Origin of Species* from 1859. Even though some aspects of Darwin's theories were denied by the American scientists, like the biological relationship of men and apes, some other aspects were welcome arguments to underline the own theories. By interpreting Darwin's theories in an own and questionable way, the members of the racial discussion processes seem to have finally a proof of the superiority of the white Anglo-Saxon race. These parts of Darwin's theories, highly selected and misused out of the context, even fit with the evangelist ideology.<sup>96</sup>

Racism was an important part of American history since its beginning. There were just few

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94 Reginald Horsman: *Race and Manifested Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1981, p. 116. (= Horsman 1981)

95 Ibid., p. 118-126.

96 Ibid., 137.

progressive thinkers who could see the differences between blacks and white not from a biological and pseudo-scientific point of view, but from a social and more realistic one. One of these few examples is Thomas Jefferson, who wrote:

*“Nobody wishes more than I do to see proofs that nature has given to our black brethren talents equal to those of the other colors of men, and that the appearance of a lack of them is owing merely to the degraded condition of their existence in Africa and America”*<sup>97</sup>

One scientist who is pronouncing the importance of capitalism for the rise of the fundamentalist puritanical and protestant influences is Jim Sleeper. He sees a connection of the rise of capitalism within the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in New England, and the puritanical teachings of hard work throughout the whole life as part of a religious belief. This combination led to a massive individual striving, an aggressive economy and the will to evangelize other people. With the overemphasis of this point of view, the evangelists began to not accept everything and everybody that was different. The so followed xenophobia was not only aimed against people of different origin, like blacks or Asians, but also against white Americans who were not of the same religious denomination, like Catholics.<sup>98</sup>

With the Civil War and the victory of the North, slavery became forbidden, but that did not solve all racial problems. They even became more clear to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the blacks had to accept that the prohibition of slavery did not mean for them equality. In fact, the society kept being as racist as before and that was not only an attitude of the South. Even liberal politicians, who demanded the same rights for everybody, did not include black people into that. To be counted as a progressive thinker, it was enough to demand different rights for different races.<sup>99</sup> This shows basically two things: racism can work in democracies as well as in other forms of government and does not need special laws to be a big social factor, and also liberal politics and the demands for equality can have its borders, excluding parts of the society from being seen as equal human beings.

Racial and social problems were also a an important part of American history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the USA established a racist immigration policy, which was directly aimed against Asians and preferred Europeans, especially Swedish and other people, who would also fit well in any national socialist cluster of racial purity and superiority.<sup>100</sup> The 20<sup>th</sup>

97 Andrew Hacker: *Two Nations. Black and White, Seperate, Hostile, Unequal*, Maxwell Macmillan International, New York (et. al.) 1992, p. 25. (= Hacker 1992)

98 Jim Sleeper: *Liberal Racism*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham (et. al.) 1997, p. 156. (= Sleeper 1997)

99 Ibid., p. 175.

100Pfaff 1994, p. 207.



century and especially the three wars marked the rise and stagnation of American power. While with the First and finally with Second World War the USA could establish themselves as the leading world power, their racial problems did not go away. The rift within the self consciousness of America came with the lost Vietnam War, which was not only a military loss, but even more a moralistic one. It was the first time that the nation, chosen by God for many believers, was defeated and the image as the leader of the free world was damaged. But independently from the real power the USA had and have today, the patriotism and nationalism did not fade away. Even though the country seems to be not as powerful as it was before, its people seem to be still assured by its singularity.<sup>101</sup>

When the USA were a leading power in the world and the number one on the economical level, after the First World War, they already wanted to be a trailblazer for humanity, rights and morale. At the same time their society was full of racism, the KKK slayed thousands of people and the immigration policy was so racist, that it was even an archetype for Adolf Hitler.<sup>102</sup> After the Second World War, fascism was not in the mind of the people anymore and right-wing extremist could not connect themselves anymore ideologically with the former enemy, the Nazi regime. But racism was still present, which was also shown in the military, which stayed segregated by colors for some more time.<sup>103</sup> Black people were hold down by the system systematically. As a result of the slavery and the following segregation, including discrimination of blacks in job and public life, the majority of them lived even after the Second World War in ghetto like neighborhoods. Since the local schools are financed mainly by local taxes, this meant that not only the neighborhoods, but also the schools and therefore the education for the black children was poor and weak in relation to the neighborhoods of the white.<sup>104</sup>

But in opposites to earlier times, the blacks and other parts of the society finally started to act against the oppression. The famous bus action of Rosa Parks is often marked as the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement, even though there were resistant actions like that before. During the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement with its charismatic leader Martin Luther King and other famous persons and groups like Malcolm X or the violent Black Panthers, should achieve a lot of goals. Even though a significant number of famous members of the movement were killed, including King in 1968, they were able to change the system sustainably. One year after the assassination of King,

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101 Ibid., p. 207-209., The question of power does get nowadays new impacts, because of the NSA affair, but still the loss of power on the foreign policy field and the questionable status as only world power show a decline of the USA until today.

102 Nolte 2009, p. 70-71.

103 Richard J. Perry: *Race and Racism. The Development of Modern Racism in America*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2007, p. 177. (Perry 2007)

104 Ibid., p. 179 and Pfaff 1994, p. 211.

the Supreme Court declared the segregation in schools because of the skin color for illegal. During the time after the Second World War, the KKK was the biggest enemy of the Civil Rights Movements, even though there were various forces, mostly with racist background, who were not organized in the Klan. This shows on the one hand the meaning of the Klan in that time, but on the other the widely accepted racist ideas in America of the 50s and 60s.<sup>105</sup>

Unfortunately the successes of the Civil Rights movement did not mean that blacks became equal to whites in real life, even though they were it now on the paper. In fact, after the decline of the new leftist movements of the 1960s, the radical right was reestablished from the 1970s on. They showed more cooperation with conservative movements, which lead to successful political actions. Since the right-wing extremist are even in the USA, a nation with traditionally huge problems whether it comes to racism, quite weak compared to the two ruling political parties, they tried more to establish an indirect power and supported more right-wing movements like the Republican Party, whether they supported the same idea. With that tactic, the radical right could influence decisions throughout the next decades and until today, whether we think of the Tea Party movement. The biggest successes were gained on the fields of anti-gun control, anti-homosexual marriages and cutting social programs. A point which unites the radical and the moderate right groups until today is also the militarism, connected with a strong patriotism, or mostly better to say nationalism whether we follow the definitions presented in the first chapter.<sup>106</sup>

Even though a lot more equality was reached for the blacks in the 20<sup>th</sup> century than in the two before together, most of the researchers are very critical to the daily racism in the USA. Even laws which are at the first look very positive for the citizens, like the typical liberal American way of dealing with freedom of speech, the first amendment of the US constitution, can have a bad impact. The question where the freedom of speech ends and a discrimination and violation of the dignity of man starts, is from a eurocentric view quickly answered by taking a look at a legalized neo-Nazi demonstration, where not only historical uniforms and Swastikas are allowed, but also open hate speeches against Jews, blacks and generally everybody who does not share the own opinion.<sup>107</sup>

Some authors go so far to say that the discrimination of blacks is a will of the state. Even though that might go too far, we should guess that there are still a lot of racist tendencies within the politics of the United States of America. Andrew Hacker describes this as the daily spiral of racism in the USA. He gives a striking, but nevertheless imaginable and realistic example of racism against

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<sup>105</sup> Perry 2007, p. 181-182.

<sup>106</sup> Gross, Bertram: *Friendly Facism. The New Face of Power in America*, M. Evans and Company, New York 1980, p. 194. (= Gross 1980)

<sup>107</sup> Grosby 1993, p. 70.

black people. Data proves, that black people are much more poor in average than white people in the USA. Because of that, the percentage of blacks committing a crime is higher, which leads to massive social problems and prejudices by the rest of the American population against black Americans. This begins, to take the example of Hacker, with taxi drivers, who do not take blacks with them. This leads to even more desperation by the black people, which leads to frustration about the society and partially to even more crimes. Using the data about the permitted crimes, white supremacists can thus feel proved and present even average, non-racist and unpolitical people an feigned proof that the white race is superior and that black people steal more because of their skin color and origin. This starts a spiral of racism, disadvantages for blacks and thus poorness for many of them. Hacker also argues that the racism in America is a weaker and more modern one as the one of the Nazis in Germany. While the Nazis wanted to carry away and kill all Jews, in the USA they blacks are just discriminated and separated from the richer whites. Still there exist no concentration camps or something comparable, which does not make the racism in the USA any better, but shows the difference of racist ideas between a early/mid 20<sup>th</sup> century fascist state and a modern democracy. Hacker also points out, that the acceptance of blacks in daily life is much lower as in sport, where they are widely accepted and sometimes even dominant, like in Basketball.<sup>108</sup>

The liberalism in USA is not only manifested in the freedom of speech, but also in the handling with extremist organizations. Liberty is the most important factor in the American constitution, which is also a historical result of the Independence War and the circumstances in 1776. Protective parts are much less important as for example in the German *Grundgesetz*, which was established after the Nazi dictatorship and the horrible experiences of the Weimar Republic.<sup>109</sup> Other nations with democratic character do not even have a written constitution, like Israel, about which we will talk later. The liberality of the USA is a non equal one. By looking back to the history of movements which were directly against the order of the state, we can see that the US officials handled right-wing movements very liberal, allowing Nazis to march with all their signs and doing nothing to ban official national socialist groups like the National Socialist Party of America (NSPA). On the other hand, the state was very repressive against left-wing movements like (supposed) communist ones in the McCarthy Era or the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>110</sup> The American tradition of fighting racism lies more within the strong civil society than in actions by the officials. Even though we have shown the historical and current racist problems in the USA, there are also strong interest groups like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the American Jewish Committee or the Simon Wiesenthal Center which are fighting discrimination in general or for some particular

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<sup>108</sup> Hacker 1992, p. 20.

<sup>109</sup> Pedahzur 2001, p. 348.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 349.

groups. In opposites to extremist right-wing movements, this groups are lobbyists and therefore work more in a field, which is not objective of great publicity.<sup>111</sup>

That racial problems are not a problem of the past, but also of the 90's and the 21<sup>st</sup> century is widely accepted in the scientific field. One example how immense the problems especially with the black population, after the white one the second biggest group and growing by number, are became clear again with the Los Angeles race riots in 1992. After Rodney King became a victim of unjustified police violence and the police men, three white and one Latino, were released by the court as not guilty, the biggest riots since the Civil Rights Movement started, leaving finally over 50 people dead and destruction worth a billion dollar. What is often forgotten for these riots and forgotten for the current situation in the USA, is that the racial problems are not anymore a question of white against black, but got more complicated and could be described now as white vs. black vs. Latino vs. Korean.<sup>112</sup> That the riots were especially most heavy in Los Angeles was not only a result of the fact that the Rodney King case was within California, but due to the reason how the city was separated between the races to discriminate the different minorities:

*“Keine andere Großstadt jenseits von Johannesburg praktiziert so strenge Rassentrennung wie Los Angeles. Und keine Stadtverwaltung führt seit Jahrzehnten so konsequent Krieg gegen die Minderheiten wie die der südkalifornischen Megalopolis”*<sup>113</sup>

The comparison with Johannesburg, the metropolis of a state which described itself by the racist ideology of Apartheid, makes clear how big the problems with racism from official side were and still are. We discussed here a lot the discrimination of blacks in the USA, but should not forget that the other minorities share the same experience. That we concentrate here mainly on the black population is a result of their significant proportion on the US population and the concentration of the scientific literature on this minority. It was be interesting to know more about the situation of Latinos, Koreans, Irish and other minorities in history and today.

Within the scientific discussion, the racial politics of the USA are often criticized heavily. Nolte for example reviews today's United States as an example for radical nationalism and national fundamentalism, including racist drifts.<sup>114</sup> On the one hand it is pointed out that the former and current political actions are not compatible to any kind of democratic order. On the other hand it

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<sup>111</sup> Pedahzur 2001, p. 354.

<sup>112</sup> Adrian Kreye: *Aufstand der Ghettos. Die Eskalation der Rassenunruhen in Amerika*, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Cologne 1993, p. 28.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>114</sup> Nolte 2009, p. 69.

is interesting to see, that many scientists also pronounce the huge importance of inner peace and therefore the need for America to solve its racial problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some argue that a growth or even hold-up of the racist problems might lead to a more aggressive foreign policy to avoid inner trouble. This behavior would be not an American one, but can be seen in history again and again. Foreign policy issues, especially wars, can be used to concentrate the view of the masses away from the problems at home, to the problems into and with other nations.<sup>115</sup> If we remember the wars of America in the last decade and the current political problems with Iran or Syria, this explanation sounds quite convincing. Other authors emphasize the meaning of inner peace for the continuance of the current order and the democracy itself:

*“interaction between social groups through such forms as intermarriage and attendance at the same schools – these are all favorable to promoting that acceptance. Where these are not present, liberal democracies are always in danger of a breakdown into communal conflict when a major political or economic crisis occurs”*<sup>116</sup>

Others go even further and accuse the USA to have a disqualification or even reluctance of dealing with Afro-American culture and integrate them into the society. Opinions go so far to say, that whether the racial problems will not be solved within the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the USA as a nation will go under.<sup>117</sup> Besides all the fear of the oncoming problems in America, whether they can not solve their inner policy, the general rating of the future looks bad follow the literature. Richard J. Perry is concluding the opinion of the majority of scientist well, when he writes that:

*“Despite a few advances, the first few years of the twenty-first century offer little reason to assume that racism will disappear any time soon as an aspect of American culture”*

Racism is older than the USA. Even though we pointed out the importance of racial problems in the country since its foundation, we should not forget that it existed always at the same time in other countries as well. Nevertheless the racism in the USA seems to be a singular one, due to the history and social-historical circumstances of this early republic. The KKK was founded and still exist in a country, which had always huge influences of racism and fundamentalist protestant ideas. Without that knowledge, the history and ideology of the Klan can not be understood.

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<sup>115</sup> Pfaff 1994, p. 211.

<sup>116</sup> Breuilly 1993, p. 40.

<sup>117</sup> Sleeper 1997, p. 176, 182.

### 3.2 The History of the Klan

Today, the Ku Klux Klan is one of the most famous ultra right-wing movements in the USA.<sup>118</sup> Founded 1865 in Pulaski (Tennessee), the Klan is a product of the Civil War and the social circumstances of the former Confederate States in the South. The origins of the name come from the Greece for circle, *kyklos*, and the last word *Klan* was added because of the Scottish origin of all its six founders. This led to the invention of the neologism Ku Klux Klan. First founded as a secret society, the Klan soon expanded over the borders of the state to other former Confederate regions. From the beginning on, the masks and the decentralized organization were part of the character of the organization. Both features are characteristic for the Klan until today. The aims of the Klan were first not clear to all members, since they differed from each regional chapter to each other. It took two years to organize a national congress, where the former Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest was elected as first *Grand Wizard*, the highest title in their hierarchy until today.<sup>119</sup>

The violent actions of the clan, beginning with bullying up to murder, were first of all aimed against the black population, but also against white Americans, who supported liberal ideas like equal civil rights or the abolition of slavery. Besides that, the Klan attacked also members of the United States Army, which was the occupying force in the years of the Reconstruction Era. People who were indicted to work together with the *Yankees*, who the people of the Union States were called, also became victims of the Klan. Other minorities like Jews, Catholics, Irish or Asians were seldom victims of the Klan, whether because the KKK concentrated mostly on black people or simply due to the fact that these minorities were nearly not existent in the South at that time. The Knight of the Ku Klux Klan, how the members called themselves, were basically against everybody who tried to change the old conditions in the South for a more liberal and democratic society without slavery.<sup>120</sup>

Even though the Klan disappeared after just six years in 1871, his impact in the South was huge. Hard to measure are the aftermaths of the terror he spread in the towns and villages. The best observable impact the Klan had, came with the elections for the local and regional parliaments in the end of the 1860s. While the Republicans stood for the abolition of slavery and were considered by the clan as Yankee party, the racist Democrat party was still for slavery and ideologically close to the Klan. Therefore the KKK supported heavily the Democrats and tried to damage the image and

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118 Norris 2005, p. 6.

119 Fromm, Rainer: *Am rechten Rand. Lexikon des Rechtsradikalismus*, Schüren, Marburg 1994, p. 113. (= Fromm 1994)

120 Allen W. Trelease: *White Terror. The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction*, Secker and Warbourg, London 1971. p. 422. (= Trelease 1971)

support of the Republicans. Their methods reached from propaganda up to open terror and even murder. People who sympathized with the Republicans were attacked, beaten and had to swear to not to vote for the party, which was against slavery. In many counties of the former Confederation, the Klan dominated public life and was successful in weakening the position of blacks and liberals. Unfortunately there are no numbers about the real strength of the Klan, like the a list of members or how much financial support he gained. The problem became big enough, that the government in Washington could not handle it anymore. When the Klan faded away in 1871, he did it because his members were satisfied with the results of their work. The Democratic Party had decisively won against the Republicans in the South and the blacks were still far away to become equal members of the society.<sup>121</sup>

But even though the Klan officially stopped to exist, the terror went on in some areas for a while, even though it did not reach the same level as in the years before. There exist no exact numbers about how many people were killed between 1865 and 1871 by the Klan. One of the few trustful numbers for lynching is presented by Robert Thurston, who presents the following number of victims:

*“1882: 64 white, 49 black*

*1892: 69 white, 161 black*

*1912: 2 white, 62 black”<sup>122</sup>*

By reading the article and the argumentation of Thurston it becomes also clear, that the research on this base is difficult, due to the bad source situation. The only aspect Thurston adds to the topic, is that the reports about the mass killings of the Klan in the Reconstruction are not true and that the Klan did not kill thousands of people in this time. Unfortunately he does not present sources which proof that.

After its disappearance, the Klan was often glorified by the white population in the whole USA. Before rebuilt in 1915, a lot of novels and even movies appeared which dealt with the KKK, mostly showing him as a just and honest organization, which protects the interests and lives of the white population. Most of this media does not show any kind of the real brutality or the true character the Klan had. The most famous example of this glorification is D. W. Griffin’s movie “The Birth of a Nation” from 1915, which became the most successful silent movie of all time.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Trelease 1971, p. 419-420 , also Perry 2007, p. 192.

<sup>122</sup> Thurston, Robert: *Lynching in den USA in globaler Perspektive*, in: *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte*, 1/2011, p. 23-43, p. 31.

<sup>123</sup> Trelease 1971, p. 421.

Why the Klan became so popular can just be guessed. Maybe it was because of its secret character or the few famous members which were known and respected by wide parts of the population, like a lot of the former Confederate generals. Also, as we have shown before, not only the simple people, but also the intelligence of that time was highly racist and viewed black people, no matter whether they were for or against the abolition of slavery, as inferior human beings. Therefore the actions of the Klan, which were glorified, seemed to be legal for masses of white Americans. The wide acceptance is on the other hand surprising, since the early members of the Klan did everything to distinguish themselves from the accursed culture of the North. During the time after between 1871 and 1915, this seems to be forgotten by the new members and followers of the second Klan. Now, the Klan was used as a combining movement for all white Americans, no matter whether from the South or not.

The most important person for the reestablishment of the Ku Klux Klan was Colonel William Joseph Simmons. He wanted to recreate the Klan again as a fraternal secret lodge. Before that, he had already been a member in different other secret societies, like the Freemasons or the Knights of Pythias. His main inspiration to create a new KKK was his racism and the movie “The Birth of a Nation”, which let him finally become active.<sup>124</sup> During the First World War, the Klan did not gain greater attention, but from 1920 on the number of members grew rapidly. Between 1920 and 1925 the organization grew from some thousands up to four and on its highest point even five million members.<sup>125</sup> Finding out a correct number of members and generally better information about the Klan is again a problem here. This is a result of the split up character of the organization form, the weak situation on sources and the existing literature, which concentrates mostly on case studies in single cities or, as the biggest unit, on a state. A nationwide work about the Klan built on convincing sources is missing until today.<sup>126</sup>

To draw a picture of their power, we can take a look at the small town of Kokomo, Indiana in 1923. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the Independence Day in the USA, there was a mass organization of people. Numbers of participants of this unexpected huge event go from 100 000 up to 200 000. This is at least 4 times bigger than the city was. Also, Kokomo did not have any special meaning for this holiday. The parade was declared as a 4<sup>th</sup> July party, but organized by the KKK and first of all a festival of them and their followers. Even though not everybody of the guests was a member of the KKK, they were at least fellow travelers. Indiana was one the few states, in which the Ku Klux Klan was represented in every single of county, for Indiana 29. Kokomo is a good research

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124 Rory Mc Veigh: *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London 2009, p. 10., (= McVeigh 2009)

125 Fromm 1994, p. 115.

126 McVeigh 2009, p. 1-6.



example, because there exists a list of all registered KKK members, which was seldom the case. With its 3998 members, 28% of the whole white population of the city was a member of the Klan. Surprisingly might be, that women were also an elemental part and better represented as in some democratic parties at that time. The participants of the mass event did not only come from Indiana, but from all around the country. This shows the ability of the Klan of the 1920s to organize itself, even though the organization was as much decentralized as it was before and as it is today.<sup>127</sup>

The second KKK rose so quickly, that it had in 1924 more members than the biggest worker organization, the American Federation of Labor. It is often discussed in the literature how this rise could happen so quickly. There is surely not just one reason, but a combination of different circumstances. First of all the racist and protestant KKK was for many Americans who shared the Spiritual Gospel ideas an ideal organization. Even though a lot of radical protestants were against violent actions, they joined the organization which was successful in showing themselves as a civil group and not a terrorist organization. Also, the USA opened themselves a little bit up to the black population in the 1920s, which created more competition for jobs between black and white. This led to a radicalization of mid right-wing white people or even persons, who were before not racist at all. Beside this factors, it seems like that the organizers of the Klan also knew how to address the masses of the people and how to deal with the complex regional structure of the Klan.<sup>128</sup>

One impressive result the Klan could gain, was at the elections for the mayor of Detroit, at that time the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest city of the USA, in 1928. At a time when the NSDAP in Germany just reached 2,6% of the votes at the elections for the national parliament, the mayor candidate who was heavily supported by the KKK was elected by 30% of the people of Detroit. How big the influence of the far-right must have been becomes also clear, whether we remember that there were no socialist or communist parties in the USA, which were close to have any success.<sup>129</sup>

But in 1928 the KKK had already reached a point of decline. While having millions of followers in the mid of the 1920s, the Klan lost more and more members during the end of the 1920s and throughout the whole 1930s. Having around three to four million members in 1925, the movement lost until 1928 millions of members, so that just 700 000 were left. This number is still quite impressive, but even more impressive was how fast the Klan declined.<sup>130</sup>

The reasons for the decline were various. First of all, the Klan was unable to get a big influence into official politics. They never had an own party and thus they had to support the candidates of others. This became quickly a problem, while the KKK was following a non-

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<sup>127</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>129</sup> Nancy McLean: *Behind the Mask of Chivalry. The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York 1994, p. 104. (= McLean 1994)

<sup>130</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 181.

cooperation dogma, because the big parties were in their mind not radical enough. Neither Democrats nor Republicans became a favorite for the Ku Klux Knights. What happened was, how the case of Detroit 1928 shows, that single candidates on the local or regional were supported, whether they were radical enough. With that tactic, the Klan could influence elections on a small, but never on a national level. It even turned out, that for most members one of the two big parties was more important, than their membership to the KKK. Therefore the Klan lost after a while members to radical wings of the Democratic or Republican party.<sup>131</sup> Also, the Ku Klux Klan could not provide any constructive solutions for the problems of the time. By repeating the same racist and religious fundamentalist demands, the majority of the members was quickly disappointed. The content of the own program was weak and when a huge number of local political candidates was elected, supported by the Klan, a lot of members felt like the members of the first Klan in 1871 – the goals were reached and now it was time to leave the organization. The process of decline was accelerated by the behavior of extreme radical members, who permitted murders or rapes, like the Grand Dragon D. C. Stephson in 1925. With actions like this the racist, but nevertheless non violent members felt that the Klan is more a terrorist, than a civilian organization.<sup>132</sup> In the 1920s, the Klan described itself as anti-catholic and 100% American. The clear victory of Herbert Hoover, a man who was described exactly with this terms, over his catholic opponent, lead to the question:

*“Who needs a '100 percent American' social movement when a '100 percent American' president resides in the White House?”*<sup>133</sup>

For the founders of the second Klan, Hoover was not radical enough. But the majority of the members was not as radical as their leaders and thus the election of Hoover was satisfying for them. In the 1930s the second Klan was just a shadow of his former self. The members left more and more, which led also to a massive decline of income. In 1936 the Imperial Palace, the official center, had to be sold and 1944 was the year when the Klan went bankrupt. Because they were unable to pay back taxes, they dissolved quietly to escape the demands of the government.<sup>134</sup>

As a reaction to the Civil Rights Movements, the Klan was born again during the 1950s, but never gained back as much power as he had in the 1920s or 1860s. Especially in popular movies like *Mississippi Burning* or *A Time to Kill*, the Klan is represented as a strong power in social live. This might be true for few regions of the USA, but was since the 1920s never the case again. Today,

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<sup>131</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 184.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>134</sup> MacLean 1994, p. 97 also Fromm 1994, p. 115.

the representation of the KKK in the media is much higher than the real power of the organization. This might be also a result of the well known symbols, like the burning cross or the the robes and hoods, but is nevertheless a social construction, which does not fit with the historical reality.<sup>135</sup> McVeigh concludes this well when he describes the situation of the Klan today and at the same time wars of a new rise of the right, even though this might be different organizations than the Klan:

*“The Ku Klux Klan has survived into the twenty-first century, but it is not poised to become a formidable political force and, unlike in the 1920s, it is far removed from the American mainstream. America's values have changed, and so has the Klan. Yet right-wing extremist movements continue to rise and at time thrive in the United States and in other countries throughout the world”*<sup>136</sup>

The number of members is today guessed around 6000 and the possible fellowship of 200 000. This does not mean, that the Klan would be able to recruit 200 000 people, but simply that around that many people are guessed to sympathize with the ideas of the organization. In reality, the Klan is just able to arrange events with some hundred people, even though they are still of both sex and through all kind of age groups.<sup>137</sup>

Traditionally, the KKK was a split up organization, which was always a problem, but still no reason danger for the existence. Nowadays this has changed, due to the small number of members and thus the geographical distance between them. It became much harder for KKK members to meet each other in real life.<sup>138</sup>

This situation is the total opposites to the 1920s, when members even invented own rituals to greet each other and find out who is a true member of the Klan. Back that days, it was common to ask on the streets “Do you know Mr. Ayak?” and, whether one was a Klansman, to answer “Well, I know Mr. Akia”. Ayak stood for “Are you a Klansman” and Akia meant “A Klansman I am”. Also, a lot of rituals and ceremonies, which were very secret in the first and second Klan, were simply given up, because they are making it even more complicated to recruit new members. What kept nearly untouched is the general order of the organization and the titles. A national leader of a Klan is still called Grand Wizard and a state leader Grand Dragon. But even this is confusing, since the KKK is organized in chapters and no chapter has the duty to accept a single Grand Dragon or Grand Wizard.<sup>139</sup> One of the last times the Klan was in the news because of a terrorist act, was when the

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<sup>135</sup> Fromm 1994, p. 117.

<sup>136</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 201.

<sup>137</sup> Fromm 1994, p. 116.

<sup>138</sup> Raphael S. Ezekiel: *The Racist Mind. Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen*, Viking, New York 1995, p. 6. (= Ezekiel 1995)

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

FBI arrested three members in 1997, who planned to blow up a gas refinery in Texas. Even though this even did not get great attention by the public, the explosion could have killed up to 30 000 people.<sup>140</sup>

In scholarship, the indirect influences of the KKK are more of interest. Since it was found out, that chapters of the Knights even exist in European nations like Germany or Great Britain, scientist pronounce the importance of the internet for the organization. This would also fit to the general trend for right-wing extremists, who use the internet more and more. For the Klan this is especially important for two reasons. First, as we already said, the geographical distances in the USA are too big to meet and organize effectively with other members. The internet provides a cheap, fast and uncomplicated way to organize and communicate for the extremist. Second, even though the KKK lost the most of its power, he can still count on its high profile, famous symbols and history. This can easily be spread throughout the internet and attract people all over the world, without the need of much money or time. Blogs, websites and music – a factor that seems to be more and more important for the far-right – can be created and shared easily with others and may attract new members, even the expectations are surely not the same as they were for the first and second Klan.<sup>141</sup>

By looking up website which are directly connected with the KKK, we can see generally two trends. The first is, that the websites are blocked, hidden or not easy to access. A question here is, whether the KKK is mainly organizing itself through the open internet, or by secret access accounts.<sup>142</sup> The second is, that the majority of the open KKK websites is presenting the Klan as a close unit, which he is not and never was. Just Few websites are showing the user, that the presented Ku Klux Klan is just a small chapter of an organization, which has neither a headquarter, nor a central website, like for example political parties.<sup>143</sup> The split up character thus continues within the web and makes it nearly impossible to draw a complete picture of today's Ku Klux Klan.

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140 Perry 2007, p. 194.

141 Fromm 1994., p. 118.

142 Closed or non-accessable websites are for example <http://www.kkk.com> or <http://www.kkk.bz>

143 Examples for that are <http://www.kkkk.net/> and <http://kukluxklan.net/>

### 3.3 Ideology

As it was shown in the chapter before, the power of the Ku Klux Klan, the length of its existence and the number of members differed a lot. The ideological differences were smaller, even though not constant over the whole time. From the beginning on, the Klan concentrated his actions mainly against the black population and their supporters. In their ideology, black people were subhuman beings and only the pure white race was seen as true human beings. That they mostly fought blacks and not other minorities as well, lies within the fact that groups who were later attacked, like Latinos and Jews, were rare in the South during the Reconstruction. The first Klan saw itself as a movement, which want to go back to constitution, since they argued that the current society is not the same anymore as created by the pilgrim fathers and which is manifested in the declaration of independence. Also highly emphasized was the Spiritual Gospel and that the USA are a nation chosen and blessed by God. Therefore, the country needed special protection from in- and outside, which included racial purity and the dominance of the superior, the white protestant Anglo-Saxon race. In many parts the first Klan followed the popular racist argumentation of a wider public and the scholarship of the time. Therefore it seems to be logical, that they could quickly attract a lot of Americans. Slogans like “back to constitution” and the belief in the superiority of the white men were aspects, which were also accepted by mid right-wing Americans at that time. Pride of the own identity and an overemphasized patriotism, or nationalism, were from the beginning on part of the thinking of the Klansmen.<sup>144</sup> With the second Klan the general thinking did not change at all. The most important developments were the increased attacks on Catholics in Jews. Both groups were already hated by the first Klan, but the actions were much fewer, because the it was concentrated on the blacks. Even though dark people still were the main enemy of the second Klan, Jews and Catholics found themselves more and more discriminated by the Klansmen. The hooded Knights argued, that Catholics are the root of a lot of evil, even though they could not present deeper going ideological arguments for that. By defining themselves as a 100% American organization, the Klan meant to be white and native-born protestant. Catholicism was simply seen as incompatible with American democracy.<sup>145</sup> This part is interesting, because the second Klan did pronounce the importance of democracy and also the first Klan supported democratic parties and candidates, even though whether they were just extreme racists. This presents an opinion about republic democracy, which is totally different than everything we find in western nation buildings. The Klan never asked for a king, a dictator, some kind of leader or the cancellation of the parliament and elections. What

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<sup>144</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 2.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

might sound first strange, fits perfectly in the crude understanding of democracy for wide parts of the American population in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even by being a republic, while other developed nations should have kings and an undemocratic system for a very long time in the future, the American way of democracy was in their understanding just open for white people.

As simple as the argumentation against the Catholics was the argumentation as the Jews. Anti-Jewish prejudices, the connection with (pseudo)biological arguments and the so created antisemitism is much older than the first Ku Klux Klan. To say it with short words, the Klansmen used through their whole history the typical antisemitic phrases and prejudices and added nothing new to this kind of far right thinking. Following their ideology, Jews control the national or even world economy and politics, are full of greed, have special biological characteristics and have a historical guilt because of their killing of Jesus Christ.<sup>146</sup>

In fact, the ideology of the Klan is more a combination of an extreme version of the Social Gospel, the overemphasis of the own nation and typical clichés about minorities like Jews or black people. This, together with the mass organizations of the 1920s led scientist see the Klan in close connection to the Nazi ideology and organization and other forms of right-wing extremism of that time:

*“Not only in its world view, but also in its dynamics as a social movement, the Klan had much in common with German National Socialism and Italian Fascism. All three movements emerged from the crucible of world war, and grew in times of economic difficulty, class polarization, and political impasse. Each mobilized men and women from a broad spectrum of the population, but had particular attraction for the petite bourgeoisie”*<sup>147</sup>

MacLean is right when she compares the world view of this movements, but is generalizing the organizational form a bit too much. Especially the meaning of Social Gospel and the protestant character of the Klan are left out and can not be counted as similar to Germany or Italy, since this form of protestant extremism is singular for the USA. On the other hand it is true, that the Klan was able to recruit different social classes and both sex. The attraction for the petite bourgeoisie was not given as much for the KKK as for the political parties in Germany and Italy. Neither tried the Klan to establish a liberal economic program, nor did he have important sponsors out of the economy. If we follow the studies of McVeigh, we can even argue that the Klan was more an organization for the average people and less successful in greater areas, traditionally the center of the most important

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<sup>146</sup> Blee/Creasap 2010, p. 275.

<sup>147</sup> MacLean 1994, p. 101.

industry and economics. In his most successful years at the beginning and mid 1920s, the Klan gained the most of his members from cities with less than 50 000 people. Just around 25% of the Klan's events were held in cities with people of more than 50 000 inhabitants. In 1920 the USA had 144 places which were bigger than this amount.<sup>148</sup> In comparison to today, this relatively small number of just 144 cities shows also that there must have been an overwhelming number of towns with less inhabitants. Therefore, the meaning of the fact that 25% of the events were held in greater cities is questionable.

Another important point in the ideology of the Klan was the role of the women within the society. Females were seen as the keeper of the households, with an inferior character to man from birth on. Their role in life should not be the one of a worker or even careerist, but mainly as a mother, who is giving birth to a lot of children to save the existence of the white race. Today some chapters accept the equal role of women in society and the Ku Klux Klan. They are allowed to take part in violent actions as well and not just bound to organizational and supportive acts like it was in the two Klan's before. This may be a reaction to attract more women for the KKK, who might still have the same ideology as the women of the first and second Klan, but are much more self-confident about their role in society. It is also noticeable that the percentage of women in the Klan was and is higher than in many other right-wing movements and even than in a lot of democratic parties.<sup>149</sup> Women play also an important role in the racist argumentation against minorities. White females are seen by the Klansmen as good, which has to be protected from the lecherous black people. Also, like a lot of right-wing Christian organizations, the Klan is heavily against abortions. This act would not only kill unborn and innocent life, but also be a step against the protection of the white race itself, because they have to stay the majority within the USA. Interestingly, the Klan is not against abortions for non-white people. This is a difference to less extreme Christian movements and a result of the Klan's ideology, which sees the world as a place of constant struggle of the white race against all others. Here the similarity to the national socialist ideology is the closest.<sup>150</sup>

The Klan was always able to concentrate on new enemies while still discriminating the old ones. Starting with blacks and liberals, the second Klan concentrated also on Jews, Catholics and other minorities. During the McCarthy Era, the KKK spread its propaganda also heavily against Communists and left-wing forces. Bolshevik and again liberal ideas were denounced as non-American, while the Klan profiled himself as the only 100% true American organization.<sup>151</sup> Even though the addition of enemies to the own list was not against the own ideology, we can see this

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<sup>148</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 13.

<sup>149</sup> Paige Whaley Eager: *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists. Woman and Political Violence*, Ashgate, Burlington 2008, p. 71-72. (= Eager 2008)

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 83-84.

<sup>151</sup> McVeigh 2009, p. 183.

steps and the self presentation as the try to attract as many citizens as possible. The same counts for the traditional tactic of the Klan to downplay the own aggressiveness to the public, minorities and less radical members, but at the same time being part of terrorist acts and providing extreme members with support of weapons, training and other things needed to harm as many people as possible.<sup>152</sup>

Even though having sometimes a huge fellowship, the KKK was never successful in establishing an own party and could just gain success on the political level by supporting extremist candidates of the Democrats or Republicans. Scientist argue that this is not a part of the ideology of the Klan, who would liked to have a Knights party in force, but an effect of the strong two party system in the USA of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Even in areas where the Klan is, or better was, very popular, he is not able to influence the regional politics decisively. It is widely discussed in the literature, whether the Klansmen could be more influential in other democracies, where there is no two party system. But a final answer to that can not be given. A problem for the Klan is also the meaninglessness of direct democracy in the USA, which does not allow any populist campaigns to gain publicity and therefore more members and supporters. The KKK faced always the problem to be officially a secret society, but with the aims of a political party of mass social movement. Today this changed due to the low numbers of members and the Klan is left as a split up organization of racist extremists with no chance of influencing the public opinion.<sup>153</sup>

Research about secret, unofficial or basically groups who do not want to be in the focus of scientists is never easy. The same counts for the Ku Klux Klan. There are many problems in identifying this old, but nevertheless still obscure organization. This is also pointed out by Blee and Creasap:

*“Scholarship on the right faces unusual challenges of data and analysis. In contrast to progressive movements to which scholars often have access through personal contacts or their own participation, many rightist movements are so far from the political experiences of most scholars as to be mysterious, frightening and irrational”*<sup>154</sup>

Therefore, we can just see the trends of today's Ku Klux Klan. One of the latest changes was already discussed in the chapter before, the increased use of the internet. From the perspective of ideology, the only small change is that it is more and more concentrated on Mexicans as illegal immigrants and as danger for the pure white race. This reflection of the environment and the

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>153</sup> Amenta et. al. 2010, p. 292-295.

<sup>154</sup> Blee / Creasap 2010, p. 278.



addition of minorities to the own hate list is historically nothing new and just found with the internet a new medium.<sup>155</sup> Also new in the last decades is that Klansmen are emphasizing the topic of mixed couples, especially between black and white people, as a general problem. In earlier times, this was not necessary simply do to fact that mixed couples were not as normal as they are today. In the 1920s this topic did not need to be emphasized, even though the Klansmen were as much against it as they are today. A common trend is also the use of the Hitler salutations and Nazi symbols like Swastikas. These symbols have nothing to do anymore with the original democratic and “Back to Constitution” thinking of the first Klan. The ideology of Hitler, the NSDAP and other historical far right powers seem to fit well for today's Klansmen. The use of this symbols results in a wild mix of old Klan symbols like the burning cross and typical neo-Nazi attitude.<sup>156</sup>

Generally, today's Klansmen are missing an ideology, which makes them somehow special or even unique within the right-wing extremist spectrum. There might not exist any deeper going argumentation or work of any Klan member, which does present ideas which were not written more precisely before. Single aspects like the antisemitism, racism, white power feeling, rejection of drugs and pornography or the role of the women were all shown by other organizations before and often more effectively than the third Klan can do it today.<sup>157</sup> The rise of political parties in Europe has also to do with a charismatic, albeit populist, communication talent of their leaders. Here the Klan is totally missing the former ability to recruit new members, like he could in the 1860s and 1920s. One of the few examples of a politically successful Klansmen is David Duke, a Holocaust denier and former member of the Klan. He was elected several times into different state parliaments, but always as a member of a party, first Democrats and later Republicans. His KKK past was not part of his election campaign, even though his general tone was populist and racist.<sup>158</sup>

The situation for the Klan did not become easier in the 20<sup>th</sup> and especially 21<sup>st</sup> century. Not only that the society became at least a bit more modern and tolerant to other cultures and minorities, but also the concurrence in the right-wing camp grew. On example for that is the American Nazi Party, which cost the Klan members even in the 1960s, when the Civil Rights Movements was at its climax of power. Having the charismatic leader George Rockwell, who was assassinated in 1967, the American Nazi Party could establish a small, but loyal base of followers. In that time, the KKK could only count on his glory of the older days and the historical glorification he received.<sup>159</sup> Another problem of today but also of older times was that the Klan could hardly present a mass

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155 McVeigh 2009, p. 10.

156 Ezekiel 1995, p. 10.

157 Ibid., p. 94.

158 Sara Diamond: *Roads to Dominion. Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States*, The Guilford Press, New York and London 1995, p. 149. (= Diamond 1995)

159 Durham 2002, p. 52.

compatible right-wing position, because the politics of the two governing parties was already highly conservatism and so was the society. When the Klansmen opened themselves up to the masses, they got millions of members quickly. But when the true face of the organization became clear, the acts of violence and even murders against the declared enemies, the Klan went bankrupt. Even the – for the Klan quite moderate – attempts to create a third party together with other right-wing extremist groups failed in the 1960s and 70s. It became clear, that the two party system was too solid to have any success on the political field and that resources should better be saved for other projects.<sup>160</sup>

To sum it up, the ideology of the Klan is a one without a deeper going argumentation or any kind of own developed theories. It is more a combination of the unique Social Gospel thinking in the USA and typical racist motives from older times. Klansmen do not argue with facts, but with emotions and prejudices. The Ku Klux Klan might be still well known by a lot of people even outside of the USA, but this is just a result of its symbolic power and the appearance in popular media. How much the Klan is lacking of a real program today, is well summarized by Raphael S. Ezekiel:

*“All this is reaction. Holland (former KKK leader) cannot plan a program; there is no program, there is no strategy, for the same reason that there is no intellectual content. The movement is powerful because it contains all that bitterness; it is powerless because it has nowhere to go”*<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Diamond, 1995, p. 141-142 and 149.

<sup>161</sup> Ezekiel 1995, p. 120.

## 4. Kahanism

### 4.1 Israel, Zionism and the Jewish Religion

Israel is, as well as Belgium and the United States of America, a democracy. Besides that, the country has many differences compared with most democracies which go so far, that we can say that the general character of the state is singular in the world and very different from most western societies. It starts with the fact that Israel is the only nation on the planet where Jews are the majority and where the Jewish religion is defined as a central part of the state. Because there is no written constitution, the question whether Israel is a secular state can not be answered clearly, but we have to remember the huge importance of the Jewish religion not only for the current Israel, but also for the region of Palestine itself since two millenniums. In this chapter we do not want to explain and discuss the foundation of Israel and its origins, but the meaning of religion, Zionist ideas and try to draw a general picture of the political atmosphere in this unique society.

There exist different definitions of Zionism, which is also a result of the different opinions within this movement. The original Zionist movement was initiated at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with leading members like Theodor Herzl or Chaim Weizmann. Main goal was to create a Jewish nation state on the territory of Palestine. Zionism is often seen as a nation state movement and nationalist ideology. That its creation took place around the turn of the centuries was an effect of the growing antisemitism in Europe and especially Russia. Jews were within Europe mostly integrated well and saw themselves in a time of great nationalism first of all as Germans, French or Austrians and after that as Jews. Some of them even converted to Christianity. Nevertheless, they were victims of discrimination and in Russia even of pogroms. All these events lead to a growth of Jewish nationalism and the desire for an own Jewish state, where they could live without any discrimination. Even though first ideas by Zionists named areas in Argentine or Africa as possible places for the Jewish state and the attitude of solidarity was more important than the territory of the oncoming nation, the views of Herzl were quickly accepted in 1881. Herzl argued that a Jewish nation can only exist in Palestine, because the historical roots of the Jewish people lay here and Jews were the natives of this territory until the Diaspora. Because Palestine was back then territory of the Ottoman Empire, a Jewish state on this ground seemed to be far away. In the following time, Herzl was seen as the father of Zionism and a huge portrait of him was shown in 1948, when David Ben Gurion finally declared the foundation of Israel. Zionism, even though mixed with different

ideas from left and right, should be a leading dogma and justification argument for Israel until today.<sup>162</sup>

In the official doctrine, Zionism is perfectly combinable with a democracy. This was not only denied by religious fundamentalist and extremist right-wing groups, but also challenged by some scientist. The border between xenophobic, religious and right-wing groups is very thin Israel since its foundation. That is also a result of the big importance that the Jewish religion within the nation and its meaning for the establishment of the state.<sup>163</sup>

Jews are in so far special as they are considered as a religion on the one side and people on the other side. This is singular for the world religions and leads to a very special case. In Christianity or Islam, one may feel as a Christ and German, British, Swedish or Muslim and Lebanese, Indonesian or Iraqi. The roots of Jewish extremism lie within the Zionist ideology, even though Zionism is originally neither an extreme ideology, nor at any point racist and xenophobic. Still, a problematic aspect of Zionism and a misused one until today, is that the early Zionists wanted an Israel in the borders of the holy Old Testament. The question what the borders of ancient Israel were, is here only a theological one and in other faculties of sciences treated different. What forgotten or ignored was the fact that the land was already owned. Not only that the Ottomans controlled the region, but Arab people settled there for many centuries and had their roots in exactly the territory, that the Zionists wanted. These Arabs, who should be cast out after the won war of 1984 of the areas of their ancestors, are the people which are called today *Palestinians*. The will of the early Zionists to create *Eretz Israel*, the original Israel as it was described in the bible, was interpreted differently by diverse groups. Moderate Zionists were satisfied with the establishment of the first Jewish state in Palestine since over 2000 years, but extremist ideologists demanded the whole territory, which is as big as today's Israel, plus parts of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Therefore the problem of right-wing extremism in Israel is not the Zionism, but the extremist way of interpreting this ideology.<sup>164</sup>

The meaning of Palestine and Jerusalem with all its holy places was throughout the whole Jewish Diaspora seen as great. But just with the manifestation of the Zionism, Jews were able to present an ideology and organization, which declared the will to resettle in this area again with a more realistic input. It is part of the Jewish religion, that the Messiah will just return when the Jews will be back in the promised land. Knowing that this return is the final of the Jewish life on earth,

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162 McDowell, David: *Palestine and Israel. The Uprising and Beyond*, I.B. Tauris & Co., London 1989. p. 163. (= McDowell 1989)

163 Shai Bermanis / Daphna Canetti-Nisim / Ami Pedahzur: *Religious Fundamentalism and the Extreme Right-Wing Camp in Israel*, in: *Patterns of Prejudice*, 38/2, 2004, p. 159-176, p. 171. (= Bermanis et. al. 2004)

164 Adel S. Elias: *Dieser Frieden Heisst Krieg. Israel und Palästina – die feindlichen Brüder*, Droemer Knauer, Munich 1997, p. 182-186.

we may get an idea how spiritually important Palestine was for Jews, especially because they had no own state. Even though the early Zionist movement was not a religious fundamentalist one – Theodor Herzl and many others could not even speak Hebrew – there emerged soon messianic views about a Jewish state in Palestine. These religious orthodox views were often connected with a rejection of the democratic character of the future Israel. Instead of that, radical thinkers like Ben-Dov called around 1940 for a theocracy with a king as leader and a society, which should just contain Jewish people, while non-Jews were not allowed to enter the state. Ben-Dov was also active the next decades and became an important theorist for right-wing extremist Jews. His radical views can be seen as a link between fascism and fundamentalism, with the acceptance of political and violent actions against all non-Jews in Israel.<sup>165</sup>

Jewish people already lived long before the foundation of Israel in Palestine. Under Ottoman rule, Jews were accepted as a small minority of a few thousand within the borders of the Holy Land. After the Russian pogroms and a growing antisemitic atmosphere in many parts of Europe, the so called *Alija*, the Hebrew word for homecoming, started. While in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the numbers of Jews was quite small, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century a mass flow of Jewish immigrants reached Palestine. Reasons for that were for example the Nazi dictatorship in Germany and the Holocaust, but also the grown popularity of the Zionist ideology. Jews became more and more confident, that not only the USA, still most popular destination of Jews, but also the Holy Land, the biblical Eretz Israel, is a land worth living in. While the USA were attractive because of liberalism and a high living standard, the motivation to settle to Palestine lied within spiritual reasons. Nor was Palestine a rich region, neither was it secure, as the Arab uprising in the end the 1930s showed. The today's called Palestinians were afraid of the massive immigration of Jews in the 30s, which seemed to transform the region into a mainly Jewish area, like it is today the case. Therefore they started an uprising against the Jewish neighbors and the British mandate forces, with the only small result that the British restricted the Jewish immigration. After the Second World War, the British troops saw the fatal situation in Palestine, with open hostility between Jews and Arabs and withdrew from their mandate. This led to the creation of Israel, announced by David Ben Gurion and the start of the Jewish-Arab War of 1948, ending with a victory of the Jews. The conquered regions led to an Israeli state with a majority of Jews, but a huge minority of Arabs, also expelled in masses to the West Bank, Jordan and other regions. This and the complicated relation of immigrated Jews, Holocaust survivors, external individuals and the conflict between orthodox and secular Jews were problems of the early Israel. Combined with these inner problems was a constant atmosphere of hate and

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<sup>165</sup> Gershom Gorenberg: *The End of Days. Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount*, The Free Press, New York (et. al.) 2000, p. 116. (= Gorenberg 2000)

intolerance with all neighbor Arab countries.<sup>166</sup>

The situation of the foundation of Israel and the following developments, including different wars, is too complex to be shown here accurately. Nevertheless it is necessary to discuss one the most decisive events in Israeli, which defines the whole region with all its attitudes and conflicts until today – the Six Days War of 1967. In just a few days Israel gained its biggest victory of his young history, defeating a union of different Arab nations like Egypt, Syria or Jordan decisively. After the ceasefire, Israel was controlling a territory which left it four times bigger than before the war, including the Golan Heights, the Sinai peninsula, the Gaza Stripe, the West Bank and – spiritually most important – the whole city of Jerusalem, including the eastern part, before owned by Jordan, with many holy places for three world religions. Especially that Jews did finally own the territory around the Temple Mountain and could visit it again, seemed to be a holy sign for religious Jews. Combined with the massive conquests of the West Bank, also a part of biblical Jerusalem, and other parts of strategical meaning, like the Golan Heights, even parts of the secular Jews started to view the victory as a sign of God.<sup>167</sup> How great the meaning of the victory was is also pointed out by Gershom Gorenberg:

*“The Six-Day War did more than create a new political and military map in the Middle East. It also changed the mythic map, in a piece of the world where myths have always bent reality”*<sup>168</sup>

Not only that the war was a total success against the neighbors and a huge win of territories, but for the long term effects the reconquest of holy places for Jews after more than 2000 years was even more important. That this conquests should bring also big troubles with the Arab neighbor countries and as an addition inner conflicts was overseen for a long time in Israel. Today these inner and foreign conflicts overshadow the successes of 1967 and split up the Israeli society heavily.<sup>169</sup>

With the conquests of the new territories came not only a huge win of territory, but also the addition of many people, first of all Muslim Arabs. This transformed the Israeli society and territory into a various class model. For the controlled areas, which did not change instead of the given back Sinai peninsula to Egypt, there are two different kinds of Israeli ownership. First, there exist the original Israeli parts of the state, which Israel controlled since the Rhodes Agreement in 1949 after

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166 Baruch Kimmerling: *Boundaries and Frontiers of the Israeli Control System: Analytical Conclusions*, in: *The Israeli State and Society. Boundaries and Frontiers*, State University of New York Press, New York 1989, p. 265-281, p. 266. (= Kimmerling 1989)

167 Gorenberg 2000, p. 108.

168 Ibid., p. 111.

169 Bernard Avishai: *The Tragedy of Zionism: How Its Revolutionary Past Haunts Israeli Democracy*, Helios Press, New York 2002, p. 235. (= Avishai 2002)

winning the war against the Arab neighbor states a year before. A second kind of territories are all areas, which were conquered later. East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the West Bank follow an own control system. The population of today's Israel is even split up into three different kinds. Same and most rights have all Jews, no matter whether they live behind the *Green Line* of 1967, or in occupied areas. This first group is completed by the other permanent residents of Israel, who lived before 1967 in original areas of 1948. The second group, Arabs who lived in Israel behind the Green Line before 1967, has de jure the same rights like all other citizens of Israel. But de facto they are discriminated in daily life. On the one side, this means a lot of problems for them and their general living standard, on the other side this is also a great problem for Israel, since the number of Arabs within today's Israeli borders is increasing heavily. In 1948 there lived 160 000 Arabs within Israel's borders. This number grew until the 1980s to around 725 000 people and the trend did not change until today. The last group with just few rights are the non-Jewish people within the occupied areas, mostly Muslim Arabs. People, that are today known as Palestinians, live in these regions since 1967 until today under military rule, which leaves them with the lowest living standard of all groups inside the Israeli society.<sup>170</sup>

It is as widely accepted by historians that the Six Days War was as much a decisive military, as it is argued that the impact of these six days brought a lot bad results for the nation until today and that the long term effects split the Israeli society. The Jewish state was now confronted with a huge Arab minority within the own borders and did not well to handle the situation. As it was shown before, the Palestinians are still often second class people and far away from equal rights. Also, a lot of Jews were afraid that even though the power of their nation grew in 1967 immediately, the state might lose its Jewish character due to the growth of the Muslim population. How much the mood of the Jewish people changed can also be seen on the political level. Until 1967 the Labor Movement was the strongest political power, but declined after the Six Days War more and more due to their defensive strategy in military issues. Their total downfall came with the Yom Kippur War of 1973, when it became clear that the most Jews wanted a more radical and aggressive foreign policy. The Likud bloc could establish itself as a hardliner faction and thus reached the wishes of many Israelis. Especially because of the early successes and the huge losses of the Israeli army – in relation to their earlier wars and the size of the country – the people became more and more radical and some even racist, religious fundamentalist or both.<sup>171</sup>

Even though racist prejudices existed since the establishment of Israel, they increased a lot after the wars of 1967 and 1973. Bernard Avishai presents a lot of polls and results for that, of

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<sup>170</sup> Kimmerling 1989, p. 269.

<sup>171</sup> Avishai 2002, p. 263.

which we want to present some here. In 1977, 90% of the Jewish teenagers did not want to live with an Arab in the same apartment building and 40% not want to work in a company with Arab colleges. Arabs felt this discrimination and even 90% of the Arab students, normally the oncoming elite of a state, thought they have no future in Israel at all.<sup>172</sup>

These numbers present a society, that is not able to deal with itself and its multireligious and -cultural diversity. In general, Avishai argues that the problem of the discrimination of Arabs in Israel is not a problem of Zionism, but its extremist interpretation, which is widely accepted. One example for that is the investment of the Jewish Agency for economics and infrastructure in 1980, a time when right-wing parties and movements became or were already very popular. In this year, the Agency spend five billion dollar for developing the Israeli economy and helping Jewish families. But non of these dollars was given to Arab families. This is part of an economical racism promoted by the state itself, which aim is to hold down Palestinians economically and thus avoid there chances to take part in higher positions of the society. The discrimination continued when land owned by Arabs was taken for “public use” as it was pronounced officially. Since only Jews are allowed to own public land in Israel, which is in the hands of the Jewish National Found, this excluded Arabs more and more from territory, they were allowed to own. Today, non-Jews are excluded from 95% of the territories, whether they want to buy some. Therefore they can hardly establish bigger businesses of become successful farmers. This is even worse, because Palestine is a region which limited amount fruitful land.<sup>173</sup>

Discriminating is also the way, how Palestinians can get the Israeli citizenship. First of all, they have to proof a knowledge of Hebrew, a language which is very different from their Arab mother tongue, even though both are Semitic languages, and was not even spoken by all Jews in 1948. Also, Palestinians have to be born in non-occupied areas to have a chance for citizenship and proof that they have serious settlement plans, which is difficult to proof because they are not allowed to own most parts of the land, as just said. Last of all, even when they fulfill all requirements, they have no security in gaining the citizenship status. Another specialty of the Israeli citizenship system is that Jewish people do not get the status as Israeli in their passport, but the nationality *Jewish*. Arab Israelis, who were successful in getting the citizenship status, are marked as *Arab*. The Arabs are excluded from special financial and tax benefits, which are guaranteed by the state just for Jews. This highly racist system is not imaginable for a lot of other nations, especially in the western world and would surely lead to a protest of Israel, which is known for its harsh critique, but nevertheless accepts and promotes a racist system against the own Arab

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172 Avishai 2002, p. 318.

173 Ibid., p. 320.



population.<sup>174</sup>

When we argue here that the Israeli society is a split up one, we can not only talk about the difference between Jews and Arabs, but also between the different Jewish groups itself. It would be a big mistake to think about the Jewish people as a homogenous mass. In opposites to that, it seems like that orthodox, moderate and modern Jews drift more and more away from each other, creating also political and social problems. These different groups seemed to be quite united after the war of 1967. The unexpected and immense victory over the neighbors was seen by secular people as a great victory. Finally, the Jews could get rid of their image as victims, which were slaughtered 2000 years long with the Holocaust as horrible peak. For religious and especially orthodox Jews, it was much more than that. Wasn't the reconquest of big parts of Eretz Israel, including the holy Western Wall not just a sign of secular military power, but much more a signal of God? Was that maybe the final symbol for the arrival of the Messiahs, a central element of the Judaism? No matter how an individual interpreted the Six Days War for him- or herself, the victory was a uniting event for all Jews, even though with different meaning for various groups.<sup>175</sup>

This created unity was more and more lost with the growing extremism of the 1970s and 80s. For the first time in the history of the young state, the right wing forces became the biggest political power in Israel. First acts under their rule lead to an increased settlement of Jews in the occupied areas, but also to a discussion of how to deal with the occupied territories. Opinions in public reached from giving all back, even though this was seldom the case, up to annex them all. The only part no political party wanted to give up was Eastern Jerusalem, which had no big strategical, but an unmeasurable spiritual meaning, even for secular Jews. Right-wing extremist groups, like the Kahanist movement about which we will talk later, even called for conquering more regions in Jordan or Lebanon to recreate the mythical empire of King David.<sup>176</sup> Justified were these demands for an annexation or even more conquest not only with extremist interpretations of the bible or the Zionist ideology, but also by using comments of moderate Zionists. Even David Ben Gurion was used by right-wing forces, because he argued that the right of the Jews to own Palestine was 4000 years older than the rights of the Palestinians. This resulted not of Ben Gurion's personal opinion, but by simply taking a look at the holy books of Judaism, where God promised the land for the Jews, the only chosen people, and thus the Jews do not choose the borders but have to follow Gods will and take it. This argumentation can easily be interpreted in a violent way. Right-wing and even moderate powers were often united in the thought that it is not an option to keep the occupied

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<sup>174</sup> Elias 1997, p. 212.

<sup>175</sup> Gorenberg 2000, p. 111.

<sup>176</sup> Gorenberg 2000, p. 114.

territories, but a duty they can not reject because it is the will of God.<sup>177</sup> Here we can see how close the wills and arguments of moderate and extremist Jews sometimes are in the Israeli society.

Two other big events which led to a growth of fundamentalist positions were 1978 the Camp David Accord and the Intifada of 1987. While many Jews in Israel welcomed the results of Camp David, for example the normalization of the relations to the neighbor Egypt, right-wing extremists were against the accord. In their view, the principle *land for peace* of Prime Minister Menachem Begin was not acceptable and the Sinai peninsula should be kept as a part of Israel. But these were just extremist positions and the Camp David Accord was widely accepted within the Knesset, even by the rest of the right Likud bloc. How much land Israel should annex and how much settlement they should promote was as much a question of these days as it is today. More impact on the whole population had the Intifada of 1987. Moderate or even left-wing forces could hardly sensitize the population for the problems of the Palestinians and the complex historical backgrounds. Even Jews who were never part of any far right movements, became more and more aggressive against the uprising Palestinians and thus the power of right-wing extremists increased. A general problem when making a distinction between fundamentalists and right-wing extremists is the circumstance that these two kinds of extreme acting are often combined. Since a lot of political and military events justified by Israelis because of religious factors, the connection of religion and the far right is traditionally close. Therefore it is much harder to make a clear cut between religious and other forms of extremism in Israel and thus the borders between the kind movements can be very thin.<sup>178</sup>

That right-wing extremist movements could become so strong in Israel, is also a result of the inactivity of the governments against racist and fascist ideologies. This might sound first surprising, because the Jews were the people who suffered most under the national socialist rule and other totalitarian dictatorship.<sup>179</sup> On the other hand, discrimination by one or many other nations and movements against the own state, race or origin does not automatically mean, that the discriminated become more tolerant. Opposites to that, the old saying that hate creates hate and leads thus in a circle full it seems to be true. Or to say it in other words, the antisemitism of Nazi Germany and other nations against the Jews does not lead to an anti-racist characteristic of the Jewish society in Israel. Even though seen as a greedy and destructive race by a lot of racist all over the world, Jews can be as much racist as every other people and every other religion. The only difference is that the Jewish racism has other enemies and maybe another, more religious, justification. In opposites to the USA, which has especially strong Jewish anti-discrimination groups, philanthropic organizations are weak in Israel and concentrate mainly on keeping away antisemitism, while not

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<sup>177</sup> Elias 1997, p. 188.

<sup>178</sup> Bermani et. al. 2004, p. 160-162.

<sup>179</sup> Pedahzur 2001, p. 355.

caring a lot for Arab population.<sup>180</sup>

By describing all these discrimination, we should not forget that Israel is still a democratic, pluralistic nation and much more liberal than all its neighbors. It has no king or other almighty leader and free elections. It would be also false to compare the situation of Israel with the rest of the western world, because no nation in Europe or other high developed countries have such a critical geographical status as the Jewish state. From the foundation until today, Israel is surrounded by enemies, even though they became less the last decades or at least changed their character. The society is much more split up, which has various historical reasons, as it was already shown here. The way Israel often handles its problems, especially the discrimination of the Palestinians, is against any kind of democratic order and basic human rights. If we describe the character of Israel's actions in the inner policy, we can follow the model of Judith Shuval. She describes split up societies, like the Israeli ones, as models of constant battle. The stronger social group, here the Jews, try to control the society and the mechanisms of the state. That parts of the society are discriminated is nothing special, but the question is who is how much discriminated and how many percentage of the society is the discriminated minority. Even in very liberal democracies, some parts of the population are excluded from parts of the society.<sup>181</sup> As an example we can see the censorship of national socialist propaganda, symbols and parties in most parts of Europe. Therefore exclusion does not need to be something bad automatically, because also democracies have to defend themselves, but are often aimed against a huge part of the population in dictatorships or difficult democracies like Israel.

Whether Israel will continue to exist as a democracy is for many scientist not clear at all. Baruch Kimmerling for example argues, that it is highly questionable whether Israel will continue in its current order, since not only the territory but also the society and the world around Israel has changed. That Kimmerling's work is from 1989 is even more interesting, because the world has changed then again a lot and Israel faced a lot of new problems and wars. When Kimmerling writes that the Israel of the 1980s is not the same as the one of the 60s, then we must also say that for the 21<sup>st</sup> century it has surely changed again.<sup>182</sup> He pronounces the special situation of Israel in the 1980s, which is interesting since this was the most important decade for the Kahanism. Israel was then as much as today depended on the financial, political and military support of the USA. Helpful for that was also the strong Jewish lobby in the United States.<sup>183</sup> What Kimmerling misses to mention here, is that Israel also got back then a lot of support by other western nations like

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Judith T. Shuval: *The Structure and Dilemmas of Israeli Pluralism*, in: *The Israeli State and Society. Boundaries and Frontiers*, State University of New York Press, New York 1989, p. 216-234, p. 217. (= Shuval 1989)

<sup>182</sup> Kimmerling 1989, p. 265.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 274.

(Western) Germany. This has not changed a lot until today. Even nearly 15 years after Kimmerling published his text, his views are as current as back then. He describes the geographic boundaries as important, but the social ones as even more important. While geographic borders can be passed, even though they might be controlled well, social ones can be impossible to pass. Religious beliefs and skin color lead in Israel to exclusion, and that even more than the geographical differences. A simple example is, that a Jew in the occupied West Bank has much more rights than an average Arab on the official state territory of Israel. A law that should be forgotten, because of its unique character in the world, is the homecoming law for Jews world wide. Israel promises every Jewish person in the world to come to Israel and automatically get the Israeli citizenship. This is just possible because the Jews see the area as a promised land – a highly religious justification so far for a secular state.<sup>184</sup> But the law is not just an offer for doing something good for Jews. Because of the growing number of Palestinians the huge amount of Arabs in the whole region, Israel needs as many Jews as possible to keep its character and not fall back to Arab character. The Jewish nation, which is by definition Zionist, has to resist the Arab influences from within and the from the borders. This explains partially also why Israel can not find a deal about the occupied territories with its neighbors and the Palestinians until today.

Following Kimmerling, there are three basic possibilities to handle the situation for Israel. A first one would be that Israel excludes all or most of the occupied areas and the majority of the inhabitants. This would lead to a much higher percentage of Jews within the nation but also mean a loss of huge territories and problems with the mostly extremist Jewish settlers in this regions. A second possibility would be to keep the status quo. Since this is mainly the case since 1967, we could say that it might be a possible option. On the other hand we have to remember that the history of Israel is still very young and that in history, even half a century is not a very long time. The question will be whether Israel is willing to accept or even capable to deal with this situation more decades. How much more wars with the neighbors, Intifada's or settlement programs can the region take? The last solution would be to annex the occupied territories. This would mark an end to all negotiations with the Palestinians and neighbor states, who once owned these territories like Jordan or Syria. A growth of power would be a short term effect, but might be overshadowed soon by mid and long term disasters. Not only that this decision could lead to another war with Arab nations, but also the image in the world public would be ruined. Actions of the UN against Israel would be possible, and it is questionable how even mighty allies like the USA would react.<sup>185</sup>

Interesting is, that a lot of Jews believe that the democratic character of their nation can just

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<sup>184</sup> Kimmerling 1989, p. 267.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p. 277.

be uphold with a majority of their religion. It is widely believed within Israel, that whether the Jewish majority skips, then also democracy will go under and the Arabs will establish a dictatorship. This view is especially accepted, since all Arab nations around Israel were kingdoms or dictatorships and just the young uprisings of the last years brought democratic elements, even no one knows how the *Arab Spring* will result in Egypt. The idea of Jewish majority keeping was not only promoted by right-wing Israelis, but is a normal thought of moderate and even left-wing Jewish officials like Shimon Peres, who said 1986:

*“That which guarantees the Jewish character of the State of Israel is first and foremost its democratic character: the necessity to remain a majority”*<sup>186</sup>

A quite recent research on Israeli politics and society was done by Shlomo Sand. In his work, which was criticized a lot by Jewish scientists but got widely recognized in other parts of the scholarship, he describes Israel as a second class democracy, like Estonia or Slovakia. It has not the quality of liberal democratic systems, because it does not guarantee equal rights for all its citizens. Therefore it can be counted as a truly republican state like the liberal examples Scandinavia. In opposites to them, Israel tries to define the national culture much more and defines what has to be part of the Israeli society. With its will to force minorities to absorb the national culture, it is more a nation like France.<sup>187</sup> Even though Sand points out here a lot of interesting and important aspects, his comparisons of Israel with other nations are inaccurate. None of these named nations is in the outpointed parts like Israel. Estonia and Slovakia do not exclude such an amount of people from elections and France is not forcing minorities so much to absorb the national culture. The circumstances are totally different. Only for Scandinavian states we can agree that they are indeed much more liberal, even some of them, like Denmark, show from time to time a liability for right-wing extremist parties. More accurate is the description of Israel as an inconsistent country, which is generally democratic and offers a lot of personal freedom for the majority, but at the same time discriminating a huge minority. Which was often at war, but always kept being a democracy, which has a liberal Supreme Court, but some laws which look like taken directly from medieval. An example for that is that marriages and funerals are not allowed to be secular, but have to follow Jewish tradition. All in all, Israel is a complex construct, in which right-wing extremism has its save place.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> MacDowell 1989, p. 176.

<sup>187</sup> Shlomo Sand: *Die Erfindung des jüdischen Volkes. Israels Gründungsmythos auf dem Prüfstand*, Propyläen, Berlin 2008, p. 430. (Sand 2008)

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 436-437, 444.

Up to this point we can see that the nation in which the Kahanist movement rose, was already influenced by a quiet short, but nevertheless eventful history. Right-wing thoughts, racism, political and religious extremism were already established long ago Meir Kahane created his movement. Therefore, the creation and rise of the Kach party was not the start of right-wing extremism, even though it was the beginning of a new extent of racism and xenophobia in Israel.<sup>189</sup> In the next chapter we want to take a look at the history of Kahanism and what kind of person this movement leader and eponym was.

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<sup>189</sup> Bermanis et. al. 2004, p. 165.

## 4.2 Meir Kahane and the Movement

The biography of Meir Kahane and the Kahanist movement is connected tightly. Therefore we have to take a look at the life of Kahane first to understand the history of the movement which is named after him. In a lot of literature, the Kahanist movement is reduced to only the political party *Kach*, Hebrew for *Now* or *Only so*, but this view misses the followers of the Kahanist ideology before the foundation and after the decline of the the Kach party. That is why we concentrate here on Kahanism, of which the Kach party is the main, but not the only party and movement.

Meir Kahane was born in 1932 in Brooklyn, New York. The first decades of his life he spent in the United States. His first acts of violence were committed by him when he threw tomatoes on a British minister in New York in 1947 to protest against the internment of Jewish refugees in Cyprus. This first registered action led to an early arrest, but was still harmless in relation to oncoming events. In 1955 Kahane became Rabbi in New York, but was already two years later expelled for his religious extremism. His followers called him a Rabbi until his dead. After the Six Days War, he founded 1967 the Jewish Defensive League (JDL), a paramilitary organization, which was officially founded to defend Jews mainly in Brooklyn and the rest of New York. In reality, they were a racist organization, which permitted first of all attacks against the black population of New York and even against the Black Panthers. Another main enemy was found in the communists and the JDL is considered to be guilty for plenty terrorist attacks against the Soviet Union or its allies, like the bombing of the embassy of the Soviet Union in New York. Also, the JDL arranged secret training camps for fresh recruits, in which the participants were taught in military and terrorist theory and practice. Meir Kahane's first organization was probably mainly financed by wealthy radical Jews in New York and had access to a huge number of weapons and logistics. Under the synonym "Michael King" he released his first books, which were mainly aimed against socialism and communism. In the era of the Cold War, the FBI became interested in Kahane and recruited him as a spy. His mission was to infiltrate communist and civil rights movements, in which he was not very successful. It is also guessed by many historians, that Kahane had good connections to the Mafia, probably the Jewish part in New York, which would also explain the huge support he and the JDL got. A central slogan of the JDL, which shows how martial the organization and Kahane was, was "*Every Jew his .22*"<sup>190</sup>, in connection to the handgun caliber .22. In 1971 Kahane was expelled from the Jewish World Congress. Even though the JDL had around 14 000 members at that time, the support of the FBI and his other dubious supporters went back dramatically. The terror of the JDL in

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190 Raphael Mergui/ Philippe Simmonot: *Israel's Ayatollahs. Meir Kahane and the Far Right in Israel*, Saqi Books, Lausanne 1985. p. 21. (= Mergui / Simmonot 1985)

New York was not anymore accepted by the state and strict investigations against him and his organization began. This is why he left the USA and went to Israel in 1971. There he could start quickly a new existence and spread his racist and fascist ideology in new movements quickly, also because of the Israeli homecoming law, which was presented a in the chapter before. Interesting to know is that Meir Kahane, who should become one of the most extreme figures in the history of Israel, was a confusing and riven person. On the one hand, he was a fundamentalist orthodox Jew, who was even to extreme for right-wing Rabbis. On the other hand, he was well known for his various sexual relations to women, without being married or in serious relationships. While preaching to his followers to live a simple life, he himself seemed to be more a playboy than anything else in his spare time. For a lot of average Israelis he was strange from the beginning on as a politician, because of his bright Brooklyn slang in his voice and his love to typical American but untypical Jewish/Israeli things like Baseball. In opposites to many other far right Israelis, he was not a settler or member of a Kibbutz, but for many Israelis a stranger from a the far away nation of the United States of America.<sup>191</sup>

The move to Israel changed the life of Meir Kahane, even though he kept and improved his own ideology. This found its expression in the foundation of the Kach party in the same year when he moved to Israel. But the 1970s were not a successful decade for the party and Kahane was more present in the public for other actions, but political work. In 1972 he was caught in the airport of Tel Aviv, when he tried to smuggle grenades and weapons from Israel to the USA. That he was released for just a bail of 10 000 dollar is until today mysterious, but was not the only time he could escape with a low punishment. Three years later he was arrested again in New York for supporting terrorist attacks of Jewish extremists and sentenced to one year in prison. Again he did not get a hard punishment, since he did not spend the year in prison but in a hotel in Manhattan with free food from the restaurant, all paid by the US government.<sup>192</sup>

All the arrests did not stop Kahane from creating new terrorist groups, like the TNT in 1984, and promote terror against the Arabs in Israel. The TNT group, in which many Kach members were active, for example became infamous when they attacked a bus and killed four people. But even before their foundation Kach members attacked Arab people and even whole villages, leaving often injured or even dead people. Meir Kahane used the same tactic as in the times of the JDL and said, that he welcomes the actions but has no connection to it and the offenders would act as private persons and not as members of the Kach party.<sup>193</sup> Following official statistics of Israel, between 1980 and 1984 there happened 380 attacks by Jewish fundamentalists on Palestinians. This lead to

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<sup>191</sup> Mergui / Simmonot 1985, p. 11-15, 16-21.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.,



23 dead and 191 wounded people, first of all Arabs. Another 38 were kidnapped and never found again. Kach members and followers were not the only, but a big part of these offenders. They did not only kill people, but also destroyed shops, cars and houses with bombs. Christian buildings were also the aim of the Jewish fundamentalist terror, even though its share in the actions is low.<sup>194</sup>

Before Kach could gain any popularity, Kahane was able to show himself and promote his ideas in the Israeli media. The biggest achievement here was reached in 1982, the first time Kahane was shown in mass media in Israel. As already negotiated between Egypt and Israel, the Sinai should be given back to its former owners. Israel also decided to destroy the settlements, which were just created some years before to not leave the Jewish settlers in the hands of the Egyptians. Starting in 1979, the evacuation of the Sinai peninsula was about to end in 1982. Even though the Sinai had for Israel neither the strategic nor the spiritual meaning like the Golan Heights or Jerusalem, some Jewish settlers refused to leave, because giving up once conquered land did not fit for their ideology. The most of the settlers gave up after clashes with the Israeli army and police or were dragged away with force. But a dozen of extremists barricaded themselves in a house and wanted to permit suicide, following the historical example of the mass suicide in Masada. Even the highest Rabbis of Israel could not convince them, which led to the incredible act of the Israeli government that they flew on own costs Meir Kahane from New York to Israel, so that he that could convince the settlers to not permit suicide. Since they stood ideological near to the Kach party, they listened to Kahane and did not kill themselves. This gained Kahane some respect in the far right scale and made him more popular to a wider audience of Israelis.<sup>195</sup>

In their first elections, the Kach party only gained 0,8%. This number of voters was gained again in 1977 and in 1981 they even fell down to 0,3%.<sup>196</sup> Not even the aggressive mood in the Israeli society helped the extreme right Kach movement to gain success. What should be not forgotten here is that Israel had at that time, and has until today, a huge number of older and more experienced right-wing extremist parties. On the other hand, the foundation of the new far right Kach party under the command of its charismatic leader Kahane was for many seen as a threat for the peace within Israel, even though they did not have any success within the first decade of its existence. This fear even increased when the Kach finally got 1,3% in the Knesset elections of 1984, which was not a lot but enough for one seat in the parliament, which was taken by Meir Kahane himself.<sup>197</sup>

The oncoming events stood in no relation to the real political power of the Kach, but attest

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<sup>194</sup> Elias 1997, p. 180.

<sup>195</sup> Pedahzur 2001, p. 352.

<sup>196</sup> Elias 1997, p. 168.

<sup>197</sup> Gorenberg 2000, p. 131.

the enormous impact the ideology of Meir Kahane had within the Israeli society. When the party leaders traditionally met the president of Israel, the head of state Haim Herzog refused to meet Kahane. This never happened before in the Israeli history, not even to other right-wing extremist parties. In the same year Kach entered the Knesset with one seat, Kahane was condemned by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. The political landscape of Israel is traditionally widespread, also due to the fact that there is a very small percent threshold and thus a split up parliament and government. But when it came to the Kach party, something happened that was very seldom. All parties in the Knesset declared the same: they do not want to make a coalition with the party of Meir Kahane. Not even one party of the far right was interested in a cooperation with them. Such an act has never happened before. When Kahane, the only member of the Kach in the parliament, spoke to the Knesset, mostly all members of the other parties left the parliament to boycott him. Therefore Kahane was forced to speak most of the time to a Knesset where nearly all seats were empty.<sup>198</sup> That was not the only unique action against Kahane. A big benefit for him and Kach was at the beginning his immunity as a member of the parliament. Covered with this juristic immunity he went more and more often to Arab settlements to provoke and discriminate the people living there with racist paroles. These provocations became so heavy, that the Knesset decided to take away the immunity of Kahane to be able to judge him for his forbidden actions. Until that time, it was very untypical for Israel that a member of the Knesset loses his immunity.<sup>199</sup>

One seat in the parliament was the best result Kach ever gained in its short history. Nevertheless a lot of Jews were worried about the elections of 1984. Especially the left wing emphasized the meaning of the election of Kahane to the Knesset as a disaster and a possible sign for the long term effects in Israeli politics. The magazine *Koteret Rashit* warned for example:

*“When the day comes, we may well say to our grandchildren that it all began in 1984”*<sup>200</sup>

Kahanism was already before the elections compared with national socialism and now the rise of Kach was compared with the rise of the NSDAP, which also started with a few seats but became quickly the dominating power within a country. But the feared rise of the Kahanist movement never happened. Again, the majority of parties in the Knesset worked together and established a more precisely defined law against racist political parties. Reasons for that were on the one hand the growing influence of Kach and at the same time the increasing terrorist actions against Arabs, which

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198 Mergui / Simmonot 1985, p. 23.

199 Ibid., p. 24.

200 Cromer, Gerald: *The Writing was on the Wall. Constructing Political Deviance in Israel*, Bar-Ilan University Press, Ramat-Gan 1998, p. 84. (= Cromer 1998)

were seen as a result of the Kahanist successes. There were different polls made, which lead to the assumption, that Kach would have gained a lot more voices in 1988, up to 10%, which would have made them the third strongest party.<sup>201</sup> But that was also the year when the new anti-racist party law was introduced, which allowed the state to forbid Kach to take part in the Knesset elections.<sup>202</sup>

In the following time, the Kahanist movement declined in popularity. Not only that it seems like that the Israeli population was searching for experienced parties during the first Intifada, but also because of other events. Meir Kahane himself declared the year 1988 as a year of serious decisions and redemption, but after it passed without any greater events, a lot of members left Kach and followers lost the trust in Kahane.<sup>203</sup> Two years later Meir Kahane left Israel for the USA because he neither had job chances, nor political ones anymore. There he was assassinated by a Muslim extremist in New York, after giving a speech in which he requested from the American Jews that they should move to Israel before it will go under, because of the inner Arabisation. The dead of Kahane did not only mean the end of the charismatic leader of the party, but also that the most talented organizer of money was gone. Kahane's fundraising contacts became almost legendary throughout the 1980s and stood in no relation to the real power of the party.<sup>204</sup>

After the dead of Kahane, Kach split up into the original group and the *Kachane Chai*, which were very similar in their program. Both were not allowed for the elections for the Knesset in 1992, even though other right-wing extremist parties were and could gain some seats. That they were excluded from the political level and could not show up with such a charismatic leader as Kahane was, led to a rapid decline of both parties.<sup>205</sup> Politically, the impact of the Kahanism was small with only a few seats in local parliaments and one seat in the Knesset from 1984-1988, but the real effectiveness of the Kahanist ideology lies within the daily life and the terror they spread. This shows, that political parties can be quite unsuccessful, but still have a great impact using media or terror, like Kahane did.

Even though the measurable impact of Kahane was small, his indirect influence could be seen even years after his dead. Shortly after his assassination, the rate of terror against Arabs by Jewish extremists grew rapidly, showing that the movement became even more extreme, even though with fewer members. Especially for Jewish extremist the dead of Kahane proofed them right in their belief, that Arabs are brutal subhuman beings who do not deserve to live in Israel. This led on the Arab side to an reaction and counter attacks of terrorist nature, with suicide bombings in Israel throughout the whole 1990s. The thus created circle of hate, terror and counter terror is not

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201 Pedahzur 2001, 352.

202 Gorenberg 2000, p. 131.

203 Ibid., p. 206.

204 Elias 1997, p. 169.

205 Sprinzak 1993, p. 134.

only, but also a result of the Kahanism.<sup>206</sup>

Today, the Kahanism is mostly connected in the mind of the public with the infamous massacre in the Tomb of the Patriarchs 1994. The assassin Baruch Goldstein was a member of the Kach party and good friend of Meir Kahane. He even was elected as a member of the local council and his social background as a middle class person and doctor of medicine shows, that terrorists do not need to be poor or out of social destructed environments. When he entered the tomb, which is holy for Muslims, he killed 29 Muslims and hurted another 150 of them with his rifle until he was killed be the masses.<sup>207</sup> How closely connected the Kahanist ideology and the massacre of Goldstein was, is explained by Juergensmeyer:

*“Kahane's ideas were also directly behind the thinking of Dr. Baruch Goldstein, who saw Kahane as a hero and who had been a loyal member of Kahane's political party. It was not a coincidence that Goldstein's grave was located next to Kahane Square, the locale at Kiryat Arba designated to honor the martyred radical rabbi”*<sup>208</sup>

In opposites to other terrorist actions before, the connection to Kahanism was obvious, which resulted also from the goodbye note Goldstein left, which shows how precisely he planned his act. As a date he chose the Purim Festival, a kind of Jewish Mardi Gras, which shows the religious background. The warnings of terrorist acts after the Oslo Accords were not taken serious by the state Israel at all. While the most parts of Israeli and worldwide public were shocked by this massacre, the Israeli far right started to celebrate Goldstein as a martyr for a just case, publishing glorifying books about him and building even a statue to remember and celebrate his actions. A poll in Goldstein's home settlement Machpellah showed how wide the acceptance was in parts of Israel for what he did. Around 40% of the interviewed settlers said, that the massacre was a positive event, 43% called Goldstein a hero and 63% said that the widow of Goldstein should be considered as a widow of a man who died as a soldier in duty and thus get a compensation of the state.<sup>209</sup>

As it is often the case, this massive terrorist act caused other terror as well and the Hamas took Goldstein as cause for another wave of terror.<sup>210</sup>

As a result for the political landscape in Israel, Goldstein's actions led to a prohibiton of the Kach and Kahane Chai. Even after all the horrible terrorist events and the racist and fascist ideas

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206 Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 58.

207 Ibid., p. 8.

208 Ibid., p. 53.

209 Raphael Cohen-Almagor: *Combating Right-Wing Political Extremism in Israel: Critical Appraisal*, in: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 9/4, 2007, p. 82-105, p. 93. (= Cohen-Almagor 2007)

210 Gorenberg 2000, p. 204-207.

the movements promoted, this was still partially seen as a extreme step by some Israelis of the government. Before Kach and Kachane Chai, only the anti-Jewish Eld-Ard party was forbidden in 1964, because it did not accept the Israeli right to exist. The two Kahanist movements were forbidden because of undemocratic behavior and racism.<sup>211</sup>

The year 1994 was thus the official end of Kahanist movements, even though members were still active with meetings and terror after 1994. The two political parties became underground terrorist organizations and have now the character of that, what was before just a part of their structure. It is estimated, that followers of the Kahanist ideology are still responsible for violence against Arabs in Israel and that they even have own training camps for new members and the youth. The paramilitary organization uses Goldstein as an archetype and even created *The Doctors Song*, a song which is not heard often, but well known in far right circles.<sup>212</sup> With symbols like these, the actions and thoughts of Kahane and Goldstein continue in the mind of people, which an unknown result for the future.

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211 Cohen-Almagor 2007, p. 88.

212 Ibid., p. 92.

### 4.3 The Kahanist Ideology

For many historians, Kach was the most extreme political party which has ever existed in Israel. This description can not only be found in current literature, but also in articles of the 1980s.<sup>213</sup> In short words Kach, Kachane Chai and the whole Kahanist ideology can be described with characteristics like fascist, racist and highly xenophobic against everyone in Israel who was not a Jew. To find a clearer definition of the Kahanist ideology is not easy, since it is tightly connected to the person of Kahane, who declared partially different positions over the time to different topics. While he and his followers were welcoming every terrorist attack against Arabs and other non-Jews in Israel, Kahane was able to use sometimes a softer language for tactical reasons, when he said for example:

*“The problem, Kahane said, was not that they were Arabs but that they were non-Jews living in a place designated by God for the Jewish people”*<sup>214</sup>

Even though this explanation is still of far right character, it is still more moderate than other explanations of the Kahanists before and after. In Israel, the grade of how far right-wing a political party is, is often measured in how much territory they want. The simple rule is, that the more land they want to annex, the more right they are. Even though this system has its failures, it works quite well to define a basic level of extremism. It fits also well, that left-wing forces often demand the opposites, namely to give back East Jerusalem, the Gaza Stripe, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Since Kahanists always demanded the maximum of possible territory for Israel, they have to been seen following this kind of categorization as one of the most extreme parties. Not only that they wanted to annex all occupied territories, but there were even plans to conquer other regions. Possible aims for that would have been the Sinai peninsula or parts of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, which were seen as part of the biblical Israel. By taking a view on the elections of 1999, when the conservative-nationalist bloc Likud was defeated, it becomes more and more clear that they were not defeated because the Jewish people wanted a more liberal or peaceful government, but that the Likud was not extreme enough. The most losses of the Likud in this elections went from the mid-right to the far right parties. Here we can see that the Kahanist movement might have stopped to exist or lives in the underground, but right-wing extremism is as much a problem of Israel like it

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<sup>213</sup> Sprinzak 1993, p. 217.

<sup>214</sup> Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 55.

was the decades before.<sup>215</sup>

Any plans for a creation of a Palestine state in the West Bank are refused by Kahanists. In general the Kahanist ideology does not deal much with Palestinians, because all current territories, whether occupied or not, are seen as parts of current and future Israel. No matter whether Jerusalem, West Bank or Gaza, Kahanists do not allow a negotiation about the status of this regions. Any kind of state or society within the Israeli borders are seen as a danger to the existence of Israel and a first step to a *Second Holocaust*, a term often used by Meir Kahane himself. In his extremist view, he and the whole movement are so radical, that they are even fought by other far right organizations. Arabs are, without exceptions, the arch enemy of of all Jews and thus they have to be kicked out of Israel.<sup>216</sup> What that would mean in reality is nearly impossible to imagine. Following Kahanism, not only the Golan Heights, West Bank and whole Jerusalem would have to be free of all non-Jews, but also every Arab would have to leave Gaza Stripe. This poor, but nevertheless high populated region was and is through and through of Arab character and not even the majority of orthodox or radical Jews sees any strategical or spiritual meaning in this region. Kahanists, as the opposites, do not want to give away any territory which was ever conquered by Israel. This became especially clear with two events. In 1982, when the last settlers should leave Sinai and followers of Kahanism refused until they were close to kill themselves. Also with the Israeli military engagement in the Lebanon Civil War, when Israelis went over the borders of Lebanon to fight enemy organizations. The only voice for occupying parts of Lebanon and even annex them, came from the Kahanist movement. Their dream was to create a Greater Israel, a term that was used by many other radicals before. In opposites to the most of them, Kahanists also demanded regions, that had no meaning for a united and secure Israeli state. This included regions in Lebanon, Jordan and other nations, as already explained before in this work. The aim for the most Israelis, no matter whether radical or not, is to annex strategically and spiritually important regions. For Kahanists this aim is just the beginning and the final aim is to weaken the Arabs so much, that they can never be a danger again. One important point for Meir Kahane was also move out all Arabs from Israel, as he declared:

*“I want to make life hard for them. I want them to think: 'It makes no sense to go on living here; let's take our compensation payment and leave.' I would only use force on those who don't want to leave...I'd go all the way, and they know that”*<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Pedahzur 2001, p. 25.

<sup>216</sup> Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 52.

<sup>217</sup> McDowell 1989, p. 257.

This explains also the mental and physical terror the Kahanist members executed in Arab settlements. When they drove to the non-Jewish settlements, they used speakers and weapons to frighten the Arabs and other minorities there and called them animals, like pig or dog. Sometimes these psychological terror actions even ended up in bloody actions, as already shown in the chapter before.<sup>218</sup>

At least, we could argue whether we see the other points of the Kahanist ideology, Kahane was open for giving the Arabs a compensation. On the other hand, he says clearly that by refusing the compensation, using force will be the result. Also, Kahane never lost a word about the amount of compensation he is willing to provide. In the worst case scenario for this event, Arabs could be forced to leave their homes and Israel, by just receiving a symbolic compensation. Kahanism justifies this way of thinking with the argument, that Israel has to stay a truly Jewish nation and that this status is in danger, since the Arab fertility rate is much higher than the Jewish one. Arabs should thus not gain equal rights, because otherwise they would take over the country and change the face of it forever. Therefore the unequal rights protect Israel and the Jews from the Arabs and their taking over. Kahane himself said that he is no racist, but that he just wants Israel to be populated only by Jews. What happened outside of the borders of Israel was not of interest for him, he argued. He would have not a problem with Arabs, but just with Arabs in Israel and therefore the biggest problem of inner politics is the Israeli citizenship of Arabs, because then they can not be kicked out.<sup>219</sup>

For Kahanism, it is much more important to keep Israel big and mighty, than to keep the current character of political organization. Every politician who ever wanted to give back parts of the conquered territory was called a traitor by Kahanists, which did also attract orthodox and other far right Jews. That was an effective strategy to not only attract wider parts of the society, but also to gain publicity.<sup>220</sup> As already said, Kahane and his followers were not interested in the aftermaths of the actions against the Palestinians. In their point of view, it was simply not of interest whether they have a right to exist somewhere as an own nation. The only point of interest was that they are kicked out of Israel and with them all non-Jews. In their religious fundamentalist beliefs, the world would be one day just Jewish, which would directly lead to the arrival of the Messiah.<sup>221</sup>

To identify a clear line within the Kahanist ideology is hard, whether not impossible, because its leader Meir Kahane himself gave comments, which were working not well with each other or even the opposites of what was said before. Even though Kahane declared that he was not a

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<sup>218</sup> Elias 1997, p. 168.

<sup>219</sup> McDowell 1989, p. 177.

<sup>220</sup> Colin Shindler: *A History of Modern Israel*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008, p. 262.

<sup>221</sup> Elias 1997, p. 192.



racist and had nothing directly against the Arabs, some comments of his followers show a different aspect. At the funeral of Baruch Goldstein's, the terrorist who became quickly a martyr and archetype for Kahanists, the Kahanist Rabbi Dow Lior said in the funeral speech:

*“Eine Million Araber sind nicht so viel wert wie ein einziger jüdischer Fingernagel”*<sup>222</sup>

This points out well the picture that Kahanists have of Arabs. Even though Kahane himself and his organization to not have any kind of racism in them, the ideology and actions speak for themselves. Kahane sometimes also shocked Israelis with comments, which showed the character of his confusing mix of ideological aspects. Even though his ideology was highly influenced by a extremist interpretation of Zionism and orthodox belief, he spread his religious fundamentalism over religious borders and declared *“a certain admiration for the Ayatollah Khomeini [...] he felt closer to Khomeini and other militant Muslims than he did to such framers of secular political thought as John Locke or even to secular Jews”*<sup>223</sup>. Also, he refused to use the term Holocaust and demanded from others to not use it anymore, because it means “burned victim” by translation. The reason for that, he explained, was that the term shows the weakness of the Jewish race in a bad time of history, but in present and future Jews should act and only be presented as strong race.<sup>224</sup>

A problem here was, that the Jewish religion forbids violence in most ways. Only for self defense or in wars it is allowed. But for Kahanism violence was an elemental part to reach its goals.<sup>225</sup> Meir Kahane presented for that a solution. He declared that there is currently a spiritual war of Muslims against Jews and that in such a spiritual war everybody is a soldier. Because single persons and victims mean nothing and just whole groups are important, there exists a system of collective justice. So whether for example an Arab kills a Jew, it is not important which Arab is to be killed, but is has to be one. In connection this means, that there were are currently no innocent Jews or Arabs, because they are all members in a war, that just one side can win. With comments like these, Kahane was quickly named *Israel's Hitler* or *Israel's Ayatollah*.<sup>226</sup>

In Kahanism, the special situation of Jews is also pointed out often. Not only that they are special for being people and religion at the same time, but also that antisemitism seems to unite the world. Meir Kahane argued that antisemitism is the only characteristic which holds the world from USSR over USA up to Asia and Africa together and that therefore all non-Jews are the enemy of the Jewish population on earth. This would make the Jews, who are the only people chosen by God,

<sup>222</sup> Translated from Elias 1997, p. 141.

<sup>223</sup> Rock 2004, p. 106-107.

<sup>224</sup> Gorenberg 2000, p. 131.

<sup>225</sup> Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 56.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

even stronger and let them one day win the fight for the control of the world, which would make the arrival of the messiah happen. But since not all enemies can be fought at the same time, Jews should start to fight against the Arabs first. To save it from the inside, the dream of Kahane was that, whether Israel would be not able to expel all Arabs from Israeli territory, Israel would become a nation like South Africa, where the separation of groups and races was normal. He hoped that the Arabs would leave them automatically to the neighbor Arab countries.<sup>227</sup>

But not only that Arabs live in Israel was and is a problem for Kahanists. Also the general character of the state, namely the democratic order is just a interim solution on the way to a truly Jewish system, which can just be reached by a a theocratically governed Israel. Even though this demand was already published by other far right Jews in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Kahanists promote it in the most offensive and radical way.<sup>228</sup> Meir Kahane said often that he is no democrat and that he and his movement refuse any kind of democratic order for Israel. The nation could not be democratic because of its Jewish character. Israel is neither a western, nor an eastern nation and thus western inventions like democracy have no meaning for the existence of the country. Israel does not need democracy as a part of their legitimization, because just the Jewish religion and Zionism can be a just argument for that. Since the Jewish religion is not democratic, the state can not be democratic as well, which legitimizes at the same time the violent actions against the Arabs. As an archetype for that he named Moses, who took action when Egypt's were beating Jews and who acted neither democratic nor non-violent. Again with this argument Kahanists argue, that their bible does not forbid killing, but assassination. That they also emphasize the important of constant action by the movement is not only another part of their self characterization, but also of a strategy to stay in the media and thus in public live. Meir Kahane said in the 1980s that Israel has just around 40 years left to transform into a theocracy and kick out all Arabs, otherwise it would go under.<sup>229</sup>

How racist the thinking about Arabs by Kahanists is, can also be seen in their demand to forbid marriages between them. Kahanists promote the idea of the pure blood of Jews, which has to stay pure, so that the Jewish race can survive. If the blood of Jews will be mixed, then the purity will fade away and a Jewish race in the sense of the Torah would not exist anymore. This would mean that the Messiah could not arrive and therefore life would be useless.<sup>230</sup> Even with their extremist anti-Arab beliefs, Kahanists are not afraid of the actions of other Arab nations. They are quite detailed in how they want to act against the Arabs on Jewish ground, but there is not much said about how they want to deal with the Arab neighbor nations. This might be a result of the won

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227 Mergui 198, p. 14.

228 Juergensmeyer 2000, p. 54.

229 Mergui 1985, o. 11.

230 Gorenberg 2000, p. 128.

wars in the past, but it seems like that Kahane lost over the years the sense for reality. Around the time he was a Knesset member, he declared that the first thing he would do as the prime minister of Israel, is to declare war on all Arab nations at the same time and destroy them. In opposites to past wars, he planned a war of an extreme character, a total war with the aim to finally destroy all neighbor states, leaving no real Arab power left. For that he wanted to mobilize all economical and military powers of the nation.<sup>231</sup>

How serious Kahanists are really with their unreal demands and illogical explanations is sometimes hard to say. On the one hand we showed that in the Kahanist ideology it is still believed what is written in the Torah about assassination: that it is forbidden. But when it came to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 by Yigal Amir, Kahanists showed their happiness about the murder and celebrated the assassin, declaring that this was not an assassination, but an act of defense, because Rabin was a traitor of the Jewish people and thus an enemy in a war – and killing in war is legal following the Torah.<sup>232</sup> That was even too much for far right Jews, who were attracted by the massacre of Baruch Goldstein, since the murder of a Jew by a Jew was for many Jews an unbelievable action that should have never happened. Even though accepting the deaths of Arabs or Israeli soldiers by Arabs as necessity, the fact that a Jew was able to kill another Jew was disillusioning for many.<sup>233</sup>

Even though there exist a bunch of right-wing extremist parties in Israel, it is interesting that not one of them wanted to cooperate with Kach. That shows the extreme character of Kach on the one hand, but also questions the positions of the other right-wing parties. As an example, we can take a look at the program of the National Religious Party (NRP), which is also a far right party, inspired widely by an extremist interpretation of the Torah and religious fundamentalism. They also emphasize the unique status of Jews, because of their combination of religion, nation, culture and history. Also, they demand a Jewish majority in Israel and a settlement of Jews in the occupied territories. But in opposites to Kach, they are open to pragmatic negotiations with the Palestinians and the Arab states – an action that is heavily refused by Kahanism. Also, they were fine when the Sinai was given back to Egypt, because they saw no spiritual or tactical meaning in it. The other occupied territories they want to keep, as Kach, but do not demand more regions of other nations. Some of the regions they want to keep because of spiritual meaning, like Jerusalem as a united capital, and some because of strategical meaning, like the Golan Heights. In opposites to Kach, they do not want to start any war against the neighbor nations, even though they seem to be more than ready to defend themselves, whatever that might mean. All in all, the NRP has also its

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<sup>231</sup> Gorenberg 2000, p. 131.s

<sup>232</sup> Elias 1997, p. 143.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

fundamentalist and partially discrimination aspects, but in comparison to the Kach they look nearly moderate.<sup>234</sup> This could be said as well as for a comparison of Kach and any other right-wing extremist party in Israel. It seems like that Kahane planned to be the most radical person in political life and thus the Kach should have been the most extreme party in the political spectrum. With an overemphasis of any aspect, no matter how extreme the aspect even was, he was quite successful with that, even though political success was not the result of his work, but just terror and suffering. To conclude the character short and well, we can just follow the words of Raphael Cohen-Almagor:

*“For the past twelve years I have been studying political extremism in Israel, especially the Kahanist phenomenon which – as stated previously – is the most extreme religious ideology the country has known since its establishments in 1948”*<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Yehuda Ben-Meir: *The Ideology of the National Religious Party. 1977: Analysis*, in: Israel in the Middle East. Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present, Brandeis University Press, Waltham 2008<sup>2</sup>, p. 301-304.

<sup>235</sup> Cohen-Almagor 1997, p. 100.

## 5. Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang

### 5.1 The Special Case of Belgium

Belgium is today an ambiguous nation whether it comes to politics. On the one hand, they are part of the European Union, NATO and the most important governmental organizations and even the EU Council and Commission are in the capital Brussels. This makes Brussels de facto to the capital of the European Union and seems to represent the will of the Belgians for unity and progress. On the other hand, the country is inside itself heavily divided between their two parts – the Flemish speaking Flanders in the North and the French speaking Wallonia in the South. The seemingly irreconcilable conflict between these two groups is the most important issue within Belgium's inner politics and an unsolved problem until today.<sup>236</sup> This went so far, that Belgium stayed 541 days without a government, because the parties could not arrange any functioning coalition, which gave the country an infamous world record.<sup>237</sup>

Currently, Belgium has around 11 million inhabitants. Around 57% percent of them live in Flanders and 31% in Wallonia. Other parts are the German minority of around 0,7% and the linguistically mixed region of Brussels, where circa 10 % of the population live. De Witte and Verbeeck explain the separation of Belgium when it comes to languages with the geographical position between the Latin and Germanic world.<sup>238</sup> But this is just one reason and does not show the complicated historical background of the special case Belgium. The nation started to exist in 1830, when it became independent from the Netherlands after a revolution. But in opposites to other revolutions, the main aim of the initiators was not to get rid of a kind of conqueror or occupying force to reestablish a former nation. The nation of Belgium is highly constructed and did not exist before, even though patriotic and nationalist forces tried to show a connection between Belgians and barbaric tribes which lived in the region in ancient times. It was much more the case that this region was already divided between Francophones, who had the most money and political power, the catholic church and the Flemish population, which was much poorer and mostly excluded from high social positions. Even though this was already a core for oncoming conflicts, all three groups could unite themselves to gain and profit from the independence. The Walloons hoped for more

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236 Hans De Witte / Georgi Verbeeck: *Belgium: Diversity in Unity*, in: *European Nations and Nationalism: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot 2000, p. 107-133, p. 112. (= De Witte / Verbeeck 2000)

237 <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/nach-541-tagen-belgien-hat-offiziell-eine-regierung/5945598.html>

238 Ibid., p. 107.

political independence, the catholic church did not want to be part of the mainly protestant Netherlands anymore and the Flemish citizens hoped for a better economic situation with independent laws about taxes, trade and working rights. Therefore the birth of Belgium was more a rational than a emotional decision, even though some artificial patriotic feelings might have existed. The people were united because of personal interests, but not because of a collective history or national myth. Even the language was from beginning on split up. Religion was one of the few things which united the Belgian from the beginning on and it is one of the few that does it today.<sup>239</sup>

The whole 19<sup>th</sup> century through, Wallonia was the leading part of the nation. Equipped with much more natural resources than Flanders, the Walloons were able to uphold their leading position in society until the the 1950s. Partially, the fact that Walloons were gaining much more of the GDP and had to clear up the financially weak Flemish, who lived mostly as peasant and poor workers, led to movements which demanded the independence of Wallonia from Belgium. But this movements never reached the support like today's Flemish independent movements do. The reason why the majority of the independent movements in Belgium come today from the Flemish part, is also that the whole economic situation between the two parts totally turned around during the first decades after the Second World War. Since the world and especially the world trade changed in the age of globalization, the natural resources of Wallonia and the connected industry was not anymore able to fit in the global competition. While it was a big benefit for Walloons to earn higher wages than the Flemish, this became quickly a problem for them and their whole region. Investors left Wallonia more and more and went to Flanders, where they found cheaper laborers and a much more flexible economy. Even though the Flemish did not have any natural resources, they were able to create an economy, which quickly overhauled the Wallonian one. With concentrating on the economic sector of services and trade, they found the right formula to deal with a world, which has changed for entrepreneurs. Today, Flanders is a much richer region than Wallonia and there are currently no signs that this will change soon.<sup>240</sup> To understand the former and current economical position inside Belgium and especially between Walloons and Flemish is central for understanding the separation movements. Even though it would be too much to say that every separatist is just fixed on economic reasons, they are nevertheless one of the most important arguments in Flemish independence movements. But all in all, as Danny Wildemeersch points out correctly, the Belgian

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239 Dietrich Schulze-Marmelig: *Ein Flämisches Flandern in einem Weissen Europa. Flämischer Nationalismus und der Belgische Staat*, in: Krisenherd Europa. Nationalismus, Regionalismus, Krieg, Die Werkstatt, Göttingen 1994, p. 259-273, p. 260. (= Schulze-Marmelig 1994)

The history of Belgium is of course much more complex than it can be shown here, including a lot of complexes, like the history of the Austrian/Spanish Netherlands.

240 Danny Wildemeersch / Gie Redig: *Towards multi-cultural and Anti-Racist Youth Work in Flanders*, in: Racism in Europe. A Challenge for Youth Policy and Youth Work, UCL Press, Bristol 1997, p. 125. (= Wildemeersch / Redig 1997).

politics is hard to understand for foreigners and unfortunately to less researched outside of Belgium. This leads to an unsatisfying situation of literature and sources, created by non-Belgians or for the non-Belgian market.<sup>241</sup> In 2005, there just existed one English book about the Flemish-Walloon conflict, which was not written by a Belgian.<sup>242</sup> Scientists are all in all united in the opinion that the current situation between Flemish and Walloons is worse than ever and a real danger for the future of a united Belgium. That the ongoing separatist demands of many Flemish might also strengthen the nationalist feelings in Wallonia as a counter reaction, is pointed out by Wichard Woyke:

*“Es ist nicht zu übersehen, dass in Belgien die beiden großen Landesteile Flandern und Wallonien weiter auseinander driften, sodass die Wallonie in der Francophonie eine weitere, ihre Identität fördernde Stütze sehen könnte. Diese sich auf Kosten der Zentralregierung des Förderalstaates vollziehende Entwicklung rückte eine weitere Föderalisierung Belgiens in greifbare Nähe. Das Zusammenleben der verschiedenen Gemeinschaften, das in den fünf Staatsreformen sorgsam austariert wurde, könnte dadurch gefährdet werden”*<sup>243</sup>

Since this chapter should provide background information for dealing with the right-wing extremist and separatist party Vlaams Belang and Vlaams Blok, we have to discuss not only separatism but also xenophobia within Belgium. Here De Witte and Verbeek present some details research numbers about different aspects of separatism and right-wing extremism in Belgium. First of all it is important to know, that the Belgian government always has to consist of an equal number of Francophones and Flemings and that each of the two regions has its own parliament. While separatist parties rose especially in the 1970s, when the economic dominance of Flanders became more and more clear, the last two decades were more characterized by the rise of the right-wing factions. Throughout all the years of conflicts between the two main parts of Belgium, the king kept being an important, whether not the most important signal for unity. These feelings went so far, that there were serious beliefs by many Belgians that the nation will now finally be divided, when king Baudoin I died in 1993.<sup>244</sup> De Witte and Verbeeck continue to present polls, which were made over the 1990s in Belgium. The European Values Systems Study Group (EVSSG) presented polls which showed that 75% of the population were proud to be a Belgian and 26% of these three quarters were even very proud. But still, just 36% declared that they would fight for their country, while the EU

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>242</sup> De Wever 2005, p. 100.

<sup>243</sup> Wichard Woyke: *Belgien*, in: Europahandbuch, Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, Gütersloh 2004, p. 63-69, p. 69. (= Woyke 2004)

<sup>244</sup> De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 116, 122.

average was about 51%.<sup>245</sup> The polls also showed that the majority of the Belgians are not separatists, but that separatism is still a mass opinion. In Flanders, 31% declared themselves as unitarians, who want to keep the current united status of Belgium, and just 11% as separatists, who want an independent Flanders. Around 33% declared themselves as regionalists, who were emphasizing the importance of Flanders and their feelings for it, but still want that Flanders stays within Belgium, even though with more independence. The rest of the interviewed people were a mixture of these groups. Interesting is, that in Wallonia the numbers were very similar, which shows also that the Wallonian separatism regional patriotism does function without economical dominance.<sup>246</sup> Apart from these high numbers of separatists and regionalists, compared with EU average level, the Belgians still have one of the highest rate for acceptance of the European Union. Around 59% answered that they are clearly pro-EU and just 9% were against it, while 26% were neither pro nor anti-EU. Even though they do not present numbers for that, De Witte and Verbeeck declare that the Flemish people quite xenophobic, while Walloons are very tolerant to foreigners. This becomes especially interesting by remembering, that there are 9% of the population of foreign origin, which is an average EU level, but that just 29% of all foreigners in Belgium live in Flanders and much more in Wallonia and especially Brussels. This means that the foreign rate in Flanders is just 4% and therefore much lower than in the other two parts.<sup>247</sup> How scientifically these last calculations are is hard to say, especially since there are other opinions in the scholarship, which tell a totally different story. Wildemeersch for example emphasizes the open character of Flemish people to foreigners, while Walloons are most xenophobic.<sup>248</sup> It is hard to say which one of these evaluations is closer to the truth. This is also a problem of missing polls and statistics for Belgium from scientists outside of Belgium, which can look at the issue more neutral than Walloons and Flemings. Concluding the current situation in Belgium and the danger by a connection of separatism and right-wing extremism for the future, we can follow De Witte and Verbeeck:

*“As we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Belgium could be confronted with some serious problems. First, several authors expect a further decrease of stable, traditional, voting behavior as a result of loosening ties with the pillars, the decline of church involvement, and the process of individualization. This opens up the possibility of a further increase of extreme right-wing votes since research indicates the existence of a larger group with xenophobic attitudes than those who already voted for an extreme right wing party”*<sup>249</sup>

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>246</sup> De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 123.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 128-130.

<sup>248</sup> Wildemeersch 1997, p. 131.

<sup>249</sup> De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 133.



## 5.2 History of the Party

The Vlaams Blok was founded in 1978 as a split up of the less radical, but nevertheless far right *Volksunie* (People's Union, VU). Basically it can be seen as the heir of right-wing extremist movements in Belgium before and during the Second World War. In their first decade of existence it was, similar to Kach party, not very important.<sup>250</sup> Nevertheless they were able to gain a seat from 1981 on. This little success was repeated in 1984, when they could rise a little from 1,1% up to 1,4%, but still kept just one seat in the national parliament until they could gain a second seat in 1987.<sup>251</sup>

The party could not gain a wider attention for voters or in media throughout their early years. The fact that they even got a seat in the parliament was due to the fact that politics in general is very split up in Belgium and the barrier for parties to enter the parliament is very low, which leads us to a little excursion. This is a similar situation in Belgium as in Israel and thus the situation for the Vlaams Blok and Kach was similar as well. Because of low barriers it was possible for these two parties to even gain a seat in the parliament. In other countries like the United Kingdom or Germany, where right-wing extremist parties sometimes gain around 1% as well or even more, they do not gain a place in the parliament due to the circumstances of much higher barriers for parties to enter. The most clear example for that are the USA, where since decades a two party system de facto exists. So whether we look back on our two examples and look forward to our last example Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang, then we should also reconsider how much the history, ideology and actions of a right-wing extremist movement are a result of the national circumstances. This is why in this paper the national backgrounds were emphasized that much.

Belgium was for a long time not known for any kind of especially high xenophobia. In the 1960s and 70s, the population of the nation grew rapidly, leaving a society with a lot of young people. But in the decades from 1980 until today, the Belgium population stagnates and thus a society with many old people, which are connected to a conservative thinking, was created. This and the rise of immigration in Belgium were the factors, as Wildemeersch argues, for the grown influence of far right parties in the political landscape. These two developments have led to a grown xenophobia to immigrants, of which parties like the Vlaams Blok could profit from the end of the 1980s on.<sup>252</sup> If that are the only two reasons why right-wing parties were much more successful during the 1990s in Belgium is hard to tell, but for our example of the Vlaams Blok it seems to fit.

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<sup>250</sup> De Witte /Verbeeck 2000, p. 117.

<sup>251</sup> Norris 2005, p. 7.

<sup>252</sup> Wildemeersch 1997, p. 126, 131.

In the European elections of 1989, the Vlaams Blok could gain more votes than in all three national elections together, leading to a result of 6,6%. The successes were not only repeated, but grew during the 1990s, when the Vlaams Blok gained 10,6% in the national elections of 1991 and nearly doubled its number of supporters on the European level, gaining 12,6% in the elections of 1994.<sup>253</sup>

This rise becomes even more impressive when we realize that in Belgium, similar to Israel again, even parties in the government do not gain numbers around 35+ percent, like in other European countries, due to the split up character of Belgium, the low political barriers and the huge number of special interest parties. Even though the Vlaams Blok became in this time successful on the European level, they did not cooperate well with a lot of other far right parties. All Scandinavian extremists for example denied to negotiate with the Belgians. A reasons for that might be the double character of the party, which draws a strange line between being more right-wing extremist or more separatists. In opposites to other far right parties, like the German NPD or our former example Kach, the Vlaams Blok did not call for some kind of Greater Belgium or Greater Flanders, but wanted in opposites a separation from an existing state building, which automatically means the loss of territory, or here better to say the creation of a new smaller nation state. On the other hand, the Vlaams Blok did not have any conflicts with other far right parties, like it was for example the case between the Austrian FPÖ and Italy's Alleanza Nazionale when it came to debates about the status of South Tyrol.<sup>254</sup>

The cooperation of the Vlaams Blok inside Belgium with other parties was even much worse, since in 1992 all parties in the parliament declared a *Cordon sanitaire*, which basically means that they will not work together with the Vlaams Blok because of its extremist character. On the other hand, the program of the Vlaams Blok itself restricts the party to very few possibilities, because the party can just work together with Flemish separatist movements, which have to be at the same time at least right-wing, whether not even right-wing extremist.<sup>255</sup> Therefore the Vlaams Blok never participated in any kind of government on regional or national level, even though the numbers of electors were constantly high through the 1990s. The most important person for the party in their first two decades was Karel Dillen, leader of the party from 1978 until 1996. Even though he represented the party in many ways and was the unquestioned leader, his influence and impact was not as huge as for example the one of Meir Kahane for the Kach party. The party was

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253 De Witte 2000, p. 117.

254 Andre Gingrich: *Nation, Status and Gender in Trouble? Exploring Some Contexts and Characteristics of Neo-Nationalism in Western Europe*, in: *Neo-Nationalism in Europe and Beyond. Perspectives from Social Anthropology*, Berghan Books, New York and Oxford 2006, p. 29-50, p. 31. (= Gingrich 2006)

255 Markus Glück: *Der Eu-Wahlkampf 2009 – eine österreichische Perspektive*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main (et. al.) 2011, p. 139. (= Glück 2011)

and is still seen as a party of many who are responsible for strategical and ideological issues.<sup>256</sup>

One of the biggest successes of the Vlaams Blok happened in 2000. They became with 20 out of 50 seats the biggest party in the city council of Antwerp. This was the first time the party became the leading one in a parliament of a bigger city. Besides that, Antwerp was and still is a center for the party and a credible place for successes. Another great event for the party happened in 2004, when they finished second place in the elections on the European level.<sup>257</sup> But 2004 was not only a year full of positive events for the party. Because they were accused of several crimes, including discrimination, racism and a general anti-democratic character, the Vlaams Blok disbanded itself at a party conference on 14<sup>th</sup> November and founded itself again under the new name Vlaams Belang on the same day. Members, ideology and organization structure kept the same and the party program was just changed in so far, that the tone became a bit less radical.<sup>258</sup> Also their leading slogan “*Eigen volk eerst*”<sup>259</sup> (own nationality first) stayed until today. This is why have to be careful when discussion the Vlaams Blok and Vlaams Belang to not use the same name all the time, but on the other hand with the change of the name there was no change of the character of the party at all. This is why this chapter and scientific literature in general makes no difference in this two parties, because they are de facto identical as a research object.

Due to their character as a Flemish separatist movement, the party was and is just electable in Flanders. Here they faced from the beginning on other parties of different character, which attracted parts of the possible electorate. One example for that is the also Flemish separatist, but not extreme right Volksunie, which we already named above. The VU attracts more educated voters than the Vlaams Blok / Belaang (VB in both cases) and also Catholics, while the electors of VB are mostly less Catholic or even atheists. Furthermore, the VB voters have not only a lower education, but also a lower income than the electors of most of the other Belgium parties. All in all, the Volksunie was over the most time of the 35 years long history the hardest concurrent for the VB.<sup>260</sup>

Today, the Vlaams Belang is the most popular separatist party of all in Belgium. They are even well known in other parts of Europe, even maybe more for their right-wing extremism. Polls show, that the former protest party changed into a solid part of the Belgian political landscape and 90% of the voters are constantly voting for them. This is comparable to a lot of other European parties, which are part of governments and less comparable to right-wing extremist ones.<sup>261</sup> The importance of their right-wing extremist character is emphasized by some authors that much, that

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256 Ibid., p. 139.

257 Norris 2005, p. 7.

258 Glück 2011, p. 139.

259 <http://www.vlaamsbelang.be/>

260 De Witte 2000, p. 118.

261 Glück 2011, p. 139-140.

they refuse to see the separatist aspect as meaningful in any way. Bruno de Wever for example argues that the Vlaams Belang just recruits electors because of the right-wing propaganda and that separatism does not play any role for Belgians anymore.<sup>262</sup> While it is hard to say whether he is right about the first part, his evaluation about the unimportance of separatism in Belgium seems to be wrong, whether we just remember current and historical struggles between Flemings and Walloons, including the debacle of the record holding situation of a country without a functioning government. Currently, the Vlaams Belang still stays solid, even though the power is decreasing. While still gaining 15,3% in the traditionally successful Flemish parliament elections in 2009, they lost five seats in the national parliament from 2007 to 2010, losing around 4,5% and finished with 7,7% of the votes.<sup>263</sup> It can just be guessed how the future of the Vlaams Belang will look like. Just one thing is sure: the future of the party is also bound to the future of the struggling Belgian unity. If Flanders should really become independent, then there will be no more need for any separatist movement, leaving the Vlaams Belang as one of the many right-wing extremist parties in Europe. This would also finally answer the question, whether the Vlaams Belang is more a far right movement or if the separatism counts more. As we will see in the next chapter, currently both parts are important in their ideology.

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<sup>262</sup> De Wever 2005, p. 95.

<sup>263</sup> Norris 2005, p. 7.

### 5.3 Ideology

As already written in the two chapters before, the ideology of the VB<sup>264</sup> contains two big parts: right-wing extremism and separatism. While the separatism makes them not very special within Belgium, no matter whether we look to Flanders or Wallonia, the right-wing character is quite special and the combination of both aspects is unique within their national political landscape. It was already written about racism, xenophobia and other aspects of right-wing movements in general in the beginning of this paper, so that we will not explain these terms again here. Basically, the ideological program of the VB is neither deep going, nor somehow new or special. Only the combination of separatism and right-wing extremism makes them in Belgium and for our research unique. This is why authors like de Witte and Verbeeck also simply characterize the ideology of the VB with naming their central elements:

*“racism, extreme nationalism, rejection of parliamentary democracy, authoritarianism, belief in the need of strong leadership, anti-socialism, and anti-pluralism”*<sup>265</sup>

These elements do not only sound like typical parts of nearly every right-wing extremist movement in Europe, but could also be projected for historical fascist parties and organizations one by one. The VB is not leaving this core of right-wing extremist ideology at all and does not give any new impulses. Similar to other European neo-Nazi parties, like Golden Dawn in Greece, they are using Nazi symbols in a little changed way to show their opinion clearly for the rest, but without getting trouble because of the use of original Nazi symbols like the Swastika.<sup>266</sup> Therefore we could classify the radical right-wing part of their ideology as typical European neo-Nazi style. This becomes even more clear whether we follow Gingrich, who already compared European right-wing extremists and defines a typical party of this style:

*“1. A basic populist criticism of any further EU integration, which would take away decision-making power from national governments and imply a heavier financial burden.*

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<sup>264</sup> Instead of Vlaams Belang or Vlaams Blok we will use VB in this chapter, because we are describing them both at the same time. The differentiation we had to make in the chapter before is not necessary anymore, because we do not write about historical events, but about the ideology, which is that similar between both parties, that it can be considered as de facto the same. Here we follow the scholarship, which makes no difference between the political aims and ideology of Vlaams Belang and Vlaams Blok.

<sup>265</sup> De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 117.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

*2. A general, profound skepticism towards further EU enlargement, particularly in view of the low income and cheap labor markets of potential new EU members.*

*3. A hard-line orientation against illegal immigrant residents inside the EU and any new immigration from outside, and, at the same time, a particular emphasis on cutting down on social services and cultural expenses by the national state*<sup>267</sup>

All of these three factors fit very well to the program of the VB, even though the separatist point distinguish them from the rest of the parties. Another point that came up the last years, is that the VB tries to become more and more a liberal party, whether it comes to economic questions. While having first of all a nationalist-protective point of view about the economy when they were founded, this is one of the few changes, whether not the only, the party has ever had. This point does not take a big part in their program and is not a reason for the voters to elect the VB. The biggest issue on the level of public relations is still shown in the aim to separate Flanders.<sup>268</sup> Besides that, the second most important for the VB in their medial campaigns is the rejections of foreigners, especially but not only from outside of the European Union. These demands go so far, that they demand a Flanders where only Flemings should have the full rights, like solid health care or a common tax system. Flemings are here defined as people who were born in Flanders and not by simply citizenship. Demands like these show how close the party is in their nationalistic thinking to national socialist and fascist movements. Especially when Dillen was the leader of the party, they often gained publicity in the media and over the borders of Belgium for actions, which can be described as pro national socialist, like the demand to rehabilitate former Flemish *Waffen-SS* members. With actions like these and demands for a total stop of immigration and push off all people with migration background, the party often showed their true fascist character to the public.<sup>269</sup>

A reason why the more liberal development to economic questions does not become more important is also, that because of their xenophobic argumentation, the protection of the Flemish economy is advertised very often. Therefore the party struggles to find a way between transforming into a market-liberal party and keeping their discriminating ideas at the same time. To poke fear in the heads of their possible electorate was and is a central political instrument of the VB and few things are better usable for that than the economic fear because of a supposed foreign infiltration by

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267 Gingrich 2006, p. 31.

268 De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 117.

269 Glück 2011, p. 139.

immigrants.<sup>270</sup>

Economic reasons are also very important for the separatist part of the party program. Even though the VB emphasizes the cultural background of the will to create an own Flemish state, most voters constantly vote for the separatist party because of economical reasons. Most Flemish separatists voters pronounce the importance of the own economy and their financial dominance within the country. This behavior is not a typical Belgian one, but can be seen as well in other separatist movements in Europe. Even though it seems to be clear at the first view why the electors vote for the party, there exists no convincing research until today whether the electors are more interested in the separatist or right-wing part or both in the same amount. There exist different theories in scholarship with a wide range of results, but most of them are missing sources and proofs for their hypothesis. Therefore we can not make a clear decision here about the true character of the supporters of the party. One argument the scholarship seems to be united in, is that the supporters are not all of right-wing extremist character, but more interested in the aspect of a stop of migration due to economic frustration.<sup>271</sup>

How far the influence of the separatist thinking reaches within the VB electorate is until today unanswered, but that there exists a strong separatist mood within Flanders is widely accepted by scientists. How the Flemish separatism, which is also a regionalism, works is well shown by Breuilly and therefore important for the VB as well:

*“Then there is separatism which is usually strongest in the 'core' territory of a cultural group. Communalism is often not a problem in such areas because there is no great mixing of cultural groups within the same territory. Separatism is promoted in situations where central government does not allow much influence to the regions dominated by these cultural groups, and where such influence is regarded as an important means of obtaining political and economic goods”*<sup>272</sup>

No matter how one rates the relation between separatism and right-wing extremism within the VB, the success of the party itself shows, that both have their meaning. All in all, the ideology of the VB is often described as the separatism of the Volksunie, of which the VB split up and was thus founded, plus a big part of racism and fascist elements. This simple formula seems to be simple, but so is the ideology of the VB. There exist no deeper going explanations or works by party members and the aims are the same as in 1978: to create a Flemish state with a pure Flemish population.

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>271</sup> De Witte / Verbeeck 2000, p. 119.

<sup>272</sup> Breuilly 1993, p. 33.

## 6. Conclusion

*United in diversity* is not only the motto of the European Union, but also a central slogan of many left-wing and multicultural organizations – and of course something a right-wing extremist party is totally against. But how this paper showed, our chosen far right movements and parties could be described with exactly these words. They are all united on the political scale, but still diverse in many aspects.

In the beginning we discussed the meaning of comparison as a method. As it was shown, comparison is a method, which was often refused in the past but became more and more accepted. There exist even experts like Matthias Middell, who have produced important works to the theory of comparison as a method. The creation of an own historical school like the *Histoire croisée*, which emphasizes the meaning of comparison a lot, shows the constant development and growing importance of this method in historical science. Especially in a globalized world there are a lot of chances to compare (not only historical) developments in a wider range, than it was done in earlier times of science. But there exist not only changes, but also dangers of this method. One example for that is the subjective position of the person who compares. Even though there are several theoretical explanations how to overcome this situation, it seems like that we have to accept that a total objectivity can never be given due to the human nature of the comparator. Nevertheless there are a lot of possible fields of research which are already or will be open in the future for the process of comparing. The here presented topic is one example and at the same time a try to do it on an international level.

The second part of the first chapter discussed different approaches and explanations towards aspects of right-wing extremism. Even though a lot of terms like racism, xenophobia or fascism seem to be clear for a lot of people, it was shown how different these aspects can be seen and categorized. To make a distinction between them can be as hard, as to categorize parties, organizations and movements which are more or less clearly situated on the right part of the political scale. As every term in humanities, they depend on the point of view of the observer and the current or historical backgrounds on the society and time the observer lived or lives in.

Societies background and history, especially of right-wing aspects, is also seen as central in this paper for the researched examples from USA, Israel and Belgium. Therefore we used the approach to first present an introduction into necessary parts of the nations society and development until today, because we see it as a necessity to know about that to understand the extremist right-wing movements. As it could have been expected, all three nations are very diverse in their



character. The USA as a highly patriotic or even nationalist state, created as a presidential democracy in a time dominated by absolutist kingdoms, were not on every field as modern as the first look tries to tell. Racism was and is still huge problem of this nation, which is so often described by themselves as chosen by God, dominating in moral and of course most powerful in the world. It was and is a nation full of contrasts and antagonisms and racism is an important example for that. These are the circumstances the KKK could count on when it was found three times, even though his power declined a lot.

Also equipped with a ambiguous character is Israel, the first Jewish state since more than 2000 years. This fact alone saves him a place in the books of history not only for Jews, but that is not the only fact about him which is special. Surrounded by enemies, the Jews fought and won a nation, which is the dominant power of the region and was able to conquer a territory that big, that is has to be questioned whether they are able to deal with it. No matter that there exist still a lot of dangers from outside, for many Israelis the real danger comes from within. This inner conflicts are not only fought between Arabs and Jews, but more and more between different kind of Jewish groups. Orthodox, nationalist, socialist, secular and racist groups establish abysses between each other, that seem sometimes to big to overcome. In this society, racist right-wing groups have a greater influence than in most parts of the western world, to which the majority of Jews rank themselves. Meir Kahane and his Kahanist movement were not the only, but the most radical example of this far right offspring.

Full of inner conflicts is also Belgium, for many an artificial nation consisting two different groups, who seem to be more Dutch and French than sharing the same nationality. Separatism was since a long time a problem for the unity of the nation, but did even become bigger until today. Separatist movements were and are therefore no exception, but the rule for this complicated democracy. That the former poor Flanders overcame its situation and is now financially dominating Wallonia did not help to solve the problem at all, but just changed the sides the regions were on. Even though not showing any conspicuous aspects towards numbers of immigrant or xenophobic behavior, the separatist and at the same time racist Vlaams Blok and Vlaams Belang managed it to become a constantly strong political party and a antagonist of the great openness that many Belgians show for the multicultural European Union.

The history of the KKK is the longest of all of three chosen examples and maybe one of the longest for right-wing extremist movements at all. In any case the KKK is a direct result of the extremist interpretation of biological and religious beliefs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the results of the American Civil War. Unlike the other two movements, the Klan was never or never had a political party. Nevertheless this organization is surely the best known in the world, especially as a result of

the massive medial reception he is receiving until today. This publicity does not represent the real power of the Klan anymore, which is just a shadow of itself and far away from being the mass organization of the 1920s. The decline of the Klan also shows, when compared to the decline of the Kahanism or the current of the Vlaams Belang, how different social movements and political parties work and are functioning. Ideologically, the Klan is inspired by religion and just accepts members of protestant Christian belief, but is still not a religious organization. Its racism is aimed against everybody who is not of white skin color and as an addition the protestant belief is important too. This seems to become less important in the last decades, since the Klan is also cooperating with non-religious organizations in Europe at all and concentrates more and more on racist and fascist ideas, that are perfectly combinable with national socialist ideology. The KKK lives today more from its own history and well known symbols, than from a great fellowship. Its future is expected to be like the present, to exist as an underground, white Anglo-Saxon racist organization with some few thousand members, since there are no signs in the American society neither for decline nor an oncoming rise.

Religion played also an important role for the Kahanism, which was as the name already tells closely related to its founder Meir Kahane. Close to other orthodox and radical thinkers, their main enemy was seen in the Arabs who are living without justification in the holy land of Eretz Israel. The motivation for Kahanists to permit violence, harm, discriminate and even kill people is not just a defensive or strategical one, as for many militaristic Jews, but much more a spiritual one and justified by Torah and Talmud. But religion was not the only motivation for them. Like the KKK, Kahanists use older and older ideas and interpret it in a very radical way. In opposites to the KKK, who already used racist and nationalist hypothesis, the Kahanism is using the Zionism, which is neither racist, nor strongly against it, due to its non clearly defined character. Since all democratic characterizations are given by democratic powers in Israel and simply refused by Jewish extremists like Kahanists, Zionism as the universal background and justification of the existence of Israel is used to justify the own ideology and actions. As the KKK, the Kahanists are openly supporting violence of their comrades and other supporters against their enemies, even though by mostly declaring that there is no connection to the own organization – an often used step by many radical movements. It is often surprising for many people who do not deal with the topic, how big the influence of right-wing and even racist powers in Israel is. For these people, a movement like the Kahanism and a party like Kach, who openly demanded the deportation of all non-Jews out of Israel, must be even more shocking. In opposites to the KKK, Kahanists do not need to emphasize the meaning of the Jewish religion that much, because it is widely accepted even by moderate Jews, that Israel is a Jewish nation, while the USA do not define themselves that much over a special

religion. Shocking is also, in what short time the followers of Kahane and he himself were able to permit violence and create victims on the side of the Arab population of Israel. In opposites to the KKK, the movement was totally bound to one figure, its founder Meir Kahane and thus the downfall came even more quickly than its rise. The Kahanist movement itself is dead or just active in the underground, but racist ideas of Israeli Jews towards Arabs are at least as much alive as they were in the 1980s and it is possible that one day there will be a second Kahane, with different name, a different organizations but with the same Jewish orthodox-racist ideas and the same or even maybe more success.

Our last example was the Vlaams Belang, former Vlaams Blok. In opposites to the other two examples, this was just a political party, without any sub-organizations or something similar. This might also be a reason, why they seem to look not as radical as the KKK or Kahanists, even though they follow right-wing extremist ideas as well. In opposites to the other movements, they are established in the political system and it is their only chance to win in elections. Therefore it seems logical, that they are not known widely for violent actions or even murders. This is first of all a result of the moderate society they are established in and second of all the fact that they do not permit violence, does not mean that they might not wish to permit it. The very big difference to the other examples is the separatism, which is a result of historical, cultural and economical processes. While the KKK does not have to deal with any separation or conquests, the Kahanism even demands more land for Israel, even though Kahanists also concentrate more on inner problems than on foreign issues. Another difference is that the right-wing extremist part of the VB is not as special as for the KKK and especially the Kahanism. Adding no own ideas, the party uses hate lyric against foreigners and changed Nazi symbols in a way, that can be describes as typical for European right-wing extremist parties. Religion does not play any role for the party in their ideology, even though especially the Islam is rejected due to the high percentage of Muslims of the Belgian immigrants.

To see differences and commonalities between these movements, we can especially take a look on their ideology and organizational structure and therefore on a big part of their character:

	Ku Klux Klan	Kahanism	Vlaams Blok / Belaang
Territorial expansion	No, accepting current borders of USA	Up to "biblical" Israel, including all current occupied territories, Sinai peninsula and not clearly defined regions in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan	No, establishing an independent Flemish nation
Race segregation	Yes, only acceptance of	No races, but only	Yes, Only Flemish

	white people	Jewish population accepted	people accepted
Role of religion	High, bases on puritan extremist Christian views	High, based on extremist interpretation of Zionism and holy Jewish sources (Torah...)	Low, religion just as exclusive factor, non-Christian people refused, no inclusion of any Christian kind
Violence	Widely accepted	Officially not accepted but proofed to be supporting	Officially not accepted, no proved connection with any kind of violent action
Historical roots	Era of Reconstruction, Southern American society, Christian extremism	Extremist interpretation of Zionism, right-wing religious movements in early 20 <sup>th</sup> century	Right-wing extremist movements before and during World War II
Leadership	Regional organization, no central leadership or central figure	Meir Kahane as central founding and leading person	No absolute leader, important but not almighty leaders
Kind of movement	Secret and not registered, character changed over decades several times	Official part: Kach as party, movement bigger	Official and registered political party
Political environment	Democratic nation, de facto two party system	Democratic nation, low barriers for parties to enter parliament	Democratic nation, differentiation between Flemish and Wallonian part
Justification of actions	Extremist biblical interpretation	Extremist interpretation of Zionism, Torah and other Jewish writings	Just due to current political and social circumstances, no deeper historical justification
Current Existence	Still active, far lost lot of popularity throughout last two decades	Officially not active anymore, underground movements possible	Still active as political party

It is hard to say which of these is more or less radical, since they are all clearly identifiable as standing on the far right political scale. Also when asking this question, it has to be seriously answered how extremism can be measured. Is the KKK more radical than Kahanism because it killed more people? Is a movement automatically more radical because it does to follow rules like a political party? How would all these three examples have developed, whether the history of the country they are situated in would have been different? None of these questions can be answered here and maybe this work has led to far more question. If so, then this is a good result. The three

examples were not only different because of their national background, but also because of a lot of other factors. Still it was hopefully shown that not only comparison as a method is worth using it, but also that looking at right-wing extremism should not be done quickly, but always carefully.

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<http://www.vlaamsbelang.be/> (30.08.2013)

## 9. Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of, this paper contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a paper presented by me for another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the paper. This paper has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or tertiary institution. All sentences or passages quoted in this paper from other people's work have been specifically acknowledged by clear cross-referencing to author, work and page(s).

Name: Christian Rödiger

Date: 21.10.2013

Signature:

# Anhang

## Abstract

Right-wing extremism is a global phenomenon, which touches political and daily life inside various societies. Neither is this kind of political thinking new, nor does it look like that it is stopping to exist in the future. Therefore the topic does not only have a historical character, but is also currently important. A lot of different kinds of right-wing extremist groups were established over the time, containing political parties, social movements and secret organizations. Even though sharing a close spot on the political scale, they are products of their environment and their development and character is influenced by various factors.

This papers deals with three right-wing extremist groups from different parts of the world. With the American Ku Klux Klan, the Israeli Kahanism and the Belgian Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belaang, movements from three continents are looked at and compared. Before starting to compare the movements, an introduction to comparison as a method in historical science is given. After that, the meaning of right-wing extremism in general is discussed. For all three examples, it is mainly concentrated on the national background, history and ideology of the movement. This paper is based first of all on scientific literature, which is whether dealing with the three movement examples or other useful aspects of right-wing extremism. Questions are, like for every comparison, which are commonalities and differences between the three movements. How much do they differ, even though being categorized as politically close? And how much do they have in common, even though of the fact that they were founded in very different countries and do not share the same cultural background? The aim of the paper is to give an answer to questions like that and therefore support the reader with a better understanding of right-wing extremist movements. It should be shown how not only the organizational structure, but also the national, social and historical background can influence movements. In the last chapter the results of the paper are concluded.

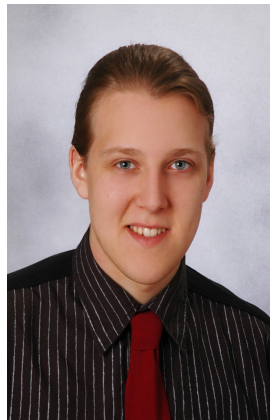
## Zusammenfassung

Rechtsextremismus ist ein globales Phänomen, welches das politische und tägliche Leben innerhalb verschiedener Gesellschaften berührt. Weder ist diese Art politischen Denkens neu, noch scheint es, dass es aufhören wird in der Zukunft zu existieren. Deshalb ist die Thematik nicht bloß von historischem Charakter, sondern auch derzeit von großer Bedeutung. Über die Zeit wurden verschiedene Arten von rechtsextremen Gruppen etabliert, welche politische Parteien, soziale Bewegungen oder Geheimorganisationen sein können. Obwohl sie alle eine ähnliche Stellung auf der politischen Skala einnehmen, sind sie Produkte ihrer Umwelt und ihre Entwicklung sowie ihr Charakter sind von verschiedenen Faktoren beeinflusst.

Diese Arbeit behandelt drei Beispiele rechtsextremer Gruppierungen, welche alle von verschiedenen Teilen der Welt stammen. Mit dem amerikanischen Ku Klux Klan, dem israelischen Kahanismus und dem Belgischen Vlaams Blok / Vlaams Belang, werden Bewegungen von drei verschiedenen Kontinenten betrachtet und miteinander verglichen. Vor dem Start des Vergleiches der drei Gruppierungen wird eine Einleitung zum Vergleich als Methode in der Geschichtswissenschaft gegeben. Danach wird die Bedeutung des Rechtsextremismus im Allgemeinen diskutiert. Für alle drei gewählten Beispiele gilt, dass sich hauptsächlich auf nationalen Hintergrund, Geschichte sowie Ideologie der Bewegung konzentriert wird. Diese Arbeit basiert vor allem auf wissenschaftlicher Literatur, welche entweder direkt eine der drei Bewegungen thematisiert oder einen anderen nützlichen Aspekt des Rechtsextremismus anspricht. Fragen sind dabei vor allem, wie für jeden Vergleich, worin Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede der drei Bewegungen bestehen. Wie sehr unterscheiden sie sich, obwohl sie politisch sehr ähnlich kategorisiert werden? Und wie viel haben sie gemeinsam, obwohl sie in sehr verschiedenen Nationen gegründet wurden und nicht den gleichen kulturellen Hintergrund besitzen? Das Ziel der Arbeit ist es Fragen wie diese zu beantworten und somit dem Leser ein besseres Verständnis von rechtsextremen Organisationen zu ermöglichen. Es soll gezeigt werden wie nicht nur die Organisationsstrukturen, sondern auch die nationalen, sozialen und historischen Hintergründe Bewegungen beeinflussen können. Im letzten Kapitel werden die Resultate in einem Fazit zusammengefasst.



# Lebenslauf



## Christian Rödiger, B. A.

### Ausbildung

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 09/2012 – 02/2013 | <b>Erasmus Semester</b><br>Universität Breslau, Polen, Studienfach: International Relations   |
| 10/2011 – aktuell | <b>Universität Wien</b><br>Master of Arts „Global History and Global Studies“, Thema der Master-Thesis: <i>„Right-Wing Extremist Movements in Global Comparison“</i>  |
| 10/2008 – 09/2011 | <b>Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen</b><br>Baccalaureus Artium „Geschichte und Fachjournalistik“<br>(Abschlussnote: hervorragend – 1,5)<br>Schwerpunkte: Nationalsozialismus, European History, Mediengeschichte, Thema der Bachelor-Thesis:<br><i>„Idylle und Schrecken. Fotografien deutscher Soldaten aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg“</i> (Note 1,3), veröffentlicht im Grin-Verlag |
| 08/2000 – 06/2008 | <b>Staatliches Gymnasium Arnstadt</b><br>Allgemeine Hochschulreife (Abschlussnote: 2,0)   |

### Berufliche Erfahrung

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 05/2013 - aktuell | <b>Eastside American Football Store</b><br>Verkaufs- und Projektassistent, direkter Kundenkontakt                             |
| 04/2013 – aktuell | <b>WOPPA, s.r.o.</b><br>Lehrkraft der Fächer Deutsch und Englisch, Zielgruppe: Studenten, Absolventen und Young Professionals |
| 06/2012 – 07/2012 | <b>Prof. Dr. Carla J. Shapreau – University of Berkeley</b>   |

Research Assistant, Dolmetschen/Übersetzen Deutsch-Englisch,  
Quellenanalyse, Recherche in Archiven und Museen

09/2011 – 10/2011

**Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen**

Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft, Leitung: Prof. Dr. Dirk van Laak,  
Recherche in Bibliotheken und Archiven, Quellenkritik

03/2011 – 08/2011

**Obi GmbH & Co. KG, Gießen**

Aushilfstätigkeit in der Logistik, direkter Kundenkontakt

02/2011 – 03/2011

**Thüringer Allgemeine Zeitung, Arnstadt**

Praktikum als Redakteur: Recherche und Veröffentlichung zahlreicher  
Artikel, ressortübergreifend

07/2010 – 09/2010

**Historisches Museum Frankfurt**

Praktikum, Co-Kurator der Ausstellung „*Besucher machen Museum*“,  
Inventarisierung, Digitalisierung

03/2010 – 04/2010

**Medienprojektzentrum Offener Kanal Gießen**

Praktikum: Videoproduktion, -dreh, -schnitt, -vertonung; Studiotechnik,  
Kameraarbeit, Rhetoriktraining, selbstständiges Filmprojekt

04/2009 – 03/2010

**ptv AG, Gießen**

Interviewer: landesweite Erhebung von Fahrgastdaten im öffentlichen  
Nahverkehr, direkter Kundenkontakt

**Kenntnisse & Qualifikationen**

Fremdsprachen

**Englisch** (fließend in Wort und Schrift)  
**Latein** (Latinum)

EDV

**MS Office** (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook)  
**Final Cut Pro, iMovie**  
**MuseumPlus, Datenbanksystem**

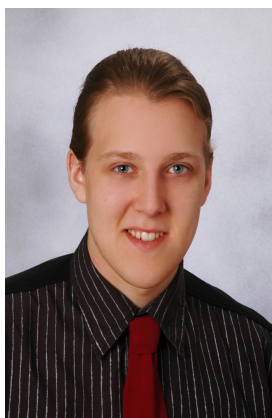
Diverses

**Kommunikations- und Verkaufstraining** (Dialog Direct GmbH)  
**Empfehlungsschreiben** (Universitäten Gießen/Berkeley/Breslau)  
**Universitätsexkursionen** (Griechenland, Polen, Schweiz)  
**Lizenz-Sportassistent für Kinder- und Jugendsport**

**Private Interessen**

**American Football** (aktiver Spieler, Vienna Knights)  
**Geschichte und Politik**  
**Kochen**

## Curriculum Vitae



**Christian Rödiger, B. A.**

### Education

09/2012 – 02/2013

#### **Erasmus Semester**

University of Wrocław, Poland, Subject: International Relations

10/2011 – now

#### **University of Vienna**

Master of Arts „Global History and Global Studies“, topic of the Master-Thesis: *“Right-Wing Extremist Movements in Global Comparison”*, finalization and graduation in summer 2013

10/2008 – 09/2011

#### **Justus-Liebig-University Giessen**

Baccalaureus Artium „History and Journalism“

(Final mark: excellent – 1,5), priorities: National Socialism, European History, History of Media, Title of the Bachelor-Thesis:

*„Idyll and Horror: Pictures of German Soldiers from the Second World War“* (translated from German original title)

(mark: excellent – 1,3), published by Grin publishing company

08/2000 – 06/2008

#### **Secondary School Arnstadt**

Matriculation Standard (final mark: good - 2,0)

### Job Experience

05/2013 - now

#### **Eastside American Football Store**

Sales and Project Assistant, direct customer contact

04/2013 – now

#### **WOPPA, s.r.o**

Teacher for subjects German and English, target audience: students, graduates, young professionals

06/2012 – 07/2012	<b>Prof. Dr. Carla J. Shapreau – University of Berkeley</b> Research Assistant, interpreting/translating German-English, source analysis, scientific investigations in museums and archives
09/2011 – 10/2011	<b>Justus-Liebig-University Giessen</b> Research Assistant, leadership: Prof. Dr. Dirk van Laak investigations in libraries and archives
03/2011 – 08/2011	<b>Obi GmbH &amp; Co. KG, Giessen</b> Temporary employment in logistics, direct customer contact
02/2011 – 03/2011	<b>Thüringer Allgemeine Zeitung, Arnstadt</b> Internship as journalist, statewide newspaper, publication of own articles, cross-departmental
07/2010 – 09/2010	<b>Historical Museum Frankfurt</b> Internship, Co-curator of the exhibition „ <i>Besucher machen Museum</i> “, inventory, digitalization
03/2010 – 04/2010	<b>Open Channel Giessen</b> Internship: video production, -shoot, -cut, -dubbing; studio technique, camera functions, rhetoric training, own film project „ <i>Bericht über die Gießener 46ers</i> “ (1 <sup>st</sup> league basketball team)
04/2009 – 03/2010	<b>ptv AG, Giessen</b> Interviewer: statewide collection of user data in public transport, direct customer contact
<b><u>Skills &amp; Qualifications</u></b>	
Foreign languages	<b>English</b> (fluently oral and written ) <b>Latin</b> (qualification)
Computing	<b>MS Office</b> (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) <b>Final Cut Pro, iMovie</b> <b>MuseumPlus, Data Bank System</b>
Miscellaneous	<b>Communication- and Sale-training</b> (Dialog Direct GmbH) <b>Commendatory letters</b> (Universities Giessen, Berkeley & Wrocław) <b>University excursions</b> (Greece, Switzerland, Poland) <b>Sport assistant license for Children and Teenager Sport</b>
<b><u>Private interests</u></b>	<b>American Football</b> (active player, Vienna Knights) <b>History and Politics</b> <b>Cooking</b>