Enemies through memories?

How state actors use collective memory to influence social identities

Joshua Kauß

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Supervisor: Simon Laumann Jørgensen

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Abstract

This paper examines how actors strategically use collective memories to influence social identities in international relations. Through analyzing speeches made by Israelis and Palestinians in the context of their conflict during meetings of the 10th Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the paper draws on a discourse heavily influenced by mnemonic themes. Through a thin constructivist framework inspired by Alexander Wendt's conception of identity, combined with insights from the interdisciplinary field of memory studies, this paper follows a strict post-positivist ontology and epistemology. Studying text in context as the source from which meanings can be inferred operationalizes this approach. An understanding of discourse enriched by the macro-structural approach of Foucault as well as the micro-interactionist view derived from Habermas provides a foundation for interpreting how the texts were produced through actor's choices as well as structural constraints. The speech acts under investigation are placed in their relevant context and analyzed through a directed and relational approach to content analysis. Directed content analysis starts with an initial coding scheme derived from the theoretical foundations of the research which is then refined through the analysis process. Relational content analysis aims to discover relationships between different themes from the data as a method to interpret more complex structures of meaning.

In this study, relationships between themes of collective memory and identity are the focus. The analysis results showed that collective memory was primarily used by actors to justify them taking certain role identities or casting others into roles. The Palestinians deployed their memory of the Nakba, the Six-Day War of 1967, as well the transnational memory of colonialism to claim their role as a victim of Israeli aggression, cast the United Nations into the role of a Patron of the Palestinian people, and take the role of a sovereign state through achieving international recognition. The Israelis used their memory of the Holocaust and the Six-Day War to contest the Palestinians' interpretation and take the role of victim for themselves. Their role-casting of the United Nations switches between casting it as a hostile actor and a patron. However, the Palestinians seem to be more successful in their aims. The October 7, 2023, attack resulted in both parties changing their rhetoric. While Israel relied on the Holocaust memory and casting Hamas into the role of genocidal terrorists more and more to justify their actions, the Palestinians abandoned the references to colonialism as a tool for claiming victimhood in favor of framing the Israelis' retaliation to attacks through the memory of the Nakba.

Keywords: *Constructivism, identity, collective memory, discourse, content analysis, Israel-Palestine, United Nations*

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1. Introduction

The study of (collective) memory, across different disciplines, has seen lots of attention over the past decades. The 'memory boom' (Langenbacher 2010), has been heavily influenced by sociologists like Jeffrey Olick, or anthropologists like Katrin Antweiler. An academic journal under the name '*Memory Studies'* has been in operation for multiple years now and even a Memories Studies Association (MSA) was founded. However, the author of this paper first came in contact with memory studies through a volume called 'Power and the Past' (2010) edited by Eric Langenbacher and Yossi Shain. This resonated with the author because much of the scholarly work centered around the German memory of the Holocaust, and as a native German this work gave an interesting perspective on German identity.

After the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas on Israel, the memory of the Holocaust became prevalent in popular discourse more than ever, and the longer the Israeli military campaign in response to the attack went on, the more polarized the debate became and the more obvious it was that the German relationship with Israel was heavily influenced by the memory of the Holocaust. This motivated the author to engage in a review of the current state of the literature on memory studies in International Relations (IR).

1.1 Literature review

The topics discussed in study's concerned with memory shifted over time. Early memory research was advanced through dedicated thematic volumes such as 'Cultural Memory Studies' (2008), 'Memory and Trauma in International Relations (2014), and the aforementioned 'Power and the Past' (2010). Contributors to these volumes discussed a wide range of topics. Some contributions were aimed at advancing the integration of collective memory into IR. Langenbacher (2010) for example argues that „memory has come to the forefront in almost every country that suffered through a dictatorial regime or a societal trauma and that has later reestablished peace and democratic systems." (p.16) The scholarship also strongly linked memory the constructivist concept of identity. Becker (2014) explored „the linkage with regard to one specific variable in identity formation: the importance of historical memory in forming a unique, yet everchanging, identity" (p.57). However, the scholars made also clear that collective memory is a broad concept. Olick (2008) argues that „collective memory is merely a broad,

sensitizing umbrella, and not a precise operational definition" (p.158). Additionally, Langenbacher and Shain (2010) make explicit that, the international policy impact of collective memory is still lacking the systematic attention it deserves from scholars and politicians alike.

As mentioned above, the German memory of the Holocaust and its importance for the development of German identity was very prevalent. For example, Warburg (2010) contends that „the German people, no less than the Jews, have formed a collective and conscious memory of the genocidal events that terminated in 1945 with the end of World War II" (pp. 51-52). Rausch (2022) analyses postcolonial class action lawsuits to show that the Holocaust memory was also used in post-colonial discourses as a tool to demand reparations. This account indicates that the Holocaust memory's prevalence also partially result from its integration with other memories.

More recently memory studies moved away from simply looking at memory centered around individual states and towards an understanding of memory that transcends borders, Zubrzycki and Wozny (2020) speak of a transnational turn in memory studies. In her important paper 'Travelling Memory' (2011) Erll justified this moving away from the nation-state by arguing that the internal heterogeneity of remembering within a state across different classes, generations, etc. necessitates this development

This transnational or transcultural turn led to a multitude of case studies looking at specific memories like Kent (2024) who tracked the memory of East Timor's Santa Cruz massacre through an analysis of 'travelling memory' inspired by Erll (2011). Another example is Budryte (2014), who analyzed the Lithuanian transnational memory after World War II. However, these accounts were still exclusively concerned with studying how memory can influence the identity of a group or a state's self.

1.2 Research gap and problem formulation

Through the process of reviewing the literature, multiple patterns emerged. The constructivist approach is usually used as the framework to understand collective memory as a crucial part of identity production. This paper will follow in this tradition. However, although no single paper explicitly stated it, they were all concerned with what Alexander Wendt (1999) calls corporate identity. No study concerned itself with understanding how the other forms of identity, role, type, and collective identities were affected by collective memory. This paper aims to address this apparent gap in the literature. The review of the existing accounts led to the following research question:

"How do state actors use collective memory to influence social identities?"

In the process of addressing the gap in the existing literature, this project will additionally contribute to the understanding of transnational memories. Nonetheless, the project will look at states as the relevant actors, because states are the actors around whom Wendt built his identity framework.

1.3 Project Outline

In the theory section, Wendt's identity framework is outlined, and it is shown how it can contribute to, and work together with, memory studies theory to answer the research question. Also included in the theory section is a theory of discourse, more specifically a fusion of Habermas and Foucault's understanding of discourse, which contributes to the analysis of the formation and reproduction of social identities through speech acts. By showing how a Habermasian micro-interactionist discourse framework can be integrated with a thin Wendtian constructivism, this chapter provides the foundation for understanding through which processes actors can deploy collective memory to shape social identities. Foucault's insights provide a reflection point for this study, focusing attention on the relevance of structure by showing how only certain discourses are viable for actors to draw on.

The methodology section of this paper outlines the path this study will take toward answering its research question. It explains why constructivism is best suited to theoretically inform this paper. The section goes on to explain the data selection decisions made. The paper will look at data from Israeli and Palestinian speeches at the 10th Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (10th ESS). The section continues with an introduction to content analysis and how specifically a relational and directed approach to content analysis functions as the optimal method to answer the research question. Through the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 14, the data analysis will be streamlined, and the results organized. Furthermore, in this section instructions for coding the data are developed in order to ensure the replicability of the study before the initial coding scheme is developed. The scheme is developed by combining insights from constructivist identity theory and memory studies with additional information surrounding the context of the selected data.

In the analysis chapter, the results of the data coding process will be presented. However, some necessary context to understand the environment in which the data was created will be given first, including its audience and format. This is very important because in the post-positivist understanding of meaning production, content is not 'found' in a text, rather it is constructed by the researcher by reading the data and properly contextualizing it. During the

presentation of the results, the analysis chapter will also give insights into how coding decisions were made during the coding process as part of the directed approach to content analysis, as well as show how relationship codes were applied.

The analysis will be followed by a closely linked discussion chapter in which the results are interpreted and made sense of in their given contexts, before, in a second part, the scientific merit of the study in regard to its validity and reliability will be discussed.

Finally, the conclusion will provide an answer to the research question, contextualize it, and make suggestions on further areas where further research is necessary.

2. Theory

2.1. Chapter Outline

In the following chapter, the theoretical foundations of the study are discussed. This paper follows a post-positivist ontology and epistemology. This led to the adoption of a constructivist approach to integrate collective memory into IR and to find out how intentional actors use collective memories to affect social identity formations. This paper understands reality not as naturally given but rather as socially created. The social creation occurs through language, communication, and discourse (Onuf 1989, Wendt 1999). Discourse theory can therefore provide the necessary understanding of how meaning is created through social practice, and how actors can deploy collective memory in order to affect social identities. It also was constructivist scholars who sought to integrate the concept of collective memory into IR. Memory studies had before already flourished as an interdisciplinary field with contributions ranging from sociology, and anthropology to psychology and more. In this section the constructivist understanding of identity and the memory studies concept of collective memory will be explored, showing how this study fits in with preexisting research. Additionally, the paper integrates a discourse approach into its framework.

2.2 Constructivism

In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the term constructivism was first introduced and popularized in the context of the end of the Cold War. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union were neither predictable nor explainable through classical realists or liber-

alist theory, International Relations scrambled for a new approach. The emergence of constructivism is a direct result of the historical circumstances. Nicholas Greenwood Onuf was the first to use the term constructivism in his 1989 book 'World of Our Making' (Onuf, 1989), but the most influential early constructivist text was Alexander Wendt's 'Anarchy is what states make of it' (Wendt 1992) first released in 1989. These authors distinguished themselves from (neo-)realists and (neo-)liberals by arguing that reality is not predetermined by material conditions but rather it is socially created. Therefore, constructivists see the world as intersubjective, and the constant contestation and restructuring through social interaction through which structures of meaning are created. Constructivism has become an umbrella term, encapsulating an array of sometimes very different approaches to the study of IR. Therefore, constructivism is best conceived not as a theory, but as a general approach to studying IR. This perspective is shared by the author of this paper. By treating constructivism as a general approach, it is possible to develop a creative methodology to study the problem under investigation.

Constructivism is sometimes seen as a middle ground between the positivist and the critical theory approaches to IR. Early constructivists argued that realist (positivist) theory lacked explanatory power because it assumed states' interests as given and treated the inner workings of the state as a black box. Constructivists aimed to prove that interests are not given but rather that they have to be created and constantly reproduced. In 'Anarchy is what states make of it' Wendt criticized realists' assumptions that states are naturally self-interested. In the realists' view, this leads to a world in a constant state of anarchy. By arguing that anarchy is not inevitable and that states are able to align and positively identify with each other, Wendt attempts to disprove this assumption (Wendt 1992).

Wendt is the scholar, most relevant for this paper because his work focused on the concept of identity. Identity is the vehicle through which collective memory materializes in international relations. Wendt defines identities as "relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt 1992, p. 397). Actors acquire these identities through their participation in collective meanings. Identity informs actors' understanding of who they are and therefore where their interests lay. Wendt treats identities as properties of intentional actors generating behavioral dispositions, for him they are a unit-level quality rotted in the self-understanding of an actor (Wendt 1999). Memory provides actors with context about themselves and their relationships to the world around them. However, since identities are products of interaction they are also influenced by the 'other' in the interaction. The way in which the other affects identities can vary, which requires the definition of several different kinds of identity (Wend, 1999). As mentioned above, this is where this study's starting point can be located. The review of the literature showed a prevalence of case studies investigating how collective

memories are influential for the personal identities of actors and their construction of the 'Self'. However, what was lacking in the literature was the conscious treatment of these personal identities as just one kind of identity. No studies explicitly dedicated to understanding how collective memory can influence role, type, and collective identities were found, prompting the inception of this research project.

Wendt differentiates between four kinds of identity. First, there's personal identity, or if it relates to multiple individuals forming a shared identity like a nation, he calls it corporate identity, which is the term used in this paper going forward. Corporate identity is followed by type identity, road identity, and collective identity. The latter three kinds of identity only exist in an actor's relations to others which is why Wendt calls them social identities (Wendt, 1999). To define social identities Wendt follows McCall and Simon's (1978) definition, understanding identities as sets of meanings which actors attribute to themselves while taking the perspective of others (Wendt 1994). An actor can have many different type, role, or collective identities at the same time, but only one corporate identity. Corporate identities form the platforms for the other kinds of identity (Wendt 1999).

Corporate identities "are constituted by the self-organizing, homeostatic structures that make actors distinct entities" (Wendt 1999, pp. 224-225). Type identities, however, are based on intrinsic characteristics of actors which they share with others. Examples include but are not limited to regime types or economic systems (Wendt 1999). Role identities result from an actor's position in the social structure. Role identities correspond to relevant counter-identities, which are corresponding roles. For example, the role of the student is only socially relevant in correspondence with the role of a teacher. Lastly, collective identity describes a combination of role and type identities which form the basis for identification between actors, this requires the boundaries between actors to blur (Wendt 1999). This blurring of boundaries occurs through positive identification with the other, meaning that one actor views the interest of the other as its own interest. The state of Germany declaring the safety of the state of Israel its 'Staatsräson' exemplifies such a blurring of boundaries.

Identities arise through interaction; they facilitate intersubjective meaning construction. This means identities are neither objective nor subjective but intersubjective. However, since this paper asks 'how' the independent variable collective memory affects the dependent variable social identity, it is necessary to define the process of meaning construction. This is why we look at discourse next.

This paper operationalizes Wendt's conception of identities into parts of its coding scheme, therefore they will be discussed in greater detail in the chapter on coding instructions.

2.3 Collective memory

Current collective memory studies can be traced back to the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs and the art historian Aby Warburg. „Halbwachs thematizes the nexus between memory and group, Warburg the one between memory and the language of cultural forms" (Assman 1995, p. 129).

When talking about memory in International Relations the term does not reference the entire history of a society or a culture (Warburg 2010). The term collective memory or just memory is however often used in misleading and misunderstood ways. A clear distinction has to be made between what belongs to the realm of history and what belongs to the realm of memory.

> *„Collective memory is not history, though it is sometimes made from similar material."*
> *(Kansteiner 2002 p.180)*

In his influential work "Les Lieux de Memoire", Pierre Nora argues that history is universal while memory only has relevance to a specific group, making it collective and plural, while still being specific and individual (Nora 1989). While history only conceives the relative and is strictly bound to temporal continuities as well as progressions and relations between things, memory occurs in concrete spaces, gestures, images, and objects, giving it an absolute nature (Nora 1989). Nora sees memory and history in such strong opposition to each other that he argues, „History is perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it" (Nora 1989, p. 9). The implications for this research project are diverse. The differentiation between memory and history informs how this paper will approach its data analysis. Since memory occurs in concrete spaces and is not bound to temporal continuities, these spaces, images, or gestures have to be identified to avoid conflation with history. The duality of a plural memory which is specific and individual infers the possibility for a memory to transcend boundaries between actors.

Another aspect that differentiates memory from history is the emotive component. This emotional element is only attached to certain events like the Holocaust or 9/11, these events are being remembered, while others are just part of a general historical consciousness (Langenbacher 2010). However, the characteristics of a historic event are not the deciding factor of whether the event is committed to collective memory. There are different ways for events to evolve into collective memory. More often than not, it is consciously created by elite actors, but it can also evolve on the basis of accumulated first-hand testimonies. Wüstenberg (2020) argues that no matter if they pursue change or just a reproduction of the status quo, states are powerful memory agents and so are international organizations and elites. Shain (2010) also references a 'primacy of elites'. This supports this paper's focus on states as memory agents as derived from Wendt's identity framework.

Kansteiner (2002) adds that not just the production but also the consumption of collective memory needs to be looked at. He argues that negotiations between three agents, memory producers, memory consumers, and intellectual and cultural traditions form the field of memory politics that shapes memory. By reconstructing their negotiations, it is possible to distinguish between failed and successful collective memory initiatives (Kansteiner 2002). Intellectual and cultural traditions frame all of our representations of the past, memory producers or makers use these representations and selectively adopt and manipulate them while the memory consumers use, ignore, or transform the traditions according to their own interests (Kansteiner 2002). Because there is no clear process behind the creation of collective memories not all of them are internationally recognized but rather some of them are heavily contested. A prevalent example of a contested collective memory is the Armenian genocide which is recognized by a majority of the world but a few countries especially Turkey heavily oppose the phrasing and many Turkish politicians claim the genocide never happened (Bedrossian 2021). This paper treats actors as memory producers and consumers at the same time. This production and consumption happen in the interactions under investigation. By providing the relevant context around the interaction this paper attempts to also account for what Kansteiner (2002) calls intellectual and cultural traditions. It will remain to be seen if this is enough to capture the dynamic Kansteiner outlines.

The importance of collective memory for international relations comes from its capacity to influence policy by constraining actors' choices and paths of action through the creation of taboos (regimes of political correctness) (Langenbacher, 2010). Identities also function in this way; they create role-specific expectations to be followed and have a need to be reproduced. However collective memory and identity are not two factors separately influencing actors' choices. Instead, collective memory informs an actor's identity formation. An actor's personal identity, its understanding of itself, is based on its previous experiences, requiring the actor to have a memory of its past. Without any memory, actors do not know who they are and how they relate to others and therefore would be unable to create or reproduce their identities. If memory shapes identity, and identity shapes interests (Wendt 1992), and interests determine policy choices, then memory can help IR to understand and predict states' policies.

A mistake that shouldn't be made is to equate the collective memory of the state with the memory of an individual. Nations can repress the collective memories or change them without having to fear a 'return of the repressed', like an individual (Kansteiner 2002). This cautions this study against trying to generalize its findings onto individual identities as well.

Not every author treats collective memory as a monolith. Assman (1995) differentiates between two types of collective memory, on the one side, communicative memory refers to everyday communications about past events. This form of memory is unstable, disorganized, and nonspecialized. The temporal horizon of peace communications is limited to 80 to 100 years or 3 to 4 generations (Assman 1995). On the other hand, cultural memory refers to a society's texts, images, and rituals which are being maintained or cultivated in order to stabilize a society's self-image, its identity. It consists of objectified culture, meaning objects designed for the long durée and to invoke memory (Assman 1995). The results of this paper's analysis might benefit from this theoretical differentiation when being interpreted. However, Assmann looks at a group's self-image, its corporate identity. It is unclear if this differentiation will be transferable to the social identities under investigation in this study as well. Therefore, at least initially during the analysis, this paper will not distinguish between the two terms and use the general term collective memory. However, this might change if the discussion of the results shows a difference between the role communicative and cultural memory play in the discourse, which could contribute to increasing the understanding of how these two subtypes might function differently in shaping actors' social identities.

Dudai (2010) found that multiple historical events are commonly remembered among Jewish Israelis and many of these predate the founding of the state of Israel. In his research with Israeli, American, and Ethiopian Jews he looked at Jewish history before the founding of the state of Israel. He found that the Holocaust, the most recent memorized event included in his study, was by far the most represented (Dudai 2010). This was followed by very early events in Jewish history, like the Exodus from Egypt, the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile (6th century BC), the instruction of the Second Temple, and exposure by Romans into the diaspora (1st century), with the only more recent one being to exclusion of the large Jewish population from Spain (15th century) (Dudai, 2010). He attributes the strong showing of the most recent and the most ancient events in the collective memory of the Jewish people to the differentiation between cultural memory and communicative memory made by Assman which this paper discussed above (Dudai 2010). The recent events are part of communicative memory and could potentially fade out of memory once no person who experienced it firsthand is alive anymore. Dudai's account informs this paper's knowledge about important events in Jewish memory that might become relevant during the analysis process. It also supports the assumption that the Holocaust has the highest likelihood of being referred to frequently.

2.4 Cosmopolitan/Transnational collective memory

This paper looks at collective memory use by state actors. If memories were not able to transcend boundaries this would be futile, however recently memory studies have seen a 'transnational turn' (Zubrzycki and Wozny, 2020). Zubrzycki and Wozny (2020) argue that the accelerated pace of globalization, the emergence of global political culture, the fast spread of media representations, and the rise of the internet have all contributed to the creation of new routes through which memories can emerge and diffuse across national borders and cultures.

Levy and Sznaider (2002) use the term 'cosmopolitan' instead of 'transnational' memory, they describe cosmopolitanism as a process of internal globalization' (Levy and Sznaider 2002). Similar to Zubrzycki and Wozny (2020), Levy and Sznaider (2002) argue that cosmopolitan (transnational) memories can for example be created by global media representations which make global concerns part of the local experiences of people (Levy and Sznaider 2002). They see the root cause in the immediacy and speed of the imagery of the new global communications which facilitate a shared consciousness and cosmopolitan memory across borders (Levy and Sznaider 2002).

Levy and Sznaider (2002) argue more specifically that in Europe, the cosmopolitan memory is centered around the Holocaust, and this provides the basis for a cosmopolitan memory, which transcends group boundaries and borders. However, not as a historic event but rather as a possible future that is universal in the sense that it can happen to anyone, at any time and everyone is responsible for preventing this, and exactly this orientation toward the future is the defining feature of cosmopolitan memory (Levy and Sznaider 2002). This research project will uncover if this future orientation can be found in the representations of collective memory from the data. It also leads to the assumption that the memory of the Holocaust will occupy an important position in the discourse. Even though the actors under investigation are not European, the Israelis can be reasonably expected to draw even more on the Holocaust as a mnemonic resource. However, the question remains if the Holocaust memory carries the same meaning in a truly global forum like the United Nations General Assembly? This is one aspect this research project aims to uncover. Since a total of 193 nations are represented at the United Nations, the presence of discursive representations of collective memories in this setting is a strong indicator of a transnational memory. At the same time, collective memories that have not had a diffusion process are unlikely to be relevant in this setting because they would not be meaningful to an international audience.

2.5 Discourse Analysis

Many different meanings have been subscribed to the concept of discourse analysis (Hajer, 1997). In IR theory, the understanding of discourse analysis is heavily influenced by the post-positivist (or constructivist) turn that occurred after the end of the Cold War. Following Hajer, discourse can be defined "as a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to the physical and social realities" (Hajer 1997, p. 44). But there are myriads of different definitions of discourse going around (see Holzscheiter 2013, etc.).

Discourse analysis is firmly linked to constructivist ontology and epistemology. Constructivism views the world as being socially created, and this creation is happening through the means of language, communication, and discourse. Thereby, constructivists moved the concepts of language, communication, and discourse close to the core of IR theory (Holzscheiter 2013). Discourse helps constructivists to identify and operationalize social facts like ideas, identities, or norms to demonstrate that these are not naturally given but produced (Holzscheiter 2013). This study does exactly that. It studies a specific discourse and operationalizes the concepts of identity and collective memory as products of the participating intentional actors' discursive practices.

Inside constructivism, there are two ontological approaches to discourse. A thin and a thick approach, which differ in the role they prescribe to discourse and language in the creation of social reality (Holzscheiter 2013). Thick constructivist thinking sees reality as being constituted through language and communication while thin constructivist thinking assumes that social facts can also assist outside of the "minds and discourses of the individuals who want to ex-plain them" (Wendt 1999 p. 75). This paper draws inspiration from both approaches; however, its strongest influence remains Wendtian thin constructivism. This paper will analyze how memory makers as speaking agents, rhetorically use collective memory to create social iden-tities.

The discourse theories of two philosophers Michel Foucault and Juergen Habermas, are the two most influential discourse theories. They wrote about the inseparable and co-constitutive effects that power and discourse have on each other. Holzscheiter (2013) shows how Fou-cault's understanding of discourse can be seen in light of a thick constructivist approach be-cause he argues that actors are trapped by the discourses they navigate, while Habermas's approach on the other hand is more akin to thin constructivist thinking because he looks at an ideal-type discourse in which the power of the better argument succeeds. There are issues with both approaches, Foucault and Habermas. Foucault's understanding is very deterministic and leaves no room for actors' agency. Habermas's understanding of an ideal-type discourse

rarely, if ever, occurs in reality and certainly does not take place in memory contests that are inherently loaded by the emotional perspective of subjective experiences and interpretations.

These ontological differences between thin and thick constructivism also lead to epistemological differences. The line of division between the approaches can be portrayed as a "differentiation between those approaches emphasizing the process through which 'subjects create meaning' and those that are primarily interested in understanding how 'meaning creates subjects'" (Holzscheiter 2013 p.5). Thin constructivists try to understand the logic behind the actions of agents with an emphasis on actors as speaking agents. They argue that agents can purposefully choose from a range of possible actions and speech acts even though they are embedded in institutional structures. However, thick constructivists see all speech acts as expressions of pre-existing discursive formations that actors cannot escape because they not only limit the possibilities for articulation but also for cognition (Holzscheiter 2013). Therefore, discourse-focused work in IR can be clustered around the agent-structure problem. Thick constructivist discourse approaches are macro-structural while thin constructivist approaches are micro-interactional in nature. While drawing insights from both perspectives, this paper stays mostly true to the thin approach, because it studies how intentional actors attempt to influence identities out of memories. Still, this paper does incorporate a broader context which includes the historical and social-political environment of the situation, and also treats the texts as evidence of a larger meaning structure and not just as a small instance of everyday communication.

3. Methodology

3.1 Chapter outline

The methodology section will start with a chapter on the choice of theory, explaining why constructivism with its focus on discovering underlying structures of meaning, provides the most suitable theoretical framework for this paper. The chapter on data selection will describe the rationale behind choosing the speeches made by Israelis and Palestinians at the 10th ESS as a representation of the data able to answer the research question.

This will be followed by an outline of the chosen method for data analysis. Through a directed and relational approach to content analysis, this paper will structure the chosen data set, identify codes and the relationships between them.

The operationalization chapter will start with detailed coding instructions designed to enhance the transparency and replicability of the study. Lastly, the different phases of the coding process are outlined, showing how the concepts from the theories were applied to the data analysis.

3.2 Choice of Theory

As the research question already suggests, this project is strongly anchored in post-positivist ontology. The author sees the world as one that is socially created and where researchers cannot achieve full objectivity. Therefore, the aim of this research project is to uncover the underlying structures of meaning that actors draw upon to make sense of the world. In the field of International Relations (IR), constructivism, sometimes also called social constructivism, embodies this post-positivist point of view. It is not the only post-positivist train of thought in IR, but it has gained a lot of notoriety because it does not see itself as a strict theory but rather as a way of seeing the world and a general approach to studying it.

The interdisciplinary field of memory studies is based on the same ontological and epistemological foundations as IR constructivism. Studying memory can contribute greatly to uncovering the underlying structures of meaning in almost all IR settings. „Collective memory is that mnemonic force by which we interpret ourselves and determine our combined future" (Warburg 2010, p.54). The lack of attention paid by IR to memory studies might be due to confusion between memory and history which is widespread in academia. Kansteiner (2002) argues that collective memory can take hold of historically and socially remote events, but he sees a primacy of the interests of the contemporary in how collective memory is dealt with (Kansteiner, 2002).

The memories held by all kinds of actors are crucial for the configuration of international affairs and greatly inform international behavior as they dictate policies (Langenbacher and Shain 2010). Kansteiner (2002) conceptualizes collective memory as a result of the interaction among three types of historical factors. Firstly, intellectual and cultural traditions frame our representations of the past, secondly, the so-called memory makers who adopt and manipulate these traditions and lastly the memory consumers who use, ignore, and transform such artifacts according to their interests (Kansteiner, 2002).

This paper is supportive of collective memory studies' recent inroads in constructivist IR scholarship. Studying collective memory can lead to great benefits for the study of identities. Studying memory as part of identity is crucial because, without a memory of their past, actors do not know who they are and how they relate to others. Memory is foundational to any sense of

self, meaning to any form of identity. "That memory and identity are closely linked on the individual level is a commonplace that goes back at least to John Locke, who maintained that there is no such thing as an essential identity, but that identities have to be constructed and reconstructed by acts of memory, by remembering who one was and by setting this past Self in relation to the present Self." (Erll 2008, p. 6)

However, so far IR constructivists have mainly utilized the concept of collective memory and sometimes of collective trauma to better understand actors' corporate (personal) identity formations. Studying the effects collective memories and traumas have on actors' current corporate identities is extremely important, but so is studying the effects collective memory can have on actors' social identities. However, the dependency between memory and identity goes both ways, because Jan Assmann (2008) makes clear, "knowledge about the past acquires the properties and functions of memory if it is related to a concept of identity" (p.113). Following Alexander Wendt (1999), social identities refer to role, type, and collective identity. These forms of identity are described as social identities because role, type, and collective identities can never exist independently of others.

Usually, actors have many role identities at the same time (Wendt 1999). In the case of states, these roles include enemies, friends and allies, strategic rivals, neighbors, and many more roles that states can occupy in relation to each other. Type identities refer to parts of a state's corporate identity that it shares with others that are seen as especially relevant and which cast the state into a category. These categories can include references to the form of government like democratic or autocratic, it can refer to a state religion, like Orthodox or Muslim. Collective identities occupy a special position. Following Wendt (1999) again, a prerequisite for the formation of a collective identity is that the actor needs to positively identify with a significant other. For states, positive identification means that they see the welfare of the significant others as part of their own interests, this especially refers to security. Therefore, collective defense organizations like NATO are institutionalizations of collective identities.

3.3 Data Selection

The data chosen to answer the research question consists of meeting records from the 10th Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (10th ESS). It exclusively consists of text, verbatim meeting records, which will be analyzed through content analysis. Only the speeches made by Israeli and Palestinian speakers are relevant for this analysis. The 10th ESS was first convened in 1997 and has continued until today and has produced numerous related resolutions and other documents. Emergency Special Sessions are un-

scheduled meetings usually with the aim to make urgent recommendations and decisions re-
garding a particular issue. All recommendations and decisions made however are nonbinding.
Emergency special sessions can be called when the Security Council fails to decide on an
issue. Usually, Emergency Special Sessions only consist of a single meeting with the 10th ESS
being the first one that resumed more than once. The topic of this Special Session is the
ongoing Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The last meeting of the ses-
sion was on December 20, 2023, in response to the Hamas October 7th attack.[1]

Several considerations went into selecting these speeches as representative data. On the
theoretical level, Wendt (1999) argues that "what really matters in defining roles is not institu-
tionalization but the degree of interdependence or ‚intimacy" between Self and Other" (p. 228).
He goes on to explicitly state, "When intimacy is high, as in the Arab-Israeli conflict, role iden-
tities might not be just a matter of choice that can be easily discarded, but positions forced on
actors by the representations of significant Others." (p.228) The degree of intimacy between
Israelis and Palestinians is even higher now, making it an especially relevant situation for the
study of social identities. Additionally, both actors, Israelis and Palestinians can draw on sub-
stantial collective memories (see Dudai 2010, Sorek 2011). And because majority Jewish Is-
rael also draws on the mast influential mnemonic event ever with the Holocaust (see Langen-
bacher 2010, Levy and Sznaider 2002, etc.).

This data selection is also influenced by considerations about relevance. The current war in
Gaza has a very elevated position in International Relations and social-political discourse
overall. It is especially relevant for the study of collective memory, because on both the Israeli
and Palestinian sides collective memory is a defining issue. The founding of the Israeli state
is a direct result of the Holocaust while at the same time being remembered as the 'great
catastrophe' or 'Nakba' in Palestine, creating a new collective memory. This shows that you
cannot analyze the current conflict without taking memory into account. Besides these two
foundational memories, the conflict has produced a number of additional memories and trau-
mas on both sides. But the precise role these memories play in shaping the actor's social
identities remains subject to speculation. Choosing this set of data gives the study additional
relevance and depth. It also enhances the paper's social validity as will be discussed later on.
This paper will treat the Palestinians as an equal state actor to the Israelis. The majority of
United Nations countries already recognizes their sovereignty, and even though their state-
hood is still contested, they have had the unit-level quality a state actor requires.

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[1] Between May 10 and 13, 2024, the 10th ESS reconvened again, however at the time of writing the meet-
ing records were not made publicly available.

But why look at the speeches from the 10th ESS? The development of the United Nations as an organization can be argued is a result of the collective trauma of the Second World War. "Some even consider the burgeoning corpus of international law in itself as constituting a collective memory of past injustice" (Langenbacher 2010, p.19*). By analyzing statement made at United Nation's meeting this paper also avoids confusion about the roles of the people representing a state. If we would look at politicians' speech acts across various contexts it would be necessary to analyze which identity they occupy at what point. Maybe one speech they act as a party politician, in one as a private citizen and in the next as a representative of the state. However, this confusion is avoided in the UN setting because speeches here are clearly understood as representing the actor qualities of the state and not the individual.

Theoretically, almost all UN General Assembly speeches, documents, or debates could qualify as data relevant to our research question which makes the task of limiting the scope of this project difficult. Looking at documents related to the 10th ESS, however, gives this project a time span long enough that changes and trends can be identified and relevant enough to current discourse due to it still being a ongoing session. The 10th ESS reconvened the last time on the 10th of May 2024. However, the data from these meetings is not included in the analysis.

3.4 NVivo

This paper utilizes the NVivo software to analyze the selected data. NVivo is intended to assist researchers in qualitative data analysis and was developed by QSR International, a research software developer from Melbourne, Australia. With NVivo it is possible to code and sort data, as well as integrate coding with linking, shaping, and modeling.

However, the software does not replace the researcher's work in the most important parts of the data analysis process, the coding and categorizing of the data. This must still be done by the researcher. Coding involves creating categories, either beforehand or during data analysis, in order to group textual data with similarities into segments. Using software to assist in the research process primarily makes organization, reduction, and storage of data less time-consuming and overall more efficient (Wong 2008). Relationships between codes can be coded as a separate kind of codes. NVivo is also able to produce maps and other visualizations that show the results of the data analysis. This especially helps to organize the relationships between codes as well as structuring the results in a concise and visual manner, making them more accessible to a wider audience.

The NVivo project created during the analysis process is attached to this thesis project. However, a little disclaimer is necessary. Some of the older meeting records from the 10th ESS were not digitalized to today's standards. This led to NVivo sometimes changing the order of codes or coding individual letters or numbers. Even deleting these codes and re-coding the data did not help because the mistake results from the original data. It also required the researcher to split references into multiple parts at some points.

3.5 Content Analysis

This paper will employ content analysis as the chosen research method. "Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyze text data. Other methods include ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and historical research" (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, p.1278). The definitions of what content analysis is and what it contains vary. Holsti (1968) gave a very general definition by describing content analysis as any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages. But this description is too broad to give a clear idea of the processes of content analysis. Berelsons (1952) definition was more precise, he stated that content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. This definition is more accurate, but also could lead readers to believe content analysis is a tool only useful for quantitative, not qualitative, research. But this paper will follow Hsieh and Shannon (2005) in defining the method of content analysis "as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, p.1278).

3.5.1 Structure of Content Analysis

Following Columbia School of Public Health (no date), there are multiple possible purposes behind content analysis. It can be used to identify the intentions and focus on the communication trends of an individual, a group, or an institution. It can also reveal international differences in communication content and determined of psychological or emotional state of a personal group. If done together with interviews it can describe attitudinal and behavioral responses to communications as well as analyzing focus group interviews and open-ended questions to complement quantitative data (Columbia, no date). It could also be used to pre-tests and improve intervention of survey prior to its launch. And, like this paper, it can be used to reveal specific patterns in communication content.

The advantages of content analysis lie in its closeness to the data, and its ability to produce qualitative as well as quantitative data. However, content analysis can be subject to increased error (80% is seen as an acceptable margin for reliability (Columbia, no date), because it is inherently reductive and can sometimes disregard the overall context that produced an analyzed text. To reduce the margin of human error, criteria for reliability and validity need to be adhered to. Reliability consists of stability, reproducibility and accuracy (Columbia, no date). To achieve stability, it is necessary that coders do re-code the same data in the same manner consistently over a period of time. Reproducibility is achieved when a group of coders classify the membership to categories in the same way repeatedly. A studies accuracy can be measured by the extent to which declassification of the text corresponds to a standout on Norm statistically (Columbia, no date). Following Krippendorff (2019c) validity consist of face validity, social validity and empirical validity, with the latter being again divided into multiple subcategories depending on the kind of evidence drawn on. How this study assures reliability and validity will be argued in detail in the discussion section, after the results have been presented to the reader.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) argue that all approaches to qualitative content analysis require a similar analytical process of seven classic steps including "formulating to research question to be answered, selecting the sample to be analyzed, defining the categories to be applied, outlining the coding process and the coder training, implementing the coding process, determining trustworthiness, and analyzing the results of the coding process" (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, p. 1285).

These seven steps will be completed in three phases (Elo et al. 2014). In the preparation phase, before the start of the analysis, the research question has to already been formulated and the data has to be collected, in this study from the United Nation's digital library.

Because collective memories are structures of meaning that are impossible to identify by looking at single words without context, the unit of analysis has to be themes. Due to the nature of the research question the themes selected refer to collective memory as well as social identities. The initial codes are derived from carefully studying collective memory and trauma theory as well as constructivist identity theory. Additionally, the historical and cultural context is studied to specify how these categories apply to the data and how specific codes need to be phrased. For example, Holocaust and Nakba are codes for collective memory while sovereign state, aggressor, or victim represent role identities.

Secondly, in the organization phase the text on analysis will be organized into categories and codes by utilizing the NVivo software. During the coding process additional categories and codes will be added. To interpret the results, codes for relationships between will be derived

in the final step of relational coding. Lastly, in the reporting phase the results will be reported and put into context,

3.5.2 Relational and Directed Content Analysis

Two general approaches to content analysis are differentiated. These are conceptual and relational content analysis. While conceptual analysis looks at the existence and frequency of concepts, relational analysis goes beyond that by also looking at the relationships between concepts in the text (Columbia, no date).

This paper will employ relational content analysis as the chosen method of analysis. Additionally, it would also deploy what Hsieh and Shannon (2005) call directed content analysis. In relational content analysis, meaning is not inferred from individual concepts but rather the meaning is seen as a product of relationships among concepts (Columbia, no date). Are concepts positively or negatively related to each other? Does the occurrence of one concept leads to the occurrence of another? To capture all nuances, it is necessary to develop categories for the different types of relationships between concepts, this is one of the main differences between conceptual and relational concept analysis.

By doing relational proximity analysis, the co-occurrence of explicit concepts in the text will be evaluated. As a result, relationship codes will be developed to identify interrelated structures of meaning. The goal is to reveal patterns in the content of communication of Israeli and Palestinian speeches.

As the chosen sample, only texts from either Israeli or Palestinian officials in the context of the 10th ESS will be analyzed. The level of analysis is the level of themes, the terms 'themes' 'codes' or 'categories' all mean the same going forward. Through the coding of themes, it will be shown if collective memory plays a role in the texts at all. Some categories for coding the data will be derived from the theory, but the directed approach allows the researcher to add additional categories during the analysis of the data. The texts will be coded for existence as well as frequency and interrelation of concepts. Developing rules for coding the text will be challenging because simply searching for specific words or phrases will not suffice to establish if the concepts from collective memory are present in the texts. Therefore, sophisticated rules need to be developed to ensure the reliability, validity, and trustworthiness of the study. These rules will be outlined in the operationalization chapter at the end of the methodology.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define directed content analysis as a type of content analysis that starts with theory in order to produce codes that are defined before data analysis as well as during the analysis, other studies like Elo et al. (2014) call this practice the deductive approach

to content analysis. The aim of this approach is to validate or conceptually extend a pre-existing theoretical framework or theory (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). This paper attempts to do the later, by trying to identify if there is the need for, and potentially contribute to, a comprehensive theory on how collective memory influence actors' social identities. Based on the theory, predictions can be made about the variables and their relationships, which allows the researcher to develop an initial coding scheme before starting the analysis process. Using directed content analysis underscores the perspective, that researchers do not approach any analysis unbiased, but rather already have preconceived notions based on their worldview, experiences and expectations. In the direct approach, these preconceived notions are integrated into the initial coding scheme but are not set in stone and susceptible to change during the analysis process. This bears the risk that this pre-existing bias makes it more likely to find supportive rather than non-supportive evidence. The overemphasis on the theory could also potentially blind the researcher to contextual aspects of the phenomenon (Hsieh and Shannon 2005).

3.6 Operationalization

To operationalize the concepts presented in the theory and methodology chapter, they need to be translated into a coding scheme and a set of coding rules that guide the researcher through the content analysis process. The overarching structure is provided by the research question "How do state actors use collective memory to influence social identities?"

3.6.1 Coding Instructions

Before the data analysis can start, it is necessary to lay out precise coding instructions that guide the coding process and enable the study to be replicable. Since this paper follows the directed and relational content analysis approaches, the initial set of codes is defined before data analysis and can then be expanded during the process of coding the data.

The initial coding scheme is based on the two variables of our research question, which are collective memory as the independent variable and social identity as the dependent variable. The coding scheme reflects this paper's analytical construct derived from the multidisciplinary field of memory studies outlined in the theory section, and the operationalization of identity is based on social identities as defined by Alexander Wendt.

Additionally, before starting to code the data, the researcher reads the complete data set. The data set consists of verbatim meeting records from all meetings of the 10th Emergency Special

Session of the United Nations General Assembly (10th ESS).[2] Only speeches made by either Palestinian or Israeli representatives are relevant for this analysis, the rest of the meeting records is disregarded. In 37 of the 48 meetings under investigation (which only excludes the latest meetings from May 10-13, 2024, from which records are not publicly available at the point of writing) Israeli and Palestinian officials made statements.

After an initial readthrough of the whole data set, the data is read again and coded for relevance. Since this paper focuses exclusively on how collective memory is rhetorically used to affect social identities, only the parts of the speeches that directly or indirectly mention or reference memorized events are relevant and therefore form the sampling units of the paper. "Sampling units are units that are distinguished for selective inclusion in an analysis." (Krippendorff 2019a, p. 3) Therefore, how actors represent identities only becomes relevant when used in the context of collective memory. To code for collective memory, as mentioned above, already existing literature was consulted. Sorek's study on Palestinian collective memory indicates that the most important events, in this order, are the 2006 July war, 1948 (also known as the 'great catastrophe', the founding of Israel or Nakba(h)), the Al-Aqsa Intifada (2. Intifada), the 1967 war, and the 2008 prisoners of war exchange (Sorek 2011). The latter took place during Sorek's survey, so it can be assumed that the recency bias means that this event is overrepresented. Besides these events, in the first face of coding every historical event is coded as relevant. To code for themes corresponding to memory, historical dates, and year numbers as well as references to time spans and specific names of events (Nakba, Intifada, etc.) are indicators.

To still be able to relate collective memory themes to their context later on, not just the mentioning of collective memory, but the whole argument it is included in constitutes a sampling unit. The texts are structured in paragraphs of differing lengths, usually an argument spans the whole paragraph, so it is entirely coded as relevant and thereby included in the sampling unit. Only in instances where a paragraph includes multiple arguments unrelated to the mention of memory, is it advantageous to only include the part of the paragraph mentioning the memory in the sampling units.

In the second step, the sampling units are coded for the specific themes of collective memory and social identities. This means that the recording units have to be identified. "Recording/coding units are units that are distinguished for separate description, transcription, recording, or coding." (Krippendorff 2019a, p. 4) To ensure consistency throughout the coding process it makes sense to keep recording units as concise as possible. Defining them „as the smallest

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[2] The document symbols go from A_ES-10_PV.1-EN to A_ES-10_PV.48-EN and are listed in the reference list

units that bear all the information need in the analysis." (Krippendorff 2019a, p. 5) To structure the recording units, a differentiation between data originating from Palestinian and from Israeli statements is being made, in order to be able to identify differences in how both parties utilize collective memory later on. Recording units will be defined as belonging either to themes of social identity or collective memory.

The three kinds of social identity described by Wendt are type identity, role identity, and collective identity. Actors can have multiple type identities at the same time, however, only categories that have social content and meaning, and not every shared characteristic is a type identity (Wendt 1999). The meaning is given to these characteristics by membership rules, which vary culturally and historically, and define what counts as a type identity and also order how others behave towards it (Wendt 1999). The key to differentiating type identities from other social identities is, that they are based on actors' intrinsic qualities, characteristics that exist independently of others (Wendt 1999). This definition guides this paper's coding for type identities. Only characteristics with social meaning are considered as indicating a reference to type identity. Because the relevant actors of the study are states or state-like, these may include characteristics describing the group's religious, organizational, ethnic, or ideational character. The state of Israel for example, has the type identity of a democracy based on its form of government, and even though the identity of democracy only becomes meaningful in the social context as a shared characteristic, the form of governmental organization is originally independent of that.

In comparison, role identities do not have their origin in the intrinsic properties of actors. Role identities only exist in relation to others. As Alexander Wendt describes "One can have these identities only by occupying a position in a social structure and following behavioral norms toward others possessing relevant counter-identities" (Wendt 1999, p. 227). This explains, how codes for role identity can be identified as clearly distinct from type identities. By asking the question: 'Is this identity linked to an intrinsic quality of the actor?' The distinction can be made between data coded as type or role identity. However, there are instances that are a little more complicated, especially in the case of sovereignty. However, since international law describes intrinsic characteristics of actors, like a permanent population or territory, as prerequisites for their sovereignty, the identity of sovereign state could be seen as a type identity, or simply as part of the state's corporate identity. However, Wendt argues that, because the sovereignty of the modern state is officially being recognized by other states, this makes being sovereign a role identity that comes with substantial rights and behavioral norms (Wendt 1999).

While role and type identities are omnipresent in interactions between actors, collective identities are much rarer because they require a higher bar in order for them to occur. This bar is (positive) identification between actors. Wendt notes "Identification is a cognitive process in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit transcended altogether" (Wendt 1999, p.229). Collective identities are built on distinct combinations of shared role and type identities between actors. To form a collective identity they require actors to identify with the ‚Other' based on their shared identities, defining the Other's welfare as part of the welfare of the Self (Wendt 1999). The identification that Israel has with the United States or Germany could be an example of a collective identity possibly found in this paper's data set. However, coding for themes corresponding to role and type identities could lead to the discovery of collective identities once this study reaches the step of coding the relationships between themes.

In step three, the recording units are defined more specifically, labeling them as concrete kinds of identity and memory. Meaning that it is now being differentiated between what kind of role, type, or collective identity is represented (Victim, Sovereign, etc.…). Also, after identifying in the step before what mentioned events are representative of collective memory, this data is now coded for the exact mnemonic events (Holocaust, Nakba, etc.…).

In the fourth and last step of coding, the relationships between codes for collective memory and codes for social identities are coded. These relationships are treated as what Krippendorff (2019) calls context units. "Context units are units of textual matter that set limits on the information to be considered in the description of recording units." (Krippendorff 2019a, p.6) Context units may overlap and can describe multiple recording units. In this study, all text that includes and relates two recording units with each other is to be coded as the context unit serving as evidence of their relationship.

The main indicator for a relationship is the co-occurrence of themes, but not every co-occurrence necessarily leads to a relationship. Co-occurrence is most likely to indicate a relationship when codes are directly connected with associative words and phrases. In its simplest terms, this might look like: 'Collective Memory X justifies/prohibits/enables me (actor Y) to take on role Z.' Here is an example from the data:

> A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „*Israel has destroyed and flattened entire neighbourhoods:, displaced virtually every Palestinian in Gaza, and brought back the scenes and memories of the 1948 Nakba with the massacres and forced transfer of our people.*" (p.10)

In this example, the associating phrase „and brought back the scenes and memories", links the casting of Israel as the aggressor to the 1948 Nakba, in a way that reinforces that characterization and role-casting. This example shows that while instructions for the coding process

can be given, the last step of relationship coding relies on a certain level of inferences and meanings that have to be constructed through the researcher's informed judgment, no clear-cut rules for this process can be described beforehand. This judgment is informed by the knowledge of the data and the relevant context. However, there is a structure to coding for relationships in the NVivo software. Relationships can be coded as associative, one-sided, and symmetrical. Themes that co-occur without a clear indicator for their relationship will be coded as associative, and the relationship code will be simply called 'co-occurrence'. Maybe patterns can be found which could lead to discovering some structured relationships after all.

If one code is used to explain, justify, or determine the occurrence of another, then the relationship will be coded as one-sided, with the just mentioned terms functioning as possible examples of how to label such a relationship, relational verbs are to be preferred here. Lastly, a relationship will be coded as symmetrical if both codes affect each other meaningfully. This requires the coder to look at the whole sampling unit. In the example above such a symmetrical association is found. The memory of the Nakba reinforces the casting of Israel into the role of aggressor while at the same time, the current situation on the ground in Gaza is framed as equal to the Nakba which functions as a representation of the events of the Nakba that influences how it is remembered.

3.6.2 Coding Process

During the first phase of the coding process, themes from Israeli speeches relevant to the analysis of this paper were found in 20 different meetings. In 25 different meetings, excerpts from Palestinian speeches were coded as relevant. As mentioned above, every argument referencing any sort of memory was initially coded as relevant. One unanticipated element was that in some instances the signifiers for identities are references for collective memories themselves. To explain this a bit further here are two examples: As will be shown in the results section, the Palestinian speaker frequently cast Israel into the identity of a 'colonizer'. The identity of 'colonizer' only holds meaning in an environment where the collective memory of colonialism is commonplace, otherwise, the understanding of what such a role identity constitutes would not exist. The same is true for the identity of 'Nazi' which is cast on to Hamas by Israeli representatives after the October 7 attacks. Without the backdrop of the collective memory of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust, this framing would be devoid of meaning. Therefore, every reference to these identities makes the argument they are part of a relevant sampling unit for this paper.

This shows that collective memory can be used to create social identities or to reproduce them at least. The role identity of the Nazi had clear role expectations during the time of the Third

Reich, however, these expectations collapsed after the end of the Nazi regime. Today's associations with this identity most certainly differ a lot from past ones since they are interpreted through our current perspectives. In the Western world, the term usually references people with far-right political ideologies, who often combine that with racist, fascist, and antisemitic thinking. But because of the historical context, framing domestic far-right political ideology as Nazi ideology is unthinkable in Israel. This Israeli understanding of the Nazi identity is uniquely informed by the memory of the Holocaust. When they use the term, they aim at invoking this memory in their audiences and the same goes for Palestinians' use of colonizer. They draw on the meaning of the memory of colonialism and not on the role identity of the colonizer. However, it is necessary for all codes to be mutually exclusive to ensure clear distinctions between the phenomena recorded (Krippendorff 2019a). Therefore, identities that only hold relevant meaning because of their mnemonic dimension are in this paper coded as memory. This also avoids having to distinguish between Israel casting Hamas or casting the Palestinians in general into a role and how that context affects the meaning. While not a perfect solution, it is the most functional and will ensure consistency and avoid misinterpretations of the coding scheme. Because relational coding is also applied to the concepts in a further coding phase, the different uses and meanings of the concepts will still be able to be identified.

In the second phase of the coding process, it was first identified which text excerpts actually reference collective memories instead of just historical events or anecdotes. This excluded some excerpts referencing the year 1967 just as a way of describing what territories they were talking about, without this mentioning contributing to any role-taking or casting. Additionally references to the Oslo peace process had been coded as relevant in the first coding phase, however, after the peace process failed in the year 2000 and the Second Intifada started, the theme quickly disappeared from the data, indicating that it had not been committed to the collective memory of actors and therefore disappeared as a rhetorical commonplace. Therefore, mentions of the Oslo peace process were in this second phase not coded as part of the recording units. Lastly, mentions referencing 1949 were excluded since they only referenced the inception of the Geneva Convention, and while the convention itself has a significant impact, this impact is still ongoing and results from its content, not the time of its writing. Besides that, the data was coded for references to identities, consisting of either actor rhetorically using memory to take an identity for themselves or casting an identity onto a significant other.

In the third coding phase, themes were specified depending on what exact memory or identity they represented. In the data themes of Jewish cultural memory, the Holocaust, the founding of the state of Israel or Nakba, colonialism, the 1967 war (Six-Day War), 9/11, and October 7 were found. In association with these memories, a number of different identities were rhetorically constructed either through role-taking or role-casting by the actors. However, it became

apparent that the initial coding scheme which differentiated between role, type, and collective identities did not contribute much to the data analysis because almost exclusively role identities were represented. This led to the abandonment of these categories in favor of a differentiation between role-taking and altercasting. These labels capture if an actor rhetorically constructs an identity for themselves or for a significant other and are much more relevant to the data. Multiple, often corresponding identity representations were found, like colonizer/colonized, victim/perpetrator (of human rights and international law violations), Nazi, Holocaust denier, Occupier, Apartheid state, law-abiding democracy, and many more appeared concerning Israel, Palestine, or both. Israelis and Palestinians both cast each other frequently into identities of violators of human rights, international law, binding Security Council resolutions, and much more. The same happens in regard to the counter-roles both parties attempt to take in response. This poses a threat to the replicability of coding because coding every one of these identities as distinct categories would blow up the number of codes and make it difficult for coders to differentiate between them. It therefore becomes necessary to subsume them under more general codes that represent multiple identities. In this study, the role identities of 'aggressor' and 'victim' accurately capture the general meaning of all these more specific identities. The differences will receive attention in the final coding step, the relationship coding. The finalized coding scheme utilized for the data analysis can be found in the attached NVivo file. It notably also includes the United Nations and, in the case of Israel, Iran as targets for role-casting. The role-casting of Iran is of little significance for the overall study and is only briefly discussed in the result. The role-casting of the United Nations by both parties as a patron and by Israel as a hostile actor was far more significant as the results will show.

The relationship codes consist of two items (selected from the codes), a from item and a to item, which are connected through different relationship types. There are three types of relationships. They either describe a simple association between two codes or alternatively they prescribe a one-sided effect, one code influencing the other, or a symmetrical effect in which both codes mutually influence each other. NVivo has a preinstalled relationship that describes association. During the relational coding, the researcher identified two one-sided relationships defined as 'justifies role-taking' and 'justifies role-casting' and also two symmetrical relationships defined as 'equates' and 'differentiates'. In total 25 different relationships were identified in the coding process; they can also be found in the NVivo file and will be discussed in the analysis chapter.

4. Analysis

4.1 Chapter Outline

In this chapter, some background information necessary to contextualize the data will be given first. The origins and setting of the 10th Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (10th ESS) are described, explaining how and why it came to be, what an Emergency Special Session is, and its function inside the United Nations. Afterward, the timeline of the 10th ESS is described, explaining when and why it was reconvened, from 1997 up until today.

Next, the results of the content analysis will be presented. In this main section of the analysis chapter, the results are outlined around the themes of collective memory that were found during the analysis. The results of all previously described coding phases are presented together, describing what was coded as relevant, what themes were identified during the coding process, as well as what relationships between different themes were found. Multiple examples for each theme will be quoted, but not all codes corresponding to every theme will be referenced. Finally, the results are summarized in a concise manner.

4.2 Relevant Context

The first meeting ever convened for the 10th ESS took place on April 24, 1997. It was convened to discuss 'Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory'. Under resolution 377A(V), "Uniting for peace" framework, adopted by the General Assembly on 3 November 1950, an Emergency Special Session can be convened within 24 hours if the Security Council (SC) fails to agree on an issue of international peace and security. This happens at the request of the SC itself or if enough member states deem it necessary. The 10th session marks the second time that the GA convened an Emergency Special Session on this issue. The 9th Emergency Special Session under the name "The situation in the occupied Arab territories" was requested by the Security Council and convened from 29 January to 5 February 1982 and effectively discussed the same issue. The situation of the Middle East was also more broadly discussed in the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and the question of Palestine in the 7th Emergency Special Session already. An Emergency Special Session always only has the ability to make recommendations that are non-binding.

The 10th Session was first convened because of Israel's construction of housing units in East Jerusalem. In three meetings between April 24 and April 25, 1997, as well as in two more meetings in July 1997 and two in November 1997, this issue was discussed and multiple resolutions were passed. The 8th and 9th meetings took place on March 17, 1998, condemning

Israel's failure to respond to previous resolutions made and calling for the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention to convene a conference on measures to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. After an expert discussion on the issue had taken place and argued for the applicability of the Convention, meetings 10-12 took place in February 1999 to call again for Israel to stop its construction in East Jerusalem and to enforce the Geneva Convention in its territories occupied since 1967.

The 13th and 14th meetings were convened on October 18, 2000, as a response to the violence that had broken out in Israel and its occupied territories in the previous month. This violence marked the start of the so-called Al-Aqsa Intifada or Second Intifada which lasted until February 2005 and was sparked by the failure of the Oslo Peace Process. In the context of the violence during the Second Intifada, the 15th Meeting was called on 20th December 2001. Fighting in the Jenin refugee Camp sparked a renewed convening for two more meetings on May 7, 2002. As a result of the meetings, a fact-finding mission to Jenin was established. The results of this fact-finding mission were discussed in the 18th and 19th meetings three months later on August 5, 2002.

A stand-off at Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's compound in Ramallah led to the 10th ESS reconvening on September 19, 2003. The situation was resolved, but the construction of a fence/wall by the Israeli side partially on Palestinian territory resulted in two more meetings in October 2003 with another Meeting in December where Palestinians requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the matter. This opinion was published in June 2004, sparking four more meetings by the 10th ESS on the issue between July 16 and July 20, 2004.

For the first time since its inception, it took over two years before the 10th ESS was reconvened again on November 17, 2006. The reason behind the reconvening was previous Israeli military actions in Gaza, which is referred to as the 2006 July War (Sorek 2011). On December 15, 2006, the 30th and 31st meetings of the 10th ESS took place in order to argue for the establishment of a Register of Damage arising from the construction of a separation wall by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Again, more than two years later, on January 15 and 16, 2009, the meetings 32 to 36 took place as a result of renewed escalation in Gaza. After this set of meetings, the 10th ESS did not reconvene until U.S. President Donald Trump decided in 2017 to move the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This issue was discussed in the 37th Meeting on December 21, 2017.

After violence had broken out at a Palestinian demonstration, leading to the killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli armed forces, the 38th meeting of the 10th ESS was convened on June

15, 2018, to discuss the escalation. This marked the last meeting of the 10th ESS before the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas.

Not the October 7 attacks, but the Israeli military offensive in Gaza that followed the attack resulted in the reconvening of the 10th ESS on October 26, 2023. Between October 26 and November 2, the issue was discussed over six meetings. But because of the continuing war, the session was reconvened again on December 12, 2023, with four more meetings taking place until December 20, 2023.

Even though the war in Gaza was still ongoing, when the session reconvened again between May 10 and May 13, 2024, the topic was the full membership of the Palestinians in the United Nations. And even though the 10th ESS passed a resolution favoring Palestinian accession to the United Nations as a full member, upon writing this paper the State of Palestine is still only in the position of an observer without voting power because of the non-binding nature of ESS resolutions.

4.3 Presenting Results

This paper's results are structured around the usage of collective memory commonplaces by Israeli and Palestinian representatives in speeches during meetings of the 10th ESS. After familiarizing with the data by reading it in its entirety, the relevant passages, the sampling units, were identified in step two. In contrast to the researcher's expectations before the coding process, neither the Holocaust nor the founding of Israel, commonly referenced by Palestinians as the Nakba or 'Great Catastrophe', are the most referenced collective memory by the speakers. The Holocaust is only mentioned in six meetings, the Nakba is referred to in seven different meetings, but the 1967 war is mentioned in 15 meetings and the themes of colonialism appeared in 20 total meetings. While colonialism is not a memory specific to Israelis or Palestinians, it is still an example of a transnational collective memory. To be clear, the memory is specific to those victimized by colonialism and not equally memorized by the perpetrators, therefore, it is best characterized as the transnational trauma of being colonized by a foreign power.

Following the discussion of these four major themes, the Holocaust, the Nakba, the 1967 war, and colonialism some interesting, but less referenced and relevant memories are discussed. This includes the memory of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the category of Jewish cultural memory which subsumes everything that is referenced from Jewish history before the Holocaust and follows Assmann's (1995) understanding of cultural memory as one of two subcategories of collective memories. Lastly, the referencing of the October 7, 2023,

attacks by Hamas on Israel are discussed. Since the war in Gaza that broke out as a response to the attack is still ongoing at the time of writing, October 7 is not a memory yet in the sense of the other themes discussed. However, it seems inevitable that October 7 will be remembered as an important event, and it will be interesting to analyze how the actors seek to construct the events as a new memory.

Lastly, the results will be summarized concisely before going into the discussion chapter and discussing what they mean for the overall research project.

4.3.1 Holocaust

Contrary to the researcher's expectations, the Holocaust memory did not initially play a significant role in the representations by Israeli representatives. Only after the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel by Hamas, became the Holocaust rhetorically used by Israeli speakers. In Meetings 28 and 30, the Holocaust was mentioned not as a tool to influence the perception of the Israel-Palestine conflict, but as a way of casting Iran in the role of a Holocaust denier.

> *A/ES-10/PV.28-EN: „(…) and Iran, whose President denies the Holocaust while diligently preparing the next one and who is on a quest to acquire the nuclear weapons to do so." (p.9.)*

> *A_ES-10_PV.30-EN: „The real emergency and the real world is where a conference on Holocaust denial is being held by a State member of this Assembly, hosted by a ranting President who denies the Holocaust while preparing the next one." (p.12)*

However, after the Hamas attack on October 7, the references to the Holocaust increased and were used to frame the attack. After being mentioned rarely during the statements in the 26 years since the inception of the 10th ESS before, the Holocaust was referenced four times in the first Israeli speech at the 39th meeting, the first meeting after the October 7 attack.

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: „Hamas carried out atrocities the likes of which we have not seen since the Holocaust. Yet, unlike the Holocaust, where the evidence we have is mostly black and white photographs and soundless footage, here the proof is in high definition because some of it is from security footage, but much of it is from the cell phones and GoPro cameras belonging to the Hamas Nazis themselves." (p.6-7)*

This quote not just references the Holocaust and draws comparisons with October 7, it also introduces a new role the Israelis cast Hamas (crucially not all Palestinians) in the role identity of a Nazi. As explained in the chapter on the coding process, this is treated as a reference to the Holocaust in itself. However, it is still interesting, that his framing was never used before October 7, but eleven times over the three speeches that followed it.

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: "It is the law-abiding democracy of Israel against modernday Nazis."(p.5)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: "Hamas's Nazi murderers went from house to house with hit lists (…)"(p.5)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: "Just like the Nazis, Hamas terrorists removed infants from their cribs (...)"(p.6)*

This casting of Hams as Nazis continues in the next set of meetings that followed in December 2023.

> *A/ES-10/PV.45-EN: On 6 October, there was a ceasefire, and it was abruptly violated — not by Israel, but by 3,000 Hamas Nazis who invaded my country, (...)" (p.7-8)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „The future that awaits us if the Hamas Nazis are not eliminated,(...)"(p.12)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „This resolution only seeks an end to the war against Hamas Nazis."(p.12)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „(...)during which he was forced to watch the atrocities of the Hamas Nazis at gunpoint."(p.13)*

But the Holocaust and October 7 are not directly compared again. Once the attack is called *„Israel has just endured the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust."(p.10) (A/ES-10/PV.41-EN)*. But besides that, the Holocaust memory is used to emphasize the role of the United Nations.

> *A/ES-10/PV.41-EN: „The Organization was founded in the wake of the Holocaust for the purpose of preventing atrocities."(p.9)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.45-EN: „This institution was founded in the wake of the Holocaust."(p.9)*

This framing casts the United Nations as responsible for Israel's security, casting the institution as an actor functioning as a patron for Israel. Such framing is also used by Palestinians in the contexts of other memories as will be shown below. The same framing by Israel had appeared once before in the 10th Meeting:

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „The four Geneva Conventions that were concluded at the end of the conference were motivated in part by the fresh memories of the delegates of the horrors of the Second World War and the atrocities committed against mankind in general and against the Jewish people in particular in Nazi-occupied Europe." (p.5)*

To summarize, the Holocaust was, previous to October 7, used only as a rhetoric commonplace casting Iran in the role of a Holocaust denier and genocidal regime. After October 7, the Holocaust memory was initially used to frame the situation as a comparable crime and to cast Hamas as the new Nazis, but in following speeches the memory was used to cast the United Nations into the role of a patron, holding responsibility for Israeli security because of the memories of the Holocaust and 2. World War's importance in the founding of the institution.

4.3.2 1948 Nakba

The state of Israel was founded in 1948. For Palestinians, this is known as the great catastrophe or the Nakba. The Nakba was the term most frequently utilized in the data; therefore, it is used as the descriptor for this event. The researcher expected the Nakba to feature heavily as a rhetorical commonplace in the speeches of the Palestinian representatives. The theme was found across eight different speeches, distributed relatively equally throughout the years.

During the 4th meeting in July 1997, the issue was framed as:

> *A/ES-10/PV.4-EN: „(…)this year also marks 50 years since the partition of Palestine and the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II). Fifty years of exile(…)"(p.3)*

This formulation positions the Nakba as the origins of the Palestinians as a people exiled from their land, casting them as victims, while casting the United Nations into a role of bearing responsibility for this, even though only partially. The rest of the responsibility, lies with Israel in the eyes of the Palestinians, as we can see in the statement from the 10th meeting:

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „The partition resolution gave the Jewish State 54 percent of Mandatory Palestine's 27,000 square kilometers. In 1948 Israel occupied additional areas, extending Israeli jurisdiction over them and bringing the total area to 78 per cent of mandatory Palestine." (p.22)*

This framing casts Israel and the role of the aggressor that violates international law, casting themselves as the victims again. The latter can be seen in this quote from the same speech:

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „the Palestinian people was uprooted from its lands in 1947 and 1948;(…)" (p.24)*

Similar framing can be seen in references from the 16th meeting as well as from the 23rd meeting.

> *A/ES-10/PV.16-EN: „(…)in which 13,000 refugees, who were uprooted from their homes and properties in 1948,had been living." (p.4)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.23-EN: „In the 1948 war, immediately after the declaration of its creation, Israel seized and began incorporating more than half of the lands allocated by the United Nations to the Arab State in the Partition Plan on the pretext that it had been attacked by Arab countries." (p. 4)*

These quotes repeat the use of the collective memory of the Nakba by Palestinian representatives as a way to cast Israel into the role of the aggressor who is illegally occupying their

lands in violation of international law, while taking the corresponding counter role of illegally displaced people, the victims, for themselves. The role as a patron that the Palestinians attribute to the United is repeated in the 38th Meeting in 2018 when the Palestinian representative stated in response to the adoption of a pro-Palestinian resolution by the 10th ESS:

> *A/ES-10/PV.38-EN: „The reality is that the draft resolution is a responsible yet very modest effort, especially considering the severity, extent and protracted nature of the protection crisis and nightmare being endured by Palestinians young and old under Israel's occupation and the more than 70 years of the Nakba." (p.6)*

Again, we see how the Nakba is used to support casting Israel in the role of the aggressor, which in this formulation, rather than referencing Israel's alleged violations of international law, references Palestinian insecurity under Israeli occupation, this framing frequently re-occurred in the data, with the Palestinian representatives casting Israel frequently in the role of an aggressor violating international law as well as human rights.

In a speech from the 46th meeting in December 2023, the Israeli military operation in Gaza in response to the October 7 attacks is framed as comparable to the Nakba. This was the first time such an equation was made, even though countless escalations had taken place during the 26 years of the 10th ESS before October 7.

> *A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „Israel has destroyed and flattened entire neighbourhoods, displaced virtually every Palestinian in Gaza and brought back the scenes and memories of the 1948 Nakba with the massacres and forced transfer of our people." (p.10)*

After the proposed pro-Palestinian resolution was passed, the representative added:

> *A/ES-10/PV.46-EN: „(…)and on this seventy-fifth anniversary of the Nakba, they voted against a new Nakba, to never again allow another Nakba to happen." (p.11)*

Thereby making clear that the situation in Gaza at that time was not equal to the Nakba of 1948 (yet) while attributing the role of being able to prevent a new Nakba from happening to the United Nations, casting them as a patron. In summary, the Nakba was used before October 7 as a way of framing Palestinians as people victimized by displacement and by illegal occupation, who are having their rights violated. This casts the Israelis into the counter-identity of the aggressor that violates human rights and international. After October 7, the Nakba is briefly used as a tool to frame Palestinian suffering.

4.3.3 1967 War

The 1967 War, also known as the Six-Day War, started when a coalition of Arab states, with Egypt in a leading position, invaded Israel but were defeated in a short and concise war. In the aftermath of the war, Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The theme of the 1967 war is by far the most referenced out of all collective memories, even after many references which were just repetitions of 'territories occupied since 1967', in place of West Bank and Gaza Strip, were not included in the recording units.

The Palestinians used the memory of the 1967 war as a justification and explanation for casting Israel into the role of an aggressor that violates international law through its illegal occupation and also violates the human rights of the Palestinians. Through this process of altercasting, they attempted to take themselves the corresponding counter-roles of a victim and a sovereign state under occupation. Additionally, they utilize the transnational memory of being colonized, which is a trauma for a majority of UN member states who had been colonized in the past, to cast Israel in the role of a colonizer while themselves taking the identity of the colonized. Interestingly they never directly refer to their own colonial past under British control. However, the collective memory of colonialism is an accepted commonplace in the discourse and is identified as a historic injustice allowing Palestinians to take the role of victim very effectively.

Palestinians also used the memory of the 1967 war to cast the United Nations into the role of a patron of the Palestinian people. The memory of the 1967 war was also deployed to justify the role-taking of sovereign state.

One use of the collective memory of the 1967 war to influence the role identities was found in the records of the 1st meeting of the 10th ESS when the Palestinian representative stated:

> A/ES-10/PV.1-EN: „Since its occupation in 1967 of Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, Israel has, over the years and in a systematic and planned manner, worked to change the legal status and demographic composition of Jerusalem and the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory as a whole through the colonial settlement of the land." (p.5)

By referencing the Israeli territorial occupation (which functions as a rhetorical commonplace because the UN officially recognized Israel as an occupying power) since the Six-Day War of 1967, the Palestinian speaker casts Israel in the role of the aggressor and, by mentioning colonial settlements, also in the role of a colonizer, the latter being subsumed under the code for colonialism. By drawing on the transnational memory of states that have been victims of colonialism in the past, Palestinians attempt to take the role of the victim. Being colonized is purely relational so it functions as a role identity.

The 1967 war was referenced again in the same Palestinian speech, again co-occurring with themes of colonialism and casting Israel into the role of aggressor.

> *A/ES-10/PV.1-EN: „In Jerusalem, immediately after its occupation, Israel demolished the Al-Magharba quarter in the Old City and built a Jewish quarter in its place. It arbitrarily expanded the boundaries of the municipality of East Jerusalem to more than 10 times the original area, to include lands totalling approximately 7,000 hectares. It declared the applicability of Israeli law in these lands. Later, in 1980, it declared the annexation of this land. Throughout the years, Israel has confiscated about 74 per cent of the annexed lands, in practice leaving only 14 per cent for the Palestinians. It has built nine colonial settlements and brought in 180,000 Jewish colonial settlers." (p.5-6)*

The attempt to use the collective memory of the 1967 war to take the role of a victim with an exiled population, displaced from their homeland was also made in the 1st meeting:

> *A/ES-10/PV.1-EN: „(…)hundreds of thousands of Palestinians displaced since 1967." (p.4)*

An example of Palestinians using the 1967 war to influence the role identity of the UN was found in the 4th ESS meeting.

> *A/ES-10/PV.4-EN: „We must also recall the permanent responsibility of the United Nations to-wards the question of Palestine: the Charter of the United Nations affirms respect for interna-tional law, for human rights and for the right of peoples to self-determination. It was the General Assembly that partitioned Mandate Palestine after it inherited the problem from the League of Nations,(…)" (p.2)*

This argument starts with casting the UN in the role of an active participant in the Israel-Pal-estine conflict, grounding this argument in the role the General Assembly played in partitioning Palestine which is coded as a reference to the Nakba as well. The argument ends with:

> *A/ES-10/PV.4-EN: „ (…) Just a month ago, the United Nations commemorated the thirtieth year of occupation, and this is an occasion to recall that this year also marks 50 years since the partition of Palestine and the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II). Fifty years of exile and 30 years under occupation, and our people, of all the peoples of the world, are still oppressed, deprived of their own State and, in addition to all that, subject to settler colonialism and the judaization of their Holy City." (p.2-3)*

Referencing 30 years of occupation/exile is referring to the 1967 war, while 50 years since the partition of Palestine is a reference to the Nakba. The combination of the two memories is used again as a way to support the casting of Israel in the role of the colonizer and occupier (coded as aggressor) while also taking on the corresponding counter-role as the victim of oppression. Another formulation that stands out from the same speech is:

> *A/ES-10/PV.4-EN: „ (…) This position insults our national feelings and the will of the whole world. The compromise, which received world consensus despite being unfair to us, is on mandated Palestine. It has never been on the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, which must be returned in its entirety." (p.4)*

In this quote, we see a reference to the 1967 war in co-occurrence with rhetoric about "our national feeling" which constitutes a code for role identity, specifically the role of a nation that will be labeled as sovereign, to code for this theme indicators are mentions of Palestinian statehood, self-determination, or nationality.

Israel on the other hand, while using the theme of the 1967 war less frequently, used it in a recurring pattern aimed to justify them taking the role of the law-abiding democracy being attacked and just responding in self-defense, thereby also taking the role of the victim. Additionally, they utilized the memory to make the argument that they are adhering to international law and respecting human rights.

For the 6th ESS meeting, one Israeli argument was coded as relevant referencing the 1967 war. Overall, they utilize it in five different meetings while the Palestinians refer to it in twelve meetings. This first Israeli mention of the 1967 war from the 6th meeting of the 10th ESS reads:

> *A/ES-10/PV.6-EN: „ Of course, today we are talking about a case of territories from which Israel was attacked in 1967 and which it entered in self-defence." (p.7)*

Here the Israeli representative uses the memory of the 1967 war to justify taking the role of the victim acting in self-defense. The argument continues:

> *A/ES-10/PV.6-EN: „In fact, in the entire history of the Convention, despite the many cases of actual occupation, only one State has actually implemented in practice the provisions of the Convention relating to occupied territory: Israel. Even though, as Israel has explained many times in this Hall, the Convention is not, strictly speaking, applicable to territories which were formerly occupied and not under a legitimate sovereign, Israel has implemented the Convention in practice." (p.7)*

The formulation calls into question the categorization of these territories as occupied while simultaneously legitimating Israel's presence there because they were "not under a legitimate sovereign". Countering the Palestinian attempt to take the roles of victim and of the sovereign.

References to the 1967 war co-occurring with Israel taking the role of the victim acting in self-defense were found again in the 10th meeting,

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „to the one case since 1949 that was an unquestionable war of self-defense, the Six Day War." (p.6)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „That is why in the War's aftermath the General Assembly refused to adopt proposals that sought to brand Israel the aggressor. It is to be remembered that the Six Day War broke out after neighbouring States massed their armies on Israel's borders, blockaded Israel's southern access to the sea at the Strait of Tiran and called on the United Nations Secretary-General at the time to remove United Nations peacekeepers along Israel's southern border." (p.6)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „The 1967 war, which was imposed upon Israel, created a new situation which was recognized by the United Nations Security Council when its resolutions 242 (1967) and, subsequently, 338 (1973) were adopted. Resolution 242 (1967) calls on the parties to negotiate with each other secure and recognized borders. That has been the basis of the peace process." (p.24)*

These quotes highlight the role of Israeli victimhood and utilize the 1967 war to remind the UN of the role it played at the time, thereby casting the UN into the role of a patron having responsibility for Israel, and contesting the Palestinians' attempt to cast Israel in the role of the aggressor. In order for this argument to carry more weight, in the 14th meeting they tie Israeli self-defense to the existence and survival of the state, while at the same time arguing against Palestinian sovereignty:

> *A/ES-10/PV.14-EN: „It should be added that, were it not for the emergence of the State of Israel in 1948 and for the failure of the attempt to annihilate it in 1967, other Powers than Israel would have imposed, if not occupation, then at least their presence and sovereign responsibility over those very territories." (p.56)*

This formulation ties the Nakba and the 1967 war to the argument that even without Israel no Palestinian state would have existed, thereby contesting the Palestinians' role-taking of sovereign state again.

4.3.4 Colonialism

The theme of colonialism, which was already mentioned briefly in the section on the 1967 war, was referenced by the Palestinians in 20 different meetings of the 10th ESS while not being mentioned by Israelis at all. The theme differs from the collective memories discussed up to this point because it draws on the memory of third parties. The references to colonialism by Palestinians might be targeted at describing their situation, but they never mentioned their colonial past under British rule. The narrative they draw on is the transnational memory of being colonized in general. When the first meeting of the 10th ESS was held in 1997 the large wave of decolonialization that followed the Second World War had already ended and these colonies had become formally independent, sovereign states and gained access to the United

Nations as equal members. Even the apartheid regimes in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia had collapsed and were replaced by democratic governments. Even though the counter-identities of colonizer and colonized had largely disappeared, they were just replaced by the identities of former colonizer and colonized, putting the issue of reparations on the agenda in some situations and attributing role-specific behavior depending on the identity. The casting of Israel as having the identity of the colonizer is coded as a reference to colonialism, because it tries to draw its meaning from this transnational memory and does not construct an identity specific to the situation. In the 10th meeting in 1999, the Palestinian representative argued:

> A/ES-10/PV.10-EN: „They now embody the ongoing settler colonialist occupation of our Palestinian lands. As we come to the end of the twentieth century, the sole remaining colonial phenomenon is the Israeli occupation,(…)" (p.22)

The formulation equates the situation in Gaza and the West Bank with colonialism overall and emphasizes the settler colonialist aspect. It also calls the situation the 'sole remaining colonial phenomenon', a formulation similarly found in the records from the 17th Meeting;

> A/ES-10/PV.17-EN: „the only colonial phenomenon in the twenty-first century(…)" (p.42)

and the 26th meeting,

> A/ES-10/PV.26-EN: „which is the only remaining colonial Power in the world — a country that is involved in colonizing the land of the indigenous people of Palestine,(…)" (p.2)

and also mentioned similarly in the 8th Meeting:

> A/ES-10/PV.8-EN: „Israel is the only State officially considered by the Security Council to be an occupying Power. Israel is the only country in the world that is engaged in settler colonialism at the end of the twentieth century. (p.3)

Here we see the theme of settler colonialism re-emerge which is also referenced across multiple more speeches:

> A/ES-10/PV.1-EN: „Throughout the years, Israel has confiscated about 74 per cent of the annexed lands, in practice leaving only 14 per cent for the Palestinians. It has built nine colonial settlements and brought in 180,000 Jewish colonial settlers." (p.6)

> A/ES-10/PV.20-EN: „Why don't they at least stop the colonization of our land and the illegal transfer of colonial settlers to it?" (p.3)

During a speech at the 23rd meeting in 2003, the Palestinian representative went even further, tying colonialism to fascism:

> *A/ES-10/PV.23-EN: „who are being increasingly cantonized by the Israeli fascist colonial occu-*
> *pier." (p.4)*

However, this framing only occurs this one time. The Palestinians merged their framing around colonialism in some instances also with references to apartheid.

> *A/ES-10/PV.37-EN: „History has taken its position on colonialism and apartheid, on settlements*
> *and walls." (p.5)*

They additionally casted Israel into the identity of an apartheid regime which is also racist.

> *A/ES-10/PV.21-EN: „How can these Israeli war crimes be described appropriately? Is this clas-*
> *sic colonization? We believe it is worse. Is it a new apartheid system? We believe it is even*
> *worse than that: it is a hybrid of those two ugly phenomena that stoops to the lowest level of*
> *racist, colonialist thinking to achieve Israel's expansionist aims to colonize the land and negate*
> *the national existence of the indigenous people (…)" (p.3-4)*

This apartheid farming is one of the few references to a type identity found in the data.

The framing of Israel as the expansionist colonizer is tied to the role of aggressor, as well as the Palestinian counter-identity of a sovereign state which the formulation 'national existence' clearly alludes to. To summarize, Palestinians utilize the transnational memory of colonialism as a tool to justify their role-taking of the roles of sovereign state and victim, and they used it to cast Israel into the role of the aggressor, who is violating human rights and international law, and once even characterized them as fascist with the type identity of an apartheid state.

Interestingly, references to colonialism are not present in Palestinian speeches after the October 7 attacks, with the last time the framing occurred being in the 37th Meeting in 2017 which is quoted above.

4.3.5 Jewish Cultural Memory

Based on the insights from Dudai (2010), it was expected to find some references to events from Jewish history in the data. What was found were very limited references focused on the Jewish history in the region, specifically Jerusalem. Other themes referencing cultural memory outside of the region (Spanish Inquisition, etc.) were not found in the data.

> *A/ES-10/PV.1-EN: „For more than 3,000 years, Jerusalem has been the focal point of the Jew-*
> *ish people. Not only in ancient times when the Holy Temple stood on Mount Moriah, but during*
> *the 2,000 years of Jewish exile from the land of Israel and to this very day. Jerusalem, which*
> *has never been the capital of any nation other than Israel, will always be the heart and soul of*
> *the Jewish people." (p.8)*

In this section the Israeli speaker recalled the Jewish history in Jerusalem, highlighting the central role the city plays for Israel, also referencing the time of the Second Temple, and mentioning how the group was exiled from their holy city. However, this theme never reoccurs so instead of attributing a singular code to the Second Temple, it is coded as a Jewish cultural memory. This code is attributed to every mnemonic event mentioned by the Israeli side that predates the Holocaust. Still, this code only has three more references attributed to it, all stemming from the 37th Meeting that was called after the U.S. had moved its embassy to Jerusalem. Here the Israeli speaker stated:

> A/ES-10/PV.37-EN: „King David declared Jerusalem the city of the Jewish people 3,000 years ago.“ (p.7)

> A/ES-10/PV.37-EN: „I am holding right now an original coin. It dates from 67 C.E. It says, in Hebrew, "Freedom of Zion". (…) It is clear evidence from the time of our second temple. It proves the ancient connection of Jews to Jerusalem. Our bond to Jerusalem is unbreakable.“ (p.7)

> A/ES-10/PV.37-EN: „For thousands of years, Jews had only partial access to or were even completely banned from the Western Wall.“ (p.8)

In their totality, these three statements made the same points as the excerpt from 20 years before. They mention the 3,000-year-long Jewish history in Jerusalem, the time of the Second Temple, as well as the Jewish exile from the city. Both the 1st and the 37th meetings are held in the context of Israel expanding control over Jerusalem, collective memory is used to justify this through Israel taking the role of a victim, and the legitimate controller of the city and region.

4.3.6 September 11

While only being mentioned in one speech from each, Israeli and Palestinian, the context in which the transnational collective memory of 9/11 appears in the data is interesting. During the 16th Meeting of the 10th ESS on May 7, 2002, notably the second and not the first time the 10th ESS reconvened after 9/11, the Palestinian representative made the statement:

> A/ES-10/PV.16-EN: „We all have stood with the United States in the face of the blind acts of terrorism of 11 September. The world indeed did form a wide coalition to combat international terrorism. Given this coalition, it is disgraceful for Israel, the only occupying power in the world, to be allowed to succeed in linking criminal acts against our people and the fight against international terrorism, including what the United States has done in Afghanistan." (p.6)

Here the Palestinians choose to support the U.S., a state they usually criticize.

4.3.7 October 7

The October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas on Israel and the war that followed it will go down in both Palestinian and Israeli memories without a doubt. The data showed that the attack marked a turning point in the conflict since the inception of the 10th ESS. While there have been many outbreaks of violence during the 27 years the 10th ESS spans, especially during the Second Intifada and multiple wars in Gaza, the October 7 attack is the only event that caused a clear shift in rhetoric for the Israelis. The Palestinians do not directly reference the events, but as shown above and will be elaborated on in the Discussion chapter, they too have changed how they use other memories in their statements after October 7.

In their references to October 7, Israelis make clear that they differentiate between Hamas and all Palestinians.

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: „The massacre of 7 October and what ensued have nothing to do with the Palestinians(…)" (p.5)*

But even though this differentiation is made, the war that followed October 7 has affected Palestinians as a whole, even outside Gaza, and has had an effect on their identities. The relationships that were found in the data are not surprising. Israel deploys the October 7 attacks, often through vivid descriptions of the violence that occurred, to take the role of the victim and cast Hamas as genocidal terrorists. The addition of the adjective 'genocidal' is important here. The Israel-Palestine conflict has seen numerous deadly terror attacks, especially during the Second Intifada, however, referring to a terror attack as genocidal is new.

> *A/ES-10/PV.39-EN: „Israel is at war only with the genocidal jihadist Hamas terror organization." (p.5)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.41-EN: „Entire families and communities have been exterminated by genocidal Hamas jihadists, whose sole goal is to annihilate the Jewish State."(p.10)*

As mentioned in the chapter on the Holocaust memory, the term Nazi in reference to Hamas also newly entered the rhetoric of Israeli statements. This adds to the framing of 'genocidal' in relation to the attack and evokes a comparison to the Holocaust. Interestingly the Israeli framing of October 7 is oriented around the implications for the future.

> *A/ES-10/PV.41-EN: „Hamas and Hizbullah would commit the 7 October massacre again and again and again(…)"(p.10)*

> *A/ES-10/PV.45-EN: „Hamas leaders have publicly stated that 7 October was just a rehearsal."(p.8)*

This orientation towards the future is also a defining characteristic of current Holocaust memory (see….). The other dimension is the justification of the retaliation that followed, casting Israel in the role of a victim, justified in its response.

4.4 Summary of Results

Overall, the results show similar levels of collective memory references by both Israelis and Palestinians, with a bit higher frequency for the Palestinians. For Israeli collective memory, the Holocaust, the 1967 war, and the October 7 attacks are the most important mnemonic resources, with Jewish cultural memory and 9/11 being only used in rare specific instances. In the Palestinian statements, the Nakba (1948), the 1967 war, and colonialism are the frequently referenced memories. The memory of 9/11 was used once to take a stance against terror.

The identities both actors rhetorically attempted to take for themselves were the role identities of a victim. Palestinians tried additionally to take the role of a sovereign state, while Israel referenced its type identity as a law-abiding democracy.

Both Israelis and Palestinians also attempt to cast each other into the role identity of the aggressor. The Palestinians' framing of aggressor builds on references to the 1967 war and the Nakba as the origin of the current state of colonial occupation. Additionally, they cast Israel into the type identity of an apartheid state. After October 7, Israelis cast Hamas as genocidal terrorists, frequently supporting this claim with references to the Holocaust.

Both parties also cast the United Nations into specific identities and sometimes also third states like Iran, which Israel casts as a Holocaust denier with Nazi ideology, a state sponsor of terror, and as having responsibility for the death of Israelis. Israel and Palestine both attempt to cast the United Nations as an organization into the identity of a Patron for them respectively, while at different points Israel casted the UN as a hostile actor.

5. Discussion

5.1 Chapter Outline

The discussion of the results of the analysis is separated into two chapters. In the first chapter, the results will be discussed in the relevant context in order to make inferences about their meanings. In the second chapter, the scientific merit of the study will be discussed by looking at its reliability and validity.

5.2 Interpreting the Results

In this section, the results presented in the analysis will be discussed and interpreted in context. Meaning can be inferred from the results based on the existence of codes as well as the frequency of their occurrence and the relationships between them. However, not the exact number of references is relevant, but larger trends and patterns which can be found throughout the data. The relationships between codes, specifically between codes representing identities and those representing memories are of key significance for answering the research question. Inferences can also be made based on what relationships do not exist, or what relationships come into existence or fade out of it across the temporal span the data covers.

Firstly, the themes of collective memory found in the data are almost all examples of transnational collective memories. This makes sense, because if a memory specific to one of the actors was represented in the international setting of the 10th ESS, then most likely the audience would have had difficulties comprehending the meaning because they would not have been aware of the relevant context. The international discourse is therefore constrained by what shared meanings the actors can draw on. The only exception is the theme of Jewish cultural memory. Even though the audience might not be familiar with specific themes from Jewish cultural memory, like the times of the Second Temple or King David, nonetheless the overall history of Jewish persecution and exile from their land is commonplace, at least in Judeo-Christian narratives. Therefore, the specific collective memory taps into a commonplace narrative which enables the audience to infer the correct meanings. While other group-specific collective memories can play a role in corporate identity formation, they don't directly affect social identity formations because their meanings are not commonly shared.

It also became apparent during the research process that only traumatic memories were present in the data. Sorek (2011) writes, that a combination of memories of victory and defeat occurring together was the best predictor for national identity in his study. However, neither Israelis nor Palestinians used memories of victories in the data. The only possible exception was the Israeli references to the 1967 war, but they still chose to take the role of the victim,

being attacked without any fault of its own, not the framing of a victorious power winning a righteous war. It would have been reasonable to expect that the victorious party was able to frame a conflict in their preferred way, but the frequent mentions by Palestinians of the 1967 war far outweigh the number of Israeli mentions and it seems like Palestinians were able to advance their interpretation to a hegemonic position in the discourse. It also shows the dominance that the victimhood discourse has. By being the less powerful actor in the interaction, the Palestinians' claim to victimhood is enhanced over that of Israelis. This supports the claim that "rhetoric is certainly a weapon of the weak" (Krebs and Jackson 2007, p.38). Looking at the prevalence of the collective memory of the 1967 war and colonialism in Palestinian speeches, it becomes clear how colonialism is used to cast Israel into the role of an aggressor and take the role of the victim. The 1967 war co-occurs in Palestinian speeches frequently together with the theme of colonialism, switching the narrative from an Israeli war of self-defense to an act of colonial occupation. The Israelis use the memory of the 1967 war to make their case for the role of the victim, but the power distribution on the ground undermines their case. They also use the memory to cast the United Nations into the role of a patron of Israel, reminding the institution of how it withdrew its peacekeeping forces from Sinai before the Egyptian assault on Israel initiated the Six-Day War.

The victimhood discourse can be seen as a 'framing contest' (Krebs and Jackson 2007) between Israel and Palestine that results in a zero-sum game. Whoever successfully takes the role of the victim will inevitably cast the other into the corresponding counter-role of the aggressor. The actors' contest over whose claim to victimhood is legitimate is a dominant theme in the data.

Palestinians attach their role as sovereign state to this victimhood discourse as well. They choose a moderate tone across all meetings, staying 'politically correct' in all their statements by choosing not to use language that could be seen as extremist or antisemitic and also by almost exclusively criticizing Israel. In the sampling units included in this paper, there are few criticisms of anyone but Israel. In the full data set critical statements towards the United States for their support of Israel were made, but always in a moderate tone. It would not be unreasonable to think that the colonialism theme would be accompanied by criticism towards the former colonial power in the region, Great Britain. However, that is not the case, no European power, even countries like Germany who are Israel's closest allies after the U.S., are ever criticized by the Palestinians. The colonial narrative solely relates to Israel as the colonial power, in order to emphasize the acute need for decolonization. The casting of the United Nations into the role of their patron follows from the history of decolonization in the second half of the 20th century which resulted in numerous new states being created and joining the United Nations. Palestinians aspire to take the same path under the patronage of the UN.

Overall, the way both parties utilize memories follows similar patterns. It is apparent that both changed their framing after the October 7 attack. The references to colonialism disappeared from Palestinian rhetoric and the Israeli references to the Holocaust increased heavily. That this took place simultaneously is not a coincidence. If Palestinians had kept drawing from the colonial narrative, they could have framed Hamas as freedom or independence fighters, but they did not. Rather they did not mention October 7 much and rather focused on Israel's response. This is a result of the zero-sum game of the victimhood discourse. The October 7 attacks gave Israel a rightful claim to the role of victim. They were able to effectively invoke the memory of the Holocaust, at least immediately after the attack occurred, and thereby shifted the aggressor role onto Palestinians. The Palestinians chose to not contest this framing and rather avoid directly discussing October 7. Instead, they chose to focus on Israel's retaliation campaign and framing the war as a 'new Nakba' themselves. Through this strategy, they were able to re-take the role of the victim over time. That Israel casted the UN into the role of a hostile actor is an indicator of this development. This framing had previously only occurred once in 2002 during the 16th meeting, but three times during the 41st meeting on October 27, 2023, and again at the 46th meeting on December 15, 2023. This is not a particularly strong indicator because the antagonistic rhetoric from Israel could have had different reasons. However, if this framing continues in future sessions of the 10th ESS, then the inference would gain strength. It could also indicate a power structure between discourses of victimhood in which the Holocaust memory has a dominant position over the memory of colonialism. However, the evidence provided here is not significant enough to confidently infer this connection.

As mentioned above, the identities that were coded are mostly examples of role identities. The only type identities which were found in the data are the identity 'apartheid regime' and 'law-abiding democracy'. The latter was taken by Israel while the first one was cast onto Israel by the Palestinians. Due to their low-frequency occurrence, these type identities have limited impact. For example, the type identity of a Muslim, or an Arab state was never supported by mentions of collective memories in Palestinian statements. No evidence of memory being used to create a collective identity was found in either Palestinian or Israeli speeches. Since Wendt (1999) defined collective identities as sets of shared type and role identities that also require (positive) identification between actors, this is either due to a lack of shared identities or identification. However, the analysis provides no answer for why type and collective memories are almost irrelevant. A possible answer could be that states, like individuals, typically occupy more role identities than type or collective identities at the same time. While all identities are relational, role identities change in every social situation and type and collective identities do not. For example, a state like Germany might have a different role identity in every

bilateral negotiation while its type identities, like its democratic and secular system, or collective identities like NATO and EU membership, stay the same. Another possible explanation could be that memories do not have the same effect on type and collective identities that they have on role identities. Since type identities are always based on intrinsic characteristics of actors, they might be less changeable and less influenced by memories. But the fact that Israel's type identities like its governing system and religious makeup are heavily influenced by the events of the Holocaust and its memories seems to refute that. The absence of collective identities is most likely due to their rarity because of the high level of identification that has to be established first. The only collective identity that is based on memory could be a shared European identity stemming from the memory of the Holocaust (Levy and Sznaider 2002, etc.). However, authors like Kansteiner (2002) refute the existence of such a shared memory. The research result discussed here cannot contribute to understanding if and how memories could be used to influence collective identities. However, this research could function as a starting point for future research on the matter.

5.3 Discussing the Reliability and Validity of the Research

To discuss this paper's reliability and validity, these concepts need to be clear. In the case of an interpretivist approach to content analysis, „reliability is the degree to which members of a designated community concur on the readings, interpretations, responses to, or uses of given texts or data." (Krippendorff 2019b, p.3). Reliability can be used to measure the trustworthiness of the data but does not say anything about the truth behind the results obtained during the research process. This is the concern of validity. Reliability does not guarantee validity, two observers might agree on what they see while still being objectively wrong (Krippendorff 2019b). It can be distinguished between three types of reliability, stability, replicability, and accuracy.

Stability is the weakest measurement for reliability, it is assessed through one researcher repeatedly testing and re-testing the same data, and variations in the results are due to intra-observer inconsistencies (Krippendorff, 2019). In this study, the researcher repeatedly re-coded the same data, but due to the strategy behind directed content analysis, the coding scheme was only finalized after multiple re-tests. Therefore, during the first few re-tests, the intra-observer inconsistencies were high because no consistent coding scheme was available at that point. However, after the finalized coding scheme was established, the inconsistencies were reduced. In the final step of coding, the relational coding, codes are no longer mutually exclusive. Relationships do overlap with each other and with the thematic coding. This required going back to all sampling units, which functioned as a control for inconsistencies and

resulted in reducing them again. Still, perfect stability is unlikely, but because of all the measures taken, this study is believed to adhere to the 80% consistency target outlined by Colombia University (no date).

The replicability, or inter-coder reliability, of results relies on multiple observers coding the same data. Disagreements might result from intra-observer inconsistencies and inter-observer differences (Krippendorff 2019b). It is a far stronger measure of the reliability of a study than stability. By providing thorough coding instruction to guide coders in their efforts and by relying on publicly available data, this paper made the effort to achieve replicability, but because of the nature of this single-person research effort, replicability tests have not been conducted because of the lack of access to different coders. This paper's replicability would require other coders to replicate similar results to those recorded in this study by only reading the coding instructions laid out in the methodology of this paper.

The strongest of the three measurements of a study's reliability is accuracy. „To establish accuracy, analysts must be in the possession of an accepted standard." (Krippendorff 2022b, p. 7). For some research designs, objective standards might be accessible, for example, if simply the occurrence of a word were to be measured, then, an objectively correct answer would exist that would serve as the standard. For studies like this one, which rely on inferring meaning from text in context, this does not exist. Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999) argue that experts could set such a standard. They make the point that „experts are usually in a position to exercise a superior perspective on the content." (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein 1999, p. 271). Because of this paper's less common methodology, which is also being applied to a rather new topic, such expert-developed standards do not yet exist. It is the hope of this study that it might contribute to the development of such standards in the future.

The biggest threat to this study's reliability is the misapplication of coding rules by the researcher. Such misapplications could be caused by coder fatigue since the coding requires high levels of concentration. However, the frequent re-coding of the data should have eliminated most of the mistakes due to fatigue. What mistakes are left have to be assumed to be based on a wrongful interpretation of either the data or the coding instructions by the researcher.

As mentioned before, reliability does not guarantee validity. Nonetheless, many scholars argue that reliability is a precondition for validity. In short, not every reliable study is valid, but every study needs to be reliable to be valid. However, Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999) suggest that for some types of content analysis, there might be a tradeoff between reliability and validity. By writing evermore detailed coding instructions, a study might lose the accessibility of its end result to wider audiences, thereby sacrificing representational/social validity for

increased reliability. They add that „when coding rules are operationalized so that all coders would make the same decisions and thus present reliable data, the rules often serve to shift coder attention to those elements that are more easily coded and away from more difficult judgments that need to be made about the content. Thus, validity can be reduced." (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein 1999, p.272)

Krippendorff (2019) describes validity as „that quality of research results that leads us to accept them as true, as speaking about the real world of objects, people, phenomena, events, processes, and actions." (Krippendorff 2019c, p. 2) He distinguishes between three types of validity, face validity, social validity, and empirical validity.

Face validity concerns the overall plausibility and believability of the research findings. When the results make sense to a larger audience without the need for detailed justification we speak of a study having face validity (Krippendorff 2019c). This study's results certainly have face validity. They follow a clear logic, and the inferences drawn are understandable and are believed to 'make sense' to a larger audience, even those unfamiliar with the details of the issue.

Social validity refers to the acceptance of research findings based on their contribution to public discussion of important social concerns (Krippendorff 2019c). Following this definition, the social validity of this study is especially high. The Israel-Palestine conflict has been of such importance, especially for public discourse. Every development is covered across the world and impacts are felt from the halls of parliaments to university campuses and the streets of all major cities. The results of this study contribute to constructivist IR scholarship's understanding of how social identities can be affected by an actor's strategic use of collective memory in an international discourse. Its high social validity makes it likely to have an impact on a broader, non-academic discourse as well.

The third type of validity is empirical validity. Empirical validity differs from face and social validity in its audience. While the first two types of validity relate to an audience beyond academia, empirical validity addresses this academic community. „Empirical validity is the degree to which available evidence and established theory support various stages of a research process, the degree to which specific inferences withstand the challenges of additional data, of the findings of other research efforts, of evidence encountered in the domain of the researcher's research question, or of criticism based on observations, experiments, or measurements as opposed to logic or process." (Krippendorff 2019c, p. 4). As this long definition indicates, empirical validity can again be separated into a multitude of subcategories based on different parts of a study. Due to its complexity, empirical validity cannot be discussed comprehensively here, but three examples will be given that discuss the empirical validity of different elements of this study.

Sampling validity is based on evidence from the content of the data, it is concerned with the degree to which a sample of texts represents the population of the whole phenomena accurately (Krippendorff 2019c). The study's sample can either consist of a subset of the population of interest or of representations of phenomena that lie outside the sample and the population (Krippendorff 2019c). In a narrow sense, this study's sample represents not just a subset but a whole population; by looking at all Israeli and Palestinian speeches from the 10th ESS, perfect sampling validity is given since the size of the sample is equal to the size of the population. However, the phenomenon that the research question asks about is not specific to the Israel-Palestine conflict. In a broader sense, it could apply to all discourse in which collective memory is used to affect social identities. This would mean that the size of the total population is immeasurable, and casts doubt on the ability of the selected sample to function as a subset of this population. In its data selection chapter, this paper attempts to argue why this sample represents this large unquantifiable population as well, however, it is not possible to provide empirical evidence of that.

Semantic validity is concerned with the „degree to which the analytical categories of texts correspond to the meanings these texts have for particular readers or the roles they play within a chosen context." (Krippendorff 2019c, p.13) This paper makes an effort to discuss the meanings the sampled texts have for particular audiences at length, but it cannot empirically prove its semantic validity.

Functional validity references how effective the developed analytical construct is in its application to the data (Krippendorff 2019c). Parts of the pre-derived themes of collective memory and social identities were found in the texts. However, by choosing a directed approach to content analysis the analytical construct was improved during the analysis process, which resulted in a functional coding scheme. It was further advanced by the addition of relational coding which made the analytical construct very suitable for answering the research question, thereby proving its functional validity.

This paper makes an effort to enhance its reliability and validity as much as possible in order to have a claim to scientific relevance. By attaching the full results from the content analysis, in the form of the NVivo project attached, this paper aims to make up for its lack of provable replicability and accuracy by providing maximum transparency. The NVivo project contains all the data and coding decisions, which should enable additional coders to replicate the results of this study.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to discover the strategies, rhetoric, and processes inherent in actors' usage of collective memories in international discourse to influence their own as well as others' social identities. This problem formulation was operationalized into the research question "How do state actors use collective memory to influence social identities?"

The analysis of Israeli and Palestinian speeches at the 10th ESS through directed and relational content analysis was able to show how collective memory is primarily used to influence actors' social positionality in the international sphere by attributing role identities to oneself and significant others. Through the processes of role-taking and altercasting, Palestinians and Israelis used collective memories, primarily of the Holocaust, the Nakba, colonialism, and the 1967 war, to cast each other as well as the United Nations into different roles. Between Israelis and Palestinians, the roles of victim and aggressor are fought over in a 'framing contest' (Krebs and Jackson 2007). The Israelis used the Holocaust and the 1967 war to grant legitimacy to their argument for victimhood, the role of aggressor is the relevant counter-role in the interaction.

The Palestinians tied the Nakba and the 1967 war together with the memory of colonialism. They notably did not reference their group's specific memory of colonialism but rather framed it in in line with the global trauma of colonialism. The evidence collected in the analysis points to the Palestinians succeeding in claiming victimhood and casting Israel directly as the aggressor, but this is susceptible to change as the data from after October 7, 2023, showed. The factors contributing to Palestinian success in taking the role of the victim are the power imbalance between the actors, as well as their effective representation of the 1967 Six-Day War as a colonial expansion by Israel. Additionally, the differentiation between Hamas and Palestinians overall does not allow Israel to cast the Palestinians in general as aggressors and instead had to develop a framing specific to Hamas, the role of genocidal terrorists.

Besides the role of victim, the Palestinians attempt to take the role of sovereign state for themselves. The fact that in today's international system states recognize each other's sovereignty gives it the property of a role identity (Wendt 1999). The memories of colonialism and the Nakba were used to justify taking the role of a sovereign,

Israelis and Palestinians both attempt to cast the United Nations into the role of their respective patron. Again, the Palestinians seem to be more successful in their efforts as the occasional Israeli hostility towards the UN indicates.

Certain role identities, like Nazis, only exist through collective memory. Their meaning is created through their relation to a memory and created by actors in the process of remembering.

The answer to the research question mostly applies to the analyzed texts in their relevant contexts. To summarize, transnational collective memories are used by Palestinians and Israelis to shape their own and other's role identities through role-taking and altercasting. The memories are deployed as a resource to justify role-taking or casting. During the 10th ESS, Palestinians and Israelis tried to use collective memories to justify their respective claims to victimhood as well as trying to cast the United Nations into the role of a patron for their causes. They contested each other's role-taking and casting with the Palestinians seemingly being more effective. The Palestinians also used memories to justify taking the role of a sovereign state. The only safely generalizable finding of this study is that collective memory can also be used to create entirely new role identities. This can be argued because role identities like 'Nazi' were not created through the speech acts studied in this paper but in different discourses preceding it. Future research on collective memory in international relations is needed. As this study has re-affirmed, a constructivist framework is not just the most common, but also the most natural and ontologically and epistemologically cohesive way to integrate memory studies into IR. Going forward, research projects should work to gain a deeper understanding of how states or other kinds of actors draw on certain transnational memories as a resource to construct their social identities. A better understanding of the properties of identities created from collective memories is also needed.

7. Reference list

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