



universität
wien

MASTER THESIS

Titel der Master Thesis / Title of the Master's Thesis

“German Migration Policy since WWII – Implications
for the 2015 Refugee Crisis”

verfasst von / submitted by

Gian Luca Melchiorre

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of

Master of Advanced International Studies (M.A.I.S.)

Wien 2021 / Vienna 2021

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt
Postgraduate programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

A 992 940

Universitätslehrgang lt. Studienblatt
Postgraduate programme as it appears on the
student record sheet:

Internationale Studien / International Studies

Betreut von / Supervisor:

Professor Arthur R. Rachwald



diplomatische
akademie **wien**
Vienna School of International Studies
École des Hautes Études Internationales de Vienne

Table of Contents

0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
1. ABSTRACT.....	3
2. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.1. MOTIVATION.....	7
2.2. METHODOLOGY.....	10
3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT	12
3.1. GERMANY AND MIGRATION IN THE 20TH CENTURY	13
3.2. DEVELOPMENT OF GERMAN MIGRATION POLICY.....	18
3.3. DOMESTIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS	22
4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	26
4.1. THEORY: NATIONALISM.....	28
4.2. NATIONAL IDENTITY	29
5. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	34
5.1. GERMANY AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS	35
5.2. DOMESTIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS.....	41
5.3. GERMANY AND EU DYNAMICS.....	46
6. CONCLUSION.....	49
6.1. OUTLOOK	51
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	54

*On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I
submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given
nor received unauthorized assistance on it.*



0. Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor, Professor Dr Arthur R. Rachwald, and thank him for his guidance and his support. Further, I would like to thank Professor Dr Anton Pelinka, for his helpful comments and literature suggestions.

1. Abstract

The thesis analyses Germany's migration policymaking and management of the 2015 Refugee Crisis, juxtaposing contemporary developments with the country's history with immigration and migration policy in the 20th century. The thesis relies on the conceptual framework of nationalism and national identity theory and combines historical analysis with original research to pose the hypothesis that Germany's historical legacy and burdens of the past have limited the country's decision-making during the crisis. However, the study finds that in reality, geopolitical and humanitarian considerations, also with respect to EU internal dynamics, have outweighed historical responsibilities in Germany's handling of the refugee crisis. Further, the thesis investigates the strong populist right-wing pushback to immigration, in the 1990s and in recent times with the *Alternative für Deutschland* and relates this to inadequate immigration and integration policy making in Germany in the 20th century guided by the perception that Germany was not a country of immigration, as well as due to structural issues in reunified Germany as a consequence of the country's double past.



Diese Arbeit befasst sich mit der deutschen Migrationspolitik und Umgang mit der Flüchtlingskrise von 2015, indem sie die aktuellen Entwicklungen mit der Geschichte des Landes bezogen auf Einwanderung und Migrationspolitik im 20. Jahrhundert vergleicht. Die Arbeit stützt sich auf den theoretischen Rahmen der Nationalismus- und nationalen Identitätstheorie, und kombiniert historische Analyse mit eigener Forschung, um die Hypothese aufzustellen, dass Deutschlands historisches Vermächtnis und die Lasten der Vergangenheit den deutschen Handlungsspielraum in der Krise eingeschränkt haben. Die Arbeit kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass in der Realität geopolitische und humanitäre Beweggründe, auch im Hinblick auf die EU-interne Dynamik, die historische Verantwortung im deutschen Umgang mit der Flüchtlingskrise überwogen haben. Des Weiteren untersucht die Arbeit den starken rechtspopulistischen Widerstand gegen Zuwanderung in den 1990er Jahren und in jüngster Zeit mit der AfD und verknüpft dies mit einer mangelhaften Einwanderungs- und Integrationspolitik im 20. Jahrhundert, sowie mit strukturellen Schwierigkeiten nach der Wiedervereinigung.

2. Introduction

This thesis aims to analyse German attitudes towards immigration and historical approaches to migration policy making and to examine the resulting, contemporary domestic socio-political developments – namely, a contemporary wave of populist and anti-immigrant sentiment which gained momentum throughout Europe and in Germany. This is put in the context of the policy responses during the 2015 Refugee Crisis, as Germany under Chancellor Angela Merkel pursued an ‘open-door’ policy to accommodate the massive population flows coming into Europe via the Mediterranean Sea and through Southeast Europe, refugees from war, political instability, or persecution. Said wave is not unique to Germany – as many countries found themselves dealing with a right-wing political front rising in power (e.g., Austria, the Netherlands) or even government reflecting such tendencies and expressing such sentiment (e.g., Hungary, Poland). However, it is Germany’s respective role within the European Union and its particular 20th century history with right-wing extremism as well as with immigration (the former in the first, the latter in the second half of the century), combined with the dynamics of the country’s reunification, which make its case rather unique, and worth analysing.

For better understanding, the author would like to briefly clarify the concepts of ‘migrant vs refugee’ and ‘immigration policy’ under which the study operates. For purposes of simplicity, the study will use the term ‘migration’ to include the varying forms of migrants (economic migrants, political refugees, family reunification). Some exceptions will have to be made for this, when analysing specific groups of migrants (e.g., guest workers, ethnic German *Aussiedler*, or political refugees), at which point the focus will be explicitly stated. Similarly, ‘immigration policy’ is meant to denote policy focused on the encompassing ‘migrant’ term, though sometimes a specific focus is also provided in that respect.

The thesis identifies two research questions: One, **what factors influenced Germany’s policy decision-making in the wake of, and in response to the 2015 Refugee Crisis?** Specifically, to what extent did the legacy of the country’s Nazi past affect domestic as well as foreign policy decisions? To explore this aspect, the study looks to contextualise the processes of German policy decision-making in 2015 with the country’s history of migration and gives a historical overview of Germany’s

immigration and integration policy stance. The study then analyses the reasons for the policy decisions that have been made, by avenues such as the potential role of the country's Nazi past as a burden on present-day international relations and policy decisions; and Germany's position as a key economic and political player in the EU (and the thus resulting dynamics); or to suppose a lack of unity of EU Member States with respect to migration and external border policy. The argument is made that Germany, restrained in its decision-making on the one hand by political memory and historical responsibility, and by European Union power dynamics in its role as a forerunner to promote consolidated policy responses, unity, and cooperation on the other, found itself in a catch-22 scenario where it could not afford to close its borders and reject immigration with the same leisure as countries such as Hungary and Poland did during the crisis.

Two, why did public attitudes and reactions to the government's open stance towards immigration in the context of the Refugee Crisis manifest in expressions of anti-immigrant sentiment? Further, to what extent did underlying national identity issues, socio-political and economic differences in the East and the West in relation to German reunification, and potential taboos of the Nazi past and expressions of nationalism exacerbate the public as well as political sentiment on immigration matters? To answer the question, the thesis will embed the issue in the theoretical framework of nationalism and national identity and focus on the role the country's Nazi past as well as the reunification of Germany played in the development of said identity. Moreover, it will elaborate on how societal change brought about by changing demographics in the 1990s and after 2015 in turn influences the political system, and how populist parties such as the *Alternative für Deutschland* exacerbate the issue and divide public opinion as part of political strategy.

The author poses the hypothesis that Germany should not have such a problem with 1) integrating immigrants of various forms into domestic society, and 2) socially accepting migrants without such significant opposition to immigrants by parts of the public, given that Germany has been a country of migration for the last 60 years. This dilemma can be explained by past failures in migration policy – especially in the 20th century – and confusion about national identity brought about by the reunification and

by burdens of the past, which in turn has allowed for anti-immigrant sentiment to manifest in German society as visibly as it has.

The work is structured as follows: First, a brief motivation section embeds the research in the contemporary, international context, where across Europe, right-wing parties and politics find a rise in acceptance with parts of the population; and where the European Union faces difficulties to promote integrated and consolidated policy approaches and witnesses rising fragmentation and dissent. Further, it is where political instability especially in the Near East and (sometimes connected) environmental pressures worldwide will lead to steadily high numbers of people becoming migrants and embarking towards Europe in search for political stability and economic opportunities, encountering a domestic population that is opposed to their arrival and existing migrant networks which often subsist as exogenous groups in domestic society.

Second, the work will provide a more detailed overview of German migration trends, immigration policy, and migrant integration efforts. It is shown that Germany, while having experienced migration inflows of various forms throughout the 20th century, has done rather little to acknowledge its status as a country of migration, and has neglected passing any comprehensive form of integration policy in that time. Things changed in the 1990s, when historic geopolitical events brought about changes in the political discourse as well as in the dynamics of population inflow. This last decade of the 20th century is made out to be a crucial period of time for German national identity development, as the country attempted the consolidation of its two parts into unified spheres and struggled with a wave of extremist terror with socio-political and religious motifs.

It is this struggle with the reconciliation of the past and the present that is embedded in the theoretical framework for the research, covering nationalism issues and political identity and memory theory. In this context, the thesis attempts to identify underlying motifs with respect to the country's national identity, exploring how taboos of the (Nazi) past and discouragement of displays of national pride can have the opposite effect and potentially explain the country's struggle with resurfacing right-wing opposition to refugee crisis politics.

Afterwards, the thesis will explore the domestic consequences of the Refugee Crisis and the German government's management of it, on the public as well as political level. To begin, the study will present a timeline of selected events and decisions, both on an international and domestic level, which would shape developments of the refugee crisis, illustrate approaches towards crisis management, and contextualise policy considerations. Then, to depict how public opinion changed throughout the crisis, the research draws on public opinion polls and surveys, and juxtaposes shifts in public opinion with key political events. It will give regard to the transformation of the German political landscape with the emergence of the *AfD* as a political player, and how internal conflict in the governing CDU/CSU parties due to differing approaches to refugee management invited a movement of voting patterns towards the populist right in the 2017 national elections. Further, regard will be given to Germany's role in the European system, and to what extent foreign policy considerations, the country's historical legacy, and EU-level dynamics had the potential to influence policy considerations respective to the management of the Refugee Crisis.

Finally, the thesis will conclude and give an outlook on how the identified issues affect current political affairs and events. More so, the work will critically examine to what extent lessons have been learned from 2015 with respect to 1) policy responses to a series of events in the summer of 2020 concerning refugee situations on the Greek coast and 2) how the European Union has dealt with the need to consolidate policy response, encourage cooperation in the face of internal threats to unity, and implement better burden-sharing mechanisms on the issue of external border and refugee management.

2.1. Motivation

Germany, in recent times, has struggled with a concerning rise in instances of anti-Semitism and aggressive manifestation of anti-foreigner sentiment. Germany is not a lonely case in the Western world, most notably France having suffered similar, if not more extreme acts of violence. Countries' distinct political and social history would caution the attempt to identify parallels – especially those of motif – past the surface level between such events across different countries. That is why the study refrains

from cross-country comparisons and focuses on the specific case of Germany: a country which to some extent still lives with shadows of the Second World War and the long-reaching consequences and changes it brought about¹. Consequences which, too, would directly affect matters of immigration: such as the benign provision on asylum in the original German constitution of 1949, or the country's responsibility for its Nazi past expressed in being welcoming and tolerant towards domestic minorities.

Corresponding to its status in international relations, Germany in 2015 took in a large share of the refugees and asylum seekers migrating to Europe. While not unprecedented in its approach, what had changed compared to the 1950s and the 1990s, when Germany had previously experienced large immigration flows, was the political attitude towards the migrants. When previously, Germany sported an immigration and integration policy representative of the slogan 'Germany is not a country of immigration', in the 21st century such perceptions from the policy side of things transitioned, more appropriately, to labour migration as an asset on the one hand, and humanitarian considerations for asylum seekers on the other. In this sense, it is relevant to explore what factors have brought about this change in perception.

What is interesting, too, is to what extent the country's history with immigration has influenced flows of refugees in terms of their destination. In the background of guest worker recruitment leading to a considerable minority of Turkish, and more broadly speaking a small Muslim diaspora existing in Germany, the presence of established socio-cultural networks may have factored into the destination selection of migrants in the context of the Refugee Crisis². Similarly, existing ties to Germany had led expellees and migrants during the Balkan wars and after the collapse of the Soviet Union to seek refuge in Germany in the 1990s.

With respect to the recent attacks on foreigners or Jewish minorities, as in Halle in 2019 or Hanau in 2020, parallels to the wave of right-wing extremism of the 1990s can be drawn and make for a compelling topic for analysis of how immigration pressures – either perceived or real – can fuel populist resistance to immigration, with

¹Such as: the divide and reunification of Germany and the corresponding social and political divisions; the political memory of Nazi atrocities and active remembrance of wartime tragedy as part of foreign policy; particular dynamics of international relations; and struggles with national identity. The potential influence of such topics on the matter at hand will be discussed at a later point in the text.

² Naturally, such factors exist alongside the fundamental appeal for economic prospects and political stability that Germany represents with its role in the EU.

the background of nationalism and national identity theory. Further, it is worth exploring to what extent failures in integration policy due to flawed perceptions of the makeup of domestic society have exacerbated public anti-immigrant sentiment. In other words, due to lack of investment by the government in the social and economic integration of immigrants particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, social problems and tensions e.g., with respect to housing or social security, became more noticeable, in turn giving more visibility of ‘immigrant problems’ and in time leading to populist opposition to immigration as well as anti-foreigner violence. Here, the work could complement research on the struggles with right-wing attacks in the Germany post-reunification, and contrast contemporary developments with past events in an investigation of historical parallels and differences.

While the literature on the dynamics of 21st century migration and its consequences (rejection of alien people in domestic society; increased Islamic terrorism or rise of populism) due to the recency of the topic is not complete, there may be reason to assume that, in the German case, efforts of recent immigrant integration into the domestic system have been built on unfertile soil³. This refers to shortcomings in the integration efforts by previous governments in the 20th century. In essence, the thesis aims to examine such shortcomings and flawed policy on the issues of immigration and integration, how the mentality of the past has affected attitudes in the present, and how the juxtaposition of German domestic versus foreign policy objectives on the topic of immigration has put the present administration in a kind of catch-22 situation.

In this sense, the thesis contributes to the literature in two key aspects: For one, it provides an analysis of the German management and policy decisions of the 2015 Refugee Crisis in the background of the country’s 20th century immigration policies; an area where due to the recency of the events exists a gap in the academic literature. Further, it integrates the analysis of the causes for anti-immigrant violence and the disproportionate support for populist party in the former Eastern *Länder* – also in reference to the comparatively low share of immigrants actually being located in areas where such tendencies are the strongest – into the context of the legacy of the former

³ As in there did/does not exist a comprehensive framework to integrate migrants into German society, leading to the formation of exogenous minority groups rather than a diverse but integrated society. This in turn has the potential to lead to socio-political tensions and the manifestation of ‘us versus them’ feelings.

GDR and reunification difficulties with respect to the consolidation of economic and socio-political imbalances. This is an area which is sparse with existing literature. In fact, in the context of reunification the literature focuses mostly on the difficulties with merging West Germany's and East Germany's national identities and past, which allows for the thesis to combine the existing theory with original analysis on immigration and integration issues.

2.2. Methodology

In this section, the methodology of the study will be briefly detailed. It is **deductive** in its analysis, posing the research questions in the context of certain preconceptions of the contemporary status quo; it develops questions based on these assumptions, and subsequently dives into research and analysis to test the hypothesis the paper poses. The work pursues a **qualitative research** approach, consulting and employing a variety of primary and secondary sources, ranging from government resources, international and domestic news reports, proclamations of political parties as well as discourse by politicians and further relevant stakeholder groups to academic literature, reviews, and original commentary. The thesis has a comparative nature, employing multi-lingual sources to consolidate different perspectives into a conceptual framework. Further, it combines the academic fields of **international relations** and comparative government with the **historical relevance** of migration processes in Germany, juxtaposing the branches as part of an **interdisciplinary study** on the country's historical relationships with migration and nationalism in the contemporary context of the Refugee Crisis.

The thesis provides **original research** in the way that it connects the contemporary discussion on the events of the 2015 Refugee Crisis with a historical analysis on German migration policy in the 20th century. In that respect, it identifies a gap in the existing literature in the link between German national identity struggles and domestic anti-immigrant attitudes – a gap that for the most part exists because of the relative recency of the refugee crisis and the contemporary nature of a populist rise in Europe, and the persisting issues with respect to immigration and anti-immigrant sentiment. Further, the thesis offers exploration into contemporary, geopolitical dynamics of EU member states, and resulting potential effects on coordinated (or rather, state-level)

responses to the humanitarian crisis. In this sense, the study aims to contribute to a more refined understanding on German policy decision-making as well as public reaction and responses in the context of the 2015 Refugee Crisis, based on interdisciplinary research and historical analysis; and to critically examine the influence of past migration policy failures and national identity issues on these developments.

More precisely, the research presupposes that there are certain connections between the migration policy as well as immigration attitudes of the 20th century and the country's refugee crisis management; and that Germany's particular historical relationship with migration and nationalism has certain implications on the policy decisions of the German government, and on the domestic public's reaction to such policy. Namely, it is the assumption that in this context, this historical relationship can explain the rise in anti-foreigner sentiment, and that domestic and European dynamics affect the decision-making process of German management of the crisis – which the study sets out to test, collect evidence on, and ultimately aims to prove or disprove. As for the research, sources employed consist of government statistics on migrant flows, official data on electoral outcomes, and evaluations of public foundations such as of the *BAMF*⁴, *BPB*⁵, or the *SVR for Integration and Migration*⁶. The thesis' theoretical foundation is in the fields of cosmopolitan nationalism and national identity, building on the philosophy of scholars such as Gellner (1983), Merkl (1989) as well as Hobsbawm (1990), and supplementing the framework with contemporary research on the German case of e.g., Canefe (2007), Fukuyama (2018) and Gatrell (2019).

⁴ *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* – the federal office for migration and refugees

⁵ *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* – the federal agency for civic education

⁶ *Sachverständigenrat für Integration und Migration* – the advisory council for integration and migration

3. Historical Context

In this section, the study sets out to provide historical context to the research question at hand. It does so by structuring the chapter as follows: First, it will chronicle the migration flows from after the Second World War up to the late 1980s. Even though German internal politics did not regard itself as a country of (im-)migration, Germany not only witnessed the movement of more than twelve million migrants to West Germany until 1961 (cf. Hönekopp 1997) – after post-war geopolitical changes, and with internal population movement following the construction of the Berlin Wall – but actively recruited foreign workers to help with post-war recovery efforts, such as establishing guest worker agreements with other European countries in the years and decades after the war. Then, the study will detail the concurrent immigration policy measures adopted by the German government⁷. While *comprehensive* immigration policy was scarce, an important factor was that the law distinguished between different groups of immigrants. For one, there were the *Aussiedler* (and *Übersiedler*⁸): Ethnic Germans or people of German origin, who immigrated from pre-war German territory, or from Eastern and Central Europe to West Germany in the post-war period (cf. Hönekopp 1997; *BVFG* §1). The *Aussiedler* were, notably, treated by law as German citizens, a status accompanied by welfare privileges, better labour market opportunities and smooth social assimilation. With some exceptions to the norm⁹, the group's primary language – 'native' as they were – was German, aiding immensely with the listed facets of integration.

Another distinct group by their legal status were the Guest Workers (*Gastarbeiter*), labour migrants who were recruited to supplement the post-war recovery efforts of domestic economy and industry. Their status was initially governed by bilateral agreements with their respective country of origin, be it Italy, Yugoslavia, or Turkey. As far as the German government was concerned, the nature of the guest workers'

⁷ West German rhetoric at the time discouraged the shortening of the *Federal Republic of Germany* (i.e., West Germany) to 'Germany' – as that term was reserved to denote the whole of Germany ('*Gesamtdeutschland*') to recognise the primary policy objective of reunification. Nevertheless, this study will use the term 'Germany' or 'German government' to mean West Germany until 1990.

⁸ The term *Übersiedler* denotes the around 4 million people who moved from East Germany to West Germany in the time period from 1945 to 1961 (Hönekopp 1997: 1).

⁹ This would later become relevant with the group of *Aussiedler* that immigrated after 1993 (the *Spätaussiedler* group) and some changes to the respective law, after which some level of language proficiency was required from this group to obtain *Aussiedler* status (cf. *BVFG* §6).

presence in German society was a temporary one, as they were imagined to work for a couple of years and then return to their home country. Accordingly, when in the context of the Oil Crisis of 1973 many guest workers decided to permanently settle in Germany, the government struggled to establish regulations to facilitate such migrant integration, preferring to focus on emigration programmes.

Finally, in the context of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany, immigration transformed to an issue of refugee and asylum seekers. Ever since, this group of immigrants has made up a significant part of migrant inflow, in part expedited by a unique provision in the German constitution allowing for the politically persecuted to enjoy certain asylum privileges (*GG* §16a)¹⁰. Similarly, the fall of the Berlin Wall signified a resurgence in *Aussiedler* migration from Poland or Czechoslovakia and enabled larger-scale population movement between the two former parts of a now reunited Germany.

3.1. Germany and Migration in the 20th century

To contextualise Germany's history with migration, scholars such as Dohse (1981) and O'Brien (1988) retrace its origin to the times of the German Reich of 1871¹¹. In part, this is due to the changing borders and territory that defined the framework of the German state in its various iterations. As such, it was not unusual for a country, through territorial expansion after a won war, to suddenly include other, minority ethnic factions as part of its dominion. Such was the case for the German Reich, which after 1871 inherited groups of Poles and Jews, now part of the new state (Canefe 2007: 522). From here on out, such minority groups would be consolidated as additional workforce required for the expanding economy, and until the start of World War I there would be more than a million migrants employed in fields such as agriculture and industry (cf. Bade 1984). While the number of migrants would fluctuate with changes in sovereignty and geopolitics – as e.g., with the creation of an independent Poland after WWI the Polish minority in Germany disappeared (cf. Dohse 1981; O'Brien 1988) – the already established mechanisms with which

¹⁰ The provision was eventually amended in the 1993 'Asylum Compromise' to reduce the previously massive number of asylum requests (around 400.000 yearly, a number only to be surpassed 2015 and '16 (*BAMF* 2020) and to ease social tensions sparked by immigration pressures.

¹¹ For further reading, refer to Hagen (1980), Bade (1984) or Elsner (1984).

‘foreign’ workforce was recruited would prove useful during the wartime that dominated the first half of the century, a steady labour supply playing a crucial role in state organisation and in keeping the war machine moving. With German remilitarisation under Hitler, and at the advent of the Second World War, Germany implemented a structured framework of labour import in order to supplement economic output and military upscaling, with previously seasonal workers and forced labour (Lehmann 1984; O’Brien 1988). Ironically, in its pursuit of cultural purity and independence, “Germany’s success depended upon the labour power of non-Germans” (Canefe 2007: 523).

In this sense, when in the 1950s in Europe the need to supplement the workforce with foreign labour arose in order to fulfil economic demands of an accelerating post-war recovery, Germany could refer to structural and organisational frameworks already in place to facilitate the process (Castles 1986). Accordingly, the German labour office set up recruitment offices across South-East Europe to attract guest workers and established bilateral agreements which served to import labour from sending countries such as Italy – with which the first agreement was signed in 1955 – Spain (1960), or Yugoslavia (1968). By 1973, around 2.6 million foreign labourers were said to be working in Germany (Castles 1986: 768; O’Brien 1988: 115; Lederer 1997: 52)¹². Combined with the large flows of displaced or expelled persons from pre-war German regions, and the *Aus-* as well as *Übersiedler* migrants until the completion of the Berlin wall, in total around 18.5 million people arrived in Germany between 1960 and 1973, amounting to the ‘greatest [labour] migration anywhere in post-war Europe’ (cf. Castles 1986). The guest workers were employed first in agriculture, but later in sectors of industry and manufacturing (Schmidt 1997: 390), and themselves regarded the projects as short-term work contracts, usually set to last around three years (cf. Hönekopp 1997). The intention for the guest workers to return to their home country after fulfilling their contracts was mutual between the workers and the state – accordingly, German policy makers engaged only minimally to integrate the labour migrants socially or economically. Similarly, the framework for the guest worker agreements was controlled with the implementation of a system of residence permits and labour permits, linking workers to specific jobs and areas, and with pre-arranged accommodation close to the work site (cf. Castles 1985). One important regulation,

¹² Some estimates go as high as 4 million (Kalter & Granato 2007; Kogan 2011: 93).

however, was achieved in 1955, from which point on foreigners were established equally in the German social security system (Mehrländer 1980). Nevertheless, authors like Dohse point out that the tendency among officials was to revoke the labour permits of those foreigners who ‘dared to take advantage’ of the state’s welfare and social services (Dohse 1981: 331-34 in: O’Brien 1988).

To satisfy labour demand, Germany also looked outside the EEC with the establishment of recruitment offices in e.g., Morocco (1963) and Tunisia (1965), and most significantly¹³ concluded agreements with Turkey already in 1961. Soon, employers realised that having their labourers, after training and having invested resources into, be sent back after a fixed amount of time was terribly inefficient, and began to favour looser controls on the enforcement of the temporary nature of the guest worker agreements (cf. Borkert & Bosswick 2007). The timing would more or less coincide with the Oil Crisis of the 1970s, which among other things led to the permanent halt on recruitment of foreign labour in Germany¹⁴. Many guest workers, confronted with the choice of returning to their home country or staying in Germany, felt that they were doing better for themselves in their new home and opted to stay. In the previous years, many had settled down and brought their families to live with them in Germany. Ergo, family reunification was a continuous trend throughout the recruitment embargo, and proved to have a significant effect on migration flows: the reduction in the number of guest workers from 2.6 million in 1973 to 1.9 million in 1976 was offset by family reunification and new births, so that the total foreigner population in Germany dropped by only 200.000 in the same period; and even increased moving towards the 1980s, up to 4.7 million in total (Castles 1986: 769; cf. Hönekopp 1994). Out of these immigration flows, 50 to 70 per cent were accounted for by methods of family reunification (Kogan 2011: 93). This kind of population movement was much to the dislike of the German government, which tried to discourage family reunification with various measures and little success (cf. O’Brien 1988) and preferred to promote emigration strategies: for example, guest workers were offered monetary incentives as part of so-called ‘repatriation programmes’ should they choose to return to their home country (cf. Borkert & Bosswick 2007;

¹³ Most significantly because the largest share of immigrants would be from Turkey (of the 2.6 million foreign labourers in 1973, 23 per cent were Turkish nationals (Lederer 1997: 52); and also because the Turkish population increased the most with family reunification after 1973 (cf. Castles 1986).

¹⁴ to be precise, a halt on recruitment of non-EC workers.

Kogan 2011). As such, the 1970s and '80s perhaps were a time where German policy makers did not foresee or were wilfully blind to the prospect that a substantial number of 'foreigners' would from here on out be living permanently in their country, and of parties unwilling to "face up to the inevitability of a multi-ethnic society" (Castles 1986: 769). As the following sections show in more detail, Germany neglected to formulate comprehensive integration policy for foreigners and immigrants as well as to implement policies representative of a transition to a multi-cultural society for most of the 20th century, and thus was implicit in creating the resulting inequalities, cultural discrimination and social tensions – facets of which resurfaced in the reactions to the 2015 Refugee Crisis and traces of which can still be observed today – with negative public sentiment towards foreigners often reinforced by – at best – ambiguous political rhetoric and directives as well as media antagonism.

With the next wave of migration, during the late 1980s and '90s, the theme shifted towards refugees and asylum seekers, as the geopolitical changes at the time – the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the breakup of the Yugoslav Federation – saw large numbers of refugees seeking asylum in Germany. On top of the country's recent history with migration which meant that many applicants had a prior connection with Germany e.g., as former guest workers (cf. Gatrell 2019: 145), what facilitated this wave of migrants to set Germany as their destination was a particular provision in the German constitution that provided unconditional right to asylum for any politically persecuted person¹⁵. Consequently, asylum requests soared from less than 60.000 in 1987 to around 440.000 in 1992 (BAMF 2020). With asylum and immigration pressures rising to unprecedented numbers, the topic of immigration gained more attention on political agendas and moved in the focus of public discourse as well. As the following sections aim to show, such elevated pressures and intensified discourse led to a number of policy measures to be enacted over the 1990s, for the most part in order to reduce the number of asylum applications, ease immigration pressure and soften any perceptions of a 'foreigner problem' in Germany. On the other hand, the increasingly visible melange of multiculturalism in German society gave rise to aggressive nationalist responses by radical groups, both on a regional level and by actual far-right terrorist

¹⁵ Formerly Art. 16 §2 (2) GG, amended with the Asylum Compromise 1993 to Art. 16a GG. (BMJV 1996)

groups such as the *NSU*, the ‘National Socialist Underground’. Not only did this result in a series of xenophobic attacks on foreigners in the early Nineties – targeting predominantly Turkish Germans – but anti-foreigner opinions found footing with the moderate parts of society, such sentiment represented politically with at the time rising popularity of the right-wing party *Deutsche Volksunion* (German People’s Union) or the *REP* (the Republicans) (cf. Klusmeyer 1993: 103; Gatrell 2019). As such, the 1990s were marked by restrictive immigration policy by the government, a heightened public discourse on the place of foreigners in German society, in large part intensified by conservative politicians and the media, and a series of far-right attacks on foreigners under the invocation of nationalist and Nazi motifs – reinforcing questions of national identity and nationalism in Germany, and showcasing initial socio-political struggles with German reunification and other geopolitical changes at the time. With migration revealing some of the underlying issues of the society – the framework for which had been set with the neglect to integrate immigrants socially and to accustom the German society to the permanent presence of foreigners and a transition to a multicultural society in the post-war period¹⁶ – “it is easier [now] to blame the victims than to come to grips with the causes” (Castles 1986: 776).

In any case, things improved significantly in the new millennium, with a change in rhetoric towards ‘the importance of immigration as a resource in global competition’ (Borkert & Bosswick 2007: 8), and a consequent overhaul of migration policy from 2001-2005. This occurred alongside the realisation that forthcoming demographic changes would prompt shortages in key areas of the labour market, such as in the care sector or in high-skill professions (cf. Hess & Green 2016). The resulting initiatives of the SPD-Green government coalition, like a ‘green card’ scheme for skilled labour migration, would serve to combat slow population- and economic growth rates; before the start of the refugee crisis in 2015, around 8.5 million non-German nationals were living in Germany, with one in five having a *Migrationshintergrund* – a background of migration (Green 2013).

¹⁶ for West Germany, a consequence of wilful neglect, while for East Germany, a structural feature.

3.2. Development of German Migration Policy

In the literature, assessment of Germany's relation to immigration is often described as not a 'classical immigration country', but a 'labour recruiting country' (cf. Castles 1986; Chin 2007; Gesley 2017). More so, during the 20th century opinion concurred from politics and the public alike that Germany was not an immigration country like the United States, or even France and Britain, where the two latter, as a consequence of colonial independence, saw the transformation towards multicultural, multiracial societies and a visible, permanent change in their way of life (cf. Lowe 2017).

Germany, in one way or the other, considered itself to not be going through the same process. If anything, the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe after 1945 and the migration movements of the ethnic German *Aus-* or *Übersiedler* simply meant a consolidation of the German population in wake of the post-war territorial changes and geopolitical developments and was not regarded as immigration in the same way. Still in 2001, German politics explicitly stated that "Germany is not a country of immigration"¹⁷. As such, it comes perhaps as no surprise that throughout the 20th century, migration policy and laws in Germany for the most part reflected the attitudes at the time. Indeed, it would be only in 2005 that politicians and policymakers, after political deadlock and pressure from domestic society, undertook an overhaul of immigration and integration laws and a re-evaluation of the government's stance on immigration.

In 1965, Germany established the Act on Foreigners, providing a general framework for the regulation of immigrants to Germany with respect to the duration and purpose of one's stay. While consolidating the varying provisions of the individual *Länder*, the language of the new regulations was vague and did not differentiate e.g., between guest workers and ethnic German migrants; and allowed for flexible interpretation of such guidelines by the regional authorities (Borkert & Bosswick 2007; Gesley 2017). The establishment of residence permits to regulate stay complemented the system of the guest worker agreements, for workers were managed by residence as well as labour permits to regulate their duration of stay. In general, residence permits were granted as long as "the presence of the foreigner does not compromise the interests of

¹⁷ 'Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland', from the not only in the literature much-discussed position paper of the CDU/CSU from 23 April 2001, the conservative, now largest German party, though at the time an opposition party to the Schröder I and II-government.

[Germany]”¹⁸, and accepted asylum seekers were granted residence permits based on their legal status as defined by the constitutional provision 16 (2) (ibid. 2017: 5).

In 1969, the EEC passed the Law on EEC Residence, which Germany implemented accordingly. The law eased freedom of movement within the EEC member states, and systematised the issuing of five-year residence permits, if workers could provide proof of employment (Gesley 2017). Here too, the law corresponded to domestic attitudes, as at the time, employers began to realise shortcomings of the short-term, limited-time guest worker agreements and were looking to retain their workers for longer periods. Thus, regulations on five-year residence permits, with a possible five-year extension, were welcomed by employers of guest-workers in particular. Less welcome, perhaps, were provisions on rights of entry for family members and dependants of EEC citizens, which lowered difficulties of family reunification substantially, in line with the EEC ideal of free movement¹⁹.

In the 1970s, after the halt on recruitment in the context of the Oil Crisis and with regards to continuous migrant streams by family reunification, social pressures and conflicts between immigrants and the endemic German population surfaced. In the context of social integration issues like access to education, medical services, and in particular fair housing conditions (cf. Klusmeyer 1993: 94) the German parliament established the position of a ‘Commissioner for the Promotion of Integration of Foreign Employees and their Families’ in 1978 (Borkert & Bosswick 2007). Contrary to the report published by the commission, which necessitated a proactive and comprehensive integration policy, German migration policy fulfilled neither the one nor the other criterion and remained conservative and restrictive in nature (cf. Geiß 2001). Then, in 1983, the government passed the Return Assistance Act, formalising efforts to encourage voluntary – and swift – return by financially subsidising, for a limited time, return projects for guest workers (cf. Gesley 2017). “While the intended result [...] was limited, its implicit symbolic message both to the foreign population and the German public was boldly visible and counteracted the goal of social integration of settled migrants” (Meier-Braun 1988: 69 in: Borkert & Bosswick 2007: 5).

¹⁸ Act on Foreigners §2 (1).

¹⁹ Law on EEC Residence §1 (1-2), §2 (2).

In the 1990s, two significant pieces of migration and asylum legislation were implemented, based on the concept that Germany was not a country of immigration, and in order to relieve pressures related to the mounting number of asylum applications to Germany. The first, the Act of Foreigners of 1990, replaced the existing Act of Foreigners of 1965 and largely continued the restrictive policy measures, limiting migration from outside the EU and tightening deportation rules (cf. Borkert & Bosswick 2007; Gesley 2017: 7). Nevertheless, the Act included progressive aspects in the area of naturalisation and citizenship, for foreigners who had been legally residing in Germany for fifteen years were granted the opportunity to naturalise, and further simplifications in this area for under-23-year-olds. The idea of naturalisation as not a means, but an end of the integration process, has a peculiar dynamic with national identity: The overall stance of the government was that ‘naturalisation is the final step of a successful integration process’ (Borkert & Bosswick 2007: 6), and that integration in this sense is achieved through the adoption of the German way of life, portraying the ‘close connection between civic membership in Germany and an ethnocultural concept of national identity’ (Klusmeyer 1993: 96). Indeed, it is this kind of connection which many foreign residents eligible for naturalisation would cite as their reason to not apply for German citizenship – for fear of losing out on certain rights in their home countries, or of having to abandon their cultural and religious roots (ibid. 1993: 89-91)²⁰. While these attitudes persisted throughout the 1980s and ‘90s and led to overall low rates of naturalisation²¹, the regulatory framework for naturalisation and citizenship has since improved to, for instance, allow exceptional cases of dual citizenship²².

The second significant piece of legislation was the Asylum Compromise of 1992, at a time where asylum discourse and criticism of ‘too liberal’ migration controls had moved in the focus of public discussion and political campaigning. The compromise aimed to soften the critical stance of the public towards immigrants which had manifested in xenophobic attacks and violence, increasing in frequency and intensity (Luft & Schimany 2014), and to reduce the volume of asylum requests which had more than quadrupled in the previous five years, from around 100.000 in 1988 to

²⁰ A further reason being the at the time mandatory military conscription in Germany.

²¹ “around 3 per cent throughout the 1980s” (Klusmeyer 1993: 89).

²² cf. §12, §25 (1) Law on Nationality (*StAG*)

almost 440.000 in 1992 (*BAMF* 2020). As such, the basic law was amended to limit eligibility for being granted asylum, and concepts such as the safe third country rule were introduced²³. While the actual approval rate for asylum applications had always been low, around 4 per cent (cf. Gesley 2017: 8), the new regulations stabilised the yearly number of asylum requests for the rest of the decade at around 150.000. At the same time, new streams for illegal entry and markets for refugee smuggling were formed (Borkert & Bosswick 2007).

At the start of the 2000s, industry demands to loosen immigration regulations motivated by a lack of skilled workers in sectors of the economy prompted the mainstream conservative CDU/CSU, who had around the same time published their stance of “Germany is not a country of immigration”²⁴, to reposition its stand on immigration and to engage with the governing coalition in the creation of new, reformed migration legislation. Further push came from the newly established independent commission on immigration which emphasised the advantages of immigration in terms of economic competitiveness and for demographic reasons (cf. Independent Commission on Immigration 2001). After the next several years were spent making concessions and compromises between the SPD-led government, the conservative opposition, and representatives of stakeholder groups, the new Migration Act entered into force on 1 January 2005 (cf. Borkert & Bosswick 2007; Gesley 2017). In short, the new framework facilitated – in particular, high-skilled – labour migration, introduced state-sponsored integration measures and activities, further eased naturalisation processes, and consolidated the various previous regulations into the new Act²⁵. In the literature, the act has since been regarded as a ‘complete overhaul of German migration policy’ (Gesley 2017: 9) and as a ‘profound turn from restrictive attitudes and policy towards immigration as an important resource for Germany’ (Borkert & Bosswick 2007: 8).

²³ Act to Amend the Basic Law Art. 16 & 18, Art. 1 § 2 (*BGBL* 1993)

²⁴ see *Ref. #17*

²⁵ Cf. Migration Act (2004).

3.3. Domestic attitudes towards immigrants

From the late 1970s onwards, immigration (and later, asylum) matters moved in the focus of public debate and political discourse. As a consequence of previous institutional neglect of integration measures, social tensions especially in education and housing allowed for the construction of a ‘foreigner problem’: With limited housing opportunities having been made available to the guest workers and immigrants in the past, foreigners faced discrimination in access to housing and local foreigner communities would often reside in the poorer, industry-heavy districts – in turn reinforcing the perception of ‘the immigrant failing to successfully integrate’ (cf. Braunthal 1989; Canefe 2007: 533), even though the structural hurdles had been put in place by the administration. Correspondingly, in the early 1980s 49 per cent of Germans expressed negative attitudes towards foreigners, and towards the resident Turkish population in particular, such unfavourable views increased from 14 per cent in 1973 to 46 per cent in 1983 (Stöss 1989: 49 in: Klusmeyer 1993). With the economic recession coming to an end in the mid-eighties, tolerance and relations towards immigrants seemed to have improved (cf. Braunthal 1989; Leenen 1992), only to take a significant hit again with the large number of refugees seeking out Germany starting in the late 1980s, as well as with social tensions arising from German reunification.

Faced with rising asylum application numbers, the conservative government began to incorporate demands for restrictive measures and an amendment to the asylum provision by justification of “a serious threat to German national identity by multicultural foreign infiltration“ as part of its national election campaign platform in 1986/87 (Borkert & Bosswick 2007: 5). Aided in large part by the media to construct an image of emergency, threat, and loss of identity, as well as by a lack of resources on a regional level to accommodate larger numbers of asylum seekers and the high level of xenophobic attacks throughout the country, the opposition eventually budged and the Asylum Compromise was passed, with which “the general public believed the problem was solved, and the ability of politicians to deal with high asylum-seeker numbers seemed to be restored” (ibid. 2007: 16). In general, the media actively exacerbated the negative attitudes towards foreigners, by spreading negative stereotypes, focusing on immigrant criminality, and talking up the panic of foreign

invasion²⁶ (cf. Merkl 1995; Gatrell 2019). Similarly, public opinion was representative of such feelings: Surveys registered that in 1991/92, 76 per cent of people supported changes to the asylum law, sixty per cent considered immigrants to exacerbate unemployment and to ‘pose danger’, and asylum and immigration was the primary point of concern for 70 per cent of West Germans after 1989 (Klusmeyer 1993: 102; Gatrell 2019: 146).

Disregarding the external factors that led to large number of asylum streams to Germany, the fact that Germany right after its reunification struggled with the integration of foreigners, and that an increasing immigrant minority led to anti-foreign violence is not a coincidence. Rather than that, how Gatrell puts it, “reunification posed a challenge because it *coincided* with the arrival of large numbers of non-German migrants” (2019: 145), I argue that reunification intrinsically posed challenges as Germany needed to consolidate the structural economic, social and political differences between the two parts into a suitable identity for the new republic. The arrival of large numbers of immigrants, then, exacerbated or compounded these challenges, and particularly in the eastern regions provided fertile ground for right-wing extremism (cf. Klusmeyer 1993; Fijalkowski 1993; Merkl 1995). The complexion of the eastern *Länder*, with severe economic difficulties and without experience of coexistence with multicultural, heterogenous foreigner minorities, as part of the legacy of the authoritarian GDR, is a theme that persists also in the contemporary attitudes towards immigration and right-wing political parties and will be relevant again when discussing regional differences in political representation and immigrant perception in context of the 2015 Refugee Crisis.

In any case, the roots of aggressiveness towards foreigners may then be traced back to the social disintegration (reduced social support, high unemployment – more so in the East than in the West (cf. Klusmeyer 1993: 103)) and looming prospects of marginalisation that some groups experienced, which particularly in the young manifested in an association with right-wing ideology and an expression of violence against the foreign ‘other’. It is coherent with theory that social transformation and disintegration of the perceived homogeneity of domestic society leads the groups

²⁶ To the point is a headline by *Der Spiegel* already in July 1973: “The Turks Are Coming – Run for Your Lives” (cf. Gatrell 2019: 92).

disadvantaged by these processes to express their frustration in aggression towards the ‘other’ (cf. Hobsbawm 1990; *see* section [4.1](#)).

While there are many instances of anti-immigrant violence in Germany throughout the 1990s²⁷, there are certain underlying themes that encompassed the events and attitudes in Germany after the country’s reunification, and which in some forms are relevant in the present still and can thus serve as reference points for contemporary analysis. For one, there was the existence of structural differences between East and West Germany, and the social, economic, and political legacy of the GDR, as introduced previously in this section. The process of consolidating such differences between the liberal West and the authoritarian East, and the corresponding socio-economic transition brought about unemployment rates in some eastern regions double that of their western counterparts (cf. Klusmeyer 1993: 103), and threatened disintegration of, in particular, rural communities. Complexities of immigration and integration were not exclusive to the political migrants – nor to the significant Turkish German population – but rather were compounded by the streams of the ‘ethnic German’ *Aussiedler* to Germany around the time of reunification – for instance, almost 400.000 *Aussiedler* immigrated to Germany in 1990 (Statistisches Bundesamt 1991). Contrary to the group that arrived in the post-war period, the *Spätaussiedler* of the 1980s and ‘90s were for the most part without German language skills, and to some extent disassociated from contemporary (West-)German culture and society. While this impeded their social integration and economic possibilities, this group was still eligible for German citizenship based on their historical ties. In this sense, German legislation faced a dilemma in regulating admission of entry for the groups of varying ethnic background yet differentiated the immigration and integration efforts towards the (*Spät*-)*Aussiedler* group as ‘repatriation’ (cf. Klusmeyer 1993). However, public opinion did not subscribe to this differentiation as much – only about a third of West Germans considered the *Aussiedler* to be ‘German’ (cf. Herdegen 1989).

²⁷ Elaboration of which will be foregone in the main text. The literature is rich with references to xenophobic violence directed at foreigners, predominantly the Turkish minority; so too is media coverage. As such, I would refer to e.g., Gatrell (2019: 148) for a list of attacks in the 1990s; Atkinson (1993), Klusmeyer (1993), Fijalkowski (1993) or Krell et al. (1996), who include statistics and case studies of anti-foreigner violence in Germany in their research. In general, such incidents of violence were high in the 1990s, in the context of large immigration pressures and the eventual amendment of the asylum law and rose again similarly after 2015. For official statistics, see BKA (2016) or AAS/*Pro Asyl* (2021) (in German).

Attitudes towards this group were, next to the few commonalities in terms of what defined German ‘membership’ (shared language, culture, traditions, ...), in part steered by the fact that the *Aussiedler* economically shared characteristics with the groups of foreigners towards which there existed negative opinion in the first place. These economic characteristics, namely, were a relatively high proportion of unemployment, the reliance on social security and -integration programmes, and difficulties with housing (cf. Klusmeyer 1993: 100-02). Resulting were the rising sympathies of the public towards nationalist, right-wing groups in the 1990s, and the increase in xenophobic anti-foreigner violence, supplemented by the socio-economic issues that accompanied the years after German reunification.

Further, there is the connection of integration and citizenship laws with German national identity understood through ethno-cultural concepts and ethno-national restrictions – a flawed understanding, however (ibid. 1993; Fijalkowski 1993; Canefe 2007). As we have seen, traditionally, German migration policy making has displayed a duality in its approach towards different groups, a dichotomy of sorts, differentiating between measures and regulations for groups of ethnic German ‘returnees’ and immigrant guest-workers, refugees, and their children. The provision which allowed the *Aussiedler* to obtain citizenship was based on ethno-national considerations, while German citizenship for foreign first- and second-generation migrants remained elusive or obstructed by law (Fijalkowski 1993). The corresponding legal provisions, such as nationality based on *jus sanguinis*, eligibility for naturalisation after usually 8-10 years of residence, or the absence of dual citizenship remained in place during the 20th century and were only eased in the 2000s. This goes to show the struggle and reluctance of Germany to move past restrictive aspects of nationality and national identity and to transition towards a multi-ethnic and -cultural society – a struggle illustrated by the restrictive migration policy in the 1990s and in relation to the reunification. There, so Canefe (2007), was a missed chance to embrace a post-national identity for the reunified country. Rather than “enlarging the arsenal of political, social and cultural tolerance”, the tightening of asylum provisions in 1993 stemmed from aspirations to establish a now-united German national identity which ‘non-ethnically identifiable Germans’ seemed to be excluded from, so the author (ibid. 2007: 524-29). Such are the roots of anti-foreigner sentiment and violence, so

Fijalkowski (1993: 857), subsequently expressed in the xenophobic attacks and popularity of right-wing populist parties across Germany in the 1990s.

In chapter 5, we will see how similar expressions resurfaced in response to the immigration pressures of the 2015 Refugee Crisis, allowed for by ‘open door’ migration policy. While in the 1990s the government had restricted the entry of refugees with the intention to soothe right-wing influence and public tension, in 2015 the government adopted an open stance towards refugees based on humanitarian considerations, which in turn triggered right-wing popularity and anti-foreigner attacks. Before that, chapter 4 will explore how nationalism and national identity in Germany developed in the 20th century, how such institutionalised ethno-national notions interacted with integration efforts, and to what extent the legacy of Nazism on the one hand, and the legacy of forty years of division on the other, influenced German identity.

4. Theoretical Framework

In this part, the author elaborates on the specifics of the proposed hypothesis, the theoretical perspectives, and the empirical expectations. The thesis employs the conceptional framework of Liberalism theory as a philosophical foundation for the research. Within the umbrella term of liberalism, it focuses on the theories of nationalism in a cosmopolitan sense, and national identity in the German case (cf. Canefe 2007). It gives regard to the connection between humanist liberalism and evolutionary liberalism, i.e., nationalism (Tamir 1993; 2019) as different pathways of Western states’ conceptual development; and how such avenues provide contrast and potential pitfalls in the responses to the Refugee Crisis across the political spectrum.

More specifically, the thesis relies on the political theories of nationalism (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990) as well as political and national identity (Merkel 1989; Smith 1991; Fukuyama 2018) to propose the hypothesis that Germany’s struggle with the cultural acceptance and integration of immigrants is connected to past policy failures, and mistaken socio-political conceptions of the makeup of the ‘German’ society. For instance, legal frameworks of citizenship and nationality furthered the neglect to integrate immigrants as part of a diverse but homogenous society and culture, and

instead led to the creation of exogenous ethnic groups of, e.g., ‘permanent guests’ (cf. Canefe 2007) and conflict with cultural memory. Accordingly, in the context of the 2015 Refugee Crisis and the corresponding waves of migrant flows and asylum requests, nationalistic and anti-immigrant sentiment, seized upon and exacerbated by right-wing political parties such as the *AfD*, gained considerable and concerning – as it similarly did so throughout Europe – momentum, manifested on the one hand in changes in the political sphere, and on the other in acts of anti-foreigner or anti-Semitic violence. *To what extent did the German handling of the refugee crisis invite such domestic reaction, and how could it have been done better? How do social changes as a result of migration influence the political spectrum? How did the reunification, and the resulting differences in social, political, and economic dynamics, affect regional perspectives? Finally, how did Germany’s history and its role as an EU actor influence its decision-making and policy options?* These are some of the issues that the thesis aims to address, and the answers to which the study sets out to find, before juxtaposing the hypothesis with the empirical evidence.



It can be said that when German chancellor Angela Merkel opened the door in the summer of 2015 to a larger-than-originally planned stream of migrants and refugees, the government acted according to liberalist morale – the uniqueness and value of human experience transcends nationality, ethnicity, and social status, and as such the refugees should find harbour safe from i.e., persecution and instability; such is liberal humanism (Harari 2016). However, this avenue presents inevitable contradictions, so Harari: he describes how nationalism developed as a form of liberalism, consolidating individual experiences into that of a common tribe, or nation, and protecting and celebrating such national experiences similar to those of an individual (ibid. 2016: 242). In the case of the refugee crisis, this line of thinking culminates in the justification of liberal citizens to assume anti-immigrant stances by wanting to protect the ‘unique communal experiences’ of their nation from external influences. In this sense, the developments in public opinion during the summer of 2015 and beyond – at first critical towards Merkel’s decision-making as not liberal and inclusive enough, to then being anxious about suffering impediments to their own culture, standard of living, and beliefs by way of too large a wave of refugees –serve as a juxtaposition of

the different interpretations and facets of liberal values in politics and the struggle to settle such dilemmas so Harari (2016).

4.1. Theory: Nationalism

Nationalism, often recited, can be defined as ‘a political principle that supposes the political and national unit to be congruent’ (Gellner 1983: 1). Classical views on nationalism, such as developed by Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson, or Ernest Gellner himself, draw predominantly on the nineteenth and early twentieth century in their analysis, in relation with the formation of traditional nation-states. Already, it should become clear that for this research project, and in the case of Germany in the late 20th century, certain temporal restrictions ought to be applied when considering aspects of nationalism theory in the context of the thesis. For one, in the German context nationalist movement does not operate as a ‘historical force of transformation’ (cf. Hobsbawm 1990) in the way it might have in the formation of the German Reich in 1871, or as it has in other parts of the world throughout the 20th century. Rather, the type of nationalism we are dealing with throughout the study is one that is reactionary in its attitudes and actions towards contemporary forces of change, international movements of population, and modern socio-economic transformation (ibid. 1990; Smith 1995). Specifically, these changes are the transition towards multicultural societies, post- or multinational state dynamics and the free movement of people particularly in the context of the European Union, and socio-economic globalisation, interconnectedness, and dependency – with the intensity of the actual changes relative to subjective perception. It is as a reaction against these forces – the transition away from the classical nation-state model and the disintegration of a perceived homogeneity of domestic society – that nationalist movements form as they have in Germany, most recently with the *AfD* and *PEGIDA*²⁸, but also throughout the last few decades of the 20th century, and throughout Europe as well.

It is by ‘us versus them’ narratives (cf. Hobsbawm 1990: 170-72), and through separatist and divisive rhetoric that nationalism expresses its aggressive tendencies, observed with xenophobic, anti-foreigner or anti-Semitic acts of violence and terror.

²⁸ Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident, a far-right political movement which is pan-European but originated in Germany.

Group identity can take different forms depending on the circumstances, but mostly finds its determinants in [a common] language, ethnicity, or culture (ibid. 1990). The ‘us’ is claimed, often under the illusionary banner of patriotism²⁹, with the goal to “defend the purity of the national cultural heritage and received national identity” (Smith 1995: 46). This has notably taken more extreme variations around the world in the past³⁰, but also exists to a lesser extent in contemporary Germany, targeting mostly immigrants and refugees with low integration levels (often in relation to Arabic and Muslim population, like with *PEGIDA*), and sometimes also the domestic Jewish populace. Unfortunately, the process of othering has been more effective in German domestic society because of systemically poor integration of immigrants and due to strict citizenship regulations, making “German-ness”, if at least by status of one’s passport, a restrictive concept even for permanent immigrants and their descendants, who often rather exist in cultural groups more or less heterogenous to the domestic society.

4.2. National Identity

As we have discussed, the subject of immigration is closely related to the formulation of nationalist and populist attitudes, not exclusively in Germany, but also across Europe and the world’s political systems. Indeed, ‘immigration and refugee matters are the policy issues that raise the greatest challenge to national identity and are the driving force behind the upsurge of populist nationalism’, so Fukuyama (2018: 131).

Fundamentally, a country needs to build on some level of national identity to function: without common belief in the legitimacy of the country and its political system, the state can neither guarantee nor ensure such legitimacy and physical security when identity groups define their identity as more communal, regional or religious rather than adhering to a common national identity; such preferences, and a

²⁹ Incidentally, more positive acts of patriotism are in turn observed in counter-reactionary protests and manifestations against right-wing violence, as after the Mölln firebombing in 1992, when around half a million people across Germany marched to protest against intolerance towards minorities (Klusmeyer 1993).

³⁰ and perhaps the counterpart to Western nationalism based on such ethnic or cultural divisions can be found in the Arabic world with contemporary radical Islamism, which may not be completely unrelated to anti-foreigner sentiment across Europe in light of religiously motivated terrorist attacks – though this is something which is beyond the scope of this work. For introductory reading on comparative nationalism studies, see Fukuyama (2018: 59-74) among many others.

lack of an overarching sense of community and (national) belonging can impede growth, stability and good governance (Fukuyama 2018). Rather, “national identity can be built around liberal and democratic values, and the common experiences that provide the connective tissue around which diverse communities can thrive” (ibid. 2018: 128). Nevertheless, “the lack of structural policies of integration and accommodation, decades of failures, misunderstandings and missed opportunities [...]” (Tamir 2019: 161) has culminated in the contemporary situation of surging populist nationalism and has led to the state of confusion of national identity in Europe today (Fukuyama 2018: 153). This seems to be a common assessment of the situation in the literature, and in the German case one which Peter Merkl points out existed already in the 1980s if not earlier (1989: 6).

Until then, Germany had been closely influenced by the legacy of the Second World War and of the Nazi regime in terms of its national identity in the way that it had turned into a liberal democracy with pluralist and humanist values – ‘the antithesis of the Third Reich’ (Wittlinger 2010). In this sense, Germany was more occupied with coming to terms with the past, cultivating collective memory and expression of remorse, pursuing reunification, and establishing itself in the new post-war Europe than to form a national character separate from such virtues. Further, with the strong economic recovery starting in the 1950s there was no fertile ground for significant populist, nationalist opposition to form to begin with; all while celebration of national identity was not particularly acceptable in the EU’s early decades – the beginning of a new historical epoch where “the age of national states has come to an end”³¹ – in the first place (Fukuyama 2018: 144). All of this did not change significantly during the 1980s, but at that point now the first generation had come of age who did not have any first-hand experiences with the Second World War (cf. Kattago 2001). As Merkl (1989: 13) documents, in the early 1980s a majority of those having grown up after the war considers the crimes of the Nazi era to belong to the past, see their responsibility with the present and the future and thus would prefer to close the chapter of that era. However, moving on from or rising above the past and to emerge from its shadows is a tricky affair and not something that could be decided by the Germans alone (cf. Lowe 2017).

³¹ Taken from a speech by Konrad Adenauer, the first German chancellor, on the foundations of a new Europe, given in 1953 (cited in Lowe 2017: 76).

Nonetheless, in the last decades of the 20th century a transition away from a very much internalised collective memory and guilt towards the Nazi past would take place, stemming from a desire to establish a normalised, positive German national identity (Kattago 2001: 35). This transition expressed itself through a number of developments in the 1980s – with the election of Helmut Kohl as chancellor in 1982 Germany seemed to move towards reconciliation and normalisation of the past and the country's identity, exemplified with US President Ronald Reagan's visit to a German military cemetery in Bitburg as part of the 40-year anniversary of the end of the war in May 1985. Reagan himself felt that "They [the German people] just have a guilt feeling that has been imposed upon them, and I just think it is unnecessary"³² (Kattago 2001: 49). At the same time, this new internalisation of the past brought about discussions on if German national identity should not rather be fixed around the events of the holocaust instead, a debate expressed through the *Historikerstreit*³³ – showing that tensions would to some extent always remain on how Germany should interact with the Nazi past.

While the events around the reunification of Germany in 1990 might have symbolised a return to normalcy from a policy perspective and evoked feelings of a new beginning (Kattago 2001: 120), it did neither solve nor simplify questions regarding German national identity. If anything, it made matters more complicated, as now the reunified Germany had to consolidate the experiences of East and West Germans into a unified narrative, framework, and identity. Further levels of complexity were added with the substantially differing approaches towards remembrance and responsibility with respect to the Nazi past of the two sides. In fact, the literature on German national identity often focuses precisely on this duality of memory and the country's double past³⁴. West Germany had engaged in a process of coming to terms with the past, through connecting itself to Western liberal values, markets, and society, and integrating its past with its present identity and collective memory, with matters being open for public debate and philosophical discussion.

³² spoken as preface of Reagan's visit to Bitburg, Germany, in 1985 (Hartman 1986 in: Kattago 2001).

³³ the 'historians' debate' of 1986, an academic dispute on how the Nazi past should be incorporated into Germany's history, and more generally about Germany's self-perception and national identity.

³⁴ for example, Kattago (2001); Wittlinger (2010); see also Blank & Schmidt (2003), Lepsius & Campbell (2004) or Gittus (2010).

On the other hand, East Germany pursued more of a ‘universalisation of the past’ (cf. Kattago 2001), meaning the distancing of itself from the Nazi past by merging the topic in a more general, abstract stance of anti-fascism, as part of the larger picture of East Germany’s communist identity (ibid. 2001). In this sense, East Germany’s approach of ‘coming to terms with the past’ was realised by a renunciation of capitalism and fascism, by which logic the Nazi regime and the Second World War had stemmed from (Wittlinger 2010). This served also as a way of differentiating and distancing itself from its Western counterpart, and in line with its political characteristics, suppressed much of public debate and official memory with respect to East Germany’s relation to the Nazi past in favour of a centrally prescribed rhetoric, memory, and identity. The resulting “lack of critical self-reflection and acknowledgement of responsibility” (ibid. 2010: 21) in East Germany, while more pronounced in the 1950s, would to a lesser extent carry over into the 1990s, and might even explain residual differences – beyond a number of other factors, such as socio-economic, educational and demographic aspects – in the attitudes between former East and West regions in the 21st century, especially regarding views of national self-determination and views on immigrants. Meanwhile in the West, alternative positive attitudes with respect to identity could be found in a variety of avenues, assisted by the strong post-war economic recovery in West Germany, and emphasising its connection to, and integration into, the Western liberal system. The country appeared to have moved past ‘primitive, narrow-minded, backward-looking’ attitudes and expressions of nationalism towards a cosmopolitan, post-national identity (cf. Wittlinger 2010).

Furthermore, “Germany’s past weighed heavily on migration and migration policy after 1945” (Gatrell 2019: 145) – exemplified by the enthusiastic (in terms of official rhetoric) reception of early guest workers and immigrants³⁵; or by the generous original provision on asylum in the constitution. On top of the challenges posed by German reunification on the country’s consolidation and formation of a national identity, a new challenge for national identity arose out of the context of the broader

³⁵ see reports by Chin (2007) on the reception of guest workers to Germany, such as the one-millionth guest worker who received a moped as celebration of his arrival – events which served to depict the good prospects for guest workers, infused by rhetoric applauding the contribution of immigrants to Germany’s prosperity and emphasising the multiculturalism and cooperation with other countries (cf. Gatrell 2019).

geopolitical changes in the early 1990s: the arrival of large numbers of non-German migrants and asylum seekers (ibid. 2019: 145). As discussed at the end of chapter [3.3](#), the timing of immigration pressures induced by the contemporary geopolitical changes corresponded with the socio-political transformation of the former East Germany by means of integration into the liberal value system of its Western counterpart. The resulting economic marginalisation of rural communities and parts of the domestic youth led to a rise in support for, and expressions of right-wing populism and nationalism. In this sense, the nationalist, anti-foreigner groups more or less³⁶ explicitly harboured evocations of Nazi ideology. At the same time, Germany's relationship to its Nazi past was being re-examined, in the context of the formation of a consolidated national identity, and the double past of West and East Germany³⁷. Culturally, the complexity of these processes was observable in Holocaust debates and memorials (cf. Kattago 2001). Through the reunification, themes of (a return to) 'normalcy' had become part of the discourse of political scientists and historians; memory of, and references to the Nazi past were drawn in domestic migration policy (cf. Gatrell 2019) and were inherent to foreign policy considerations and Germany's role in the post-Cold War world (Kattago 2001; Wittlinger 2010: 10).

Overall, while difficulties in the consolidation of the divided past and respective identities remained with reunification, the Nazi past and the responsibility of unified Germany resulting from it persisted. The memory of the Nazi past would also influence German foreign policy at the end of the 20th century – this specifically in the context of military power such as in the Balkan wars in the 1990s – and accompany an overall shift in European power dynamics and Germany's role as a major player in the EU, complemented by more influence in international affairs and with more assertiveness with respect to national interests. How German foreign policy identity transformed after reunification, and to what extent responsibility for the Nazi past and EU member state dynamics have shaped Germany's role in Europe, will become

³⁶ More explicitly, like the *NSU – Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*, or less, in ways that right-wing parties are usually under pressure to distance themselves from violence and engage more in rhetoric and posturing (cf. Merkl 1995).

³⁷ An apt symbol of the duality of the German past is perhaps the 9th of November, a date which signifies the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, but also the *beer hall putsch* in 1923 and the *Kristallnacht* in 1938 (see Kattago 2001: 121; Reichel 1995: 310-12).

relevant again when examining political dynamics and humanitarian responsibility in wake of the 2015 Refugee Crisis in the next chapter of the thesis.

5. Empirical Analysis

In this chapter, the thesis sets out to analyse the contemporary socio-political consequences of the German handling of the 2015 Refugee Crisis with respect to the previously constructed historical background and theoretical framework. It does so by detailing the events of the summer of 2015 and beyond, how the public opinion on the humanitarian crisis and on German management efforts fluctuated on the one hand and investigate the implications for changes in political dynamics on the other. That is to say, it will examine how the political landscape changed in the following years by employing and analysing political data, electoral coverage and party rhetoric and statements.

More precisely, the study presents a timeline of the 2015 Refugee Crisis from the German perspective, identifying any events (e.g., policy responses and decisions, or public appearances and speeches by chancellor Angela Merkel) that were key in shaping the contingent developments at the time. These events then are analysed vis à vis the established historical background and the theoretical framework.

Further, the research continues its exploration of the differences in attitudes between the Western and the former East German regions, with respect to national and cultural identity issues and concepts. It will give regard to the reasons for differences in voting behaviour, anti-foreigner sentiment, and the strength of populism / parties like the *AfD* in the east. On the same note, the thesis will probe the paradoxical nature of these issues – showcasing how migrant density is lowest in the eastern *Länder*, yet regions where *AfD* polls the highest. Developing the analytical framework set out in chapters [3](#) and [4](#), I will attempt to give reasons for these developments, such as a lack of experience of East Germany with migration and struggles to consolidate the two political entities in the 1990s.

Afterwards, the research will juxtapose the public mood and political struggles regarding crisis management and policy development by means of public opinion polls and electoral analysis, with the aim to consolidate the two spheres into a

comprehensive display of perceptions at the time, and to substantiate the resulting changes in the domestic political landscape.

Finally, the thesis will consider Germany's role in the European Union, and potential catch-22 scenarios with respect to policy action, the country's historical legacy, and contingent developments. Namely, it will investigate to what extent, and in which aspects, the country's decision making was limited and influenced by its political relations and EU member-state dynamics. Considering the presented theoretical framework, it is argued that there is a certain predictability in the domestic reaction to Germany's open-door policy. Did the German government anticipate this, and was it able to consider such potential developments as part of its decision-making process – if yes, what reasons were there to embrace this policy stance? The section will conclude by considering the EU's position and part in the handling of the refugee crisis; and look ahead to contemporary developments and future challenges on the front of European unity, the surging right-wing and the need for comprehensive policy responses on migration and external border management.

5.1. Germany and the Refugee Crisis

For Germany, developments of the Refugee Crisis compounded the country's historical legacy with respect to migration with its national identity and foreign policy agenda of the post-1945 and post-1989 world; as well as with contemporary EU member state dynamics and geopolitics, the latter aspect one that will be covered more extensively in the following sections. In this section, the investigation will focus on Germany's decision-making in the context of the Refugee Crisis, on the subjects of asylum as a humanitarian commitment, immigration and integration policies, and domestic political opposition. Although individual member state policy on 'common' EU issues such as migration should usually be considered through the lens of EU dynamics, the developments of the Refugee Crisis mark a time where the European Union was unable to develop comprehensive policy under aligned national interests, and instead, exemplified cleavages in national and EU priorities on refugee management and -integration. It is argued that the historical legacy, contemporary national identity, and foreign policy agenda of Germany, which together with a group of countries made up the most desirable destinations for asylum seekers and

consequently were strained the most by immigration pressures³⁸, are captured well in its considerations on policy decisions and attitudes towards asylum and immigration. In this sense, Germany's history with migration also played a part: Besides other factors that attract migrants and refugees to a destination country, a further reason that particularly many Syrian or West Balkan refugees were drawn to Germany is the fact that there were already existing social networks in place: ethnic and cultural minority communities shaped by the guest worker immigrants or the asylum seekers of the 1990s (cf. Engler 2016). The existence of such social ties can facilitate migrant integration and influence migration flows³⁹. For better and for worse, throughout the crisis, the language and decision-making, exemplified by the likes of Chancellor Angela Merkel (and on the other side, *AfD* rhetoric and public expression of anti-immigrant attitudes), expressed the duality of the role of immigrants in the formation of Germany's realised national identity and its role as a forerunner of liberal, humanitarian, egalitarian values vis-à-vis its Nazi past and in international relations.

In constructing a timeline of Refugee Crisis developments from the German perspective, perhaps the most publicised event is that of Merkel's speech on 31 August 2015, with the sentence "*Wir schaffen das*" ('We can do it'/'We can manage it') with regard to Germany's capability of accommodating large numbers of refugees⁴⁰. Previously, the German government and federal agencies had expressed intentions to process large numbers of asylum seekers (cf. BBC 2015; Oltermann & Kinglsey 2016), expectations of which led especially Syrian refugees already in Europe to seek out Germany as their destination, and, in turn, sparked political as well as public opposition to the liberal refugee policy (cf. Hill 2015; Mader & Schoen 2018). Positive responses to refugees arriving in Munich⁴¹ turned out to be fickle, with Merkel being confronted with local opposition when visiting a refugee camp in

³⁸ This is considered separately from countries like Italy and Greece (or even Turkey), which as border countries saw the majority of immigrants arrive at their shores and faced resulting, significant pressures of their own, however were for most refugees ideally considered transit countries on their path to e.g., Germany, Sweden, or France (cf. UNHCR 2016a; EC 2021).

³⁹ From Social Capital Theory, see e.g., Kalter 2011; Kalter & Kogan 2014 for empirical studies on Germany.

⁴⁰ This slogan – which Merkel stopped using not long after (cf. Livingstone 2016) – went on to be widely used by both supporters and opponents of Merkel's asylum politics, predominantly with a negative connotation to the difficulties of the refugee management (cf. Wood 2018), with some political observers arguing, e.g., that "no group has benefited more from [this language] than the *AfD*" (Delcker 2016).

⁴¹ See, e.g., Graham-Harrison 2015: *The Guardian* 5 September 2015.

Saxony, a few days after which she would deliver said statement (Delcker 2015; Feldhoff 2020). Public opinion remained ambivalent throughout. Especially in the early days there was sweeping support for Merkel's humanitarian stance as well as willingness to help with social integration on a regional level (Dudasova 2016). However, the number of attacks on refugees increased significantly soon after the initial goodwill had abated (Jackle & König 2018), and antagonistic public opinion aggravated, e.g., due to occurrences of sexual assaults by foreigners around New Year's Eve in Cologne, and terrorist attacks with Islamist background across Europe – all this exacerbated by discourse from the media and by members of the political opposition, inciting socio-cultural perceptions of threat and animosity (ibid. 2018: 7; Gatrell 2019). By the same token, regional capacities for refugee accommodation and integration turned out to be often insufficient⁴², and the mounting pressures led to a reassessment of asylum policies in late 2015 and early 2016.

These new regulations, the 'Asylum Packages I & II' (*Asylpaket I & II*), thus addressed some of these issues, like allocating government integration support measures and funds to local communities, and extending the list of safe third countries in order to limit the admission of asylum applicants (cf. Engler 2016). Overall, while Merkel's position towards the Refugee Crisis situation was welcoming, Germany's effective actions were not particularly characterised by consistency. The arrangement in September 2015 to admit refugees stranded in Hungary to Germany via a transit route through Austria was representative of the underlying humanitarian motives Merkel applied in face of the EU's inaptitude to agree on comprehensive refugee management systems. Further, it showcased the volatility of the whole refugee situation – Germany's and Merkel's actions seemed to have implied, beyond their intended scope, 'an invitation for the refugees to come' (Engler 2016). In turn, public opinion and political opposition turned sour soon after⁴³, and the government back-pedalled with the implementation of short-term border controls to Austria (cf. Alexander 2017). As such, policymakers have had to gingerly manoeuvre public opinion and current trends on top of a domestic fallout with the CDU's Bavarian sister party (CSU) caused by differences in refugee politics (cf. the *Asylstreit*). Nonetheless, Merkel's public acts never failed to catch public attention, for better or for worse:

⁴² See, e.g., Amann 2015: *Der Spiegel* 11 September 2015.

⁴³ See, e.g., Bender 2015. *The Wall Street Journal* 9 October 2015

(in-)famous remain the selfies taken with refugees in Berlin emblematising Germany's open-door policy at the time⁴⁴, or the chancellor's TV appearance in July 2015, bringing a young Palestinian refugee to tears when confronted with the difficulties for asylum seekers⁴⁵.

With the EU-Turkey agreement and the closing of the West Balkans transit route in 2016, the number of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe dropped significantly⁴⁶. For the EU-Turkey agreement, concluded in March 2016, the aim was to “end irregular migration” to the EU, relieving pressures of uncontrolled streams of migration (European Commission 2016). The ‘closing’ of the Balkan transit corridor, over which around 700.000 migrants had travelled in 2015 alone⁴⁷, resulted in a decrease in illegal border-crossings of 98 per cent year-on-year in the region, according to Frontex data (FRONTEX 2017: 5). As for Germany, asylum applications peaked in 2016 with more than 720.000 in total and receded to pre-crisis levels of around 200.000 in 2017 (BPB 2021).

While the generally immigration-friendly stance was driven for the most part by humanitarian motifs, and national action was urged by a lack of an EU-level response in the early days of the crisis, invocations of Germany's historical legacy could also be observed. German president Joachim Gauck, who like Merkel had been brought up in East Germany and thus was familiar with the struggles with migration and integration within Germany post-1989, drew upon notions of a moral obligation to support refugees and migrants, similar to how ethnic Germans had been refugees after the war and had relied on support of German citizens then (*Deutsche Welle* 2015; Gatrell 2019). Thus, Germany itself invoked its history with migration to warrant and inspire support for the government's stance. On the international sphere, too, Germany was able to use this as an opportunity for the ‘rehabilitation of its image’ with respect to its historical legacy (Dudasova 2016: 316). Further, policymakers were wary to repeat mistakes of failed integration in the past and implemented

⁴⁴ cf. Engler 2016: 3.

⁴⁵ See, e.g., Connolly 2015: *The Guardian* 16 July 2015.

⁴⁶ It is debatable at which point the Refugee Crisis was considered ‘over’ or at least ‘halted’ (the EU “declared the migration crisis over” in 2019 (Rankin 2019)). The author does not argue that the developments in 2016 constituted such a point of the crisis, though selects the mentioned measures as a concluding point of the timeline of events constructed in the work, as further elaboration would be beyond the scope of the research.

⁴⁷ cf. European Commission 2015; UNHCR 2016b

integration measures as well as encouraged training opportunities for refugees, formalised in the Integration Act of 2016 (cf. Gesley 2016) – although certain structural hurdles to integration still exist (cf. Gatrell 2019: 203), perhaps due to ‘successful integration’ being considered through out-of-date perceptions of German culture and characteristics, of which residuals exist on an institutional level, argues Canefe (2007). However, in the 21st century these hurdles are less likely to be caused by outdated institutionalised perceptions of national identity⁴⁸, but rather by the inherent unfriendliness and complexity of the bureaucratic process so ingrained in the German system. More so, the importance of conveying German (or more generally, Western-) values and norms as part of the integration process has been made apparent by the events on New Year’s Eve in Cologne 2015/16, and the threat of radical Islamism in Western Europe (cf. SVR 2017). A commonality of most (publicised) ‘integration success stories’ is that they are most often realised against the background of strong community support and dedicated local volunteers. While associations that provide integration support for refugees can be proud of the success of their mentees, they also observe that volunteer support receded after the initial wave (cf. Feldhoff 2020), and it remains to be seen to what extent the Covid-19 pandemic will set back integration efforts. In Germany, the ‘five-year anniversary’ of the Refugee Crisis in 2020 prompted an initial review of the developments, for which the advisory council for integration and migration (SVR) draws an overall positive evaluation, particularly in the areas of access to education and labour market integration – “considering the circumstances”⁴⁹ (SVR 2017, 2019; ARD 2020a).

In this sense, it can be said that Germany learned from its policy inadequacies and integration failures of the 20th century, and set out to manage migration inflows and provide integration support in a more proactive and less restrictive manner. When in the past, German migration policy was characterised by the perception that Germany was ‘not a country of immigration’, the government’s decisions during the Refugee Crisis quite clearly demonstrated that policymaking has unburdened itself from this fallacy of a mindset. Naturally, the objective for immigrants to assimilate to domestic

⁴⁸ and indeed, analysts confirm that negative ‘culturalization of integration discourse’ was observed to not have affected integration politics (SVR 2019: 13).

⁴⁹ the circumstances being the inherent barriers to integration that exist in Germany, like German language skills, a lengthy asylum process, or idiosyncrasies of the German labour market, which for example make the accreditation of foreign qualifications and certificates required for labour market entry very difficult.

culture and values is still imbued in national integration processes. However, such values are less shaped by restrictive concepts of national identity and internal values as they tended to be in the past but are embedded in a multi-cultural society, and an overarching value system of the liberal, capitalist Western world. German-ness has, like many other national identities in the globalised world, taken on more of a cosmopolitan nature and attributes appropriate to the modern era. Tension points remain, nevertheless, in the integration of cultures that are inherently different from the ‘western’ system, namely the Muslim world. The clash of value systems, at its extremes expressed in Islamic terror attacks throughout Europe and aggressive expressions of anti-foreigner sentiment, has led to a resurgence of nationalism based on traditional understandings of national identity across Europe, so too in Germany. In this sense, threats exist less due to immigration *per se* but due to “the political [and public] reaction that immigrants and cultural diversity create” (Fukuyama 2018: 153). Integration measures can here have negative side-effects as well: Youth with immigrant roots who struggle to integrate into the domestic society and culture but are at the same time disassociated from their religious and cultural roots, can be susceptible to radicalisation by terrorist groups.

In any case, Germany in its generally open-door policies seemed to have embraced contemporary humanitarian values, consciously or unconsciously influenced by the policy failures in the past, rather than having taken a restrictive nationalist approach to Refugee Crisis management like countries such as Hungary or Poland. This has come with a price domestically, since immigration and refugee policy has been the driving force behind the upsurge of populist nationalism (cf. Fukuyama 2018: 131), as it is in Germany with the popularity of the *Alternative für Deutschland* party. These developments stand akin to the wave of right-wing extremism in Germany in the 1990s, as mentioned in section [3.3](#), at a time when immigration pressures and the panic over the arrival of asylum seekers allowed extreme right parties to capitalise politically, and anti-foreigner attacks increased (cf. Merkl 1995). With this in mind, the following sections will analyse the domestic political developments as a consequence of the Refugee Crisis in more detail, and further explore factors that influenced the German government’s decision- and policymaking, from its historical legacy over domestic public opinion and political opposition to contemporary international relations and EU dynamics.

5.2. Domestic consequences of the Refugee Crisis

The Refugee Crisis brought about a change in the status quo of German political competition in many ways, for one due to politics being unable to continue to play down questions of immigration (Mader & Schoen 2018). More broadly, the immigration pressures on the one hand necessitated the governing parties to take a position on immigration management, and on the other hand allowed the opposition parties to reiterate their stances on the topic (ibid. 2018: 4). The conservative CDU notably deviated from its traditionally restrictive immigration policy to, under Merkel, position itself as welcoming to the refugees and asylum seekers. This position perhaps was more representative of the Chancellor herself, with respect to the contemporary circumstances, than of the baseline party stance, as consequently, criticism from within the party accumulated and internal tensions arose with the CSU. These tensions reached their peak in the summer of 2018 with the *Asylstreit* (asylum quarrel). Previously, differences in approaches to immigration policy had caused the government's coalition building process to stagnate for several months after the 2017 national elections (Oltermann 2017). Then, the CDU clashed with the CSU personified by Merkel and her interior minister and then-leader of the CSU, Horst Seehofer, on the nature of migration policy. In the process, Seehofer would threaten to bypass Merkel's efforts to reach a European solution on migration controls, temporarily declare his resignation over the agreements reached at the EU summit⁵⁰, and state that "the Islam is not part of Germany" (cf. Feldhoff 2020). In the end, a break of the government was prevented with EU-level and domestic concessions on stricter immigration regulations. In the bigger picture, the CSU distanced itself from Merkel, party representatives were found to adopt populist rhetoric and portrayed refugees as a threat. Thus, positions on the political right of the CDU/CSU were made 'socially acceptable' (Jäckle & König 2018; ibid. 2020). In this sense, voters of the CDU saw their party in a bumpy, back-and-forth process take an uncharacteristic turn away from past conservative immigration policy to a more liberal position. This in turn alienated the factions of more conservative voters who, no longer identifying with their party's policy stances, were absorbed by the parties to the right of the CDU,

⁵⁰ See, e.g., *Al Jazeera* 2 July 2018.

namely the AfD (Mader & Schoen 2018). Following the changes in the political landscape after the 2017 national elections, the CDU/CSU has on some issues even positioned itself more conservatively than before the crisis, for one in an attempt to regain the voter groups lost to the AfD.

In the hectic environment of the crisis, strategic considerations of the government lost out in priority to more immediate crisis management, and especially parties with an anti-immigration agenda capitalised on attention-grabbing events and provocative newspaper headlines, and further were able to cue threat perceptions and rouse reactionary, populist opinion. Such as the AfD, which exploited such structural tensions to mobilise voters with the party's populist anti-immigration position (ibid. 2018: 17). In many ways, the AfD plays on attributes of traditional nationalism, i.e., the 'us-versus-them' rhetoric, the threat of the 'other' to the perceived homogeneity of domestic society and culture and blame on foreigners for the marginalisation of communities as negative externalities of globalisation (cf. section 4.1). Political analysts observe that the AfD polls the strongest in the 'precarious' sectors of society, in the same areas that the presence of the long-standing parties (CDU and SPD) is being eroded (Vehrkamp & Mehregani 2017). For the AfD, rooted in Euroscepticism and nationalism and originally founded as response to the economic difficulties in the aftermath of the 2008 Financial Crisis, the 2015 Refugee Crisis has constituted a critical juncture in its party politics, after which the party shifted further to the right and anti-immigration politics took centre stage in the party's programme. Similarly, the 'marginalised and dissatisfied' voters of the AfD are not so much marginalised economically, as they are dissatisfied culturally; as opponents of the effects of globalisation and modernisation identifying with values of 'tradition' or 'protection of vested rights' (SZ 2017; Vehrkamp & Mehregani 2017). In every regional election after 2015, the AfD has passed the five per cent threshold for a place in the state parliament and received 12,6 per cent of the votes in the national elections 2017, an increase of 7,9 percentage points compared to 2013 (Statista 2021a). In regional elections, the AfD scored as high as 27,5 per cent in Saxony (2019), or 24,2 per cent in Saxony-Anhalt (2016).

Overall, the percentage of votes for the AfD is more than twice as high in the eastern parts of Germany as in the western *Länder* (Decker 2020). Though existing academic literature is sparse on the causal links between structural factors of the former East

German regions and right-leaning political orientation/anti-foreigner attitudes, the theory supports this connection. The GDR had little exposure to foreigners and unfamiliar cultures, such inter-cultural interaction which has the potential to reduce conflict and soothe anti-foreigner sentiment, as posited by contact theory (Allport 1954 in: Jäckle & König 2018). Similarly, due to economic and structural deficits of the East German regions after reunification, communities in the eastern *Länder* would be more prone to marginalisation and poor economic conditions, in turn leading to political support for anti-establishment parties. While along these lines, the wave of right-wing extremism and party popularity of the 1990s can be explained, this does not hold as much for the post-2015 developments, where the situation is more complicated⁵¹. While the roots of the disproportionate support for the AfD in the East can be found in these factors, in regional and national elections the party polls strongest in the 35- to 44-age group⁵², which would not correspond with the post-reunification changes of the 1990s. Further, there is a paradoxical nature between the visibility of foreigners and political anti-immigrant opinion: While the majority of asylum seekers are by way of administration systems distributed to western states (cf. *BAMF* 2019, *BPB* 2021), populist parties like the AfD score highest in the regions where there is a generally low density of refugees. Similarly, perceptions about refugees are highly susceptible to media manipulation or popular opinion (cf. Jäckle & König 2018)⁵³. In any case, party competition and the political landscape in Germany has transformed after the Refugee Crisis, and the AfD in Germany, and other populist parties across Europe, have emerged as the main beneficiaries politically, by positioning themselves as immigration-critical and using populist rhetoric to shore up fears and threat perceptions of foreigners. In the literature, the main question remains whether or not the populist right-wing has entered the political landscape to stay or will transpire as more of a temporary phenomenon as a result of the perceived mismanagement and migration influx (cf. Dudasova 2016; Mader & Schoen 2018). In Germany, the presence of the AfD provokes a particular dynamic of the country's historical legacy, as any semblance of radical nationalist ideas constitutes a political taboo, and as such the party is unlikely to become part of

⁵¹ For more on this, see e.g., Platzeck (2009); Pollack (2020): "East Germany: The dissatisfied people".

⁵² See, e.g., Pfahl-Traughber (2017).

⁵³ For instance, as part of a *ZDF* report, citizens in Brandenburg perceive the share of foreigners in the population up to almost ten times as high as they are in reality: estimates of 35%-45% compared to the actual number of 4,7 per cent (*ZDF* 2019).

regional or national government. For the time being, with the loss of immigration politics as a key issue during the Coronavirus pandemic the AfD seems to have lost its otherwise considerable momentum, which is likely to translate into a regressing of voter support in the 2021 national elections⁵⁴.

As previously discussed, public approval for the government's open-door refugee policy and integration support was positive initially; after a short while attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers turned more critical. In this section, I rely on surveys and public opinion polls compiled by the *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen* to paint a picture of attitudes towards refugees and German management of the refugee crisis. Already in July 2015, the refugee crisis had become the 'most crucial problem' in Germany by public opinion. The percentage of the population that considered refugees, asylum, and integration as the main problem in Germany would increase to almost 90 per cent at the height of the crisis in late 2015/early 2016, and remained the most pressing issue until mid-2019, when it was overtaken by discussion on climate change (*FG Wahlen* 2015a, 2021a). While two thirds supported the government's decision in September 2015 to admit refugees stuck in Hungary, only a month later the majority began to change its view, doubting Germany could cope with the number of refugee seekers coming to the country. To this regard, the main concerns were economic (doubts of proper integration into the labour market), and fears of an increase in criminality due to the increase of refugees. These concerns would grow in popularity until around the time the EU-Turkey agreement was concluded in March 2016, after which a stable majority again believed that Germany would be able to cope with the number of refugees (*ibid.* 2016b). However, the EU-Turkey agreement was perceived critically – not only by the German population, but among political observers and stakeholders as well – and was rejected by around 70 per cent of the population at the time of its ratification. Notably, at the height of the Refugee Crisis almost half of the surveyed people felt that German social and cultural values were being threatened by the increased presence of refugees and attributed the refugees with a lack of willingness to integrate into domestic society (*ibid.* 2016a). Notwithstanding, only every tenth respondent observed 'problems' with refugees in their community and only three per cent accredited to the AfD the largest competency

⁵⁴ and has done so already in the 2021 federal elections in Rhineland-Palatine and Baden-Württemberg (cf. *FAZ* 2021).

in the management of the crisis in late 2015 (FG Wahlen 2015b). Support for Chancellor Merkel's handling of the crisis was balanced throughout, with approval rates of asylum politics fluctuating between 60 and 40 per cent from 2015 to 2019 (ibid. 2021b).

What can be drawn from this data are the following observations: For one, due to the susceptibility of public opinion to overblown rhetoric and threat perceptions by the media and conservative politicians, discrepancies exist in the public's perception of the situation and the realities in the country. This is exemplified by the percentage of respondents who thought Germany was taking in a too high number of refugees and feared increased violence, poor integration, and a potential erosion of cultural values in comparison to the low perceived presence of, and problems caused by refugees first-hand. Both theory and empirical models support that threat perceptions and anti-immigration sentiment can be mobilised by statements of political figures, and influenced heavily by situational threatening events such as terrorist attacks; so too are the findings of Jäckle & König (2018). Similarly, the AfD profiled itself less as a party capable of presenting adequate solutions for better crisis management as perceived by public opinion, but profited more from voters dissatisfied with the governing parties' political direction, as shown by Mader & Schoen (2018). With the CDU suffering from internal conflict due to a shift towards a more liberal approach to immigration politics, party lines to the right of the CDU/CSU were prone to erosion which resulted in a loss of conservative voters to right-wing competition.

Overall, it is difficult to say to what extent the historical legacy with migration has *actively* played a party in German crisis management, asylum policy, and stances on immigration. Germany certainly learned from the lack of integration efforts and comprehensive immigration policy of the past and adjusted its stance accordingly to modernise and invest in integration programmes. However, the deconstruction of Germany's motivations to take an open stance on immigration at the start of the crisis proves more complex and should be observed in the context of EU-level power dynamics and international relations. Accordingly, the next section places Germany's actions in the context of the EU's management of the refugee crisis, and member state dynamics.

Finally, there remains the dichotomy of nationalist sentiment to liberal policy action in Germany. The emergence of traditional nationalist, populist protest to contemporary developments of globalisation and modernisation, as a reaction to an increase in visibility of ‘the other’ i.e., of foreigners in the domestic society, is grounded in nationalism theory, and historically proven. So too, Germany certainly was not unaware of the potential of right-wing backlash to its position and actions in immigration policy and crisis management, and the rise of parties like the AfD and movements like *Pegida* could have been anticipated. Thus, to what extent was the domestic government able to allow anticipation and prevention of populist right-wing support to influence policy decisions? Germany’s foreign policy contemplations, and international dynamics may have trumped considerations for a firmer grip on political opposition and public opinion by way of restrictive asylum policy, in addition to humanitarian concerns. At the peak of the crisis, urgency for action often overshadowed considerations and pursuits of strategic political agendas. In 2015 and in the early months of 2016, too, influences of political campaigning and positioning for the national elections in the fall of 2017 were still minimal and thus policymakers were able to operate more freely in this regard. Nevertheless, Merkel’s backtracking from the open-door policies towards more restrictive policy in 2016 and 2017, and resulting compromises on immigration restrictions, deportation measures, and caps on the number of incoming asylum seekers to reduce immigration pressures can be seen in the context of trying to alleviate critical public opinion, noise from the political opposition (and within the own party), and shrinking approval ratings.

5.3. Germany and EU dynamics

For the European Union, decision-making was shaped primarily by the objective to secure its external borders while maintaining internal freedom of movement. Due to the inability to formulate comprehensive policy action and crisis management strategy, asylum policy as a response to the Refugee Crisis developed mainly on a national level, and in turn highlighted divisions between member states (cf. Maldini & Takahashi 2017; Gatrell 2019; Henrekson et al. 2019). Similarly, cracks have appeared in the setting of fundamental EU values such as solidarity, cooperation, or human rights. On the one hand, policy was developed with the intention of keeping migrants away, and any collective action was focused on externalising responsibility

for the management of refugees to the EU's borders, either to Greece or, as with the 2018 EU-Turkey agreement, to Turkey (cf. Gatrell 2019). Accordingly, as humanitarian considerations were overshadowed by restrictive policy, refugees paid the price. On the other hand, rifts between member states and in the EU value system would manifest by member states' efforts to temporarily suspend Schengen Agreements to enforce unilateral or bilateral border controls, or in different interpretations of the Dublin Regulations. Often, this would go hand in hand with expressions of national identity and -self-interest, and political right-wing/populist tendencies, such as in Hungary, Poland, or the Czech Republic. For the same reasons, proposals for EU-wide solidarity measures and burden-sharing initiatives did not gain traction. Throughout, Merkel focused on promoting a European solution to the refugee crisis, such as a burden-sharing system, however with little success. Comprehensive action would often fall short, except for when agreeing on more restrictive measures and outsourcing refugee management to third countries (cf. Henrekson et al. 2019). Combined with national pressure to take policy action, the German government would operate with shifting priorities, first allowing large numbers of refugees to enter the country, and then gradually re-introduce restrictions on asylum (cf. Engler 2016).

Contemporary Germany's role in the European Union is that of a (the) major economy and political influence, and as such comes to some extent the responsibility of the torchbearer for liberal values, EU integration, and the like, in international relations and vis-à-vis other member states. So too in the Refugee Crisis, it seemed unavoidable that Germany would be able to formulate a national response to crisis management which would not correspond to these influences or would not involve humanitarian considerations when devising policy decisions. So are the contemporary political realities, that there was not much choice whether or not to take in refugees in the beginning, as opposed to countries like Hungary and Poland, who either unilaterally, or in refusal of EU comprehensive policy, tended to reject the reception of larger number of refugees. Germany's role within the European Union, and the country's dynamics and foreign policy pursuits has transformed throughout the 20th and 21st century, and one can pose the question to what extent Germany's past and historical legacy is still able to hold the country accountable today. In the academic literature, the consensus seems to be that this particular influence has ceased, or at

least receded, with the beginning of the new century, when German national interest and assertiveness in foreign policy became more pronounced (cf. Wittlinger 2010), for instance with military action and exercises of power in NATO operations in the Gulf war (cf. Kattago 2001: 119). Similarly, Gatrell observes that this trend was exemplified by the 2005 Immigration Act and the introduction of the safe third country rule, at which time apparently “history had lost its power to hold Germany accountable for its past” (2019: 150). This was a change from the Federal Republic’s international relations under Chancellor Kohl after reunification, at a time where geopolitical realities would discourage Germany from formulating assertiveness in its foreign policy, and the country instead gingerly operated under the umbrella of European and Western integration and stability (cf. Kattago 2001; Wittlinger 2010; Spohr 2019). The Germany of the 2000s only slowly shrugged off its reluctance to take the initiative in European affairs, and in this context, “the fear of German hegemony was still present in the European political discourse” (Dudasova 2016: 315). Merkel, too, has been characterised not to lead by initiative, and the chancellor has aimed to keep a balance between the assertion of national interest and pushes for pro-European integration – the latter reflected in Merkel’s pursuit of multilateral action and the development of EU-level solutions with respect to Refugee Crisis management.

Nevertheless, Germany’s historical legacy still could be observed to play some role during the refugee crisis, if only in invoking post-1989 sentiment to inspire support for the acceptance of refugees (cf. Gatrell 2019). More broadly, historical narratives of the past were frequently employed throughout refugee crisis management, for instance with the United Kingdom appealing to parallels of the post-1945 taking in of refugees of the war (Kirkwood 2018). In this sense, associations with mass migration during and after World War II were still present, though not explicitly directed at Germany. Even so, conceptually speaking, I would argue that Germany’s historical legacy still has the potential to externally influence the country’s decision-making to some degree. If Germany had from the start taken a restrictive stance on the matter of accepting refugees in the summer of 2015, certainly parallels would have been drawn by the international community, perhaps not explicitly, to the country’s past and to appeal to its historical legacy. In this sense, Germany’s stance on immigration at the time was necessitated by the country’s international image, and also crucial with

respect to EU stability and cooperation. In the end, geopolitical realities and humanitarian considerations outweighed historical legacies in the management of the Refugee Crisis.

6. Conclusion

In this thesis, I set out to analyse the German government's response to the 2015 Refugee Crisis, its policy considerations and -decisions, and contingent changes in the domestic political landscape as well as public sentiment towards migration and asylum issues. This research was carried out by means of examining German migration policy in the 20th century and juxtaposing past policy decisions and attitudes with contemporary developments vis-à-vis the theoretical framework of national identity and nationalism theory. I aimed to show that in the 20th century, there were significant shortcomings and inadequate policy decisions with respect to the integration of immigrants to Germany due to a longstanding, flawed understanding that Germany was 'not a country of immigration'. This, in turn, had the potential to cause structural deficiencies in immigration and integration policies, and has allowed strong nationalist populist opposition to immigrants, expressed in anti-foreigner violence support for the political right, with the government unable to effectively cope with immigration pressures in the 1990s in particular. After the turn of the century, German immigration policies and integration efforts improved, and accordingly, the Merkel government took an open, humanitarian stance towards refugee inflows at the start of the Refugee Crisis in 2015. Here, I posed the hypothesis that Germany was in some way restrained in its decision-making due to its historical legacy, and that burdens of the Nazi past would surface if Germany had taken a restrictive stance on refugee inflows. In this sense, I argued that the government had found itself in a catch-22 situation in its policy decision making, with restrictive policies inviting invocations of humanitarian responsibility due to the country's Nazi past on an international level, and an open stance provoking a wave of right-wing, anti-immigrant sentiment domestically. However, the empirical evidence gathered does not support this hypothesis – while it still may be accurate, albeit hypothetical – as international dynamics are shown to have been the primary factor in determining Germany's response to the Refugee Crisis.

At the outset, I posed two research questions to guide the analysis: *What factors influenced German policy decision-making in response to the 2015 Refugee Crisis?* and *Why did public reactions to the government's open stance manifest in expressions of anti-immigrant sentiment?* For the former, I conclude that Germany acted out of humanitarian concerns, less affected by its historical legacies and internal restraint than influenced by geopolitical realities, EU internal dynamics and its responsibilities on the international level. The country's neglect to invest in comprehensive integration processes and to prepare for immigration pressures during the 20th century manifested especially in the 1990s with right-wing popularity and anti-foreigner attacks; a part of its legacy which influenced policymakers to avoid repetition of past failures. To answer the latter research question, I constructed a theoretical framework of nationalism and national identity theory. While the theories find their limitations in explaining geopolitical dynamics and influences, they are useful tools to identify the factors that move public attitudes vis-à-vis immigration pressures. Therefore, the answers to anti-immigrant sentiment as a reaction to the government's open stance can be found in nationalism theory, namely reactionary attitudes towards contemporary forces of change. In addition, national identity theory in the German case proved valuable to illuminate the particularities of the country's reconciliation with its Nazi past as well as with the consolidation of its double identity after reunification.

As such, corresponding to classical nationalism theory, and visible throughout Europe, populist opposition to incoming streams of refugees gained momentum and changed the political landscape accordingly, in Germany with the *Alternative für Deutschland* winning 12.7 per cent of votes in the national elections of 2017, and up to 27.5 per cent in some regional elections. To alleviate public concern and political pressure, Merkel would make concessions to her position, and introduce more restrictive measures on immigration, together with the EU, whose policy focus throughout the crisis had laid on external border management and security. As for the European Union, a general failure to develop comprehensive policy for crisis management could be observed, with member-state dynamics and unbalanced national responsibilities complicating the EU's tasks. As such, the Refugee Crisis here called into question the fundamental values of solidarity, cooperation, and human rights of the EU and indeed exacerbated to some extent fragmentation within the EU

across member-state lines. It is with this background that Germany, as the major player in the EU, was required to take a humanitarian, open stance on crisis management and to represent EU values and virtues, even if at the end it would have to deal with the various domestic consequences. Therefore, regardless of whether or not burdens of the past would have affected Germany's decision making or would have appeared if Germany had opted for restrictive policies from the start, in this sense, geopolitical realities seem to have trumped historical legacies.

6.1. Outlook

Refugee politics and EU policy management issues resurfaced in the summer of 2020, when tensions mounted in the Greek refugee camps on the island of Lesbos, and the EU formulated a 'New Pact on Migration and Asylum'⁵⁵ in September of the same year. Previously, the European Court of Justice had ruled the actions of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic during the 2015 Refugee Crisis to have been in violation of EU law, when the countries showed 'a lack of solidarity' by rejecting the quota system designed to alleviate immigration pressures at the time of the crisis (ARD 2019). The ineptitude of the EU to successfully implement comprehensive policy action in management of the Refugee Crisis proved to be a symptom of the European Union's struggle to consolidate the differing interests and attitudes of the member states on issues such as migration and asylum policy, and of the fractures in EU solidarity.

As a response to a series of events that unfolded in Lesbos, Greece, when multiple refugee camps were destroyed by fires, more than ten thousand refugees had to be relocated to neighbouring camps with inadequate capacity – the whole affair exacerbated by a number of coronavirus cases and resulting quarantine of the camps – the EU passed a new pact on migration and asylum on 23 September 2020. Designed to 'ensure clearer responsibilities', 'improve the link between asylum and return' and showcase 'effective solidarity', the pact swiftly encountered a range of criticism, in particular from the Visegrád Four, with Hungary favouring the externalisation of refugee management beyond EU borders, or Czech PM Babiš rejecting the intake of refugees from the get-go; also from Austria, which argued matters of 'solidarity' as

⁵⁵ cf. European Commission 2020.

not relevant to migration issues (cf. Göbel 2020). In this sense, the humanitarian crises have visualised problem areas for the European Union in terms of integration and cooperation (Maldini & Takahashi 2020); as well as the limited competencies to design internal solutions to issues of migration and asylum as, throughout, the focus was put on externalising responsibility for the management of refugees (cf. Henrekson et al. 2019; Carrera 2021). It is doubtful that any significant progress, such as the development of a common asylum policy, will be made on this front in the near future, as the EU seems to be stuck with a static policy core in terms of asylum policy, and member states are divided in their perceptions on solutions to the migration ‘problem’ (Hadj Abdou 2021). In this sense, one would be hard-pressed to do justice by Jean Monnet’s proclamation that “Europe is forged in crises”, at least in the context of the Refugee Crisis.

In Germany, meanwhile, the situation concerning immigration pressures seems to have relaxed, with on the one hand, public perception supporting the intake of refugees in 2020 (*ARD* 2020b)⁵⁶, and on the other hand with cautiously positive results being drawn from integration processes (cf. *SVR* 2019; *ARD* 2020a). While with the Covid-19 pandemic, care must be taken to not lose progress on the front of the integration of immigrants; in the build-up to the 2021 German national elections issues regarding immigration and refugee seekers have subsided from the political agenda and from public concern (cf. Statista 2021b) and accordingly are predicted to influence election outcomes to a much lesser extent than in 2017.



Further research based on this contribution could develop in two directions: For one, as this thesis briefly explored the relationship between (negative) attitudes towards immigrants and the socio-political legacy of former East Germany, more extensive investigation can be conducted into the dynamics of backward social integration and marginalisation in rural communities and acceptance of forces of modernisation and globalisation such as immigration and multiculturalism, and the implications for

⁵⁶ Granted, around half of those supporting refugee intake set it conditional to a European solution, or at least to ‘EU-wide distribution’ – which has neither been realisable in 2015 nor in 2020. Indeed, in the immediate context of the developments in the Greek refugee camps, EU countries did offer support and negotiated the acceptance of refugees, though this took place more on a member-state level, and less through EU-wide distribution.

political voting behaviour and party alignment. Although in general such occurrences of anti-foreigner violence can be explained with classical nationalism theory, for the German case in particular research is on the sparse side, perhaps due to the fact that it proves difficult to find concrete evidence for the influences of the country's historical legacy due to other, more pronounced factors – something this research struggled with as well, after all. Further, I believe it would be particularly interesting to explore to what extent social taboos of the Nazi past and expressions of nationalism actually 'encourage' the breaking of such taboos by the right-wing; and how an overall disconnect and marginalisation of the rural communities in particular in former East Germany contribute to the pronounced *AfD* presence in those regions. The second direction for further research lies, more obviously, in the future of EU migration policy as well as regarding the ideological cleavages with the more authoritarian states within the European Union. Even though the refugee problem has – in relative terms – subsided from the height of the crisis, migration (towards Europe) is the opposite of solved – indeed more likely to remain permanently 'unsolved' – and an issue which is forecasted to keep the EU divided across differing stances towards migration management, bar substantial innovation in policymaking approaches away from the externalisation of refugee management, and capacity-building within the EU.

7. Bibliography

- Adenauer, K. (1953) *Journey to America: Collected Speeches, Statements, Press, Radio and TV Interviews* Washington DC: Press Office German Diplomatic Mission
- Alexander, R. (2017) *Die Getriebenen – Merkel und die Flüchtlingspolitik: Report aus dem Inneren der Macht* Munich: Siedler Verlag
- Al Jazeera (2018) ‘Merkel coalition crisis: Seehofer offers to quit over migration’ *Al Jazeera* 2 July 2018 [online] Available from: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/7/2/merkel-coalition-crisis-seehofer-offers-to-quit-over-migration>>
- Allport, G. (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley
- Amadeu Antonio Stiftung/Pro Asyl (2021) *Chronik flüchtlingsfeindlicher Vorfälle* [online] Available from: <<https://www.mut-gegen-rechte-gewalt.de/service/chronik-vorfaelle>>
- Amann, M., Gebauer, M., Knaup, H. (2015) “‘Sie öffnen die Grenzen und lassen uns im Stich’” *Der Spiegel* 11 September 2015 [online] Available from: <<https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/innenminister-warnen-vor-noch-mehr-fluechtlingen-a-1052575.html>>
- ARD (2019) ‘Mangelnde Solidarität kann EU-Recht brechen’ *tagesschau* 31 October 2019 [online] Available from: <<https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/gutachten-eu-fluechtlinge-101.html>>
- . (2020a) ‘Fünf Jahre nach Merkels „Wir schaffen das“: Bilanz der Flüchtlingskrise 2015’ *tagesschau* 31 August 2020 [online video] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NA_ESc7J7DU>
- . (2020b) ‘Große Mehrheit für Aufnahme von Flüchtlingen’ *ARD-DeutschlandTrend* 18 September 2020 [online] Available from: <<https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/deutschlandtrend/deutschlandtrend-2331.html>>
- Atkinson, G. (1993) ‘Germany: Nationalism, Nazism and Violence’ in: *Racist Violence in Europe* ed. by Björgö, T, Witte, R. London: Palgrave Macmillan 154-166

Ausländergesetz [Act on Foreigners] (1965) *BGBL Teil I*. [online] Available from
 <https://www.bgb.de/xaver/bgb/start.xav?startbk=Bundesanzeiger_BGB&jumpTo=bgb1165s0353.pdf>

Bade, K.J. (1984) 'Von Auswandererland zum Arbeitseinfuhrland: Kontinentale Zuwanderung und Ausländerbeschäftigung in Deutschland im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert' in: *Auswanderer, Wanderarbeiter, Gastarbeiter* (2) ed. by Bade, K.J. Ostfildern: Scripta Mercaturae 433-505

BBC (2015) 'Migrant crisis: Germany 'can take 500,000 asylum seekers a year'' *BBC* 8 September 2015 [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34185353>>

Bender, R. (2015) 'Political backlash against Merkel grows over Refugee Crisis' *The Wall Street Journal* 9 October 2015 [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.wsj.com/articles/political-backlash-against-merkel-grows-over-refugee-crisis-1444411824>>

Blank, T., Schmidt, P. (2003) 'National Identity in a United Germany: Nationalism or Patriotism?' *Political Psychology* 24 (2) 289-312

Borkert, M., Bosswick, W. (2007) 'Migration Policy Making in Germany – between national reluctance and local pragmatism?' *IMISCOE Working Paper* 20

Bornewasser, M. (1994) 'Zum Zusammenhang von Nationalbewußtsein, Berufstätigkeit und Fremdenfeindlichkeit. Eine explorative Untersuchung' in: *Nationale Identität und europäisches Bewußtsein*. 103-116

Bosswick, W. (1997) 'Development of Asylum Policy in Germany' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 13 (1) 43-60

Braunthal, G. (1989) 'Public Order and Civil Liberties' in: *Developments in West German Politics* ed. by Smith, G., Paterson, W. E., Merkl, P. H. London: Macmillan Education LTD

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – BAMF (2017) *Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2017: Asyl, Migration und Integration*. 13-25

---. (2019) 'Erstverteilung der Asylsuchenden (EASY) [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/AsylFluechtlingsschutz/AblaufAsylverfahrens/Erstverteilung/erstverteilung-node.html>>

---. (2020) 'Aktuelle Zahlen' [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Statistik/AsylinZahlen/aktuelle-zahlen-dezember-2020.html>> [24 January 2021]

Bundeskriminalamt – BKA (2016) ‘Kriminalität im Kontext von Zuwanderung‘ *Bundeslagebild 2015* [online] Available from: <https://www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Publikationen/JahresberichteUndLagebilder/KriminalitaetImKontextVonZuwanderung/KriminalitaetImKontextVonZuwanderung_2015.html>

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung – BPB (2021) ‘Asylanträge in Deutschland’ [online] Available from: <<https://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/flucht/zahlen-zu-asyl/265708/asylantraege-und-asylsuchende>> [24 January 2021]

Bundesministerium der Justiz und für Verbraucherschutz – BMJV (1953) Gesetz über die Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge (Bundesvertriebenengesetz – BVFG)

---. (1996) *Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* Art. 16a [online] Available from <https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/gg/art_16a.html>

Canefe, N. (2007) ‘Citizens versus permanent guests: Cultural memory and citizenship laws in a reunified Germany’ *Citizenship Studies* 2 (3) 519-544

Carrera, S. (2021) ‘Whose Pact? The Cognitive Dimensions of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum’ in: *The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum in light of the United Nations Global Compact on Refugees* ed. by Carrera, S., Geddes, A., European University Institute 1-25

Castles, S. (1985) ‘The Guests Who Stayed – The Debate on ‘Foreigners Policy’ in the German Federal Republic’ *International Migration Review* 19 (3) 517-534

---. (1986) ‘The Guest Worker in Western Europe – an Obituary’ *International Migration Review* 20 (4) New York: Sage Publications 761-778

Chin, R. (2007) *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Connolly, K. (2015) ‘Angela Merkel comforts sobbing refugee but says Germany can’t help everyone’ *The Guardian* 16 July 2015 [online] Available from: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/16/angela-merkel-comforts-teenage-palestinian-asylum-seeker-germany>>

Decker, F. (2020) ‘Wahlergebnisse und Wählerschaft der AfD’ *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung* [online] Available from: <<https://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/afd/273131/wahlergebnisse-und-waehlerschaft>>

Delcker, J. (2015) ‚Merkel’s migrant problem‘ *Politico* 26 August 2015 [online] Available from: <<https://www.politico.eu/article/merkel-migration-problem-refugees-pegida-racism/>>

---. (2016) ‚The phrase that haunts Angela Merkel‘ *Politico* 19 August 2016 [online] Available from: <<https://www.politico.eu/article/the-phrase-that-haunts-angela-merkel/>>

Deutsche Welle (2015) ‘‘Moral duty‘ to save Mediterranean migrants, says Gauck’ *Deutsche Welle* 20 June 2015 [online] Available from: <<https://p.dw.com/p/1Fk76>>

Dohse, K. (1981) *Ausländische Arbeiter und bürgerlicher Staat. Genese und Funktion von staatlicher Ausländerpolitik und Ausländerrecht. Von Kaiserreich bis Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Koenigstein: Anton Hain

Dudasova, M. (2016) ‘Political consequences of the Refugee Crisis – the case of Germany’ *Economic Review* 45 (3)

Elsner, L. (1984) ‘Ausländerbeschäftigung und Zwangsarbeitspolitik in Deutschland während des Ersten Weltkriegs’ in: *Auswanderer, Wanderarbeiter, Gastarbeiter* (2) ed. by Bade, K.J. Ostfildern: Scripta Mercaturae 527-557

Engler, M. (2016) ‘Germany in the refugee crisis – background, reactions and challenges’ *Bulletin of the Institute for Western Affairs*

European Commission (2015) ‘Western Balkans Route: State of Play Report’ *Policies: Migration* [online] Available from: <[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/western_balkans_route_state_of_play_report_en.pdf)

[information/docs/western_balkans_route_state_of_play_report_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/western_balkans_route_state_of_play_report_en.pdf)>

---. (2016) ‘Implementing the EU-Turkey Agreement – Questions and Answers’ *Press Corner Memo* 20 April 2016 [online] Available from:

<https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_16_1494>

---. (2020) ‘New Pact on Migration and Asylum’ *Priorities 2019-2024* [online] Available from: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/new-pact-migration-and-asylum_en>

---. (2021) ‘Statistics on migration to Europe’ *Priorities 2019-2024* [online] Available from: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en>

- Fargues, P. (2015) '2015: The year we mistook refugees for invaders' *Migration Policy Centre* 12
- Feldhoff, M. (2020) 'Fünf Jahre "Wir schaffen das"' *ZDF* 29 August 2020 [online] Available from: <<https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/wir-schaffen-das-merkel-100.html>>
- Fijalkowski, J. (1993) 'Aggressive Nationalism, Immigration Pressure and Asylum Policy Disputes in Contemporary Germany' *The International Migration Review* 27 (4) 850-869
- Forschungsgruppe Wahlen E.V. (Election Research Group) (2015a) *Politbarometer Juli II 2015* [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Archiv/Politbarometer_2015/Juli_II_2015/>
- . (2015b) *Politbarometer November II 2015* [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Archiv/Politbarometer_2015/November_II_2015/>
- . (2016a) *Politbarometer April I 2016* [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Archiv/Politbarometer_2016/April_I_2016/>
- . (2016b) *Politbarometer Januar I 2016* [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Archiv/Politbarometer_2016/Januar_I_2016/>
- . (2021a) *Politik II: Wichtige Probleme in Deutschland*. [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Langzeitentwicklung_-_Themen_im_Ueberblick/Politik_II/#Probl1>
- . (2021b) *Politik-Archiv: Flüchtlinge verkraften*. [online] Available from: <https://www.forschungsgruppe.de/Umfragen/Politbarometer/Langzeitentwicklung_-_Themen_im_Ueberblick/Politik_-_Archiv/#Fluechtl>
- FRONTEX (2017) *Western Balkans Quarterly Q3 2016* [online] Available from: <https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/WB_Q3_2016.pdf>
- Fukuyama, F. (2018) *Identity* London: Profile Books
- Gatrell, P. (2019) *The Unsettling of Europe* New York: Basic Books
- Geiß, B. (2001) 'Die Ausländerbeauftragten der Bundesregierung in der ausländerpolitischen Diskussion' in: *Deutschland – ein Einwanderungsland?*

Rückblick, Bilanz und neue Fragen. ed. by Wunderlich, T.; Currle, E. Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius 127-140

Gellner, E. (1983) 'Nationalism' *Theory and Society* 10 (6) 753-776

Gesetz über Einreise und Aufenthalt von Staatsangehörigen der Mitgliedsstaaten der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft (AufenthG/EWG) [Law on EEC Residence] (1969) *BGBL Teil I* [online] Available from
 <https://www.bgb1.de/xaver/bgb1/start.xav?startbk=Bundesanzeiger_BGB1&jumpTo=bgb1169s0927.pdf>

Gesetz zur Änderung des Grundgesetzes Artikel 16 und 18 [Act to Amend Basic Law Art. 16 and 18] (1993) *BGBL Teil I* [online] Available from
 <https://www.bgb1.de/xaver/bgb1/start.xav?startbk=Bundesanzeiger_BGB1&jumpTo=bgb1193s1002.pdf>

Gesetz zur Steuerung und Begrenzung der Zuwanderung und zur Regelung des Aufenthalts und der Integration von Unionsbürgern und Ausländern (Zuwanderungsgesetz) [Migration Act] (2004) *BGBL Teil I* (41) [online] Available from
 <https://www.bgb1.de/xaver/bgb1/start.xav?startbk=Bundesanzeiger_BGB1&jumpTo=bgb1104s1950.pdf>

Gesley, J. (2016) 'Germany: Act to Integrate Refugees Enters Into Force' *Global Legal Monitor* [online] Available from: <<https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/germany-act-to-integrate-refugees-enters-into-force/>>

---. (2017) 'Germany: The Development of Migration and Citizenship Law in Postwar Germany' *The Law Library of Congress*

Gittus, E. J. (2010) 'Berlin as a Conduit for the Creation of German National Identity at the End of the Twentieth Century' *Space and Polity* 6 (1) 91-115

Göbel, A. (2020) 'Ist der EU-Migrationspakt umsetzbar?' *tagesschau* 24 September 2020 [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/asylreform-analyse-101.html>>

Graham-Harrison, E., Kingsley, P., McVeigh, T. (2015) 'Cheering German crowds greet refugees after long trek from Budapest to Munich' *The Guardian* 5 September 2015 [online] Available from:
 <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/05/refugee-crisis-warm-welcome-for-people-bussed-from-budapest>>

- Green, S. (2013) 'Germany: A Changing Country of Immigration' *German Politics* 22 (3) 333-51
- Hadj Abdou, L. (2021) 'From the Migration Crisis to the New Pact on Migration and Asylum: The Status Quo Problem' *BRIDGE Network Working Paper* 11
- Hagen, W. (1980) *Germans, Poles and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Harari, Y. N. (2016) *Homo Deus* Oxford: Signal
- Hartman, G. (1986) *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective* Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Heckmann, F. (1994) 'Is there a migration policy in Germany?' in: Heckmann, F. and Bosswick, W.: *Migration policies. A comparative perspective* Stuttgart: Enke
- Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Henrekson, M., Öner, Ö., Sanandaji, T. (2019) 'The Refugee Crisis and the Reinvigoration of the Nation State: Does the European Union Have a Common Asylum Policy?' *IFN Working Paper No. 1265* Stockholm: Research Institute of Industrial Economics
- Herdegen, G. (1989) 'Aussiedler in der Bundesrepublik' *Deutschland Archiv* 8 913-920 cited in: Klusmeyer, D. (1993) 'Aliens, Immigrants, and Citizens: The Politics of Inclusion in the Federal Republic of Germany' *Daedalus* 122 (3) 81-114
- Hess, C., Green, S. (2015) 'Introduction: The Changing Politics and Policies of Migration in Germany' *German Politics* 25 (3) 315-28
- Hill, J. (2015) 'Immigration fuels rising tension in Germany' *BBC* 30 July 2015 [online] Available from: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33700624>>
- Honolka, H. and Götz, I. (2013) *Deutsche Identität und das Zusammenleben mit Fremden: Fallanalysen*.
- Hönekopp, E. (1994) 'Germany' in: *The Politics of East-West Migration* ed. by Ardittis, S., London
- . (1997) 'Labour Migration to Germany from Central and Eastern Europe – Old and New Trends' *Economics and European Migration Policy* ed. by Corry, D. London: IPPR

- Jäckle, S., König, P. (2018) 'Threatening Events and Anti-Refugee Violence: An Empirical Analysis in the Wake of the Refugee Crisis during the Years 2015 and 2016 in Germany' *European Sociological Review* 1-16
- Kalter, F. (2011) 'Social Capital and the Dynamics of Temporary Labour Migration from Poland to Germany' *European Sociological Review*, 27 (5) 555-569
- Kalter, F., Granato, N. (2002) 'Ethnic Minorities' Education and Occupational Attainment: The Case of Germany' *Arbeitspapiere*, 58 Mannheim: Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung
- Kalter, F., Kogan, I. (2014) 'Migrant Networks and Labour Market Integration of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Germany' *Social Forces*, 92 (4) 1435-1456
- Kattago, S. (2001) *Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity* Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group
- Kirkwood, S. (2018) 'History in the Service of Politics: Constructing Narratives of History During the European Refugee "Crisis"' *Political Psychology*
- Klusmeyer, D. (1993) 'Aliens, Immigrants, and Citizens: The Politics of Inclusion in the Federal Republic of Germany' *Daedalus* 122 (3) 81-114
- Kogan, I. (2011) 'New Immigrants – Old Disadvantage Patterns? Labour Market Integration of Recent Immigrants into Germany' *International Migration* 49 (1)
- Krell, G., Nicklas, H., Ostermann, A. (1996) 'Immigration, Asylum, and Anti-Foreigner Violence in Germany' *Journal of Peace Research* 33 (2) 153-170
- Lederer, H. (1997) *Migration und Integration in Zahlen: Ein Handbuch*. Bonn: Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Ausländerfragen, BMAS
- Leenen, W. R. (1992) 'Ausländerfeindlichkeit in Deutschland: Politischer Rechtsruck oder Politikversagen' *Deutschland Archiv* 10
- Lehmann, J. (1984) 'Ausländerbeschäftigung und Fremdarbeiterpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland' in: *Auswanderer, Wanderarbeiter, Gastarbeiter* (2) ed. by Bade, K.J. Ostfildern: Scripta Mercaturae 558-583
- Lepsius, M.R., Campbell, J. (2004) 'The Nation and Nationalism in Germany' *Social Research* 71 (3) 481-500
- Livingstone, E. (2016) 'Angela Merkel drops the 'we can do it' slogan' *Politico* 17 September 2016 [online] Available from:

<<https://www.politico.eu/article/angela-merkel-drops-the-we-can-do-it-slogan-catchphrase-migration-refugees/>>

Lowe, K. (2017) *The Fear and the Freedom: Why the Second World War still matters*.

Luft, S., Schimany, P. (2014) 'Asylpolitik im Wandel' *20 Jahre Asylkompromiss*

Mader, M., Schoen, H. (2018) 'The European Refugee Crisis, party competition, and voters' responses in Germany' *West European Politics*

Maldini, P., Takahashi, M. (2017) 'Refugee Crisis and the European Union: Do the Failed Migration Policies Indicate a Political and Structural Crisis of European Integration?' *Communication Management Review* (2) 2

Mehrländer, U. (1980) 'The 'human resource' problem in Europe: Migrant labour in the Federal Republic of Germany' in: *Ethnic resurgence in modern, democratic states: a multidisciplinary approach to human resources and conflict* ed. by Ra'anani, U. New York: Pergamon Press 77-100

Meier-Braun, K. (1988) 'Integration oder Rückkehr. Zur Ausländerpolitik des Bundes und der Länder, insbesondere Baden-Württembergs.' *Entwicklung und Frieden: Materialien*, 19 Mainz/München: Matthias Grünewald Verlag/ Christian Kaiser Verlag

Merkel, P. H. (1989) 'The German Search for Identity' in: *Developments in West German Politics* ed. by Smith, G., Paterson, W. E., Merkel, P. H. London: Macmillan Education LTD

Miller, D. (1995) *On Nationality* Oxford: Oxford University Press

O'Brien, P. (1988) 'Continuity and Change in Germany's Treatment of Non-Germans' *International Migration Review* 22 (3) 109-134

Oltermann, P. (2017) 'German coalition talks collapse after deadlock on migration and energy' *The Guardian* 20 November 2017 [online] Available from: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/19/german-coalition-talks-close-to-collapse-angela-merkel>>

Oltermann, P., Kinglsey, P. (2016) 'It took a life of its own': how one rogue tweet led Syrians to Germany' *The Guardian* 25 August 2016 [online] Available from: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/25/it-took-on-a-life-of-its-own-how-rogue-tweet-led-syrians-to-germany>>

Pfahl-Traughber, A. (2017) 'Wer wählt warum die AfD?' *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung* [online] Available from:

<<https://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtspopulismus/248916/wer-waehlt-warum-die-afd>>

Platzeck, M. (2009) *Zukunft braucht Herkunft: Deutsche Fragen, Ostdeutsche Antworten*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe

Pollack, D. (2020) *Das unzufriedene Volk. Protest und Ressentiment in Ostdeutschland von der friedlichen Revolution bis heute*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag

Rankin, J. (2019) 'EU declares migration crisis over as it hits out at 'fake news'' *The Guardian* 6 March 2019 [online] Available from:

<<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/06/eu-declares-migration-crisis-over-hits-out-fake-news-european-commission>>

Reichel, P. (1995) *Politik mit der Erinnerung: Gedächtnisorte im Streit um die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit* Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag

Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration – SVR

(2017) *Jahresgutachten 2017: Chancen in der Krise: Zur Zukunft der Flüchtlingspolitik in Deutschland und Europa* [online] Available from

<https://www.svr-migration.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SVR_Jahresgutachten_2017.pdf> [24 January 2021]

---. (2019) *Jahresgutachten 2019: Bewegte Zeiten: Rückblick auf die Integrations- und Migrationspolitik der letzten Jahre* [online] Available from <https://www.svr-migration.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SVR_Jahresgutachten_2019.pdf> [24 January 2021]

Santel, B. (2000) 'Zwischen Ausländerpolitik und Einwanderungspolitik: Migration und Ausländerrecht in Deutschland' in: Bade, K.J.; Münz, R.: *Migrationsreport 2000*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag

Schmidt, C. (1997) 'Immigrant Performance in Germany: Labour Earnings of Ethnic German Migrants and Foreign Guest-Workers' *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, 37: 379-397

Schneeberger, R. (2017) "'AfD-Wähler sind nicht wirtschaftlich, sondern kulturell abgehängt'" Interview mit Holger Lengfeld' *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 22 September 2017 [online] Available from: <<https://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/abgehaengte-bevoelkerungsgruppen-afd-waehler-sind-nicht-wirtschaftlich-sondern-kulturell-abgehaengt-1.3675805>>

Smith, A.D. (1991) *National Identity* London: Penguin Books

---. (1995) *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* Cambridge: Polity Press

Spohr, K. (2019) *Post Wall Post Square: Rebuilding the World after 1989* London: William Collins

Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz (StAG) [Law on Nationality] (2020) [online] Available from <<https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/stag/BJNR005830913.html>>

Statistisches Bundesamt (1991) *Statistisches Jahrbuch 1991 für das vereinte Deutschland*

Statista Research Department (2021a) *Statistiken zur AfD* [online] Available from: <<https://de.statista.com/themen/3260/afd/>>

---. (2021b) *Umfrage zu den Wichtigsten Problemen in Deutschland 2018-2021* [online] Available from: <<https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1062780/umfrage/umfrage-zu-den-wichtigsten-problemen-in-deutschland/>>

Stöss, R. (1989) *Die extreme Rechte der Bundesrepublik*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag

Tamir, Y. (1993) *Liberal Nationalism* Princeton: Princeton University Press

---. (2019) *Why Nationalism?* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Tsiakalos, G. (1983) *Ausländerfeindlichkeit: Tatsachen und Erklärungsversuche*. Munich: C.H. Beck

Unabhängige Kommission “Zuwanderung” [Independent Commission on Immigration] (2001) *Zuwanderung gestalten, Integration fördern* [online] Available from <http://www.jugendsozialarbeit.de/media/raw/Zuwanderungsbericht_pdf.pdf>

UNHCR (2016a) *Global Trends* [online] Available from: <<https://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf>>

---. (2016b) *Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe 2017* [online] Available from: <<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/52619>>

Vehrkamp, R., Mehregani, M. (2017) ‘Bundestagswahl 2017 Wahlanalyse’ *Bertelsmann-Stiftung* [online] Available from: <<https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/de/themen/aktuelle-meldungen/2017/oktober/bundestagswahl-2017-wahlergebnis-zeigt-neue-konfliktlinie-der-demokratie/>>

Wehner, M. (2021) 'Der AfD fehlt das Gewinnerthema' *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 14 March 2021 [online] Available from:
<<https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/afd-bei-der-landtagswahl-schlechtere-wahlergebnisse-als-2016-17244662.html>>

Wittlinger, R. (2010) *German National Identity in the Twenty-First Century: A different Republic after all?* Berlin: Springer

Wood, G. (2018) 'The Refugee Detectives' *The Atlantic* [online] Available from:
<<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/04/the-refugee-detectives/554090/>>

ZDF (2019) 'Wahlkampf in Brandenburg: Lutz van der Horst und Fabian Köster fahren Richtung Ostopia!' *ZDF heute-show* 16 August 2019 [online video]
Available from: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4SYmLidVy8>>