State Framing of Terrorism: A Comparative Analysis of the Red Army Faction in Germany and Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya in Egypt

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1 Introduction

In February 2024, former RAF member Daniela Klette was arrested in Berlin, 26 years after the radical left-wing organisation was disbanded. While the arrest was celebrated by German police and politicians, it sparked an unexpectedly intense public debate about whether the Red Army Faction (RAF) should still be classified as a terrorist organisation.[1] The questions of why some things are considered terrorism and others are not and who gets to decide are closely connected to this debate and highly topical. Especially the idea that the framing of an issue as terrorism plays "a significant role in the transmission and construction of the understanding of terrorism and consequently how the public (and public officials) think about the construction of counterterrorism choices and policies"[2] is particularly interesting in this context. The question of what influences a state's framing of an issue as terrorism is worth exploring in more detail, given the far-reaching implications of the use of terrorism rhetoric. This question is also especially intriguing due to the significant disparity between the perceived threat of terrorism and the actual threat level it poses. As Mueller and Stewart write: "Outside of war zones, the number of fatalities caused by terrorists of all stripes has been […] remarkably low."[3].

Looking at state framing of perceived terrorist threats, in this analysis I am going to compare two case studies, namely the case of the RAF in Germany and the case of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* (The Islamic Group) in Egypt. This thesis seeks to answer the following questions: How did the German and Egyptian states frame the RAF and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*, respectively? And what similarities and differences can be identified in their framing strategies? By addressing these questions, the thesis aims to come closer to answering the question of how states in general deal with a perceived terrorist threat.

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[1] Kate Connolly, "Berlin police order evacuation of Red Army Faction fugitive's apartment block," The Guardian, February 28, 2024; Tobias Großekemper, Hubert Gude, Jens Glüsing, Roman Höfner, Bertolt Hunger, Roman Lehberger, Sven Röbel, Hannes Schrader, Ansgar Siemens, and Wolf Wiedemann-Schmidt, "Die Frau aus dem Untergrund," SPIEGEL, Feburary 28, 2024; Deutsche Welle, "Far-left RAF terror suspect Daniela Klette arrested," DW, February 27, 2024; Frank Jansen, "Erbe des RAF-Terrors: Das Risiko einer Gewaltspirale wächst," Tagesspiegel, March 2, 2024.

[2] Benjamin K. Smith, Scott Englund, Andrea Figueroa-Caballero, Elena Salcido and Michael Stohl, "Framing Terrorism," in Constructions of Terrorism: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Research and Policy, ed. Michael Stohl, Dr. Richard Burchill, and Scott Howard Englund (United States: University of California Press, 2017), 105.

[3] John Mueller and Mark G. Stewart, "Misoverestimating Terrorism," in Constructions of Terrorism: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Research and Policy, ed. by Michael Stohl, Dr. Richard Burchill, and Scott Howard Englund (United States: University of California Press, 2017), 21.

The RAF and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* and their confrontations with their respective states have both been described and analysed individually. However, no one has yet analysed and compared the two cases and, in particular, the respective state framings of these two organisations. This comparison is particularly interesting because it involves two organisations that share significant similarities in that they were both ideologically driven and resorted to violent means to disrupt the state, which they believed was corrupting society. By examining how their respective states frame these organisations, it is possible to identify the similarities and differences in state framing of perceived terrorist organisations and the factors that may influence this framing. Comparing the state's framing of the RAF in Germany and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt, it becomes clear that both states used securitisation tactics, portraying these organisations as terrorist threats through speech acts, leading to public acceptance of extraordinary measures. However, the intensity and nature of these measures differed significantly, with the Egyptian state's response being far more violent. Moreover, while the German state eventually reflected on and reversed its harsh measures, Egypt continued with its repressive tactics.

The main body of this thesis is divided into four chapters. The following second chapter is going to introduce the methodology of the thesis and the main theories used for my analysis. Especially important for this analysis were the theories of framing and securitisation. The methodology and theory chapter is followed by two chapters analysing the respective case studies. Chapter three will be dealing with the RAF, whereas chapter four will be detailing *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya.* Both chapters are structured in a similar way, beginning with a discussion of the history, development and ideology of each organisation, followed by a discussion of the state's framing of and reaction to each organisation. The fifth and final chapter of the main body will bring all the research conducted in the preceding chapters together and discuss the differences and similarities found between both case studies.

Terminology

Two terms that will be briefly discussed here, as their vagueness and definitional ambiguity could otherwise lead to confusion in the further discussion, are 'terrorism' and 'state'. The lack of consensus among scholars on the definition of the term terrorism shows the

difficulties one faces when using it. In the existing literature, terrorism is most commonly defined by the following characteristics: the use or threat of violence to achieve a political goal; the distinction between the individual victim of an attack and the primary target that terrorists seek to influence; and the killing of uninvolved and randomly selected civilians.[4] For the purpose of this thesis, I will use the term terrorism, and derived from that, terrorist and terrorist organisation, as defined by Beck as a group that uses violence or the threat of violence against unconventional targets to achieve a political goal.[5] Since this analysis looks at the state framing of organisations and therefore focuses on the state's perspective and narrative, it is not of interest if I believe, that the label of terrorism is applicable for either organisation. Therefore, I will be using the term terrorism very cautiously and only when necessary to underscore where and in what way it was used by the state to frame the respective organisation.

When talking about state in this thesis I will be referring to the state as an actor. This means, that my definition of state includes all actors, that function as representatives for the state. Or like Stephan Scheiper puts it: "These individual and collective actors each act as representatives of the state. In other words, they are the state at the point at which they come to the fore and are also perceived as such by the public."[6]

[4] Lisa Stampnitzky, "Can Terrorism be defined?" in Constructions of Terrorism: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Research and Policy, ed. Michael Stohl, Dr. Richard Burchill, and Scott Howard Englund (United States: University of California Press, 2017), 11-20; Smith, Englund, Figueroa-Caballero, Salcido and Stohl, "Framing Terrorism," 91-107; Richards, "Some thoughts on constructions of terrorism," 108-124; Gunning, Jackson, and Smyth, *Critical terrorism studies*, 1-10, 124-137, 156-177; Hoffman, "Inside Terrorism", 1-44; Bergesen, "Three-Step Model of Terrorist Violence," 111–118; Goodwin, "A Theory of Categorical Terrorism," 2027–2046; Beck, "The Contribution of Social Movement Theory to Understanding Terrorism," 1565–1581.

[5] Hoffman, "Inside Terrorism," 1-44; Bergesen, "Three-Step Model of Terrorist Violence," 111–118; Goodwin, "A Theory of Categorical Terrorism," 2027–2046; Beck, "The Contribution of Social Movement Theory to Understanding Terrorism," 1565–1581.

[6] Scheiper, Innere Sicherheit, 35.

2 Methodology and Theory

To answer the question of similarities and differences in the state's framing of the RAF in Germany and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt, I analysed secondary and primary sources to identify recurring themes in the state's framing of the two organisations. As my main focus was on the state's framing of these groups, I decided to concentrate on sources that were either published by the state or about the state and its relationship with the respective organisation. The type of data I used for my analysis focuses mainly on state discourse and other sources that reveal either the state's attitude towards the two organisations or its behaviour towards them. The main sources I worked with were speeches by heads of state, accounts of court cases, reports of legal action taken by the state, and human rights reports. I chose speeches in which the respective heads of state addressed the general public against the backdrop of a perceived escalating security situation and in which they justified the measures taken to counter these perceived threats. In both case studies, the trials against the accused members of the organisations took an unusual form in one way or another, so a selection of examples of what happened during these trials and how the state treated the defendants was also part of my analysis. These accounts were complemented by human rights reports that focused mainly on the treatment of the accused in court and in detention. These reports provided background to the way in which the two states treated the suspects. Finally, I have analysed the legal measures taken by the two states to combat these groups.

Comparative Discourse Analysis

To analyse my findings, I used comparative discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a method used to study the ways in which discourse is used in different contexts. This approach focuses on the structures and functions of discourse, examining how these elements vary and what these variations may reveal about underlying social, cultural or ideological influences.[7] In my paper I compared the state discourse or framing of an organisation that opposes the state with violent means in two different cases. Discourse can

[7] Teun A. Van Dijk, *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-28; Lene Hansen, Security As Practice : Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War (London: Routledge, 2006), 14-82; Norman Fairclough, "Critical discourse analysis and critical policy studies," Critical Policy Studies Vol. 7, no. 2 (2013-07): 177-197.

be defined as a structured way of speaking or writing. It includes not only the language used, but it can also be seen as a social practice that both reflects and shapes social structures, identities and relationships.[8] The meaning and function of discourse is highly dependent on the context in which it takes place. This includes the physical setting, the participants involved, the purpose of the communication, and broader cultural and historical factors.[9] Michel Foucault defines discourse as a system of representation that includes not only language but also the rules, norms, and practices that structure knowledge and power relations in society. In his view, discourse shapes and is shaped by power dynamics and institutions.[10] Stuart Hall says about Foucault's definition of discourse: "One important point about this notion of discourse is that it is not based on the conventional distinction between thought and action, language and practice. Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But it is itself produced by a practice: 'discursive practice'—the practice of producing meaning. Since all social practices entail meaning, all practices have a discursive aspect. So, discourse enters into and influences all social practices."[11] Drawing on Foucault's definition, in this study, I define discourse to include not only language and text production, but also any actions or statements by the state or its representatives that frame the organisations in question.

Framing Theory

In this context, something needs to be said about framing. Framing theory examines how information is presented (framed) and how this presentation influences perceptions and attitudes towards certain issues. The notion of framing goes beyond the mere delivery of information. It also involves the selection, emphasis, and exclusion of information to promote a particular interpretation or perspective. By highlighting certain issues, frames can make these issues more prominent in public discourse, thereby influencing what people think about a particular topic. Emotional framing for example can influence perceptions and

[8] Van Dijk, *Discourse and Context*, 1-55; Teun A. Van Dijk, *Text and Context: Explorations in the Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse* (London: Longman, 1977), 1-15; Fairclough, "Critical discourse analysis," 177-197.
[9] Van Dijk, *Discourse and Context*, 111-216.
[10] Michel Foucault, "Orders of discourse," *Social Science Information Vol. 10*, no.2 (1971-04): 7-30.
[11] Stuart Hall, "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power," in Essential Essays: Volume 2, ed. David Morley (Duke University Press, 2018), 155.

attitudes by appealing to fear, anger, or empathy. This type of framing can drive public support or opposition to policies.[12] Of particular relevance to this study is the framing of an issue as terrorism. The process of framing something as terrorism is complex and often politically charged, characterised by definitional ambiguity and selective labelling that often reflects bias and double standards. This framing influences counter-terrorism policies, and can lead to securitisation and the erosion of civil liberties. Critical Terrorism Studies critiques these mainstream framings and argues for a more nuanced, ethical and contextualised understanding that also addresses the root causes of violence.[13] Central to my analysis is the term 'state framing'. It refers to the strategic use of language and narratives by state actors to construct and propagate specific interpretations of events, policies or political issues in order to achieve desired political outcomes. The term state framing is derived from the broader theory of framing but narrows its focus to state actions.

Securitisation Theory

The question of when and why something is or is not considered a security threat, and who decides what is and what action to take, is addressed by securitisation theory. Securitisation theory is a framework within critical security studies that examines how issues are transformed into security issues, thereby justifying extraordinary measures and attention. Developed by scholars of the Copenhagen School, notably Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, the theory focuses on the process by which different actors frame certain topics as existential threats through discursive means. The process of securitisation begins with the identification of a threat, in this case an organisation that opposes the state with violent means. A securitising actor, in this case the state represented by the head of state, the police or a court, identifies an entity as a fundamental threat to a referent object. The referent object is what is threatened and needs to be protected; in this case it is a matter of freedom and security. In

[12] Dennis Chong and James Druckman, "Framing Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science Vol. 10*, no. 1 (2007-01): 103-126; Robert Entman, "Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power," *Journal of communication Vol. 57*, no.1 (2007-03): 163-173; Dietram Scheufele, "Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing Revisited: Another Look at Cognitive Effects of Political Communication," *Mass Communication & Society Vol. 3*, no. 2-3 (2000-08): 297-316; Kimberly Gross and Lisa D'Ambrosio, "Framing Emotional Response," *Political Psychology Vol.25*, no. 1 (2004): 1–29.

[13] Beck, and Miner, "Who Gets Designated a Terrorist and Why?," 837–72; Stampnitzky, "Can Terrorism be defined?," 11-20; Smith, Englund, Figueroa-Caballero, Salcido and Stohl, "Framing Terrorism," 91-107; Richards, "Some thoughts on constructions of terrorism and the framing of the terrorist threat," 108-124; Gunning, Jackson, and Smyth, *Critical terrorism studies*, 156-177.

the next step, the threat is articulated through a speech act in which the securitising actor communicates the threat to an audience, in this case the general public, emphasising the urgency and the need for exceptional measures. The concept of the speech act is fundamental to securitisation theory. According to the theory, something becomes a security issue only because a securitising actor declares it a threat, not because of its inherent qualities. The speech act typically involves framing an issue in terms of survival that requires urgent and extraordinary measures. This characterisation of the issue as an existential threat to security must then be approved by the relevant audience. In this case, this is achieved by creating an environment of fear around the respective organisations. In a final step, measures are taken to counter the threat. Once an issue has been securitised, it justifies the use of actions that might not be acceptable under normal political circumstances. These may include policy changes, legal adjustments or military action. The consequences of this process can be the concentration of power in the hands of those who can successfully label an issue as a security threat, often leading to increased centralisation of authority, or the undermining of democratic norms.[14]

Comparative Approach

To answer the question of the differences and similarities in state framing and reaction towards the RAF in Germany and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt, I compared the state framing of the two organisations. I decided to conduct a comparative discourse analysis in order to compare these frames across cases, allowing for a detailed examination of how framing varies in different contexts and what factors might influence these variations. George and Bennett write about the value of comparing case studies, that they serve as valuable tools in research, providing in-depth analyses of specific issues within a broader phenomenon.[15] The two case studies I compared were chosen for a number of reasons: Both organisations emerged within a decade or so of each other, both had their origins in the

[14] Ole Wæver, "Securitzation and Desecuritization," in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 39-69; Micael C. Williams, "Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics," *International Studies Quarterly Vol. 47*, no. 4 (2003-12): 511-531; Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 1-48, 141-162, 195-214; Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1-90.
[15] George, and Bennett, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*; 17-40.

student movements of their time, both were organisations that developed within the country they wanted to abolish, and both were ideologically driven and used violent means to achieve their goals. Additionally, both organisations failed to achieve their goals and officially renounced violence in the late 1990s. Roel Meijer draws a connection between the history of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* and the student movement from which the RAF emerged: "In its history the Jama'a resembles in many ways the student movements in Europe of the 1960s, going through the same stages of development from an apolitical movement, acquiring political awareness, radicalising and in some cases coming into violent conflict with the state."[16] My analysis involved a structured comparative approach with several key steps. First, I analysed the two case studies in detail and independently of each other. For each case I first looked at the historical background and the political system in each country to establish the environment in which each organisation an state acted. After that I analysed the origin, development and ideological background of each organisation, in order to understand what might have influenced their actions and what kind of organisation the respective states were reacting to. Each case study analysis ended with a description of the respective states reaction to and framing of the described organisation. Here I sought to identify overarching trends and processes inherent to the states actions towards the organisation. In doing so I identified key trends and characteristics for each case study. These trends and characteristics were analysed and compared after the case study examination was finalised. I used securitisation theory as a framework to structure the comparison of the respective state framings. This approach helped me to identify the similarities and differences in state framing between both cases. After establishing how each state securitised the respective organisation I continued with comparing the two securitisation processes. Within that comparison I especially focused on the states framing and discourse by analysing examples of speech acts and the measures employed by each state, since those allow conclusions to be drawn about how the respective state viewed each organisation and how far they were willing to go to combat them. By comparing these two cases, I hoped to find out if the differences between the two case studies, such as different countries of origin, different group ideologies, different state systems and different cultures, may have had an influence on how states framed these groups. The overarching question is: what influences a state's framing of a perceived terrorist threat? Of course, my research alone cannot answer this question definitively

[16] Roel Meijer, *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 190-91.

because of the many factors involved. Therefore, this study can only provide an approximation of the answer.

3 The Red Army Faction in Germany

After the end of the Second World War and the division of Germany into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Konrad Adenauer became the first Chancellor of the FRG. During his time in office, the economic upswing (*Wirtschaftswunder*) in the FRG began, supported by the Marshall Plan.[17] Although the first post-war generation grew up with the benefits of economic growth, by the end of the 1960s the youth began to question the existing social structure and the values of their parents' generation. The desire for social change gave rise to a protest movement that had its roots in universities. Initially, students protested against what they saw as rigid structures in the education system, politics and the judiciary, where former members of the Nazi party still held high positions. The protesters of the so-called '68-movement were intellectually influenced by thinkers such as Marx, Bloch and Adorno. The protests against the Vietnam War gave the movement new impetus and sharpened its political stance. At the same time, popular resentment against the young demonstrators grew. In this heated climate, the student Benno Ohnesorg was shot dead by a policeman on 2 June 1967 during a demonstration opposing the visit of the Shah of Iran in West-Berlin. This incident fundamentally changed the protest movement and unleashed a huge wave of solidarity among leftist student circles. The day is seen as a decisive event in the emergence of the 1968-movement and led to further politicisation and an increasing propensity for violence among demonstrators. The situation escalated further when one of the main spokesmen of the student movement, Rudi Dutschke, was shot at in Berlin on 11 April 1968, presumably for political reasons. The subsequent Easter riots resulted in several injuries and two deaths.[18] At the end of May 1968, the Emergency Act (*Notstandsgesetz*) was passed by the required two-thirds majority in the Bundestag, again leading to demonstrations and riots. This law stipulates that in the event of a state of emergency, an emergency parliament can be convened to replace the *Bundestag* (Parliament). It also means that in a state of emergency, the basic rights of every individual

[17] Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, "Germany Is No More: Defeat, Occupation, and the Postwar Order," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford University Press, 2011), 593-607; Andrew Port, "Democracy and Dictatorship in the Cold War: The Two Germanies, 1949–1961," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford University Press, 2011).

[18] Caroline Klausing and Verena von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF - ein deutsches Trauma? Versuch einer historischen Deutung* (Mainz: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung Rheinland-Pfalz, 2018), 176; Uta G. Poiger, "Generations: The "Revolutions" of the 1960s," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford University Press, 2011).

can be restricted. Until this day the Emergency Act has never been invoked.[19] In October 1969, a new social-liberal government led by the Social Democrat Willy Brandt was elected. The '68-movement was already disintegrating by that time. It was succeeded by other protest movements such as the anti-nuclear movement and the women's movement, which campaigned against the abortion law and for equal rights in the late 1970s. However, some supporters of the '68-movement also turned to extremism, forming the basis of what would later become the RAF.[20]

3.1 The Red Army Faction – History, Development, and Ideology

The RAF was the most prominent group to use violence to achieve its goals in the Federal Republic of Germany. Its significance becomes particularly clear when one considers the political and social repercussions the group still has today.[21] In order to illustrate this impact and to understand who the RAF was and what they wanted to achieve by what means, but also to understand what might have triggered the hefty state response towards the group's actions, in the following chapter I will describe the history and development of the RAF from its emergence from the offshoots of the 1968 movement to its dissolution in 1998.

The RAF wanted to overthrow what they saw as a capitalist state system and replace it with a communist society. Their strategy focused on challenging the perceived imperialist and fascist elements within the West German government and society. To achieve this, their goals included carrying out high-profile attacks to destabilise the government and economy, and securing the release of imprisoned members. The means they used included bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings of state representatives and representatives of the 'capitalist' system. This approach aimed to destabilise the existing political order and provoke revolutionary change.[22] The groups development is generally divided into three generations. The first generation, founded and led by figures such as Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof (therefore sometimes referred to as the Baader-Meinhof Group), used militant tactics in a campaign against perceived capitalist and imperialist oppression in West Germany. The second generation, which emerged after the arrest of leading figures of the first RAF

[19] Deutscher Bundestag, "Vor 55 Jahren: Bundestag beschließt Notstandsgesetze," Deutscher Bundestag, May 23, 2023; Poiger, "Generations," 640-658.
[20] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 175-176; Poiger, "Generations," 640-658.
[21] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 173; Poiger, "Generations," 640-658.
[22] Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF".

generation, was characterised by an increase in violence and a reorientation towards the objective of freeing captured key members of the first generation. The third generation, which showed a decline in activity and influence compared to earlier generations, focused on anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist ideas and was characterised by greater internationalisation.[23]

Foundation and 1st Generation (1970-75)

In April 1968, two later founding members of the RAF, Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin, carried out an arson attack on two department stores in Frankfurt am Main. A few days later they were arrested and sentenced to several years in prison. After the defendants' lawyers appealed and the sentence was temporarily suspended, the two fled to Paris to avoid further imprisonment. On their return to Germany, Baader was arrested and imprisoned again in April 1970. What followed is seen by many as the founding moment of the RAF. On 14 May 1970, Baader was taken from jail to Berlin on the pretext of giving an interview there. In Berlin he was forcibly freed by leading RAF members Gudrun Ensslin, Horst Mahler and Ulrike Meinhof. After Baader's release, the group fled to Jordan for a time to evade the German police. They also received military training there. In August 1970, the group returned to Germany and began robbing banks to provide an economic base for their planned operations.[24]

The group's radicalisation and worldview were shaped by a number of experiences in the 1960s, including the Vietnam War, the consumerist lifestyle in the Western world compared to life in the so-called Third World, and the sometimes-violent actions of the German state against the protesters of the 1968 movement.[25] The name Red Army Faction was chosen by the group itself and first appeared in a text written by Ulrike Meinhof. In this text, known as *The Urban Guerrilla Concept*, the RAF stressed that only the use of violence was a promising means of transforming society and that 'US imperialism' had to be fought

[23] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 175-187.
[24] Christopher Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF (1970-75)," Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, August 20, 2007; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 176; Poiger, "Generations," 652-657.
[25] Jan Henschen, *Die RAF-Erzählung: Eine mediale Historiographie des Terrorismus* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2014), 24; Poiger, "Generations," 652-657.

with weapons globally.[26] The first generation of the RAF embraced an internationalist agenda but adapted it locally. They saw themselves as part of a global uprising against imperialism and capitalism. The RAF drew its ideology from figures such as Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. They acknowledged their roots in student activism but emphasised a move towards more effective methods. While focusing on Marxism and Leninism, they also showed affinity with Castroism and Maoism.[27]

With the so-called May Offensive in the spring of 1972, the RAF began to actively pursue its political goals. This brutal offensive began with the bombing of the US Army headquarters in Frankfurt am Main on 11 May 1972, which killed one person and injured 13 others. In the following weeks, there were attacks on the police directorate in Augsburg, the state criminal investigation office in Munich, the car of a federal judge and the Axel Springer building, the headquarters of Germany's largest media publishing company, in Hamburg, culminating in an attack on the US Army's European headquarters in Heidelberg. The resulting manhunt was successful within a few weeks and led to the arrest of a large number of important RAF members.[28]

Despite their imprisonment in the notorious *Stammheim* prison in Stuttgart, the group tried to continue their actions and political resistance from prison. In addition to public statements and the publication of texts, hunger strikes were one of the forms of resistance chosen by the members of the group. As a result of one of these hunger strikes, Holger Meins died in prison on 9 November 1974. Following the arrest of key RAF figures, the group's focus shifted to extorting the release of its imprisoned members. This change in strategy marks the transition from the first to the second generation in 1975.[29]

2nd Generation and Increasing Violence (1975-81)

In practice, the RAF's change in strategy first became apparent with the siege of the German embassy in Stockholm in 1975, during which twelve hostages were taken. The aim of this action was to press free imprisoned RAF members and was seen as a direct response to the death of Holger Meins. A total of four people died as a result of the incident, two of them

[26] Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF"; "Heft: 'Das Konzept Stadtguerilla'," Lebendiges Museum Online, accessed April 15, 2024.
[27] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 178; Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF".
[28] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 60; Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF".
[29] Daase, "Die erste Generation der RAF".

RAF members. The occupation of the German embassy marked the beginning of a new type of violence for the group.[30]

The RAF's violence reached its peak in the so-called German Autumn of 1977. On the 7 April Federal Attorney General Siegfried Buback was murdered by members of the organisation. In July 1977, in response to the sentencing of Ensslin, Baader and Raspe to life imprisonment, the RAF killed the spokesman of the *Dresdner Bank*, Jürgen Ponto, in a failed kidnapping attempt. On 5 September, members of the group kidnapped Hanns-Martin Schleyer, president of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations, in order to free their imprisoned comrades. In this tense situation, a group of Palestinian terrorists sympathetic towards the demands of the RAF hijacked the Lufthansa plane *Landshut*. The hijacking of the plane, which was on its way from Mallorca to Frankfurt, led to the final escalation of the situation. After an erratic route the aircraft finally landed in Mogadishu, where on 18 October, the plane was stormed by the *GSG 9* (Grenzschutzgruppe 9; Border Guard Group 9), a German counterterrorism commando which was created after the failed operation to free the Israeli hostages at the Munich Olympics in 1972. During this rescue operation, all passengers were freed and three hijackers were killed. That same night, Ensslin, Baader and Raspe committed suicide in their cells in Stammheim. Hanns-Martin Schleyer was then killed by his captors. This escalation of violence cost the RAF a great deal of public support and sympathy. A period of reorientation was followed by a number of bank robberies and a failed attack on NATO Commander-in-Chief Alexander Haig in 1979. These events were followed by a bomb attack on an American base at Rammstein and a failed rocket attack on a US general, which narrowly missed its target in 1981.[31]

3rd Generation and Internationalisation (1982-98)

The exact point in time at which the transition from the second to the third generation of the RAF took place is disputed. For the purposes of this thesis, I will locate this transition with

[30] Redaktion der bpb, "Die Geiselnahme von Stokholm," Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, April 21, 2015; Christopher Daase, "Die zweite Generation der RAF (1975-1981)," Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, August 20, 2007.
[31] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 105; Michael Marz, *Linker Protest nach dem Deutschen Herbst: Eine Geschichte des linken Spektrums im Schatten des 'starken Staates', 1977-1979*, (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2014), 121-129; Stephan Scheiper, *Innere Sicherheit: Politische Anti-Terror-Konzepte in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland während der 1970er Jahre* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010), 50-54; Martin Herzog, *GSG 9: Ein deutscher Mythos*, (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2023) 7-56.

the RAF's change in strategy in the early 1980s, which was accompanied by the internationalisation of the RAF's course of action. This change can be clearly observed in the publication of the so-called *May Paper* in 1982, in which the RAF announced a change in strategy based on the lessons of the year 1977. Two years after the publication the RAF attempted an attack on the NATO school in Oberammergau in 1984. The assassinations of General René Audran and the industrialist Ernst Zimmermann, carried out in conjunction with *Action Directe*, a French far-left militant group, are examples of the internationalisation of the RAF's strategy. Members of the third generation of the RAF also killed Karl Heinz Beckurts, a member of the *Siemens* board, and his chauffeur; Gerold von Braunmühl, a head of department in the Foreign Office; and Alfred Herrhausen, the spokesman for the board of the *Deutsche Bank*. In 1990, the group committed its last murder, that of Detlev Karsten Rohwedder. In 1992, the Federal Minister of Justice declared that the German state was prepared to reconsider its relationship with the RAF and to reach out to the group. On 20 April 1998, the RAF published its declaration of dissolution. This document was initially greeted with disbelief. It heralded the end of a long chapter of violence in Germany. But closer analysis reveals that, despite admitted mistakes, the RAF remained committed to its ideological rigidity. The document reflects a complex understanding of history and resistance, but without any real remorse or recognition of the victims.[32]

3.2 The Red Army Faction and the State

Since the extent of points of contact between the RAF and the German state between 1970 and 1998 is very extensive, in the following chapter I will analyse what I consider to be the most important actions and events that are representative of the state's framing of the group. These include the *Stammheim* prison and trial and the connected modifications to the German legal system, as well as the state's handling of the so-called German Autumn in 1977. In *Die RAF – Ein deutsches Trauma?* the authors identify three phases in the state's struggle against the RAF: The first phase, which lasted from 1969 to 1974, was characterised by a comprehensive internal security policy driven by leading figures in the social-liberal government. Despite an initial wave of escalation, the situation was temporarily considered

[32] Christopher Daase, "Die Dritte Generation der RAF (1982-1998)," Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, August 20, 2007; Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Das Ende der RAF." Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, August 20, 2007.

to be under control. In the second phase, which lasted from 1974 to 1978, anti-terrorism policy took on a life of its own, with a stronger focus on combating terrorism. Special anti-terror laws were passed, political crisis teams were set up and large-scale police operations were carried out in response to the RAF. Under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, it was emphasised that the protection of the rule of law had to go to its limits in order to effectively combat the organisation.[33] After the peak of violence in 1977-78, the state's reaction to the RAF entered its third and final phase, which is described as a reflexive phase. During this period, criticism of state intervention grew, leading to a fundamental rethink of the previous strategy. During this time the government began to reflect on its counter-terrorism policy and asked whether it had gone too far.[34]

Initial Security Measures (1969-74)

Against the backdrop of the reform policies of the late 1960s promoted by Chancellor Willy Brandt (r. 1969-1974), internal security became an important issue in the FRG. Some of the measures taken at that time to improve the security apparatus were not the result of the actions of the RAF, which was still in its infancy, but were the consequence of a reform policy that had been planned and implemented for some time. Only later did this change, so that there was a shift from an actively planned security policy towards a more reactive policy that was directed at the RAF.[35] The RAF attacks of May 1972 were not the reason for the creation of the so-called 'Priority Program for Internal Security', but served as a welcome opportunity to present it to the Bundestag.[36] In a speech to the Bundestag in 1972, the Federal Minister of the Interior, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, made it clear that the actions of the RAF would have an accelerating effect on the domestic politics of the Federal Republic. From May 1972, the government came under increasing pressure from the actions of the RAF and the expectations of the population and the political opposition. In practice, this led to a

[33] "Stenographischer Bericht 42. Sitzung," Deutscher Bundestag, September 15, 1977, 3164-3166; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 18-20.
[34] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 18-20.
[35] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 9-22; Weinhauer, "Staatsmacht ohne Grenzen?," 215-238.
[36] "Stenographischer Bericht 188. Sitzung," Deutscher Bundestag, June 7, 1972, 10975-10982.

significant strengthening of the law enforcement agencies and the formation of special units such as the *GSG 9*.[37]

Intensified Measures: Anti-Terrorism Efforts (1974-78)

The years 1974-75 saw a clear change in the German government's terrorism-policy. The RAF's increasing willingness to use violence led to a series of legislative changes and reactions by the German government. Many such changes to the law can be observed, for example, in the course of the criminal proceedings against the members of the first generation of the RAF.[38]

The trial against Baader, Ensslin, Raspe and Meinhof, who committed suicide in her prison cell on 9 May 1976, took place between 1975 and 1977 and is regarded as one of the great political criminal trials of the 20th century. For the trial against the RAF, a heavily secured courthouse was built near the prison wing.[39] Since then, this building has become "a symbol of the state's efforts to combat politically motivated (terrorist) violence with the means of criminal law".[40] In the course of the trial in *Stammheim*, a series of legal amendments were passed which significantly restricted the rights of the accused and their defence lawyers and which were described in a quite critical manner in the 1977 Amnesty International report: "In the past year Amnesty International has been concerned by possible implications for human rights of some legislation newly introduced in the Federal Republic of Germany in the context of official efforts to deal with terrorist offences"[41] and "a series of laws changing the right to defence have been incorporated into the Code of Criminal Procedure, in connection with incidents during the trial at *Stammheim* of the Red Army Faction […] These laws have considerably affected rights of defence in the Federal Republic of Germany."[42] The opening of the trial on 21 May 1975 was initially followed by heated discussions about the defendant's fitness to stand trial. Ultimately, the Senate decided to

[37] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 9-22; Deutscher Bundestag, "Stenographischer Bericht. 188. Sitzung," 10975-10982.
[38] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 15.
[39] Stammheim-Protokoll. "Verlauf und Bedeutung".
[40] Stammheim-Protokoll. "Verlauf und Bedeutung".
[41] Amnesty International, "Amnesty International Annual Report 1977," Amnesty International, January 1, 1977.
[42] Amnesty International, "Amnesty International Annual Report 1977," Amnesty International, January 1, 1977.

continue the trial in the absence of the accused. This was possible due to a change in law made in advance to the trial in December 1974, allowing the trial to continue without the defendant in the case of self-inflicted incapacity.[43] In August 1976, the so-called Anti-Terror Law was passed, enabling law enforcement to monitor correspondence between prisoners and their defence lawyers. In order to be able to take more effective action against members of the RAF, the government created the offence of forming a terrorist organisation and regulated the punishment for participation in a terrorist organisation.[44]

On the 185th day of the trial, a scandal erupted when the information that confidential conversations between lawyers and their clients had been tapped by the police came to light. The government justified this action by claiming that there was a justifiable state of emergency. As a result, some of the defendants' lawyers refused to further take part in the trial.[45] Defence counsel Otto Schily commented as follows: "What is taking place here in these proceedings cannot be described as anything other than the systematic destruction of all constitutional guarantees [...]. Under no circumstances can the defence justify participating in these proceedings for even one minute longer, in order to perhaps appear here as a kind of alibi that there is still something like a defence".[46] On 28 April 1977 at 9.01 a.m. the presiding judge pronounced the sentence against Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe in the courtroom before the second Criminal Senate of the Higher Regional Court in Stuttgart *Stammheim*. The record states that the defendants were not present when the sentence was pronounced. Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe were sentenced to life in prison. Six months after the verdict was announced, the three RAF members were found dead in their prison cells. Although various authorities have ruled out the possibility of malpractice, many theories have been put forward about the involvement of the German state in the deaths of the three accused. The heated debate about this incident shows how shaken many citizens' faith in the state was at the time. This was not least due to the repeated complaints about the conditions

[43] Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung"; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 107-108; Redaktion der bpb, "1976: Anti-Terror-Paragraph wird eingeführt," Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, August 16, 2016; Johannes Hürter and Gian Enrico Rusconi, *Die bleiernen Jahre: Staat und Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Italien 1969-1982* (De Gruyter, 2010), 13-16.
[44] Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung"; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 107-108; Hürter and Rusconi, *Die bleiernen Jahre*, 113-16; Redaktion der bpb, "1976: Anti-Terror-Paragraph wird eingeführt".
[45] Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung".
[46] "Fortsetzung der Hauptverhandlung am Donnerstag, den 17. März 1977 um 10.01 Uhr (185. Verhandlungstag)," Das Stammheim-Protokoll, March 17, 1977, 13712-1371.

of detention, as well as the agitated and controversial court hearings in Stuttgart *Stammheim*.[47]

Public reaction to the trial was mixed, but certainly critical. Both the state's reaction, which was often perceived as excessive, and the prison conditions, which were repeatedly condemned, fueled resentment against the state and led to a further increase in the number of RAF supporters, even though a large majority of the German population welcomed the conviction of the defendants.[48] During the trial, there were repeated complaints about the conditions of detention. The lawyers even spoke of isolation torture by the state, which the defendants were subjected to because some of them were held in isolation. Researchers are divided on this issue. Some scholars speak of a "myth of isolation torture"[49] and believe that this accusation is partly due to "hysterical exaggeration"[50] and partly to an attempt to build a "legal sympathy group"[51]. Others, however, see the accusation of isolation torture as confirmed.[52] It can be said, however, that the state reacted with particular severity to the RAF.

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt is celebrated in many quarters for his actions during the so-called German Autumn. In a retrospective on the occasion of his death, the German weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* ran the headline 'The man who defeated the RAF' on 11 November 2015. The hijacking and liberation of the *Landshut* and the related kidnapping of the president of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations, Hanns-Martin Schleyer, as well as the suicide of RAF members Baader, Ensslin and Raspe, represent an important chapter in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany and the RAF, often referred to as the German Autumn.[53]

On 5 September 1977, Hanns-Martin Schleyer was abducted from his car by members of the RAF. On the same day, Helmut Schmidt reacted with a much-quoted speech on public television. In his speech he spoke of "frenzied terrorists"[54] whose actions were

[47] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 63-64; "Fortsetzung der Hauptverhandlung am Donnerstag, 28. April 1977, um 9.01 Uhr (192. Verhandlungstag)," Das Stammheim-Protokoll, April 28, 1977; Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung," Stammheim-Protokoll, accessed 18 April 2024.
[48] Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung".
[49] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 61-62.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Michael März, *Linker Protest nach dem deutschen Herbst: Eine Geschichte des linken Spektrums im Schatten des "starken Staates," 1977-1979* (Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, 2014), 124.
[53] Michael Sontheimer, "Der Man, der die RAF besiegte," SPIEGEL, November 11, 2015.
[54] Helmut Schmidt, "Altkanzler Schmidt: 'Terrorismus keine Chance'," Fernsehansprache, ZDF, filmed September 5, 1977, video of speech, 4:38.

intended to "undermine the democratic state and the confidence of the citizens in our state"[55]. The state had to respond "with all necessary severity"[56]. All police and security forces therefore had "the unreserved support of the Federal Government and also my personal backing"[57]. The RAF's actions would not stand a chance in the long run, because "the will of the entire people stands against terrorism"[58] (for the entire transcribed and translated speech, see appendix). With all its linguistic imagery of 'the evil terrorists' against 'a prudent but decisive state', this speech is an almost ideal-typical use of the idea of 'the strong state'.[59]

The crisis staff (*Krisenstab*) that came together the following evening set three objectives for resolving the situation. The first was to free Schleyer alive, the second was to capture the hostage-takers and bring them to justice, and the third was not to release the RAF prisoners. Meeting the hostage-takers' demands was therefore ruled out from the outset. Later, because of this hard and risky course of action, there were accusations that this approach had cost Schleyer his life.[60] The following news blackout declared by the German government was almost unanimously accepted by the press. Wolfgang Krausharr writes: "In complete contrast to the foreign press, they followed the verbose dictates and refrained from critical reporting. By unhesitatingly adopting the maxims of the Small and Large Crisis Staff that the same views that are otherwise customary in a parliamentary democracy can no longer apply when it comes to saving human lives, they are forfeiting their independence and becoming an integral part of an authoritarian understanding of the state."[61].[62]

On 16 September 1977, the German tabloid BILD ran the headline "We will defeat the terrorists!" [63] referring to a speech by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. It refers to the government statement Helmut Schmidt had made in parliament the day before in response

[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.; "Protokoll der Entführung von Hanns Martin Schleyer und des Passagierflugzeuges "Landshut"," Stasi Mediathek, October 27, 1977; Wolfgang Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand: Staatliches Handeln während des so genannten Deutschen Herbstes," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, August 20, 2007; Scheiper, *Innere Sicherheit*, 50-129.
[60] Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand"; Stasi Mediathek, "Protokoll der Entführung von Hanns Martin Schleyer"; Tim Geiger, "Landshut in Mogadischu. Das außenpolitische Krisenmanagement der Bundesregierung angesichts der terroristischen Herausforderung 1977," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte Vol.57*, no. 3 (15 July 2009): 413–56; Scheiper, *Innere Sicherheit*, 50-129.
[61] Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand".
[62] Stasi Mediathek, "Protokoll der Entführung von Hanns Martin Schleyer"; Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand".
[63] "Bild-Zeitung Helmut Schmidt "Wir besiegen die Terroristen"," Lebendiges Museum Online, Accessed April 15, 2024.

to the kidnapping of Hanns-Martin Schleyer. He began his speech by thanking the press, police and security forces, as well as the media and the public for their commitment and patience. The overall theme of the speech was unity against terror. Schmidt used the word terror thirteen times in his speech. He used the words democracy and freedom seven times each. He mentioned the contact ban (*Kontaktsperre*) between the prisoners and their representatives and his willingness "to go to the limits of what [...] the rule of law allows and what it [...] demands"[64]. At the same time, he stressed the need for the measures taken to be compatible with the Constitution and his duty to uphold it. He also stressed that the German government did not want to solve the situation militarily and that contact had already been made with the kidnappers. He ended his speech with an appeal to the youth: "Acquire your democratic citizenship in our community, accept it and use it to democratically shape the future life of your own generation! Shape by persuasion - not by force!"[65].[66]

As part of the contact ban mentioned by Schmidt in his speech as a reaction to Schleyer's abduction, around 80 prisoners were placed under a contact ban. This was intended to prevent the flow of information between prisoners, but also to lawyers and media representatives.[67] On 29 September 1977, the Contact Ban Act was passed, retroactively legitimising the state's actions. The law was seen by many lawyers and human rights activists as an aberration of the rule of law and the culmination of a series of legal changes made by the German state in connection with the fight against the RAF. As there was no legal basis for a ban on contact, the state felt it had to act quickly. A bill was drafted in just eight days. This made the Contact Ban Act the fastest passed law in Germany at the time. At the second reading of the bill on 29 September, the speed with which the law was passed was the subject of heated debate in the Bundestag. SPD MP Manfred Coppik criticised: "Today we are debating a law that was introduced into the Bundestag yesterday and whose final wording was only presented to the MPs today"[68]. He further stresses that all aspects had to be weighed up, especially in the case of a law that affects "the fundamental relationship between procedural guarantees under the rule of law and the needs of the fight

[64] Deutscher Bundestag, "Stenographischer Bericht 42. Sitzung," 3165.
[65] Ibid., 3166.
[66] Ibid., 3164-3166.
[67] Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand".
[68] "Stenographischer Bericht 44. Sitzung," Deutscher Bundestag, September 29, 1977, 3371.

against terrorism"[69]. Despite this controversy, the law was passed by a large majority of the German Bundestag on the same day. The law has never been applied since.[70]

The situation reached its climax with the hijacking of the Lufthansa flight 181 on 13 October 1977. After several days of misdirected flights via Rome, Larnaca, Bahrain, Dubai and Aden, the hijacked Lufthansa plane finally landed in Mogadishu. The hostages were freed on the night of 18 October by the police anti-terrorist unit *GSG 9* after several days of negotiations and stalling tactics by the German government.[71] On the same day, probably in reaction to the successful liberation, the three RAF members, Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe, committed suicide in their prison cells in Stuttgart-*Stammheim*. The incident caused a wave of outrage among RAF supporters and raised the enduring question of the German state's role in the deaths of the prisoners. Although both an autopsy and a parliamentary inquiry confirmed that the three had in fact committed suicide, rumors persisted that they had been murdered by the state.[72] In response to the deaths of the three RAF members, Hanns-Martin Schleyer was killed by his kidnappers on the same day. His body was found by the police in the boot of a car in Mulhouse, Alsace, on 19 October 1977. After 43 days, the death of Hanns-Martin Schleyer brought the German Autumn to an end and left the Federal Republic in great turmoil.[73]

Reflection and Reevaluation of State Policies (1978 and Beyond)

After this critical phase of the confrontation between the state and the RAF, in which the 'strong state' was put on display, particularly in the form of criminal prosecution and a series of new laws but also in a very decisive state-rhetoric, the state's approach towards the RAF began to change. After the autumn of 1977 there were an increasing number of voices within the federal government that began to take a critical look at the state's role in the confrontation with the RAF. This trend was exemplified by the newly elected Minister of the Interior,

[69] Ibid.
[70] Deutscher Bundestag, "Historische Debatten (8): Kontaktsperregesetz," Deutscher Bundestag, August 14, 2007; Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung"; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 13-16; Redaktion der bpb, "1976: Anti-Terror-Paragraph wird eingeführt".
[71] Charity Scribner, *After the Red Army Faction: Gender, Culture, and Militancy*. (New York: Columbia Press, 2015), 31; Geiger, "Landshut in Mogadischu," 432.
[72] Scribner, *After the Red Army Faction*, 31-32; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 63-64.
[73] Stasi Mediathek, "Protokoll der Entführung von Hanns Martin Schleyer"; Geiger, "Landshut in Mogadischu," 446.

Gerhart Baum, who increasingly focused on dialogue and cooling the heated political rhetoric.[74]

The measures applied by the German state to combat the RAF are celebrated by some but are seen by others in a much more critical light. They argue, that the measures taken by the German government especially during the so-called German Autumn almost vindicated the RAF.[75] In her book *After the Red Army Faction* Charity Scribner writes: "the restrictions of civil liberties disclosed the government's will toward domination and undermined the ethical principles of the *Rechtsstaat.*"[76] From the very beginning, the RAF was declared an enemy of the German state and all of its actions were categorised as a threat to the rule of law and democracy.[77] What is particularly interesting here is the exceptionalisation of the crime and the offenders. RAF members were not seen as ordinary criminals and were characterised as anarchists, terrorists and enemies of the state in the public debate.[78] Klausing and Wiczlinski describe the developing dynamic between the state and the RAF as an escalating "spiral movement"[79] in which each action by one actor was met with a reaction by the other.[80] In conclusion, it can be said that the securitisation of the RAF by the German state becomes apparent when looking at the findings of this chapter. The state is framing the organisation as a terrorist threat, through a series of speech acts. By appealing to the fears of the population through using a rhetoric of terrorism, the application of unusual measures gets accepted by the general public.

[74] Ibid., 14-22.
[75] Scribner, *After the Red Army Faction,* 31-32.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF,* 15, 104.
[78] Ibid., 106.
[79] Ibid., 73.
[80] Ibid., 104.

4 Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya in Egypt

The 1967 Arab-Israeli War is often seen as a turning point for the region referred to as the Middle East. The war solidified Israel's alignment with the West while distancing it from the Soviet Union. It discredited secular Arab nationalism, particularly Nasserism, leading to a decline in Soviet influence as Arab states sought accommodation with the West. At the same time the Palestinian movement emerged as a distinct political force, with the PLO asserting itself independently. Disillusionment with secular political endeavours contributed to the rise of Islamism in several countries, including Egypt. This shift reflected a revival of interest in Islamic values. Islamist movements emerged as both a challenge to secular governance and the pan-Arab idea. This change in political culture stemmed from internal shifts and global trends, serving as a reaction to Cold War-era ideologies and countering leftist and secular movements.[81] For the purpose of this paper, I am going to define Islamism as a political ideology that aims to establish Islamic norms and rules as the foundation of government and society. It seeks to introduce the principles of Islam into all aspects of life, including politics, law, and culture.[82]

Gamal Abdel Nasser who had been president of Egypt since 1956 died unexpectedly in 1970 and was succeeded by his vice-president, Anwar Sadat, who inherited a difficult political and economic situation, including the ongoing conflict with Israel, internal dissent, and economic difficulties. Sadat broke with the socialist and secular policies of Nasser by allowing freedoms for the Islamists and implementing significant political and economic reforms aimed at liberalising Egypt's economy. Whereas Nasser had pursued an almost anti-religious policy of repression and confinement and was supporting secular forces in the country, Sadat allowed the Islamist groups in Egypt a greater deal of freedom and shortly after his assumption of the presidency released thousands of members of the Muslim Brotherhood from prison, where some of them had been further radicalised.[83] Ultimately,

[81] Halliday, Fred, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 116-123; Cristine Binzel and Jean-Paul Carvalho, "Education, Social Mobility and Religious Movements: The Islamic Revival in Egypt," *The Economic Journal Vol. 127*, no. 607 (2017-12): 2553–2580.
[82] Peter Mandaville, *Global Political Islam* (London: Routledge, 2007), 57-58; Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Noha Mellor, "Islamism in Egypt," in *Routledge Handbook on Contemporary Egypt*, ed. Robert Springborg, Amr Adly, Anthony Gorman, Tamir Moustafa, Aisha Saad, Naomi Sakr, and Sarah Smierciak (Routledge, 2021), 120–132.
[83] Holger Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine: Political Opposition Under Authoritarianism in Egypt*, (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 98; Basheer Nafi, *The Islamists: A Contextual History of Political Islam* (Oxford: Afro-Middle East Centre, 2017), 179-180; Anthony Gorman,

Sadat also switched Egypt's allegiance from the Soviet-Union to America. The Arab-Israeli war of 1973 brought yet another military and political stalemate between Israel and the Arab countries. In 1977, Sadat made the famous visit to Jerusalem, opening the way for negotiations that ended with the Egyptian-Israeli peace in 1979. While this resulted in the Noble Peace prize for Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, it caused the diplomatic isolation of Egypt by its Arab partners because Egypt had broken the pledge that the Arab countries would jointly negotiate for peace with Israel. Domestically, the rapprochement with the West and the peace treaty with Israel provoked strong resistance, particularly from the Islamist opposition. Sadat resorted to increasingly harsh measures to combat the Islamist opposition groups, while at the same time pursuing a policy of Islamisation, for example by amending the constitution in 1980 and subsequently requiring all laws in the country to be based on Sharia law. Ironically, and despite his more open policy towards the country's Islamist groups compared to his predecessor, Sadat was assassinated by members of *al-Jihad* on 6 October 1981 while attending a commemoration of the Fourth Arab-Israeli War.[84]

When *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* emerged in Egypt in the early 1980s, the country already had a long history of dealing with Islamist opposition groups. The landscape of radical Islam in Egypt at the time had been shaped by a complex interplay of socio-political factors, ideological movements and state responses over several decades. The roots of radical Islamism in Egypt can be traced back to the mid-20th century with the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood, founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1928, which advocated for the establishment of an Islamic state governed by Sharia law. In the 1960s, the writings of Sayyid Qutb further radicalised elements within the Brotherhood. He was sentenced to death and hanged in 1966. He strongly influenced the radicalisation of modern Islamist movements

"Introduction: Occupation, Independence, Revolution," in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Egypt*, ed. Robert Springborg, Amr Adly, Anthony Gorman, Tamir Moustafa, Aisha Saad, Naomi Sakr, and Sarah Smierciak (Routledge, 2021), 7-20; Dina Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt: Opposition, conflict, and cooperation* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 19-33.

[84] Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, 116-123; Laurie Brand, "Restor(y)ing the State: National Narratives and Regime Resilience," in *Official Stories*, ed. Laurie Brand (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2020), 1–26; Gamze Yaşar, "A Comparison between State Strategies toward Islamism in Turkey and Egypt," (PhD thesis, University of Utah, 2008), 10-19; Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine*, 98; Nafi, *The Islamists:* 179-180; Muhammad Haykal, *Autumn of Fury: The Assasination of Sadat* (London: Corgi Books, 1984); James MacManus, "From the archive, 7 October 1981: President Sadat assassinated at army parade," *The Guardian*, October 7, 2010; John Kifner. "Sadat Assassinated at Army Parade as Men Admit Ranks Fire Into Stands Vice President Affirms," The New York Times, October 7,1981; Laurie Brand, "Egypt under Sadat and Mubarak: Rescripting Revolution, Redefining Legitimacy," in *Official Stories*, ed. Laurie Brand (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2020), 69-116.

with his ideology and works such as Signposts (*ma'alim fi'l-tariq*). The 1970s and 1980s saw the emergence of more militant groups such as *al-Jihad* and *al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*.[85]

4.1 Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya – History, Development and Ideology

Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya emerged as an independent organisation in the early 1980s from the Islamist student movement that had formed on university campuses in loose affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, particularly from those members of the Brotherhood who had been imprisoned and tortured by Nasser and radicalised in prison.[86] Capitalising on the heated atmosphere after the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979, the *Gama'a* was able to take the protest from the universities to the streets. The confrontation with the security forces increased and became more violent, leading to a violent state response that culminated in a state crackdown on Islamists and members of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* following Sadat's assassination by *al-Jihad* in 1981. After 1981 the violence appeared to be under control and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* activities cooled down for a time, with some members of the group leaving the country to join the Islamist opposition in Afghanistan. In the early 1990s, however, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* resurfaced in Egypt and once again began violent resistance against the Egyptian state.[87]

The Emergence of Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya

Formation and Early Activities (1970s)

Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya emerged from the Islamist student movement of the 1970s. Initially, this movement was nonviolent and focused on organising religious study groups, Islamic summer camps, and providing social services such as cheap clothing, sewing lessons, and low-priced textbooks.[88] After Nasser's death in 1970 and his succession by Sadat, the student movement, which had grown out of demonstrations and opposition since the late 1960s,

[85] Gerhard Bowering, Patricia Crone and Mahan Mirza, *The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2013), 189; Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (University of California Press, 1985), 170; Gilles Kepel and Anthony Roberts, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (London: Tauris, 2014) 278.
[86] Roel Meijer, *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), 199.
[87] Bowering, Crone and Mirza, *The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought*, 189; Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 170.
[88] Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 199.

gained strength.[89] To counter left-wing and Nasserist political influences, Sadat encouraged the formation of Islamic student groups in universities and pardoned thousands of imprisoned members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The strengthening of Islamic student associations would lead to universities becoming the hotbeds of new Islamist movements and ideas.[90] The Islamic student associations' influence grew during the time of Sadat's presidency, making them the most influential group in the Egyptian Student Union. The associations effectively voiced criticisms about conditions on Egyptian campuses. Their grievances echoed those of many students, focusing on issues such as inadequate housing, transport and lecture facilities. While the group's ideological orientation centered on societal transformation guided by Islamic principles, their critique pointed to the unresolved practical challenges students face in their daily lives.[91] They managed to gain popularity by offering 'Islamic' solutions to some of the students' most pressing problems, for example offering study support, and the separation of male and female students to prevent sexual harassment. In 1973, the Islamic student associations organised their first summer camp, where students could meet and spend their time studying the Qur'an, participating in sports activities and praying together. Gilles Kepel writes about these summer camps: "The camps were meant to be a model of the future Islamic society that the young Islamicists intended to build on the ruins of *jahiliyya*."[92] In 1976 the associations already were the dominant force in the student movement and had far reaching control over the universities. Up until reaching the height of their dominance in 1977 the Egyptian government let the Islamic student associations go ahead with their activities. In return the associations did not oppose the government or Sadat to directly.[93]

Shift towards Aggressive Tactics (Late 1970s - 1980)

By 1980, the Islamic student associations had become the dominant force on university campuses and began using aggressive tactics such as closing down book fairs and burning literature deemed un-Islamic. This period saw a shift from addressing social issues to

[89] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt*, 130-132.
[90] Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine*, 98-99; Maurits Berger and Nadia Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," in *Sharia Incorporated: A Comparative Overview of the Legal Systems of Twelve Muslim Countries in Past and Present*, ed. Jan Michiel Otto (The Neatherlands: Leiden University Press, 2011), 51-88; Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt*, 133-34.
[91] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt*, 129-170; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad*, 83-84.
[92] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt*, 139.
[93] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt*, 129-146.

opposing the government, leading to demonstrations and clashes with authorities.[94] The tacit agreement between the associations and the Egyptian state collapsed after Sadat returned from his visit to Israel in 1977 and the realisation of the Egypt-Israeli peace treaty two years later. In Egypt, opposition to this treaty and to the policy of 'Economic Opening' grew, and the Islamic student associations began leveraging the heated atmosphere to advance their agenda, often in opposition to the government. This led to an initial distancing between the state and the associations. From the perspective of the state this also meant, that the student associations now posed a threat to the state. It responded with harsh measures by shutting down the financial support of the Student Union, manipulating student elections and prohibiting the summer camps that had become regular networking occasions for the movement. Those government reactions did not have the desired effects. The support for the Islamic student associations only grew in the years between 1979 and 1981. In addition, the movement was now forced to move their protest from the universities to the streets, where they began to recruit new members from the poorer neighborhoods on the outskirts of Egyptian cities. When clashes between Coptic Christians and Muslims in the upper Egypt city of Minya escalated in Spring 1980 with several people being killed and the Islamic student associations violently taking over the city's police station, the government finally had a reason to take measures against the group. Members of the associations were charged and arrested by the police. The arrests were followed by the dissolution of the Islamic student associations and appeared to have significantly weakened the movement. The atmosphere on Egyptian campuses changed, but the pressing social and cultural issues that had provided the Islamic student associations with fertile ground for agitation, such as housing, transport, or lecture facilities, remained unresolved.[95]

The Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya after 1981

In this chapter, I will trace *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* evolution from its origins in the early 1980s, after Sadat's assassination, to becoming the most active terrorist group in Egypt in the mid-1990s, to the group's declaration of non-violence in 1997.[96] The organisation sought to establish an Islamic state governed by Sharia law by overthrowing the Egyptian

[94] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt,* 129-146.
[95] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 129-170; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad,* 83-84.
[96] Ioana Emy Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya: From Terrorism to Nonviolence," in *The Violence Pendulum* (United States: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2020), 79-80.

government, which it considered un-Islamic. At the heart of their strategy was the mobilisation of the Muslim population against what they saw as a corrupt and Western-influenced regime. Their goals included destabilising the government through acts of violence and gaining popular support. The means they used included a range of activities like carrying out high-profile attacks such as assassinations and bombings against state representatives and later also tourists.[97]

Ideologically *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* was influenced by modern Islamic thinkers like Sayyid Qutb and classic Islamic theologians like Ibn Taimiya. Qutb, an influential Egyptian thinker and Islamist theorist, has profoundly shaped modern Islamic thought and activism. He became a leading figure in the Muslim Brotherhood, advocating the implementation of Sharia law and opposing Western influence in Muslim societies. In his texts Qutb ascribed great importance to organised movement to reaching the goal of political change and achieving an Islamic order, which was his primary concern. He was imprisoned under Nasser and wrote his most influential texts, like Signposts (*ma'alim fi'l-tariq*) which later was banned by the state, in prison. In 1966 he was sentenced to death. Qutb's ideas on jihad, governance, and social reform have inspired radical Islamist movements around the world. Derived from his worldview, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* saw Egyptian society as being in a state of *jahiliya* (period of ignorance before the advent of Islam) and themselves as the force to liberate society from this state of being by establishing an Islamic state based on Sharia. Inspired by Qutb's emphasis on *jihad* as both a spiritual and physical struggle, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* saw armed struggle as a legitimate means of achieving their goals. They believed that violent *jihad* was necessary to overthrow the corrupt, non-Islamic government.[98]

Sadat's Assassination and Emergence of Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (1981)

President Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1981 and the political measures that followed were significant events in the development of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. Under the leadership of Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the *Gama'a* emerged as a distinct organisation out of the

[97] Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine,* 98-119; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 79; Carrie Wickham Rosefsky, "The parallel Islamic Sector" in *Mobilizing Islam* (United States: Columbia University Press, 2002), 93-118.
[98] Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine,* 119; Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 38-43; Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 189-218; Mandaville, *Global Political Islam*, 76-83; John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the origins of radical Islamism* (London: Hurst and Company, 2010), 1-21, 103-138, 157-292.

weakened and internally divided Islamic student movement. By 1978, Islamic student associations had made significant gains in student union elections, initially using peaceful means such as shutting down book fairs and burning materials deemed contrary to Islamic principles. However, as tensions with the government grew, the tactics gradually escalated. After 1979 the divisions within the student movement grew deeper, which led to the emergence of two distinct factions: *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* and *al-Jihad*. When Sadat was assassinated by members of *al-Jihad* in 1981 his successor Muhammad Hosni Mubarak reacted with a crackdown on Islamist forces in the country. This included the reinstatement of the emergency law that had been suspended since 1980.[99]

Increased Violence and Government Repression (Late 1980s – Early 1990s)

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the *Gama'a's* increased involvement in violence, including riots and assassination attempts against high-profile government officials. This led to a vicious cycle of state repression and further escalation.[100] After Sadat's assassination, many *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* members had been imprisoned and the group had remained dormant until 1984, when the first members were released from prison, only to resurface in early 1987 and unleash a new wave of violence against state officials. This period marked the beginning of intensified violent activities. In the late 1980s, the *Gama'a* had taken control of a number of regions in the country through the use of violent means. In 1989 the group attempted to kill Zaki Badr the Egyptian interior minister and the next year attempted to assassinate his successor, Abdel-Halim Moussa, and succeeded in killing Rifaat Mahgoub, the speaker of the People's Assembly (*Majlis al-Shaab)*. In response to these incidents, the state banned preaching in mosques and giving or attending lectures. Additionally, the police used increasingly heavy-handed tactics when clashing with protesters.[101]

[99] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 129, 170; Bowering, Crone and Mirza, *The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought*, 189; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 79-85; Berger and Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," 64.
[100] Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad*, 276-288; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 83-85.
[101] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* 129, 170; Bowering, Crone and Mirza, *The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought*, 189; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 79-85; Berger and Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," 276-288; Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 200.

Shift to Targeting Civilians and Tourists (1992 - 1997)

In 1992, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* shifted its focus from targeting state representatives to attacking civilians and tourists, beginning with the assassination of secularist writer Farag Foda. Foda's writings and public statements condemning Islamist ideologies and advocating for secularism made him a target for radical Islamists. He was accused of blasphemy and apostasy, leading to threats against his life. On 8 June 1992, he was assassinated by members of Al-*Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. The reaction of the state was immediate. The men responsible for Foda's murder were sentenced to death in June of the following year. In October 1994 Naguib Mahfouz, a celebrated Egyptian writer, was stabbed by a member of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* because one of his novels was perceived as blasphemous for its portrayal of religious figures. In April of 1996 the group was responsible for the killing of eight Greek tourists in Cairo and in September the following year for that of eleven German tourists in Tahrir Square. On 17 November 1997 the *Gama'a* killed 60 tourists in Luxor. This was the last attack the group officially took responsibility for.[102]

Nonviolent Initiative and Ceasefire (1997-2002)

Following the Luxor attack, senior leaders of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* announced a nonviolent initiative in 1997. By 1999, the organization enforced a permanent ceasefire and by 2002, the group had largely renounced violent actions.[103] The peace initiative emerged amid a complex web of internal and external pressures on *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. Ongoing low-level conflict, coupled with trials that resulted in death sentences for its members, forced the *Gama'a* to rethink its strategies. One of the key events that led to this shift was the Luxor attack. This incident had led to a brutal state response that had permanently weakened the group, with many of its members being detained in prison. In addition, a growing support for peace initiatives signalled a broader recognition within the organisation of the need for a change in approach. Taken together, these factors precipitated the release of the 1997 Peace Initiative, reflecting a strategic shift for the *Gama'a* towards diplomacy and non-violent methods.[104]

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[102] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 83-85; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad,* 276-288.
[103] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 83-85, 110-112; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad,* 276-288.
[104] Meijer, *Global Salafism,* 207-210; Rohan Gunaratna and Mohamed Bin Ali, "De-Radicalization Initiatives in Egypt: A Preliminary Insight," *Studies in conflict and terrorism Vol. 32*, no. 4 (2009-04): 277-291.

4.2 Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya and the State

Between 1980 and 1997, the Egyptian state's response to *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* was primarily one of confrontation and repression. The Egyptian government viewed the *Gama'a* as a serious threat to the stability of the country and its authority. As a result, the government launched a comprehensive crackdown on the group, including arrests, trials before military courts and imprisonment of its members. The most significant events of this period were the assassination of President Sadat in 1981 and the wave of violence that erupted in the 1990s, culminating in the Luxor massacre in 1997. These events further intensified the government's efforts to suppress the group. Overall, the Egyptian state's response to *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* during this period was characterised by a combination of security measures, military operations and legal action aimed at dismantling the organisation and preventing its activities.[105]

The Gam'a under Sadat – Shift from Strategic Accommodation to Suppression

Unlike his predecessor, in the beginning of his presidency Sadat had adopted a more accommodating stance toward Islam. He positioned himself as a devout Muslim and included Islamic references in his speeches, earning the nickname 'the Believer President'. Sadat pursued a policy of economic liberalisation and political openness, known as *Infitah* (open door policy). As part of this policy, he released many imprisoned Muslim Brothers and allowed them greater freedom to operate. Sadat's efforts to legitimise his regime involved empowering Islamist groups as a counterbalance to leftist and Nasserist opposition. This led to a revival of Islamic institutions and the proliferation of Islamist discourse. However, Sadat's peace treaty with Israel in 1979 alienated many Islamists, who viewed the treaty as a betrayal of Islamic principles. While Sadat had initially pursued a policy of accommodation, in the last years of his presidency he could no longer control the Islamist forces that he had strengthened during the course of his presidency. In a last and unsuccessful attempt, he tried to regain control over the radicalising Islamist groups in the country through applying harsh political measures.[106]

[105] Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt*, 33-49; Yasar, *A comparison between state strategies*, 143-232.
[106] Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt*, 24-33, 52-65; Yasar, *A comparison between state strategies*, 143-232.

From the early 1980s, the Egyptian state, under the leadership of President Anwar Sadat, initiated a series of measures aimed at curbing the influence of Islamist groups in the country. Sadat's repressive measures targeted Islamist activities both on and off campuses, seeing them as a potential source of political destabilisation. These measures included taking control of privately-owned mosques, increasing security on campuses, and imposing restrictions such as a ban on female students wearing face-veils. In April 1980 clashes between the *Gama'a* and police forces escalated in Alexandria, following tensions between the Coptic and Muslim population in the city.[107] In June 1981 these confrontations reached a peak in response to which Sadat demanded that strict security measures be put in place and "the toughest punitive articles of the law"[108] would be used. On 4 September, in response to the ongoing clashes between Muslims and Copts, the state closed both Coptic and Islamist opposition newspapers and clamped down on both groups, with numerous arrests on both sides. On day later, Sadat proclaimed the "'September 5 revolution' to 'signal the inception of total confrontation with all those who manifest extremism under the pretext of religion and exploit religion for political purposes and to bring about sectarian sedition.'"[109]. This 'revolution' entailed the ban and dissolution of various religious groups, the freezing of funds and taking over of property, the dismission of journalists and university professors that were deemed opposition by the state, and around 1,500 arrests. Despite these severe measures, his attempt to pacify and control the radical Islamist forces in the country came too late; Sadat was assassinated by radical Islamists in October 1981.[110]

The Gama'a under Mubarak - Controlled Pluralism and Repression

Mubarak, as Sadat's predecessor, maintained tight control over political life while allowing a limited degree of political pluralism. While Mubarak allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to contest in parliamentary elections as independents, he periodically tightened his grip on the organisation to ensure it did not become too powerful. This repression included arrests, harassment, and restrictions on their activities. Mubarak supported state-controlled Islamic institutions, such as *Al-Azhar University*, to promote a moderate version of Islam and

[107] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 129-170; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad*, 83-84; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 88-91.
[108] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89.
[109] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 90.
[110] Kepel, *Muslim extremism in Egypt* , 129-170; Kepel and Roberts, *Jihad*, 83-84; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 88-91.

counteract extremist ideologies. This policy aimed to co-opt religious authority and maintain control over religious discourse. Mubarak faced significant challenges from radical Islamist organisations and responded with harsh security measures to suppress these groups.[111]

When Sadat was assassinated in October 1981, his successor Hosni Mubarak reinstated the emergency law and with all the means at its disposal clamped down on Islamist forces in Egypt. Between 1981 and 1984, many members of the group were imprisoned, significantly disrupting the organisation.[112] In his inaugural speech to the People's Assembly (*Majlis al-Shaab*) on 8 November 1981, which he opened with the *Basmala*, Mubarak addressed his "brothers and sisters"[113] and remembered Sadat's presidency. In his speech he focused on the unity and cohesion of the Egyptian people.[114] Mubarak also addressed the topic of terrorism and painted a picture of 'barbarism and darkness' against 'innocence and civilisation':

> Brothers and sisters, the phenomenon of bloody terrorism recently invaded our life. It was terrorism that sought to destroy every building; a barbaric terrorism which schemed and plotted in the dark to destroy everything and to impose a rule of injustice and darkness; a rash abhorrent terrorism led by backward groups which resorted to bloodshed and crime to kill innocent people, undermine every honest value, and abort all civilized progress; a grudgeful evil terrorism which sought to turn the Egypt of love and life into a swamp of blood and mutilated limbs and a field for the rule of the gallows and the demagogue murderers; a terrorism which intruded upon religion and faith and was an enemy of knowledge and development and chose treachery and fire to destroy the edifice of man and do away with all the foundations of our life and existence.[115]

A new phase of state suppression of *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* began in 1986 when Zaki Badr became minister of the interior. Under his leadership state measures against the *Gama'a* intensified which meant the closing down of mosques, the prohibition of lectures, and interfering in student elections. The period from 1986 to 1989 saw aggressive repression and an increase in arrests that was a turning point for *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. The state increasingly used torture against suspects and detainees. Egypt pursued a dual strategy in its fight against *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. First, it arrested large numbers of *Al-Gama'a al-*

[111] Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt*, 33-48; Yasar, *A comparison between state strategies*, 183-217; Wickham Rosefsky, "The parallel Islamic Sector," 103.
[112] Ioana Emy Matesan, "Grievances and Fears in Islamist Movements: Revisiting the Link between Exclusion, Insecurity, and Political Violence," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5, no. 1 (2020-01): 44-62; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89-91; Lisa Blaydes and Lawrence Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism: Confronting Militant Islam in Egypt," *Terrorism and Political Violence Vol. 20*, no. 4 (2008-10): 461-479; Geneive Abdo, *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 19-25.
[113] Hosni Mubarak, "Mubarak People's Assembly Speech," transcript of speech delivered in Cairo, November8, 1981.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

Islamiyya members, some 3,000 Islamists in 1987. Second, it engaged in dialogue with the group's leaders to negotiate an end to the violence. *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* leaders agreed to de-escalate tensions on the condition that its prisoners were released from jail, propaganda bans were lifted and the use of torture by the state was stopped. The Egyptian government did not meet the demands of the group and no end of violence could be achieved. The repressive measures taken by the Egyptian state, instead of suppressing Islamist activism, only served to further radicalise elements within the *Gama'a*. Feeling marginalised and persecuted, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* leaders sought to fight back against the government.[116]

In the 1990s the violence escalated again when the spokesman for the *Gama'a* was killed and members of the group then attempted to assassinate the Minister of the Interior, killing the speaker of the People's Assembly (*Majlis al-Shaab)* in the process. The state's repression of the group increased so much in the years until 1997 that Ioana Matesan describes the state of the conflict at that time as "a war between the state and the organization."[117] In December 1992, the state orchestrated a five-week assault on the Imbaba district of Cairo, mobilising a force of fourteen thousand soldiers. In the course of this action, the state resorted to indiscriminate measures and violence in an attempt to crush the Islamist movements influence in the district. The period, from 1990 to 1997, witnessed a vicious cycle of escalating state repression and violence by the group, taking a heavy toll not only on the *Gama'a* but also on the wider population. Faced with mounting pressure and the rising costs of violence, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* announced a non-violent initiative in 1997.[118]

One of the most important tools used by the Egyptian state to combat Islamist groups in the country has been the Emergency Law. It has been used since 1956 with only short periods of interruption and grants the president sweeping powers. Under the law, authorities can detain people without trial, censor the media and restrict public gatherings. While supporters argue that it is necessary to combat terrorism and maintain stability, critics condemn its use to suppress dissent and political opposition. Its use has also raised concerns among human rights organisations, highlighting the delicate balance between security measures and the

[116] Matesan, "Grievances and Fears," 44-62; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89-91; Blaydes and Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism," 461-479; Abdo, *No God but God,* 19-25.
[117] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 91.
[118] Matesan, "Grievances and Fears," 56-57; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89-91; Blaydes and Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism," 466; Abdo, *No God but God,* 19-25.

protection of civil liberties. The law has to be renewed by parliament every three years, with the fight against terrorism always being cited as justification for its extension.[119] Human rights organisations such as Amnesty International have criticised the law for encouraging human rights abuse: "The emergency legislation confers wide powers on security officials and the executive authority. These powers facilitate numerous violations of human rights, including arbitrary detention, torture or other ill-treatment and unfair trials, violations that have been perpetrated with impunity over many years."[120]

In 1992, an Anti-Terror law was passed that granted the president even greater powers. The Law not only criminalises members of the non-violent political opposition, but also targets individuals allegedly associated with Islamist groups. The law makes it possible for the president to refer cases to military courts, which offer fewer legal protections and often result in summary executions. It also empowers the security forces and the public prosecutor, restricting fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, association and assembly.[121]

The Egyptian state began trying so-called terrorism cases before military courts in 1992. As reasons for referring cases to military tribunals Mubarak stated national security concerns and the possibility of expedited trials. He put an emphasis on safeguarding Egypt's stability and protecting the civilian judiciary from potential terrorist threats. Mubarak suggested that the use of military courts could help deter individuals or groups that pose a threat to the lives and livelihoods of the Egyptian people. Mubarak also emphasised that military courts would be used for cases requiring quick action, indicating a desire for speedy justice to address issues affecting Egypt's stability, economy and the general welfare of its people. The Alexandria Military Trial in 1992 was the first of its kind to bring civilians before a military court. Forty-seven defendants were tried in two trials and eight men were sentenced to death, seven of them in absentia.[122] In March 1993 the state referred more cases of terrorism against tourists to the military court in Cairo. This decision was supposedly

[119] Berger and Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," 61-79; Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine*, 154-155; Diane Singerman, "The Politics of Emergency Rule in Egypt," *Current History Vol.101*, no. 651 (2002-01): 29-35.
[120] Amnesty International "Egypt: Systematic abuses in the name of security," Amnesty International. April 11, 2007.
[121] Singerman, "The Politics of Emergency Rule," 30; Amnesty International, "Egypt – Systematic abuses in the name of security."
[122] Human Rights Watch, "Egypt: Trials of civilians in military courts violate international law," Human Rights Watch. July, 1993. Anis, Kassim, "Civilians before military courts : the trial of Muslim fundamentalists in Egypt," *The Review*, no.51 (1993): 49-55.

aimed at ensuring a speedy resolution and the imposition of deterrent sentences for crimes that harmed Egypt's economy and security. The first trial under this directive began on 9 March 1993 in the Supreme Military Court at the Hakstep military base near Cairo. Forty-nine civilian defendants were on trial, accused of various offences including conspiracy against the government and attacking tourists. The defendants reported off torture which they said had taken place in prison over the course of the trial. Seven defendants who had been sentenced to death where hanged on 8 July 1997. Twenty-five others were sentenced to life imprisonment.[123]

In the 1990s a number of human rights organisations emerged in Egypt, openly criticising the states actions in their confrontation with *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. In his attempt to stay in power, Mubarak had used a great deal of violence, especially against the political opposition. The security apparatus was particularly important in carrying out this repression. The main actors in this security apparatus were the military, the state security police (*amn al-dawla*) and the secret service (*mukhabarat*). These actors carried out surveillance of political opponents, brutal repression of uprisings, arrests of Islamists and torture in prisons.[124] Local and international human rights organisations had long criticised Egypt's human rights record. They highlighted several specific issues, including routine torture, arbitrary detention and unfair trials conducted by military and state security courts.[125] The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) described the situation related to torture as follows in its report in 1995: "torture was practised routinely in prisons, State Security Intelligence (SSI) facilities, Central Security Forces (CSF) detention camps and police stations. The frequency of the practice was said to have risen sharply with the concomitant increase in political activities, especially by certain Islamic groups."[126] Over the years Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the United States Department among others have repeatedly underlined the poor human rights situation in the country. They were reporting of extrajudicially executions: "Dozens of people were killed by the

[123] Kassim, "Civilians before military courts," 50-53.
[124] Berger and Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," 68; Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine,* 13-14.
[125] UNHCR, "Question of the human rights of all persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment, in particular torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment : report of the Special Rapporteur, Nigel S. Rodley, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1992/32," Refworld. January 12, 1995; Amnesty International Reports 1992-1998; Human Rights Watch World Report 1992 – 1998.
[126] UNHCR, "Question of the human rights of all persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment."

security forces in circumstances suggesting that some had been extrajudicially executed."[127], torture in prison: "Long-term detention without charge or trial, torture, extreme isolation of political prisoners in appalling conditions, a sharp rise in deaths in custody, and continuing executions of civilians condemned to death by military courts were features of the dismal human rights picture in 1995."[128], unfair trials: "On 3 December a military court in Alexandria sentenced eight alleged members of Gihad to death after an unfair trial."[129], and the ill-treatment of nonviolent persons: "Although most of the arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and torture were perpetrated on suspected members of terrorist groups, the police also victimized nonviolent Islamic activists and ordinary citizens."[130]

Under President Sadat, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* initially benefited from a more accommodating stance aimed at countering left-wing influences. However, as the group's opposition became more militant, Sadat responded with repression, culminating in a harsh crackdown in 1981. Under President Mubarak, the state maintained a strategy of controlled pluralism accompanied by repression. Tight security, mass arrests, the use of the emergency law, and torture marked this era, creating a cycle of violence between the state and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. The violations of human rights and civil liberties that accompanied the measures taken by the state were criticised by a number of different human rights organisations. The overarching pattern in the state's framing of the *Gama'a* is the process of securitisation. The Egyptian state securitised the *Gama'a* by framing it as a terrorist threat, endangering the freedom and security of the Egyptian people. In doing so, the state gathered support and approval for the measures taken to fight the organisation.

[127] Amnesty International "Amnesty International Annual Report 1994" Amnesty International. January 1, 1994.
[128] Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Watch World Report 1996," Human Rights Watch.
[129] Amnesty International. "Amnesty International Annual Report 1993." Amnesty International. January 1, 1993.
[130] United States Department of State, "U.S. Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 1993 – Egypt," Refworld. January 30, 1994.

5 Comparing State Framing in Egypt and Germany

Bringing together the findings from the previous chapters, the similarities and differences of the two case studies are going to be compared and analysed to understand what influenced the state's response to a perceived terrorist threat, respectively. The chosen categories for comparison are the organisation that is identified as a terrorist threat, the speech act (state's declaration of said threat), the referent object that is portrayed as being under threat, and the measures taken by the state to counter the perceived threat. These categories were chosen because they are extremely helpful in explaining the similarities and differences in the state's framing of the two organisations. First, describing the organisations that were framed as terrorist threats makes it clear what the respective states reacted to and gives some indication as to why this reaction and subsequent framing were similar in some respects and different in others. Second, the speech act, or in this case, an example of a series of speech acts, is central to understanding the securitisation of the two groups by their state and the subsequent state framing. Thirdly, the question of what the state defines as the referent object is very helpful in understanding its reasoning in framing the organisation and justifying measures taken to combat it. Finally, the actions taken to combat these groups perfectly illustrate the practical application of the framing described above.

A threat to the state: RAF and Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya

The radicalisation of the RAF was influenced by opposition to the state, in particular to right-wing tendencies that were a remnant of the Nazi era. In addition, the Vietnam War, opposition to a supposedly capitalist and imperialist state system and brutal police action against demonstrators further accelerated this radicalisation process. The RAF was not afraid to use violent means to achieve their goals. Strategically, they targeted representatives of the state in order to weaken the state, and later they continued to also target representatives of the perceived capitalist system. Ideologically the RAF was driven by Marxist-Leninist, and anti-imperialist ideologies and was influenced also by Castroism and Maoism. They saw West Germany as a puppet of American imperialism and a state with lingering fascist influences. The RAF also criticised consumer culture, seeing it as a tool of capitalist oppression. The German state, just coming to terms with its recent past of dictatorship, the failure of the Weimarer Republic and National Socialism, was struggling to find a balance between combating the radical left-wing organisation and upholding democratic values such

as civil liberties. Politically the German government clearly distanced itself from the radical leftist ideology of the RAF.[131]

Emerging from the student movement on Egyptian campuses in the 1970s, *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* radicalisation process was shaped by political repression, especially the torture experienced by some Islamists in Nasser's prisons, ideological influences such as those of Sayyid Qutb, and the socio-economic conditions in Egypt at the time. From its beginnings, the *Gama'a* was not afraid to use violence to achieve its goals. In an effort to weaken the Egyptian state, they targeted state officials and later began to attack groups that were important pillars of Egyptian society, such as tourists and religious minorities. *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya's* ideology focused on the implementation of Sharia law and the establishment of an Islamic state in Egypt. Sayyid Qutb's ideas were particularly influential, advocating political change through organised movements and emphasising jihad as both a spiritual and physical struggle. *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* saw Egyptian society as being in a state of *jahiliya* (ignorance) and believed they were the force to liberate it by overthrowing the government through violent means. The Egyptian state already had a history of dealing with Islamist opposition in the country, when the *Gama'a* emerged in 1981. Nasser had clamped down on the Muslim Brotherhood during his time in office. When Sadat released members of the Brotherhood from prison to combat leftist and Nasserist opposition, he also released those Islamists who had been radicalised in prison, triggering a process of further radical Islamisation in the country.[132]

Comparing the two cases, at first glance, there appear to be many factors that distinguish the two organisations, such as differences in ideology, country of origin or state system they operated in. However, there are clear parallels between the RAF and the *Gama'a*. Both organisations were ideologically driven, believing that the society from which they emerged was corrupt and that the state was to blame for this. From this belief, both groups derived the goal of overthrowing the state with violent means.

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[131] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 172-192; Poiger, "Generations," 640-658; Hoffmann, "Germany Is No More", 593-607; Port, "Democracy and Dictatorship in the Cold War".
[132] Albrecht, *Raging Against the Machine*, 98; Nafi, *The Islamists*, 179-180; Gorman, "Introduction: Occupation, Independence, Revolution," 7-20; Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt*, 19-33; Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the origins of radical Islamism*, 1-21, 103-138, 157-292.

Speech Act – Calling it "Terrorism"

The two speeches compared in this subchapter are representative of a number of other speeches with similar content and framing. I chose them because they were both held in similar circumstances. Both speeches were held under the impression of a perceived escalating security threat; both were addressed to the parliament; both were delivered by the respective heads of state; and therefore, they served as good examples for comparison.

In his government statement on 15 September 1977, chancellor Helmut Schmidt responded to the kidnapping of Hanns-Martin Schleyer by the RAF by emphasising the need for the rule of law and national unity. In his speech, Schmidt framed the RAF as a serious terrorist threat to the basic principles of a free and democratic society. He characterised the actions of the organisation as attacks not only on their immediate victims, but on the entire social order of the German state. Schmidt also emphasised that these acts were intended to undermine the government and create chaos, but asserted that the state was not powerless and would ultimately defeat terrorism with the support of the public. Schmidt's framing was clear: terrorism and with that the RAF was an irrational, criminal attack on democratic values and the rule of law. What stands out in the speech is the attempt to radiate calm and rationality, to demonstrate unity in the face of perceived terror and to make clear the capacity of the state to act. Schmidt put great emphasis on the maintenance of the rule of law and on the importance of freedom and security. Whilst emphasising the importance of the rule of law, Schmidt still made clear that he was willing "to go to the limits of what [...] the rule of law allows and what it [...] demands"[133].[134]

In his inaugural speech to the people's assembly (*Majlis al-Shaab*) on 8 November 1981, shortly after Sadat's assassination, president Mubarak addressed the perceived terrorist threat posed by *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. Mubarak opened his speech with the *Basmala* adressing his "brothers and sisters"[135] and remembering Sadats presidency with benevolent words. In his speech he focused on the unity and cohesion of the Egyptian people. He repeatedly used words and phrases like "unity", "lover of Egypt", or "brothers" underscoring this narrative.[136] Mubarak described terrorism as a major threat to national stability and security and painted a picture of 'barbarism and darkness' against 'innocence

[133] Deutscher Bundestag, "Stenographischer Bericht 42. Sitzung," 3165.
[134] Deutscher Bundestag, "Stenographischer Bericht 42. Sitzung," 3164-3166.
[135] Mubarak, "Mubarak People's Assembly Speech".
[136] Ibid.

and civilisation'. Mubarak condemned the *Gama'a's* activities, portraying them as actions that not only endangered lives but also threatened the development of the nation. By framing *Gama'a* members as enemies of the state, he aimed to mobilise public support for harsh measures against them, including the enforcement of the emergency law and increased security measures. The use of religious language, such as the use of the *Basmala* and the repeated mention of God, is particularly interesting in this context. This language was intended to resonate with a predominantly Muslim audience. Mubarak had to find a balance between condemning Islamist radicalism and at the same time, in so doing, not alienating the non-violent Muslim and Islamist parts of society he needed to realise his political goals. By framing the organisation in this way, Mubarak positioned himself as a defender of both national security and religious values, aiming to consolidate his legitimacy and authority in the wake of Sadat's assassination.[137]

In both speeches, the framing of the organisation as a terrorist threat is followed by a condemnation of terrorism and a call for national unity. Both leaders in calling the respective organisation terrorist, frame them as a threat to democratic principles, national stability and security, and emphasise the need for unity in confronting this common enemy. In addition, both speeches aim to rally public support for decisive action against this security threat. Through their speeches, both leaders reaffirm the state's ability and determination to combat terrorism, thereby reinforcing their leadership and authority in times of crisis. By analysing those speech acts it becomes apparent, that both states securitised the two organisations by labeling them as terrorist threats. They do so to justify the counter measures taken and to assert power over the public narrative. Priya Dixit writes about the connection between the sate framing of an issue as terrorism and the exercise of power: "the use of terrorism rhetoric is itself a way by and through which state actors attempt to establish control over their citizens and over the space within which state security forces can operate. By demarcating terrorists and 'not-terrorists' […] the state operates in a way that those deemed terrorist can be incarcerated and acts of terrorism managed."[138] Additionally, the

[137] Mubarak, "Mubarak People's Assembly Speech"; Basheer Ibrahim Elghayesh, "Mubarak's Use of Religion in his Political Discourse," *CDELT Occasional Papers in the Development of English Education Vol. 62*, no. 1 (12-2016): 331-344; Oluchukwu Asadu, "Speech act analysis: Hosni mubarak's speeches in pre-crises and in-crises Egypt," *Mgbakoigba: Journal of African Studies Vol.2* (2013): 82-88.
[138] Bettina Koch, *State Terror, State Violence: Global Perspectives* (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2015), 33.

measures taken to fight this declared terrorist threat become permissible in the perception of the general public and therefore they accept them.[139]

Defending the State: Freedom and Security

What a state claims to be protecting against a proclaimed security threat is of great importance when analysing the framing of that threat. By showing the general public what they have to lose if one of the organisations should prevail, it is possible to secure support for even unusual measures and win over an otherwise potentially critical public. In the case of Germany, the state was claiming to protect democracy, which was often equated with freedom in the state's narrative, and security from the threat the RAF posed. The Egyptian state emphasised the importance of freedom and security, as well as the unity of the Egyptian people. State framing of perceived security threats plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and garnering support for state actions. In both cases, the state framed the organisation in a way that strategically emphasised values that resonate with their populations. By emphasising values like freedom and security, the states aimed to garner public support for their actions while presenting themselves as the guardians of the nation's interests. This strategic framing serves to legitimise state interventions and policies by presenting them as necessary measures against an extraordinary threat.

Combating a "Terrorist" Threat: Measures employed by the state

Justified by framing the organisations as a threat to freedom and security, both states implemented various measures to combat the respective organisation, which have already been discussed in detail in chapters three and four and will be compared and analysed below.

In the years between 1970 and 1998 law enforcement was systematically strengthened by the German state as the concept of internal security (*Innere Sicherheit*) became increasingly important in the 1970s, which is partly due to the challenges posed by the RAF. Among other things, in response to the activities of the RAF the powers of the police in countering terrorism were extended. This included additional surveillance powers and the authority to carry out more extensive checks and searches of suspicious persons. In addition, special units such as the *GSG 9* were founded, which were later deployed in the

[139] Koch, *State Terror, State Violence,*31-47.

liberation of the Lufthansa aircraft *Landshut*.[140] A number of laws were enacted or changed in reaction to the challenge the RAF presented to the state. Particularly noteworthy here are the Contact Ban from September 1977, as well as the Anti-Terror Law from August 1976. These and other laws have made it possible to isolate detained terrorists by severely restricting their contact with lawyers and others in order to prevent communication and coordination of criminal activity. These changes clearly restricted the rights of the accused and their lawyers. The News Blackout that was realised with the approval of the German media landscape, is also worth mentioning here. This measure clearly restricted the freedom of the press and thus constituted a far-reaching violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the German Basic Law.[141] These changes are of particular interest for the present analysis, as such intervention by the state in the law highlight the extent to which the German state must have felt threatened by the organisation. Like mentioned before, the trials against the accused members of the RAF took an unusual form compared to the way legal proceedings were usually conducted in Germany at the time. In Germany the fact that a special courthouse was built exclusively for the RAF-Trials shows the exceptionalisation of the trials as well as the organisation by the state.[142] The conditions in custody and the question of whether the German state tortured RAF-members in prison is the subject of controversial debate. It is clear however that human rights organisations have critisised the difficult conditions under which the prisoners had to life in their *Stammheim* prison cells. In an extensive and detailed analysis of the torture debate and prison conditions in Stuttgart Stammheim, Christoph Riederer concludes that although the prison conditions for RAF members were challenging and in some cases harsh, they could not be described as torture: "Overall, however, this study concludes that the acts of the terrorists became a touchstone for the rule of law and humanity and that the values of 'human rights' and 'rule of law' can be seen as the 'winners' of this conflict in the conflict over the conditions of detention."[143].[144]

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[140] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 14-22; Klaus Weinhauer, "Staatsmacht ohne Grenzen? Innere Sicherheit, 'Terrorismus'-Bekämpfung und die bundesdeutsche Gesellschaft der 1970er Jahre," in *Rationalitäten der Gewalt: Staatliche Neurodnungen vom 19. Bis zum 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Susanne Krasmann and Jürgen Martschukat (Germany: Transcript Verlag, 2007), 215-238.
[141] Kraushaar, "Der nicht erklärte Ausnahmezustand"; Deutscher Bundestag, "Historische Debatten (8)"; Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung"; Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 13-16, 107-108; Redaktion der bpb, "1976: Anti-Terror-Paragraph wird eingeführt"; Hürter and Rusconi, *Die bleiernen Jahre*, 113-16.
[142] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 15; Stammheim-Protokoll, "Verlauf und Bedeutung".
[143] Christoph Riederer, *Die RAF und die Folterdebatte der 1970er Jahre* (Wiesbaden: Springer: 2014), 345.
[144] Riederer, *Die RAF und die Folterdebatte*, 333-346.

To summarise, it can be said that the measures taken by the German state to fight the RAF restricted civil liberties like freedom of the press, attorney-client privilege, and right to defence. In addition, an exeptionalisation of the acts and perpetrators can be observed, especially in the course of the trials.

From 1980 to 1997, the Egyptian state used a major show of force against *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* executed by police and law enforcement. An example of this is the deployment of fourteen thousand soldiers to the Imbaba district to regain control after the *Gama'a* had gained dominance of large parts of the district.[145] Legally the reinstatement of the emergency law was an incisive moment in the course of the state's fight against *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*. The law gave authorities the power to arrest and detain people for long periods of time without sufficient justification. Although often defended as a necessary measure against terrorism and radical Islamism, the law was frequently used to carry out crackdowns on opposition groups and to unjustly arrest and detain journalists and human rights defenders. Additionally, the introduction of the Anti-Terror Law, which gave the president even greater powers, in 1992 was a noteworthy change in legislation.[146] The Egyptian state reacted with harsh measures to the actions of the *Gama'a*. Hugh waves of arrests, as a result of which many members of the group were imprisoned and put on trial, continued to weaken the group over the years. Brutal interrogation methods and torture have been used repeatedly, especially in prisons. This was frequently denounced and criticised by human rights organisations.[147] In 1992 the first so called terrorism cases were tried before military courts. This approach seriously undermined civil and human rights. By bypassing the civilian judiciary, these courts undermined fair trial standards, reinforced the use of torture, and suppressed political dissent.[148] In addition to those measures, the Egyptian state tried to intervene against *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* by closing newspapers, closing down mosques, and by prohibiting certain lectures and demonstrations. Overall, the Egyptian state has been extremely harsh on *Gama'a* members and has violated various human rights in an attempt to combat the group. Apart from the far-reaching restrictions on the freedom of the press,

[145] Matesan, "Grievances and Fears," 56-57; Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89-91; Blaydes and Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism," 466; Abdo, *No God but God*, 19-25.
[146] Berger and Sonneveld, "Sharia and National Law in Egypt," 80-81. Amnesty International, "Egypt – Systematic abuses in the name of security"; Singerman, "The Politics of Emergency Rule," 30.
[147] For a detailed account on human rights violations in Egyptian prisons see: Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Watch World Report 1992," Human Rights Watch.
[148] Human Rights Watch, "Egypt: Trials of civilians in military courts violate international law," Human Rights Watch, July, 1993; Kassim, "Civilians before military courts," 49-55.

religion and assembly the frequent use of torture in prisons is particularly noteworthy and has undoubtedly contributed significantly to the further radicalisation of detainees.[149]

When comparing the measures taken by each state to combat the respective organisation, one finds that in both cases, the state violated civil liberties and exeptionalised the group and their acts. At the same time, it is to be observed that the measures taken by the Egyptian state were much more violent and unrestricted. The use of torture in prisons as well as the application of the emergency law takes the Egyptian state's violence to another level. In both cases, the changes in legislation are an indication of the extent to which the organisations were perceived as a threat by the state.

State Framing of "Terrorist" Organisations – A Balance sheet

When comparing the state framing of the RAF in Germany and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt, it becomes apparent that both states securitised the respective organisation in a similar manner. This process entails framing the organisation as a security issue, specifically a terrorist threat, through a series of speech acts, from which I analysed two examples in this chapter. By appealing to the population's fears through the rhetoric of terrorism, the general public accepted the application of unusual measures.

The intensity of the measures applied by the state however differed considerably between the two cases. In both instances civil liberties were violated and there are considerable examples in which the reaction of the German state was very harsh and the implications of those measures should not be underestimated. At the same time, the reaction of the Egyptian state was much more violent than that of the German state. Additionally, the German state was in the position of being able to clearly distance itself from the leftist ideology of the RAF whilst the Egyptian state had to find an acceptable balance between condemning the acts of the *Gama'a* and at the same time not losing the much-needed support of Muslim and Islamist groups in the country. In contrast to Egypt, in 1987 the German state entered a reflective phase and started questioning its behaviour towards the RAF, admitted its own mistakes and consequently began to reverse the measures it had taken against the RAF. Fighting opposition groups with the same means as in the days of the RAF is no longer

[149] Matesan, "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," 89-90.

common practice in Germany today. In Egypt, however, the situation deteriorated in the years that followed.[150]

Looking at the overarching question of what influences a state's framing of a perceived terrorist threat, a look at the historical as well as sociopolitical background of each country is very helpful. Stephan Scheiper describes in detail how the generation of political decision-makers in Germany from the 1970s to the 1990s was shaped by the failure of the Weimar Republic and its consequences, such as economic decline and dictatorship, as well as by the extreme experiences of war. The result was a fundamental rejection of ideologies that promised salvation, a willingness to actively shape and defend democracy and to prevent the collapse of the political system (as experienced in the Weimar Republic) by any means necessary.[151] In Egypt first Sadat and then Mubarak were in the difficult position of not wanting to estrange the Islamist forces in the country completely and at the same time trying to condemn the violent actions of the *Gama'a*. In this context, both tried to solve the problem with a dual policy of repression and pacification. At the beginning of his term, Sadat had even strengthened Islamist forces in order to protect his political power against the left-wing opposition. Towards the end of his term, however, he also took violent action against radical Islamist groups in the country. Mubarak then continued on this course.[152]

These political and historical backgrounds significantly influenced the actions of both states. Although the similarities in state framing in the two selected cases seem far-fetched on first glance, what connects both cases is the process of securitising the respective organisation as a terror threat. The differences, however, paint a much clearer picture of what might influence a state's reaction to a perceived terrorist threat. I argue that a difference in political system and resent history are influential factors contributing to a state's reaction to a terrorist threat. The chosen case-studies analysed in this chapter provide information that supports this thesis. As described before, the German state and its representatives, strongly influenced by its recent past seem to have tried to prevent a renewed threat to democracy at all costs. In doing so, they probably overestimated the danger posed by the RAF to the state and overstated it to the public. As a result, the state framing and reaction were excessive in some instances. This fact has already been discussed in detail in this thesis. However, from 1978 onwards, a period of reflection ensued, leading to the scaling back of the measures and

[150] Klausing and von Wiczlinski, *Die RAF*, 14-22.
[151] Scheiper, *Innere Sicherhei*, 103-105, 140.
[152] Shehata, *Islamists and Secularists in Egypt*, 19-49, 52-65.

Germany's successful exit from this critical period. This rethinking certainly was related to Germany's past, as the actors involved were all too aware of the serious consequences that excessive state-monopolised violence could have on society. Egypt, with a history of radical Islamist opposition posing a threat to the state constitution and the president, evidently felt a strong need to safeguard the state and the president. For Sadat and Mubarak, it seems to have been more important to secure their political influence in Egypt, first against leftist and Nasserist opposition, and later by cracking down on Islamist forces with a resounding amount of violence, than to ensure the compliance with fundamental human rights.

6 Conclusion

This study aimed to analyse the similarities and differences in state framing of a perceived terrorist threat by comparing two different case studies, namely the RAF in Germany and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt. The paper indicates that both Germany and Egypt securitised the RAF and *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya,* respectively, framing them as terrorist threats to justify extraordinary measures. While both states violated civil liberties, Germany's measures, while harsh, were less violent than Egypt's actions. Germany distanced itself from the RAF's left-wing ideology, while Egypt had to balance condemning *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* without alienating its Muslim population. By 1987, the German state had started to reconsider and reverse some of its measures, unlike Egypt, which continued its repressive tactics. Historical and socio-political contexts, such as Germany's past with the Weimar Republic and the Second World War, and Egypt's ongoing struggle with Islamist opposition, significantly influenced their responses. It can be concluded that the way in which Egypt and Germany dealt with the challenge posed by a perceived terrorist organisation was significantly shaped by their unique national political systems and their recent histories. Nevertheless, the responses to and framing of the organisations by the two states reveal distinct parallels, namely the process of securitising both organisations, that transcend specific national frameworks. This suggests that, while national contexts matter, there are overarching patterns in state responses to and framing of perceived terrorism threats.

In summary, this study highlights the importance of considering historical and socio-political contexts when it comes to the state framing of terrorism, recognising common patterns in state responses, and the need to balance security measures with the protection of civil liberties. Although this paper compared two case studies in two different societies and geographic regions, the similarities in the findings underline the relevance of the study. The novelty of the study lies in its comparative analysis of Germany's and Egypt's framing of perceived terrorist organisations, highlighting how historical and socio-political contexts shape state framing. By identifying overarching patterns of state behaviour that transcend national boundaries, the study provides a broader framework for understanding the state framing of perceived terrorist organisations.

It is important to recognise that this research does not provide an all-encompassing answer to the questions raised in this paper. The complexity of the issue means that many

factors, such as the economic situation, other political factors like the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the functioning of the state administration, need to be considered, many of which are beyond the scope of this study. As a result, the findings presented here should not be seen as universally applicable rules but rather as potential contributions to the wider discourse. Future research can build on these findings by exploring additional case studies to further and deepen the understanding of this multifaceted issue and enrich the findings of this study. This could include an examination of the question of how media framing influenced the state framing in the two specific cases analysed in this paper. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to further examine the extent to which transnational factors influence state framing in these cases.

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8 Appendix

Transcript and Translation of Helmut Schmidt's Television Address on 5 September 1977[153]

Transcript

Die Nachricht von dem Mordanschlag auf Hanns-Martin Schleyer und die ihn begleitenden Beamten und Mitarbeiter hat mich tief getroffen. Nicht anders als die Nachricht die erst wenige Wochen zurückliegt von dem Mord an Jürgen Ponto. Nicht anders als die Morde an Buback, Wurster und Göbel. Vier Tote Bürger unseres Staates verlängern seit heute Abend die Reihe der Opfer von blindwütigen Terroristen, die wir waren uns darüber stets im klaren noch nicht am Ende ihrer kriminellen Energie sind. Uns alle erfüllt nicht bloß tiefe Betroffenheit angesichts der Toten, uns erfüllt alle auch tiefer Zorn über die Brutalität mit der die Terroristen in ihrem verbrecherischen Wahn vorgingen. Sie wollen den demokratischen Staat und das Vertrauen der Bürger in unseren Staat aushölen. Der Staat ob die Organe des Bundes oder der Länder oder der Städte. Der Staat muss darauf mit aller notwendigen härte antworten. Alle Polizei und Sicherheitsorgane die seit Wochen und Monaten ihre ganze Energie auf die Fahndung nach den Mördern von Siegfried Buback und Jürgen Ponto wenden, und die seit heute Abend mit aller verfügbaren kraft das Verbrechen in Köln aufzuklären und der Täter habhaft zu werden versuchen. Sie haben deshalb die uneingeschränkte Unterstützung der Bundesregierung und ebenso meine sehr persönliche Rückendeckung. Jeder Mann weiß, dass es eine absolute Sicherheit nicht gibt. Aber diese Einsicht kann nicht die staatlichen Organe davon abhalten und hat sie schon bisher nicht davon abgehalten, mit allen verfügbaren Mitteln gegen den Terrorismus front zu machen. Sie wissen, dass wir gerade erst in der vergangenen Woche im Bundeskabinett eine massive Verstärkung des Bundeskriminalamts und anderer Sicherheitsorgane verabredet haben. Die notwendigen Mittel und Hilfsmittel dafür werden selbstverständlich verfügbar gemacht werden. Sie erinnern sich, dass ich bei der Trauerfeier für buback und wurster und göbel eindringlich an jene relativ kleine Minderheit in unserem Lande appelliert habe die für die Täter ein mehr oder minder deutliches Verständnis gezeigt hatte. Ich spreche von den sogenannten Sympathisanten. Für jeden Bürger dem der freiheitliche Rechtsstaat etwas gilt, ist inzwischen klar, dass es für die schuldigen keine Ausreden mehr gibt. Während ich hier

[153] Helmut Schmidt, "Altkanzler Schmidt: 'Terrorismus keine Chance'," Fernsehansprache, ZDF, filmed September 5, 1977, Video of speech, 4:38.

spreche hören irgendwo sicher auch die schuldigen Täter zu. Sie mögen in diesem Augenblick ein triumphierendes Machtgefühl empfinden aber sie sollen sich nicht täuschen, der Terrorismus hat auf die Dauer keine Chance. Denn gegen den Terrorismus steht nicht nur der Wille der staatlichen Organe, gegen den Terrorismus steht der Wille des ganzen Volks. Dabei müssen wir alle trotz unseres Zorns einen kühlen Kopf behalten. Doch mit kühlem Kopf will ich sagen, dass sich einer der jetzt noch verharmlost der jetzt noch nach Entschuldigungen sucht von der Gemeinschaft aller Bürger isoliert die sich mit unserer Rechts- und Gesellschaftsordnung identifizieren und die sie erhalten wollen. Wer von ihnen auch immer nur die kleinste Information über den Hintergrund der morde hat oder auch nur den kleinsten sachdienlichen Hinweis auf den Hintergrund des heutigen Verbrechens und auf die Entführung von Hanns-Martin Schleyer ergeben kann, der hat als Bürger unseres Rechtsstaats die unabweisbare moralische Pflicht die Polizei bei ihrer Fahndung nach den Mördern und Entführern aktiv zu unterstützen. Dies ist meine bitte an sie alle. Die blutige Provokation in Köln richtet sich gegen uns alle. Wir alle sind aufgefordert, den staatlichen Organen beizustehen, wo immer das dem einzelnen möglich ist.

Translation

The news of the assassination attempt on Hanns-Martin Schleyer and the officials and employees accompanying him hit me hard. Not unlike the news, only a few weeks ago, of the murder of Jürgen Ponto. No different from the murders of Buback, Wurster and Göbel. As of tonight, four dead citizens of our state extend the line of victims of blind terrorists who we have always been aware were not yet at the end of their criminal energy. Not only are we all deeply saddened by the deaths, we are also deeply angered by the brutality with which the terrorists acted in their criminal madness. They want to undermine the democratic state and the citizens' trust in our state. The state, whether federal, state or city authorities. The state must respond with all necessary rigour. All the police and security forces who have been devoting all their energy for weeks and months to the search for the murderers of Siegfried Buback and Jürgen Ponto, and who have been doing everything in their power since tonight to solve the crime in Cologne and apprehend the perpetrators. They therefore have the unreserved support of the Federal Government and also my very personal backing. Everyone knows that there is no such thing as absolute security. But this realisation cannot

and has not prevented the state authorities from using all available means to combat terrorism. As you know, just last week the Federal Cabinet agreed to massively strengthen the Federal Criminal Police Office and other security organisations. The necessary means and resources will of course be made available. You will remember that at the funeral service for buback and wurster and göbel, I appealed urgently to that relatively small minority in our country who had shown a more or less clear understanding for the perpetrators. I'm talking about the so-called sympathisers. It is now clear to every citizen who cares about the rule of law that there are no more excuses for the guilty. As I speak, the guilty perpetrators are surely listening somewhere. They may feel a triumphant sense of power at this moment, but make no mistake, terrorism doesn't stand a chance in the long run. Because terrorism is not only opposed by the will of the state authorities, it is opposed by the will of the whole people. Despite our anger, we must all keep a cool head. But by keeping a cool head, I mean that anyone who continues to trivialise and look for excuses is isolating themselves from the community of all citizens who identify with our legal and social order and want to preserve it. Whoever of you has even the slightest information about the background to the murders or can provide even the slightest pertinent reference to the background to today's crime and to the kidnapping of Hanns-Martin Schleyer has, as a citizen of our constitutional state, the irrefutable moral duty to actively support the police in their search for the murderers and kidnappers. This is my request to all of you. The bloody provocation in Cologne is directed against us all. We are all called upon to assist the state authorities wherever possible.