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**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**AFD'S RISE: THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND
IMPACT ON GERMAN POLITICS**

by

Jeffrey W. Arroyo

September 2018

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE September 2018	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE AFD'S RISE: THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT ON GERMAN POLITICS			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Jeffrey W. Arroyo				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) Germany's newest right-wing party, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), burst on to Germany's political stage in 2013 and has achieved more success than any German right-wing party since 1949. The resurgence of the German right wing has caused concern for many who still remember the legacy of National Socialism, and the wave of right-wing populism that has swept Europe has exacerbated those fears. Is AfD's rise, although significant, really a threat to the established German political order? Can AfD really influence German politics and foreign policy? These questions are answered by placing AfD's rise into the historical context of Germany's far-right wing since 1949. The analysis of all right-wing parties since 1949, to include the AfD, reveals key continuities in the German extreme right. These continuities have contributed to the inability of the far right to gain political representation at the national level or to sustain long-term success at the state level. The analysis indicates that AfD is simply the latest iteration, or fifth wave, of the German extreme right since 1949, and is likely to fail just like all its predecessors. Although AfD's long-term success is unlikely, its influence on contemporary German politics has been substantial. AfD's political activism has called Merkel's rule into question, potentially creating the possibility for new coalitions that will shift political power toward the center-left.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS AfD, nationalism, German politics, radical right-wing parties, trans-Atlantic security			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 121	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	

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**AFD'S RISE: THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT ON GERMAN
POLITICS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(EUROPE AND EURASIA)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Germany's newest right-wing party, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), burst on to Germany's political stage in 2013 and has achieved more success than any German right-wing party since 1949. The resurgence of the German right wing has caused concern for many who still remember the legacy of National Socialism, and the wave of right-wing populism that has swept Europe has exacerbated those fears. Is AfD's rise, although significant, really a threat to the established German political order? Can AfD really influence German politics and foreign policy? These questions are answered by placing AfD's rise into the historical context of Germany's far-right wing since 1949. The analysis of all right-wing parties since 1949, to include the AfD, reveals key continuities in the German extreme right. These continuities have contributed to the inability of the far right to gain political representation at the national level or to sustain long-term success at the state level. The analysis indicates that AfD is simply the latest iteration, or fifth wave, of the German extreme right since 1949, and is likely to fail just like all its predecessors. Although AfD's long-term success is unlikely, its influence on contemporary German politics has been substantial. AfD's political activism has called Merkel's rule into question, potentially creating the possibility for new coalitions that will shift political power toward the center-left.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CDU/CSU	Coalition of CDU and CSU
CFSP	Common Foreign Security Policy
CSU	Christian Social Union
DKP	German Conservative Party
DKP-DRP	German Conservative Party-German Right Party
DRP	German Right Party
DVU	German People's Union
EU	European Union
FN	National Front (France)
FPÖ	Freedom Party (Austria)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
KPD	German Communist Party
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPD	National Democratic Party of Germany
PEGIDA	Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West
SED	Socialist Unity Party
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
SRP	Socialist Reich Party

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

In 2016, Germany's newest far right-wing party, the AfD, achieved stunning electoral success at the state level and became the first far right-wing party to enter Germany's Federal parliament since 1949. The ascent of AfD coincides with the surge of right-wing populism that has washed over Europe since the peak of the Migrant Crisis in 2015, but the resurgence of the far right in Germany has caused alarm because it indicates a break from the nation's post-war aversion for nationalism. In addition to a major migrant crisis, AfD's rise coincided with increased acts of terrorism in Germany and throughout Europe, the United Kingdom's vote to exit from the European Union, and the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States. The resulting uncertainty created by these events has raised concerns about the future of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and Germany's role in both. To fully understand what the rise of AfD means to Germany and its allies, the following question was analyzed: What effect does the rise of AfD have on German politics and foreign policy?

B. SIGNIFICANCE

This significance of this research is two-fold. First, this thesis provides a holistic assessment of AfD as a post-war German far right-wing party. The examination of German politics since 1949, with in-depth focus placed on the party dynamics, political programs, and electoral patterns, provides the proper historical context in which to assess AfD's rise in Germany. Close study of the German far right since 1949 reveals several continuities that contributed to the far right's collective failure in German politics. The establishment of these continuities creates a common profile for the German far right since 1949 and provides a valuable tool that can be used to assess AfD, and any future German far right-wing party.

Second, this thesis examines the potential impact of AfD's rise on contemporary German politics and foreign policy. This analysis includes how a young, inexperienced party like AfD successfully leveraged Germans' fear to push its nationalist agenda and

routinely punch above its weight in the German political arena. This analysis is extended to assess the potential impact that AfD could have on German Foreign policy during a period of trans-Atlantic uncertainty. The analysis is then extrapolated to the international level, and assesses AfD's potential impact on European solidarity and security.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

To realize the purpose of this thesis, a review of two different but related themes was required. The first theme was dedicated to the history of German politics since 1945. The examination focused on literature centered on the post-war development of the German government, politics, and foreign policy since 1945. The second theme was dedicated to the examination of European far right-wing politics. The examination focused heavily on German right-wing political trends and how they fit into the European far right.

1. German Political History

The history of post-war German government and politics has been well documented. After World War II, Germany was partitioned into four occupation zones which were individually placed under control of the war's victor's—the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia. The post-war revival of German politics began almost immediately after the war. The establishment of political parties occurred simultaneously across zones, but independent of each other as interzonal political cooperation was not permitted.¹ In each Germany, the political parties that favored the geopolitical preferences of their respective patron superpower flourished. At the same time, all right-wing parties were eliminated in the Russian occupation zone and severely restricted in western occupation zones.

Although the governments of both the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) adopted a democratic system, only the FRG was permitted to operate a free, competitive democracy. Under the control of Stalinist Russia,

¹ Henry Ashby Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, rev. ed. (London: Yale University Press, 1992), 16–17.

democracy in the GDR was a merely a façade as the ruling Social Unity Party (SED) government operated as puppet government of the Soviet Union.²

a. The FRG and the Domination of the Political-Center

From of the time of the establishment of both German governments in 1949, focused was placed on the literature that covered the political history of the FRG. This pointed turn towards the FRG's was made because the right wing only existed in the FRG, and because the FRG's government since 1949 is the political forefather of the modern German government. The literature on the history of politics in the FRG since 1945 illustrates a clear trend in the FRG's commitment to western liberalism, European integration, and a security strategy that was firmly tied NATO and the United States.³ The political history of the FRG has been dominated by two political parties, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Since 1949, the government of the FRG has been led by a cabinet headed by one of these two parties.⁴ Which party has led the FRG government has alternated over time, and the change of the guard between the two were often precipitated by a change in the social dynamics within Germany, or some type of domestic or international crisis, or a combination of both.

Regardless of which political party headed the government, or what type of crisis the FRG underwent, the government has consistently adopted political, economic, and foreign policies that have reinforced the FRG's staunch commitment to the European Integration and the trans-Atlanticism. Although this trend has been well established, differences in the level of the FRG's assertion over its political sovereignty have varied over time. These differences did not manifest to a level of importance until SPD Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's refused to allow the German military from participating in the Iraq War in 2003.

² Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 47.

³ Klaus Larres, "West Germany and European Unity in U.S. Foreign Policy," in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1968*, vol. 2, ed. Detlef Junker (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 62–68.

⁴ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 256–258

Schröder's assertion of Germany's political sovereignty marked the beginning of a new era in German foreign policy, one in which military actions other than self-defense, would be inextricably tied to an approved United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution.⁵ The assertion of Germany's political sovereignty was further elevated by CDU Chancellor Angela Merkel in 2011 when she refused to permit the German military from participating in the NATO led military intervention in Libya despite an approved UN Security Council Resolution. Despite the recent trend of Germany breaking ranks with the NATO alliance, Germany has remained committed to its North American and European allies, European Integration, and western liberalism. Germany's commitment to democratic internationalism was underscored by its response to the Annexation of Ukraine in 2014, the European Migrant Crisis in 2016, and the uncertainty created by U.S. President Donald Trump's worrying statements about the United States' commitment to NATO.

b. The German Far Right and the FRG's Tradition of Right-Wing Exclusion

According to David Art, there have been four waves of German far right in the FRG since 1945. The first wave spanned from 1949 until 1952, and encompassed the German Conservative Party – German Right Party (DKP-DRP) and the Socialist Reich Party (SRP). The second wave spanned from 1964 to 1969, where National Democratic Party was the lone right-wing political force. The third wave of the German far right was led by the Republikaner Party and lasted from 1983 to 1994. The fourth wave lasted from 1994 to 2013 and consisted of the German People's Union (DVU) and a reanimated NPD.⁶ All four waves of the German far right had one thing in common, the detriment of their Nazi legacy.

The first trend identified during the examination of the four waves of the German far right revealed that all parties were founded by a merger between a conservative-

⁵ "One Year Later, Germany Anything But Smug Over Iraq War," Deutsche Welle, March 20, 2004, Accessed August 10, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/4oa4>.

⁶ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Developments of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge, 2011), 196.

nationalist splinter group, and radical-nationalist group.⁷ The mergers were always driven by significant electoral support base of the radical group. Mergers between right-wing groups were common because numerous splinter right-wing nationalist groups existed, and often counterproductively competed against each at the polls. Consolidation of these various right-wing nationalist groups was done to combine electorates to achieve regional success.⁸ In all far right-wing parties studied, the leadership of the radical factions had Nazi backgrounds or believed in National Socialism. Many of the conservative leaders in all parties studied had Nazi ties and embraced the *völkisch*, tenets of German nationalism, but they all understood the importance of appealing to a larger, more conservative support base that would not tolerate nationalist radicalism and extremism.⁹

The second trend that developed within this far right-wing cohort was that once merged, internal party strife between the conservative leadership and the radical leadership developed not long after the party's foundation. In every case studied, as the party began to experience electoral success, the radical support base grew emboldened the radical leadership to try and steer the party further to the right.¹⁰ The conservative leadership always resisted a shift further right, but had their legs swept out from under them as the parties' membership favored the radical leaders. Often the conservative leaders quit before the party voted for the radical. The outcomes of the internal conflicts that developed within these parties always ended with the radical leaders seizing control of the party and ousting the conservative leadership. Once in control, the radical leaders always pushed their party's political platform further right, adopting radical views that were against the established democratic order, and in favor of integral nationalism.¹¹ Prior to reunification, all far right-

⁷ Kurt Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika: German Nationalism Since 1945*, vol. 1 (Middletown: CT, Wesleyan University Press, 1967), 79–80, Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 192–208.

⁸ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 713–714; Art, *Inside the Radical Right*: 196

⁹ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 706; Richard Stöss, "The Problem of Right-Wing Extremism in West Germany," *West European Politics* 11, no. 2 (1988), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402388808424680>: 40; Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 146.

¹⁰ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 79–80, Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 192–208.

¹¹ Tauber; Art.

wing parties included the complete rejection of the post-war settlement and borders as part of their political programs.

The third trend that developed during the historical view of the far right was that as all parties drifted right, they all faced the same dilemma of how to employ a political program that appealed to both conservatives and radicals.¹² On the one hand, the radical leaders were always cautious about how they presented the parties' official programs, aiming for a conservative-nationalist tone. This was done because, under Article 21 of the Basic Law, the government could banish political parties that sought to undermine or destroy the free democratic order of the FRG.¹³ On the other hand, the radical leaders used rallies to and speeches to as venues to unleash their anti-government, racist rhetoric to their growing radical support base. The majority of Germans were able to see these parties for what they are, and refused to provide these parties the support required to sustain their political legitimacy regardless of what crisis had hastened a resurgence of nationalism in Germany.

The fourth trend exhibited by Germany's far right was that although all parties were able to achieve success at the state and local levels, the "verboten" nationalist and racist rhetoric of the parties' leadership failed to translate to a mass support base, and therefore failed to translate into national level success.¹⁴ The support base of these parties was primarily comprised of blue-collar, unemployed, uneducated, and other Germans who were mobilized by some external crisis or event that made them feel culturally or economically deprived.¹⁵ The support base was more diverse for these parties in the beginning, but the conservative-nationalist voters that these parties targeted voted bailed as the party became more radicalized. The lack of mass support base, combined with these parties' increasing radical actors, eventually prevented their ability to gain federal level representation in the German government.

¹² Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 711.

¹³ Tauber, 713–714.

¹⁴ Tauber, 79–80, Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 192–208.

¹⁵ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 711.

2. Right-Wing Populism in Europe

Right-wing populist parties have existed in Europe for several decades, but these parties have increasingly moved from the fringes of the political arena into mainstream European politics since the Euro Crisis in 2008.¹⁶ Continuing crises have resulted in increased xenophobia and have energized the European extreme right's agenda to discontinue Europe's steadfast journey toward a common economic, social, and political union. Michael Minkenberg broadly characterized the extreme right-wing political ideology as follows:

A political ideology, the core element of which is a myth of a homogeneous nation, a romantic and populist ultranationalism which is directed against the concept of liberal and pluralistic democracy and its underlying principles of individualism and universalism. The contemporary radical right does not want to return to pre-democratic regimes such as monarchy or feudalism. It wants government by the people, but in terms of ethnocracy instead of democracy.¹⁷

Jérôme Jamin, refined the definition when he wrote that the European extreme-right wing is “an ideological movement based on an extreme nationalism that is anxious to defend a given people in a given territory. A nationalism that justifies xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and the development of a strong police state to protect the future of that people from a racial, territorial and cultural point of view.”¹⁸ Jamin identifies one of the most frequent characteristics of the radical right as its hostility to democracy.¹⁹

Joan Antón-Mellón adds to the literature in this field, introducing the concept of the “European New Right,” a group that defines itself as “a radical and special variant of

¹⁶ Jon Henley, Helena Bengtsson, and Caelainn Barr, “Across Europe, Distrust of Mainstream Political Parties,” *Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/25/across-europe-distrust-of-mainstream-political-parties-is-on-the-rise>.

¹⁷ Michael Minkenberg, “The Renewal of the Radical Right: Between Modernity and Anti-Modernity,” *Government and Opposition* 35, no. 2 (2000): 174–175.

¹⁸ Jérôme Jamin, “Two Different Realities: Notes on Populism and the Extreme Right,” in *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe* (2013), 38.

¹⁹ Jamin.

the right and as the contemporary representative of revolutionary conservatism.”²⁰ Much of the ideological foundations of the New Right were borrowed from the ideas of inter-war German conservative revolutionaries like Ernst Jünger and Arthur Moeller and van der Bruck, which permitted ascribing to highly nationalist political lines without being associated with fascist or Nazi values.²¹ It is “new” in the sense of claiming antecedents other than the Nazi or fascist parties of the first half of the 20th century, at least for the purposes of public outreach.²² According to Antón-Mellón, the New Right aspires to highlight the root causes of Europe’s social degradation by taking three specific actions—promoting cultural engineering to garner public support, providing intellectual leaders to battle the social decline, developing a European political environment “that acknowledges the authenticity of its identity going back into the past and builds its future in the present.”²³

Jens Rydgren argues that individuals who support far right-wing political parties can be explained by two distinguishing groups of theories—supply side and demand side.²⁴ According to Rydgren, supply side factors focus on the programs of the political parties and their ability to organize party structure coherently, whereas demand-side theories factors create a change in the attitudes, emotions, and preferences of voters.²⁵ Rydgren identifies the common demand-side theories as “the social breakdown thesis, the relative deprivation/modernization loser’s thesis, and the ethnic competition thesis.”²⁶ Rydgren’s

²⁰ Joan Antón-Mellón, "The Idées-Force of the European New Right: a New Paradigm?" In *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe*, edited by Andrea Mammone, Emmanuel Godin, and Brian Jenkins, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 67-68.

²¹ Tamir Bar-On, “The Ambiguities of the Nouvelle Droite, 1968–1999, *European Legacy* 6, no. 3 (2001): 340, http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/33662857/Bar-OnEuropeanLegacy.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ56TQJRTWSMTNPEA&Expires=1473718238&Signature=K2sIcfLH5byi051MWyJVHkVa46I%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DThe_Ambiguities_of_the_Nouvelle_Droite_1.pdf.

²² Bar-On.

²³ Bar-On.

²⁴ Jens Rydgren, “The Sociology of the Radical Right,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (2007): 247, 252, <http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.nps.edu/stable/29737762>.

²⁵ Rydgren, 247–256.

²⁶ Rydgren, 247–250.

ethnic competition thesis is the theory best suited to correlate the increase in support for European far right with the migrant crisis; however, the modernization-loser thesis is also a core tenet in the programs of far right-wing populist parties as it rejects the social liberalism, individualism, and cultural dissolution associated with globalization.²⁷

On the opposite end of the political spectrum is left-wing political discourse that, according to Luke March, consists of two subcategories: the radical left whose aspiration is fundamentally change the capitalist system while accepting democracy, and the extreme left who reject any compromise with capitalism and are hostile to liberal democracy.²⁸ Vit Hloušek and Lubomír Kopeček further contend that in addition to characteristics identified by March, the radical left in Europe today espouses anti-Americanism, anti-globalization, anti-NATO, and reject European integration.²⁹ The characterization indicates that the extreme left and extreme right have some overlap when it comes to anti-democratic views, and cross-cutting appeal is the hallmark of 21st-century populism in Europe.³⁰ Cas Mudde contends that all of Europe's contemporary populist radical right-wing parties exhibit a "distinct form of nationalism, nativism, authoritarianism, and populism."³¹ These categories defy the easy classifications of left-wing or right-wing orientation that formed in the 20th century.

Concerning populism in European politics, Jamin, contends that it is vital to clarify that populism "is first and foremost a discourse or style rather than a doctrine or ideology, [and] we should not ignore the representation of society and politics running through populist movements. It appeals to the people and the elite, and attributes very specific

²⁷ Rydgren, 248.

²⁸ Luke March, "Contemporary Far Left Parties in Europe" in *From Marxism to the Mainstream* (Berlin: Routledge, 2008), 3.

²⁹ Vit Hloušek, and Lubomír Kopeček. *Origin, Ideology and Transformation of Political Parties: East-Central and Western Europe Compared* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 46.

³⁰ "Parliamentary Groups," Deutscher Bundestag, <http://www.bundestag.de/en/members/groups?url=L2VuL21lbWJlcnMvZ3JvdXBzL2dyb3Vwcy1kaXN0cmliidXRpb24vMTk3NjQ0&mod=mod487054>.

³¹ Cas Mudde. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15–19.

attributes to them that are of relevance.”³² Jamin contends that right-wing populist parties seek legitimacy through a heterogeneous majority, by “constructing a political battle focused around a bitter struggle between ‘us’ and ‘them’ ... populists exploit fear and resentment of the people and direct them toward groups and institutions that they deem responsible.”³³ In this way, populism unifies a fragmented society against real or perceived enemies—without and within.

Christina Liang states that the “us-versus-them viewpoint” is consistent with populist ideology.³⁴ She asserts that populist ideology “separates society into two homogenous and antagonistic groups—‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’—and holds that politics should be an expression of the general will of the people.”³⁵ Populist sentiments resonate with both ends of the political spectrum in Europe, but today they are more associated with the far right as they both reject of multiculturalism and cultural integration.³⁶ Liang also recognizes the close association between the European far-right wing and Euroscepticism, acknowledging that most far right-wing parties are opposed the European project because of the increasing demands to relinquish economic and political sovereignty and to adopt liberal migration that policies threaten the integrity of the national cultural identity.³⁷ Although rooted in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, the increased level of European xenophobia toward Muslims has been elevated by the current Migrant Crisis caused by the Syrian Civil War.³⁸ Far right-wing

³² Jamin, “Two Different Realities,” 40.

³³ Jamin, 41, 43.

³⁴ Christina Schori Liang, ed. *Europe for the Europeans: The Foreign and Security Policy of the Populist Radical Right* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 5.

³⁵ Liang.

³⁶ Liang 5–6

³⁷ Hans-Georg Betz, *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2013), 4,119-132; Liang, ed. *Europe for the Europeans*, 10–13.; Nicole Scicluna, “Domestication of the Euro Crisis: Legal and Political Manifestations of Euroscepticism in Germany,” *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, (2014): 10:3, 287–288, <http://www.jcer.myzen.co.uk/index.php/jcer/article/viewFile/621/468>.

³⁸ Sieglinde Rosenberger and Leila Hadj-Adbou, “Islam at Issue: Anti-Islamic Mobilization of the Extreme Right in Austria,” In *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe*, edited by Andrea Mammone, Emmanuel Godin, and Brian Jenkins, (New York: Routledge, 2013),149.

populist parties like the AfD portray Muslim immigration as a threat to the cultural integrity and social cohesion of the nation.³⁹

Alina Polyakova and Marlene Laurelle conclude that the anti-European integration, anti-Atlantic Alliance, and pro-Russian views of European far-right wing political parties present serious security implications for Europe and the trans-Atlantic Alliance.⁴⁰ Supplementing the tandems was a study conducted by the Political Capital Institute which largely focused on the European far-right wing's links to Russia, distinguishing a far right-wing parties' affiliation with Russia as either committed, or open/neutral.⁴¹ According to the study titled "The Russian Connection: The Spread of pro-Russian Policies on the European far right," the "committed" designation of European far right-wing parties applies to those parties that openly profess their sympathy with Russia through public statements, whereas the parties designated as open/neutral, openly display a negative or neutral attitude toward Russia, but support Russia in one or more important issues in the case of the open group.⁴² This Moscow-friendly characteristic of the European far right-wing parties highlights a new element of the right wing, because since the Cold War even the right wing in Europe could be counted on to be anti-Soviet.⁴³

D. HYPOTHESIS AND POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

The aim of this thesis is to determine what impact, if any, that AfD's rise will have on German politics and foreign policy, and trans-Atlantic security. To realize that aim, this thesis examines two hypotheses. First, that AfD's success marks a break from the post-war tradition of radical right-wing exclusion in German politics. This theory generally assumes that globalization and a recent migrant crisis have opened a political window in Germany

³⁹ Rosenberger and Hadi-Adbou.

⁴⁰ Alina Polyakova, "Putinism and the European Far Right," Institute of Modern Russia, January 19, 2016, <http://imrussia.org/en/analysis/world/2500-putinism-and-the-european-far-right>

⁴¹ "The Russian Connection: The Spread of Pro-Russian Policies on the European Far-Right," Political Capital Institute, March 14, 2014, 2–9. http://www.riskandforecast.com/useruploads/files/pc_flash_report_russian_connection.pdf.

⁴² Political Capital Institute.

⁴³ Political Capital Institute.

for extreme–right wing nationalism to once again take root in Germany. This theory entails extreme right-wing nationalists to ride the wave of populism that is sweeping Europe and elsewhere to get Germany to abandon its constructivist approach to international relations in lieu of a more state-centric or realist approach. To achieve this transformation, a complete turn-around in the electorate’s post-war center-right and center-left voting trend would be required to produce a governing body capable of implementing the policies required to achieve this type of transformation. The extreme–right wing would not only need to enter mainstream German politics but gain a majority or join a coalition capable of producing a majority government that could implement policies to affect significant changes in German foreign policy and the current trans-Atlantic security paradigm.

The second hypothesis considers AfD’s rise as a significant historical shift in post-war German politics that is worth noting, but one that is lacking the magnitude to achieve an extreme–right wing majority or coalition majority. Instead, this hypothesis considers AfD’s rise historic rise as a political wake-up call for the ruling mainstream parties, one that will force them to shift aspects of their political platform to recapture the right-leaning voters who became disenfranchised by the ruling coalition’s stubborn commitment to internationalism, and perceived ineffectiveness in ensuring the safety and security of Germans. This theory anticipates dramatic shifts in immigration and asylum policy positions by the current center-left SPD and center-right CDU/CSU governing coalition to halt AfD’s rise. As a result, AfD’s platform will gain legitimacy, which AfD will continually leverage to shape the political narrative in Germany and attract Germans who have been marginalized by globalization. This theory accepts the notion that AfD could leverage anti-globalization, world crises, and the threat of terrorism to become a significant political force in Germany. Given current global political dynamics and security threats, AfD could remain a viable political option for many fearful Germans for years to come if they can overcome post-war trend of extreme–right wing party infighting and self-destruction.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis uses a contemporary historical analysis approach to answer the research question, drawing largely from an in-depth examination of German domestic politics and foreign policy since 1949. The historical analysis will be used to place Germany's current political landscape, and AfD's unexpected rise, into context. Viewing current German political dynamics through the proper historical lens will reveal any continuities or discontinuities in Germany's political reaction to global crises, immigration and asylum, and fully understand the meaning of AfD's rise in Germany. Likewise, the historical examination will unquestionably tie German politics to foreign policy and trans-Atlantic security, and establish the basis to assess AfD's potential to impact German foreign policy and the existing trans-Atlantic security model.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

This thesis is organized into six chapters conducts a contemporary historical analysis to explore what AfD's rise means to German politics, foreign policy, and trans-Atlantic security. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter II examines the resurrection of German politics after World War II and the birth of the German rebirth of German government. Chapter III analyzes the politics and foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany since 1949 and chronicles the political dominance of the SPD and CDU. Chapter IV examines right-wing politics in Germany since from 1949 to 2013, revealing common trends in membership composition, party strife, and political platforms. Chapter V covers AfD from its birth in 2013 to its unprecedented showing in the 2017 German Federal Election. This chapter produces highlights the continuities and discontinuities between AfD and all other radical right-wing German political parties since 1949. Chapter VI concludes the research and places AfD's rise into the proper context of contemporary German history and uses that contextual reference to explain the potential impact that AfD's rise can have on German politics, foreign policy, and the existing trans-Atlantic security paradigm.

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II. THE HISTORY OF FEDERAL GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS FROM 1945–1949

This chapter focuses on the history and politics of the German government from 1945 to 1949 in an effort to provide the historical context to fully understand the political analysis conducted in Chapter III. The chapter chronologically examines the political history of Germany during occupation, highlighting the post-war political dynamics that introduced the tradition of far right-wing exclusion in Germany's federal government. Next, the chapter examines how occupation and denazification helped shape a sociopolitical environment where nationalism and right-wing politics were considered taboo by the German majority. The chapter closes by examining the political dynamics involved in the division of Germany and foundation of two new German governments. The establishment of two Germanys is crucial to understanding the scope of the political assessment completed in Chapter III.

A. OCCUPATION AND DENAZIFICATION

The post-war occupation of Germany complicated the peace process and final disposition of defeated Germany. In 1944, before the war was officially over, the European Advisory Commission (EAC) was established by the United States, Great Britain, and Russia. Anticipating victory, the EAC decided that post-war Germany would be divided up into three temporary occupation zones—the American zone in the south, the British zone in the northwest, and the Soviet zone in the east.⁴⁴ The occupation configuration was changed at the Yalta Conference in February 1945, when Joseph Stalin agreed to create a fourth occupation, the French zone, out of territories in the American and British zones.⁴⁵ The victors also agreed to create the Allied Control Council (ACC), a joint military governing body in Germany that would coordinate the actions of the military governments until a permanent peace settlement could be reached. Cooperation within the ACC seemed hopeful at first, but tremendous differences between victors on how to best realize

⁴⁴ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 9.

⁴⁵ Tuner Jr., 10.

reparations and restore borders made it clear that an acceptable peace settlement would be difficult, if not impossible to reach.

A particularly contested issue between the victors was the Soviet Union's unilateral decision to shift Poland's western borders from the eastern branch of the Neisse River, to the Oder and Western branch of the Neisse River, commonly referred to as the Oder-Neisse line.⁴⁶ The re-drawing of borders also included the Russian seizure of the northern Prussian city of Königsberg, a German cultural treasure since the Middle Ages and important piece of the Germany romantic identity. Russia's shifting of borders effectively reduced Germany's 1937 territory by almost one-quarter as seen in Figure 1.⁴⁷



Figure 1. Occupied Germany in 1946.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Mary Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008: A Nation Divided*, 3rd ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 117.

⁴⁷ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 10.

⁴⁸ Source: “Germany, Zones of Occupation, 1946,” GlobalSecurity.org, accessed 16 July 2017, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/other/us-army_germany_1944-46_map3.htm.

The friction caused by Russia's redrawing of borders resulted in the Potsdam Conference of July-August 1945. At the conference, the territories claimed by the Russians and Poles were recognized by the other occupying powers, but under the condition that permanent borders would be determined at a final peace conference.⁴⁹ The issue of reparations was also settled at Potsdam, all victors agreeing to extract reparations from Germany in the form of industrial equipment, factories, and machinery instead of monetary payments, and that food shipments from the Russian zone would be sent west as machinery from Germany was sent east.⁵⁰ The occupying powers also agreed that Germany was to undergo the four D's in an effort to remove all elements of national socialism and Nazism from society—denazification, demilitarization, democratization, and decartelization.⁵¹

From 1845 to 1948, denazification in the western occupation zones went through several legal iterations but ultimately was focused on the rehabilitation culpable individuals.⁵² According to Mary Fulbrook, "It was generally accepted that in some way Germany must be cleansed of Nazis, that those guilty must be punished, and that it was essential, if future peace was to be secured, that Germans should be convinced of the error of Nazi views and persuaded to assent to more democratic and peaceful values." The Nuremberg trials, the only aspect of denazification where the victors worked together, were reserved for the worst of the Nazi war Criminals like Reichsmarschall Herman Göring and Reichsführer Heirnrich Himmler.⁵³ The United States took the lead in legally defining the method by which all other Germans were to be assessed in the western occupation zones. In July 1945, United States European Forces Directive Seven was published and it identified 136 mandatory removal categories based on offices held during Hitler's reign.⁵⁴ Ex-Nazis who were automatically arrested on this basis were placed in internment camps in the western occupation zones. U.S. General Lucius Clay, Military Governor of occupied

⁴⁹ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 10.

⁵⁰ Tuner Jr., 12.

⁵¹ Tuner Jr.

⁵² Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 126.

⁵³ Fulbrook, 123.

⁵⁴ Fulbrook, 135.

Germany, extended denazification into the economic sphere in September 1945 when he declared that ex-Nazis should be remanded to work only menial jobs.⁵⁵ With the establishment of the Law for Liberation from National Socialism in March 1946, the assessment of Nazi culpability shifted from the structural level to the individual level.⁵⁶ Under the 1946 law, German tribunals would assess individual culpability by reviewing completed questionnaires and classify individuals into one of five categories ranging from “major offender” to “exonerated.”⁵⁷ According to historian Mary Fulbrook, “On the basis of final classification, individuals might be imprisoned, or fined, or restricted in their activities and employment, or given a clean bill of political health and permitted to return to the community as free citizens.”⁵⁸

The outcome of denazification of people in the western zones proved inconsistent as just over 33 percent of culpable Germans were exonerated in the American zone as compared to 50 percent in the French zone and 90 percent in the British zone.⁵⁹ The real problem, according to historian Kurt Tauber, was that “the Allies were confusing criminal guilt, which a minority had incurred, with political responsibility, which all adult Germans had incurred, with moral guilt, which was a matter of the individual conscience and hence outside the pale of public atonement.”⁶⁰ On the one hand, denazification forced the German people to internalize the notion of collective guilt, reconcile their actions or inactions with the horrors of the Holocaust, and base their post-war identity by denouncing the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NDSAP) and all it stood for.⁶¹ In this regard, the development of a social taboo against nationalism in German politics can be viewed as the result of the Holocaust and post-war denazification.

⁵⁵ Fulbrook, 126.

⁵⁶ Fulbrook.

⁵⁷ Fulbrook, 127.

⁵⁸ Fulbrook.

⁵⁹ Fulbrook.

⁶⁰ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 42; Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 126.

⁶¹ Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 126.

The denazification of people in the Russian zone was not as complicated as the procedures established in the western zones. As early as November 1945, the Russian denazification process distinguished between just two types of Nazis, nominal and activist.⁶² Ex-Nazis and those opposed to the Russian system were widely purged from political, judicial, administrative, and educational offices in the Russian occupation zone.⁶³ In 1947, the nominal Nazis who were willing to buy into the soviet-style system emerging in the Russian occupation zone were given amnesty.⁶⁴ Beginning in 1948, socioeconomic constraints against former Nazis who were not war criminals began to be removed and eventually these individuals were fully incorporated back into society.

The only post-war consensus immediately reached by the occupying powers was that the denazification of Germans had to occur. With exception of the Nuremberg Trials, the denazification of people was not standardized and had varying degrees of effectiveness in each occupation zone. In the western zones, system used to assess culpability produced drastically different results in each zone. In the Russian zone, denazification was not as complicated and mass purges of former Nazis occurred. In all zones, former Nazis were permitted to return to society, but only in the western zones were former Nazis free to organize. In the western zones, denazification had forced the internalization of the Holocaust and made Germans denounce nationalism. At the same time, the highly subjective denazification process and treatment of Germans in the western zones also created a strong anti-western sentiment which was used by nationalists and radicals as political rallying point, especially in universities where denazification and education reform was minimal.⁶⁵ In this regard, the turmoil created by denazification helped nationalism stay alive in post-war Germany. According to Tauber, “this confusion became the perfect smoke screen behind which a relatively small number of incorrigible nationalist extremists, along with a far larger number of more moderate skeptics, could evade the sense

⁶² Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 126

⁶³ Tuner Jr., 125.

⁶⁴ Tuner Jr., 126.

⁶⁵ Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 129.

both of political responsibility and moral guilt.”⁶⁶ The survival, revival, and eventual reintegration of these nationalists into society provided the right wing’s political base and leadership during the formative years of politics on the western zones.

The denazification of German industry occurred in drastically different ways. In the west, the denazification of industry focused on establishing a privatized, capitalistic industrial base that could provide economic stability. The western occupation zones took full advantage of Marshall Plan aid and implemented liberal economic policies that mirrored that of the western occupation powers. The denazification of industry in the Russian zone primarily entailed the transformation of industry into a state dominated enterprise that was designed to mirror the Soviet economic system. Unlike the western zones that relied on food imports, the Russian zone could produce its own food, which allowed Russia to get away funneling much of the industrial output back to Moscow. Ultimately, the western powers had vastly different economic goals than the Russians. These differing goals highlighted the inability of military governments to cooperate. The impasse created by the introduction of a new currency in the Bizonia drove a large wedge between the eastern and western zones, and accelerated movements towards the impending division of Germany.

B. THE BIRTH OF POST-WAR GERMAN POLITICS

Throughout Germany, regional organizations of self-administration called Länder were established to carry out day-to-day civil affairs of the region.⁶⁷ The reestablishment of German politics first began in 1945 in the Russian occupation zone when William Ulbricht, a devout Stalinist who lived in the Soviet Union during Hitler’s reign of terror, was sent to lead the newly established German Communist Party (KPD) in April 1945.⁶⁸ The establishment of the KPD was immediately followed by the reconstitution of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and the licensing of the newfound Christian Democratic Union

⁶⁶ Fulbrook.

⁶⁷ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 20.

⁶⁸ Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 119.

(CDU) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LPD).⁶⁹ The licensing of the non-communist parties was permitted in order to legitimize the existence of the KPD, but their political existence was dependent on their participation in a permanent coalition with the KPD as part of an anti-fascist bloc.⁷⁰ Despite these forced coalitions, the KPD lacked popular support due to high levels of dislike and distrust by Germans who experienced the Red Army's carnage at the end of the war. KPD Party leaders took note of the November 1945 Austrian election results when the communist party received just five percent of the popular vote, and subsequently forced a merger with SPD to form the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in April 1946 and retain a majority.⁷¹ From then on, the SED used Stalinist tactics to retain political dominance in the Russian and political competition within the Russian zone was for show only. The establishment of self-founded right-wing parties inside the Russian zone was prohibited.

The western occupation powers followed Russia's lead and permitted the establishment of the CDU, SPD, KPD, and the Free Democratic Party (FPD) in their occupation zones, the liberal party choosing to call themselves FPD instead of LPD.⁷² The Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) was also licensed, but only operated in Bavaria. The CSU promptly formed a political partnership with its sister party, the CDU, forming the center-right CDU/CSU union.⁷³ The establishment of right-wing political organizations was permitted in the western zones, but the military governments staunchly refused to license any right-wing party which meant that right-wing parties were only allowed to organize at the local level. The most prominent of these unlicensed right-wing parties were the German Conservative Party-German Right Party (DKP-DRP) in the British zone, and the National Democratic Party (NDP) in the American zone.⁷⁴ The French, dreadfully fearful of any revival of German nationalism, simply banned all

⁶⁹ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 16.

⁷⁰ Tuner Jr.

⁷¹ Tuner Jr., 17–18.

⁷² Tuner Jr. 16–17.

⁷³ Tuner Jr., 16.

⁷⁴ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 65–67.

nationalist political activity in their zone.⁷⁵ Despite the repeated refusal to grant land licenses for right-wing parties in the western zones, these scrappy parties continued to grow and experience success at the local levels.

In the west, the SPD, the CDU/CSU, and the FDP dominated the political scene in terms of party membership and influence. The SPD had the oldest and largest party in the west, and the party aggressively worked an anti-capitalist party line that was committed to socializing the economy.⁷⁶ The CDU/CSU Union embraced Christian values and western democratic values. The CDU/CSU Union made the wise decision to pursue a progressive economic party line that favored more liberal economic policies, and thus appealed to those German who were anti-socialists.⁷⁷ The wide-ranging appeal of the CDU/CSU was best characterized by Henry Ashby Turner Jr. who said:

The CDU/CSU captured most Catholic voters, who made up roughly half of the electorate, including many wage earners, but in parts of the country it also fared well with Protestants. With a following that spanned employees and employers, farmers and urban middle-class persons, the CDU/CSU had emerged as a 'people's party' that transcended the barriers that of class and religion that had traditionally fragmented the German party system.⁷⁸

The liberal FDP was committed to laissez-faire economic policies and competed with the CDU/CSU for the support of capitalists. FDP supporters were primarily Protestants and were against the CDU/CSU's view of that religion should play a role in public education.⁷⁹ The three top parties in the west may have differed in terms of economic or religious outlook, but the one thing they all had in common was their public denunciation of Nazism and avoidance of any nationalist tone in their political programs.

The development of the far rightwing parties in the British occupation zone ended in the establishment of the DKP-DRP. The DKP-DRP was born out of a merger between the German Reconstruction Party (DAP) and the German Conservative Party or (DKP) in

⁷⁵ Tauber, 108.

⁷⁶ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 105.

⁷⁷ Tuner Jr.

⁷⁸ Tuner Jr.

⁷⁹ Tuner Jr.

the summer of 1946.⁸⁰ The DAP was founded in October 1945 by Reinhold Wulle and Joachim von Ostau.⁸¹ Reinhold Wulle was expelled from the German National People's Party (DNVP) during the interwar years for being too radical, and founded a radically folkish, antiemetic, and monarchist German Folkish Freedom Party (DVFP) in March 1923.⁸² Wulle formed a political partnership with the outlawed National Socialist German Workers' Party (NDSAP) while Hitler was in prison, but a fierce rivalry between the two parties developed once Hitler was released and resumed command of the Nazi Party.⁸³ In 1938, Wulle spent two years in a German prison for illegal party activity, and immediately upon his release was sent to the Sachsen Concentration Camp for another two years.⁸⁴ Joachim von Ostau was an early regional Nazi Propaganda Chief who turned against Hitler and his quest for power in 1932, favoring instead a monarchist authoritarian government.⁸⁵ By February 1946 Wulle and Von Ostau had established the DAP in 21 districts in the British zone, and worked feverishly to merge the numerous right-wing splinter parties in the British zone into one cohesive nationalist-conservative party.⁸⁶ The DKP was founded in several districts of North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946 by Wilhelm Jäger.⁸⁷ Jäger's DKP, was identified in German as the Deutsche Konservative Partei, and had had no direct connection to the Prussian Junker's DKP that was founded in 1871.⁸⁸ The DKP members that led the charge towards the merger with the DAP were Wilhelm Jäger and Otto Schmidt-Hannover.⁸⁹ The conservative Wilhelm Jäger was a former land deputy for the

⁸⁰ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 48.

⁸¹ Tauber, 51.

⁸² Tauber, 60.

⁸³ Tauber, 60.

⁸⁴ Tauber, 50.

⁸⁵ Tauber, 49–50.

⁸⁶ Tauber, 54–55.

⁸⁷ Tauber, 49–50.

⁸⁸ Tauber, 49–50.

⁸⁹ Tauber, 55.

DNVP, Otto Schmidt-Hannover was the DNVP Chairman during the last Weimar government.⁹⁰

While both the DAP and DKP set out to establish a newly consolidated conservative-nationalist party, the party name became an issue. Both parties agreed that military governments and political opposition would identify a growing party named the German Conservative Party with militarism and nationalism, much like that of the DKP founded in 1871.⁹¹ Von Ostau further argued that substantial portion of their potential electorate, the post-war youth, had no concept of conservatism. Considering these arguments, both parties agreed on the party name — the German Right Party [Conservative Action] DRP [KV].⁹² The party was often only referred to as DRP in Lower-Saxony where a large portion of the party's electoral support base was derived. The party's name was officially changed to from DRP[KV] to DKP-DRP in 1948 when local parties branches were given the freedom to operate under any configuration of the merged name—DKP, DRP or DKP-DRP.⁹³ The DKP-DRP was not licensed in the British zone until just two weeks prior to the first German elections in 1949.⁹⁴

In the American occupation zone, the NDP was founded in the fall of 1945 by Heinrich Leuchtgens. Leuchtgens was the Mayor of Freiberg in 1933 but was dismissed for denouncing Nazism.⁹⁵ Leuchtgens was later sent to the Osthofen Concentration Camp for five weeks for violating censorship regulations when he acquired a book on national/international socialism.⁹⁶ Leuchtgens founded the NDP as a traditionalist-conservative party that was firmly oriented to the west. This party line failed to gain significant support outside of Freiberg, but that changed in April 1948 when radical-nationalists within the party began to publicly criticize allied occupation and denazification in hopes of drawing

⁹⁰ Tauber, 48, 55.

⁹¹ Tauber, 61

⁹² Tauber, 60.

⁹³ Tauber, 67.

⁹⁴ Tauber, 89

⁹⁵ Tauber, 71

⁹⁶ Tauber.

in former Nazis who had endured denazification.⁹⁷ The NDP's radical shift right was led by Carl S. Heinz, who openly bragged of his service in the Waffen SS, and Karl-Heinz Priester, a former Hitler Youth leader.⁹⁸ The party's hard shift right paid off in the state of Hesse, where the NDP received more than 10 percent of the vote in nine of the 10 districts where it campaigned.⁹⁹ Despite NDP's local successes, the party was ultimately unable to get licensed in the American occupation zone so it desperately rushed to form a partnership with the FDP just before the election. Per their agreement, the NDP would not list its candidates as independents and would vote for the FDP, and in return, the FDP would put eight NDP members, including Leuchtgens, on the FDP's Land Supplementary Lists.¹⁰⁰ Priester and his radical nationalist followers considered Leuchtgens' move a total betrayal of the NDP's national socialist beliefs and succeeded from the NDP in 1949, but continued to be politically active using the party's name.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Tauber, 74.

⁹⁸ Tauber, 75.

⁹⁹ Tauber.

¹⁰⁰ Tauber, 98.

¹⁰¹ Tauber.

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III. THE POLITICS OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC SINCE 1949: SIX-PLUS DECADES OF CDU/CSU AND SPD DOMINATION

This chapter chronologically establishes the political dominance of the CDU/CSU Union and the SPD since 1949. The section is divided up into five eras of government domination by the CDU/CSU coalition or the SPD, and establishes a clear westward oriented foreign policy regardless of which CDU or SPD led cabinet was in command. The historical review and analysis of each era will be limited, and focus primarily on the political, social, and security issues that drove government action in that period. The purpose of this review is to provide the historical context in which the detailed examination of the German right wing in following section may be placed.

A. 1949–1969: ADENAUER AND THE CDU TIE THE FRG FIRMLY TO THE WEST

The first federal elections in the FRG were held in August 1949, and the CDU's and SPD's political dominance was quickly established. The SPD won the single largest share of the vote with 29.2 percent, but the CDU/CSU combined to win 31 percent of the vote and earned eight more seats in the Bundestag than the SPD. The FDP came in third with 11.9 percent of the vote and the KPD fourth with 5.7 percent. The four largest parties secured 337 of the 402 seats in the first Bundestag, the CDU/CSU and SPD accounting for 270 of those seats. The remaining 65 seats went to seven different small parties, to include the right wing DKP-DRP. Being the single largest bloc, the CDU/CSU had several coalition options to choose from.

The SPD desired to enter into a “Grand Coalition” with CDU/CSU so combined they would command an overwhelming majority in the Bundestag, but the CDU/CSU did not chose that option. Instead, the CDU/CSU opted to form a coalition with the FDP and small German Party (DP) due to its aligned liberal economic outlook.¹⁰² The CDU/CSU led coalition government elected Konrad Adenauer as the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic. One of the most pressing issues facing Adenauer was to determine the foreign

¹⁰² Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 106.

policy of the FRG, which found itself becoming the front line of the looming Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Adenauer had to choose which sphere of influence provided the best hope for Germany's future.

Chancellor Adenauer staked the FRG's security and hope for a unified Germany in a west, and adopted the foreign policy position known as Westpolitik. Adenauer appointed Ludwig Erhard as his economic minister, and Erhard engineered a tremendous revival of the FRG's economy by implementing a welfare-state capitalism system that fully leveraged the Marshall Plan funds and immigrant labor that flowed into the FRG.¹⁰³ According to Henry Ashby Turner Jr., the growth rate of the FRG economy "leapt upward at an average annual rate of 8.2 percent in the years 1950–1954, and 7.1 percent in the years 1955–1958."¹⁰⁴

While Erhard drove economic policy, Adenauer continued to steer the political orientation of the FRG sharply towards the west. Under Adenauer, the FRG became a member of Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in 1949, and equal members of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the Council of Europe in 1951, the Western European Union (WEU) in 1954, NATO in 1955. In 1956, Adenauer endorsed NATO's "New Look" nuclear policy for Europe and the FRG was equipped with nuclear weapons, made an equal partner by the two-key policy that gave the FRG control over the nuclear munitions carriers, while the United States Army retained control of the nuclear warheads.¹⁰⁵ While acting as his own Foreign Minister, Adenauer sharply pointed the FRG's political, economic, and security interests towards to the west.

The political and economic recovery of the FRG won Adenauer the unwavering support of West Germans, and he presided over the federal government until the 1963. During his tenure, Adenauer established the CDU/CSU as the mainstay of German politics. He stood firm against tremendous Cold War pressures that included—the 1953 workers

¹⁰³ Turner Jr., 109–110.

¹⁰⁴ Turner Jr., 110.

¹⁰⁵ David Clay Large, "Partners in Defense," in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1968*, Vol. 1, edited by Detlef Junker (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 214.

uprising in the GDR, the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, and the establishment of the Berlin Wall in 1961.¹⁰⁶ He engineered a remarkable turnaround from 1945 occupied Germany, transforming the Federal Republic of Germany from an enemy into an integral member of the Atlantic Alliance. Josef Joffe puts Adenauer's accomplishments into perspective well when he said the following:

Indeed, Bonn had to react in the most rigid setting Europe has ever known: a system divided into two immutable blocs and polarized around two overweening superpowers. Yet merely ten years after the most catastrophic collapse since Carthage's, West Germany had shouldered the occupation regime, regained sovereignty, and reentered the community of nations as linchpin of the West's Cold War coalition.¹⁰⁷

Although Adenauer's chancellorship ended in 1963 with his resignation, the CDU/CSU continued to lead the FRG's government until 1970.

While Adenauer's 14 years of uncontested chancellorship set the bar for the CDU/CSU dominance, the CDU/CSU had to politically maneuver from 1963 to 1970 to retain its leadership role. Ludwig Erhard was voted in as Adenauer's successor and carried on much of Adenauer's legacy. Ironically, Erhard's leadership was undermined by a budget deficit in 1966 that was caused by the FRG's first recession. The government was not making enough money to cover the state's welfare obligations, so Erhard decided to raise taxes in order to maintain a balanced budget as required by the Basic Law.¹⁰⁸ This move put Erhard at odds with his FDP coalition partners who withdrew their ministers from his cabinet and denied him the outright majority in the Bundestag.¹⁰⁹ Having lost the faith of his party, Erhard resigned in October 1966 as the political momentum shifted from the CDU/CSU to the SPD.

¹⁰⁶ Large, 73, 74, 87–88.

¹⁰⁷ Josef Joffe, "Germany: The Continuities from Frederick the Great to the Federal Republic," in *A Century's Journey: How the Great Powers Shape the World*, edited by Robert A. Pastor, (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 110–111.

¹⁰⁸ Joffe.

¹⁰⁹ Joffe, 141–142.

After the FDP abandoned its coalition with the CDU/CSU, the SPD had two options to choose from to form a ruling coalition. The SPD could partner with the FDP and narrowly gain a majority in the Bundestag, or form a Grand Coalition with the CDU/CSU and obtain an overwhelming majority.¹¹⁰ The SPD chose to form a Grand Coalition with the CDU/CSU. The larger CDU retained the lead role when Kurt Kiesinger was appointed Chancellor, but the SPD entered the cabinet when Willy Brandt was appointed Foreign Minister.¹¹¹ The 1960s were challenging for the CDU led Grand Coalition. West Germans became increasingly disenchanted with the German government over the close association with the United States who was involved in the Vietnam War, the unsatisfactory conditions in the former elite-only German universities that had opened up to all Germans, and the large amount of Turkish guest workers that remained inside Germany despite the recession.¹¹²

Far-left student protests aimed at the government's lack of action spread across the FRG, but the right wing was also reinvigorated and questioned the government's commitment to liberalism. Both external and internal factors contributed to the decline of CDU/CSU's celebrity with German people, but the two decades of CDU/CSU leadership had led Germany far down the path of European Integration and western liberalism.

B. 1969–1982: THE SPD UNDER WILLY BRANDT AND HELMUT SCHMIDT

In October 1969, The SPD and the FDP took control of the Bundestag by a 12-seat margin and voted SPD's Willy Brandt as the next Chancellor of the FRG. Maintaining continuity with his predecessors, Brandt quickly reaffirmed the FRG's commitment to NATO and European integration. However, Brandt broke from Adenauer's rigid foreign policy towards Russia and the GDR by pursuing normalized relations with the East via a foreign policy position known as Ostpolitik.¹¹³ His efforts led to the signing of the Moscow Treaty

¹¹⁰ Joffe, 141.

¹¹¹ Joffe.

¹¹² Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 144, 145; German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag - Results Lookup."

¹¹³ Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 175

in August 1970, the signing of the Treaty of Warsaw in December 1970, and the Berlin Accord in 1971.¹¹⁴ Brandt drew Moscow to the political bargaining table when he proposed a non-aggression pact between the Russia and the FRG, and in return, Russia would agree negotiate a new four-power agreement with the other victors regarding the status of Berlin.¹¹⁵ In the Treaty of Warsaw, the FRG also pledged to recognize the 1945 the Oder-Neisse line that was established in 1945, and in return, Poland agreed that the final determination of the post-war boundaries would be determined through a final peace settlement.¹¹⁶

Brandt's efforts resulted in the successful Four Power Agreement on Berlin in 1971. According to the agreement, the Western Powers agreed that West Berlin was not part of the FRG, and that no major FRG government business was to be conducted there. In return, Russia let go of the claim that West Berlin resided inside the territory of the GDR, and agreed to open up the GDR to some West Berliners who were refused accessed since the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.¹¹⁷

The détente envisioned by Brandt almost never occurred due to the fierce opposition of the CDU/CSU, who alleged that Brandt had violated the Basic Law by abandoning the principle of unification.¹¹⁸ This mentality was shared by some members of the FDP who aligned with the CDU/CSU who vowed to vote against the ratification of the treaties. Sensing the fragility of the SPD majority, the CDU/CSU moved to initiate a vote of no confidence in hopes of ousting Brandt and taking control of the Bundestag.¹¹⁹ In April 1972, the no confidence vote failed because not enough FDP members voted in favor of it, and some CDU/CSU members decided to vote against it. The resulting discord that the vote created in the CDU/CSU prevented the Union from blocking the ratification

¹¹⁴ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 152–154.

¹¹⁵ Tuner Jr., 152.

¹¹⁶ Tuner Jr.

¹¹⁷ Tuner Jr., 156.

¹¹⁸ Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918–2008*, 177; Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 154.

¹¹⁹ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 157.

of the treaties. The Moscow and Warsaw Treaties were therefore ratified in May 1972, and the four powers subsequently approved treaties and Berlin Accord a month later.¹²⁰

Due to the number of FDP members had defected from the SPD-FDP coalition, Brandt did not have the support to pass his proposed budget so he moved for a vote of confidence in the Bundestag.¹²¹ Knowing he could not receive the overwhelming majority he needed, Brandt instructed his cabinet members to abstain from the vote of confidence to ensure its failure. Because the CDU/CSU would not be able to obtain a majority vote for an alternate cabinet, Brandt knew that President would be forced to dissolve the parliament and that a new federal election would have to be held in November 1972. Brandt's ploy worked as the SPD won 45.8 percent of the vote, which was more than the CDU/CSU Union combined, and the FDP gained 30 more seats in the Bundestag.¹²² Despite Brandt's success in reengineering his continued tenure, he was forced to resign in May 1974 when it was discovered that one of his top aides was actually a GDR spy.¹²³ Brandt's legacy was Ostpolitik, and the slight warming of east-west relations in the Cold War that this policy engendered.

Helmut Schmidt was elected as Brandt's successor in 1974, and was faced with looming problems created by the oil crisis in 1973. By 1974, more than 500,000 West Germans has lost their jobs due to a recession, and inflation rose to seven percent. This created problems for the SPD who had expanded spending on social welfare programs that now paid benefits to 2.5 million migrant guest workers who chose to settle in the FRG.¹²⁴ The number of unemployed in January 1976 was 1.3 million.¹²⁵ Not surprisingly, these issues hurt the SPD-FDP coalition in the 1976 federal election. The coalition lost a total of

¹²⁰ Tuner Jr., 159.

¹²¹ Tuner Jr., 160.

¹²² Tuner Jr.

¹²³ Tuner Jr., 167.

¹²⁴ Tuner Jr., 164, 170–171.

¹²⁵ Simon Green, Dan Hough, and Alister Miskimmon, *The Politics of the New Germany*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge), 2013, 43.

18 seats in Bundestag, but managed to maintain the majority by just 10 seats.¹²⁶ By 1978, the economy had started to recover and the inflation rate dropped to three percent, but unemployment remained high among young people. Schmidt helped the SPD recover its prominence by successfully dealing with the wave of terrorist acts that swept over Germany in 1977. Schmidt's government led to the capture of two of the terrorists who were responsible for the assassination of two prominent businessmen and a public prosecutor, as well as the successful rescue of hundreds of hostages from a thwarted Lufthansa hijacking.¹²⁷

In December 1979, Chancellor Schmidt led the charge for NATO to station 108 Pershing II nuclear missiles in Germany as part of NATO's "Dual Track" decision to strategically deploy medium range nuclear missiles in response to the Soviet Union's secret deployment of its SS-20 missiles.¹²⁸ Part of the Dual Track decision included arms reduction talks between the United States and the Soviet Union, but the United States refused to negotiate due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹²⁹ Schmidt, despite pressures from within his own party and society to withdraw, stood behind the Dual Track decision even though no arms reduction talks were to take place.

Once again, Schmidt directed the FRG's foreign policy sharply toward the west. In the federal election of 1980, the SPD-FDP coalition emerged with 53.5 percent of the second vote and had a 45-seat advantage in the Bundestag over the CDU/CSU opposition.¹³⁰ Despite the large margin of victory, unemployment and a budget deficit created tensions between the SPD and FDP. The FDP wanted to reduce government welfare spending, while the SPD wanted to meet the government's welfare obligations to the unemployed. The FDP threatened to take its 53 Bundestag seats and form a coalition with the CDU/CSU, but Chancellor Brandt refused to cave in to the FDP's demands.¹³¹

¹²⁶ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 171.

¹²⁷ Tuner Jr., 171–172.

¹²⁸ Green, Hough, and Miskimmon, *The Politics of the New Germany*, 43.

¹²⁹ Green, Hough, and Miskimmon.

¹³⁰ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 167.

¹³¹ Tuner Jr., 175.

Subsequently, in October 1982, the Bundestag passed the first vote of no confidence in its history, ousting Schmidt and voting in the CDU's Helmut Kohl.

C. 1982–1998: HELMUT KOHL AND THE WEST

Chancellor Kohl wanted a new election to place to fully leverage the shift away from the Social Democrats, so he took a page from Willy Brandt's book in 1972 and called for a vote of confidence in the Bundestag. Of course, the CDU/CSU abstained and the SPD voted against Kohl, so President Carstens dissolved the parliament, and a new election was scheduled for March 6, 1983.¹³² The election provided the overwhelming majority in the Bundestag that Kohl wanted, as the CDU/CSU captured nearly 49 percent of the vote and 278 of the 498 seats in Parliament.¹³³ The Green Party made its parliamentary debut in 1983 by winning 5.7 percent of the second vote and 27 seats in the Bundestag.¹³⁴ The entry of the Greens entry was the first time a minor party made it into the Bundestag since 1949.

D. 1998–2005: GERHARD SCHRÖDER, AFGHANISTAN, AND IRAQ

By 1998, the CDU/CSU led government has run its course and the political tide sifted back to the SPD, who formed a coalition with the Greens. In the 1998 election, the SPD won 212 direct elect seats from the first vote, and gained an additional 89 seats after winning 40.9 percent of the second vote.¹³⁵ The Greens, matched the CSUs electoral success when it won 6.7 percent and tied the CSU for the third largest party in the Bundestag with 47 seats. The CDU lost 46 seats from its 1994 election results. The center-left coalition of the SPD and the Greens signified a generational change in the government and Germany became less tied to its past. Schröder's commitment to the west was immediately tested in the fall of 1998 with the Kosovo War. Schröder led a special session of the Bundestag in October 1998 to get the Bundestag's approval to allow the German Bundeswehr to take part in NATO air strikes against the forces loyal to Yugoslavian

¹³² Tuner Jr., 178.

¹³³ Tuner Jr., 178–179.

¹³⁴ Tuner Jr.

¹³⁵ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag."

President Slobodan Milosevic.¹³⁶ Schröder's commitment to NATO actions were underscored by the fact that there was no United Nations Security Council Resolution that blessed the bombings. Germany's participation in the air strikes created conflict within the coalition as The Greens were highly opposed to German participation. In June 1999, Gerhard Schröder and Britain Prime Minister Tony Blair issued a manifesto entitled, "The Third Way," which called on Europe's center-left governments to adopt a supply side agenda in the wake of globalization, and to cut taxes, pursue labor and welfare reforms and encourage entrepreneurship.¹³⁷ Initially, Schröder's economic reform policy drew criticism from within his own party after the SPD registered losses in six state elections in 1999.¹³⁸ The only thing to that saved the SPD from a downward spiral was the emergence of a political donations scandal that centered on former CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Kohl had who himself received DM 2 million in undeclared donations and refused to say where they came from.¹³⁹ The scandal spread to other elements of the CDU, and the party lost the trust of many Germans who were unsure of who was buying political influence in Germany.¹⁴⁰

In 2001 Schröder further demonstrated Germany's commitment to the west when he put his Chancellorship on the line in a vote of confidence centered on sending German troops to Afghanistan as part of NATO operations after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States.¹⁴¹ The move put further pressure on The Greens who has

¹³⁶ "Ten Years On, Germany Looks Back at Return to War in Kosovo," *Deutsche Welle*, March 24, 2009, Accessed August 18, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/Hllq>

¹³⁷ Rachel Sylvester, "We Say Third Way, You Say Die Neue Mitte," *The Independent*, May 29, 1999, Accessed August 2, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/we-say-third-way-you-say-die-neue-mitte-1096855.html>

¹³⁸ Claus Christian Malzahn, "The Modern Chancellor: Taking Stock of Gerhard Schröder," *Der Spiegel*, October 14, 2005, Accessed August 10, 2017, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/the-modern-chancellor-taking-stock-of-gerhard-schroeder-a-379600.html>

¹³⁹ "The Scandal That Rocked the Government of Helmut Kohl," *Deutsche Welle*, January 18, 2010, Accessed August 16, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/LYcA>.

¹⁴⁰ *Deutsche Welle*.

¹⁴¹ Steven Erlanger, "Pressing Greens, German Leader Wins Historic Vote on Sending Troops to Afghanistan," *New York Times*, November 7, 2001, Accessed August 1, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/17/world/pressing-greens-german-leader-wins-historic-vote-sending-troops-afghanistan.html?mcubz=0>.

to commit political suicide by voting in favor of their coalition even though it meant going against their public position against the Germany's participation. In a break from Schröder's staunch commitment to NATO and the United States, Schröder vehemently opposed Germany's participation in the Iraq War in September 2002 just before the federal election.¹⁴² Schröder's skillful timing paid off as the SPD maintained control of the government after the 2002 election. Although he never reversed his position, Schröder worked to repair the diplomatic relationship between the United States, and despite not sending troops Germany participated to the Alliance's efforts by training Iraqi police officers in Saudi Arabia.¹⁴³ Despite the cooling of German–United States relations in 2003, Schröder kept with the German tradition of maintain strong commitment to the west and NATO. Under Schröder, Germany broke free from the diplomatic shadow of the United States to become the modern voice Europeanism. Chancellor Schröder demonstrated that Germany could create and follow its own foreign policy and still remain an integral part of the Atlantic Alliance. He also set the precedent that Germany's military role in NATO functions would not be automatic, and largely dependent on the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

E. 2005–2013: ANGELA MERKEL, THE EUROCRISIS, A EUROPEAN MIGRANT CRISIS, AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POPULISM

In 2005, the CDU's Angela Merkel was pitted against the incumbent Gerhard Schröder in an election that produced a three-seat advantage in the Bundestag for the CDU and Merkel. Although the CDU had a razor thin majority of three seats in parliament, the SPD claimed that it had received the largest single party victory had the right to have its minority party candidate elected as Chancellor.¹⁴⁴ After weeks of intense debate between the CDU and the SPD, Merkel was finally voted in as Chancellor and the CDU/CSU fashioned a second grand coalition with SPD. Merkel grew up behind the wall in a rural

¹⁴² "One Year Later, Germany Anything But Smug Over Iraq War," *Deutsche Welle*, March 20, 2004, Accessed August 10, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/4oa4>.

¹⁴³ *Deutsche Welle*.

¹⁴⁴ "What Next After German Political Stalemate?" *Deutsche Welle*, September 20, 2005, accessed August 8, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/7CFI>.

area of the GDR, where she earned a doctorate in physics. Merkel became the East German government's spokeswoman in 1989, but joined the CDU two months before reunification and was given the job of Minister of Woman and Youth in Chancellor Kohl's cabinet.¹⁴⁵ Merkel called for Kohl's resignation from the party after he was caught up in the slush fund scandal, and was subsequently elected party chairwoman in 2000.¹⁴⁶

Merkel's first task as chancellor required her figure how to get an uneasy coalition to work together to create jobs and balance the budget. In March 2005, the number of unemployed Germans stood at 5.2 million, and the unemployment rate rose to 12.6 percent.¹⁴⁷ Merkel's plan to balance the budget called for an increase income increase for the wealthy, a goods and services tax increase from 16 to 18 percent, and a reduction in public spending.¹⁴⁸ Many Germans were unimpressed with the Grand Coalition's performance as it appeared the government was simply muddling through, creating ineffective policies that were represented the middle ground between the CDU and SPD lawmakers.¹⁴⁹

Merkel's successes in righting the economy earned her the adoration of Germans, but the dissatisfaction with the bureaucracy of the Grand Coalition produced conflicting election results. The CDU achieved a net gain in of 14 seats in the Bundestag, but that was largely due to a gain of 67 more directly elected individuals from the first vote. In the second vote, the one-half a percent of the vote that the CDU lost equated to 53 lost list seats in the Bundestag.¹⁵⁰ The Grand Coalition's shortcomings were taken out on the SPD, as the party lost a total of 73 seats in Bundestag in 2009. The real winners were the FDP, The

¹⁴⁵ "Chancellor Merkel: Germany's Shrewd Survivor," BBC, November 21, 2016, Accessed August 15, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23709337>.

¹⁴⁶ BBC.

¹⁴⁷ Carter Dougherty, "German Unemployment Reaches 12.6 %," *New York Times*, March 2, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/02/business/worldbusiness/german-unemployment-reaches-126.html?mcubz=0&r=0>.

¹⁴⁸ "Merkel Defends German Reform Plan," BBC, November 12, 2005, Accessed August 13, 2017, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4431262.stm>.

¹⁴⁹ "Angela Merkel's Not-So-Grand Coalition," *Economist*, October, 5, 2006, Accessed August 16, 2017, <http://www.economist.com/node/8001011>.

¹⁵⁰ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag."

Greens, and the left party Die Linke, which combined gained 67 seats in the Bundestag.¹⁵¹ Merkel swiftly dumped the Grand Coalition in favor of a return to a coalition with the pro-business FDP.

Heading into the 2013 elections, Merkel had already proven that she could be the pragmatic, effective leader that German needed to get through a period marked by crises and changes. The election results vindicated Merkel's leadership as the CDU/CSU Union won 41.5 percent of the vote and the outright majority in the Bundestag.¹⁵² All other parties besides the AfD lost support, the CDU/CSU's coalition partner FDP even failed to cross the five percent threshold and fell out of the parliament.¹⁵³ The AfD, in its first election ever also failed to cross the five percent threshold, but at 4.7 percent of the vote mustered the best showing of a German right-wing party since 1949. The crisis Chancellor would face three more crises that will be covered in detail in Chapter V—the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, the European Migrant Crisis in 2015, and the populist rage that has spread across the globe since 2015. Chancellor Merkel's three successful terms have drawn comparisons between her, Adenauer, and Kohl, but the changing international environment presents a tough test for Merkel moving forward as she seeks a fourth term as Germany's Chancellor.

In summary, the FRG government has been dominated by either a CDU/CSU led cabinet or a SPD led cabinet since 1949, as seen in Figure 2. The division of Germany and Soviet threat drove the leaders of these two dominant political parties to consistently tie Germany's foreign and security policy to the west and the Atlantic Alliance. Throughout the five periods of political domination covered in this section, international crises served as points of affirmation of the FRG's commitment to European integration and the Atlantic Alliance.

¹⁵¹ German Bundestag.

¹⁵² German Bundestag.

¹⁵³ Kate Connolly and Philip Oltermann, "German Election: Angela Merkel Secures Historic Third Win," *Guardian*, September 23, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/22/angela-merkel-wins-third-term-germany>.

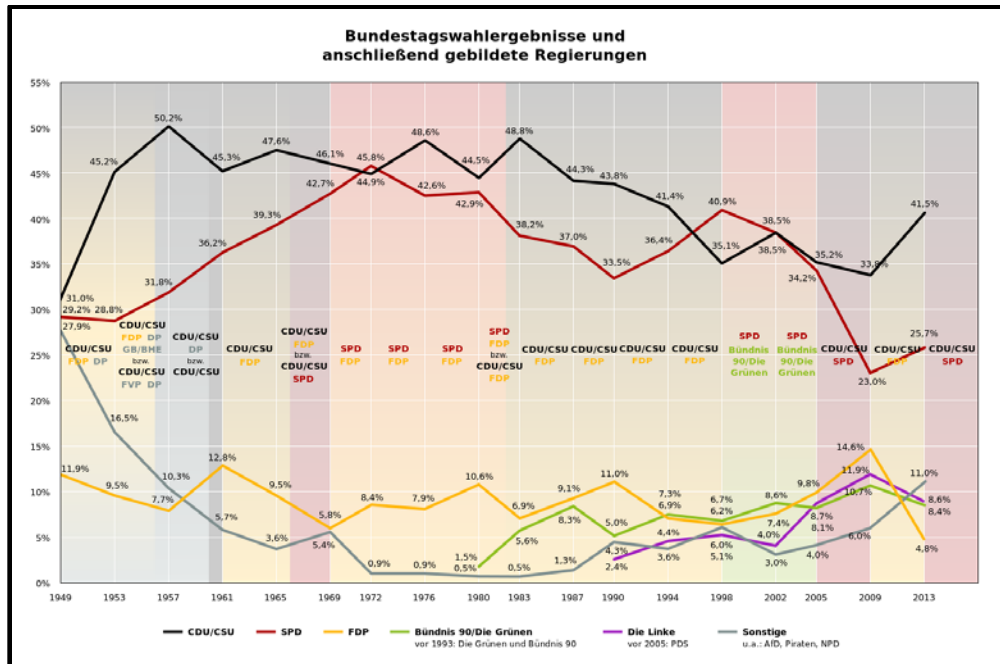


Figure 2. CDU/CSU and SPD’s Electoral Successes and Bundestag Dominance¹⁵⁴

Domestically, the political-center’s domination of German politics signified the German people’s unanimous acceptance of democratic values and western liberalism. A common theme in the political ideologies of the CDU/CSU and SPD has been the uncontested outcome of World War Two and acknowledgement of Germany’s role in it. Likewise, a close examination of German politics reveals that just like most other democratic nations, that German party politics and party policies are influenced by domestic pressures. The shifts between the CDU/CSU and the SPD governments reflected how German’s felt the ruling party dealt with the most pressing social issues of the time, but not Germany’s overall post-war democratic order. The ruling coalitions throughout this period have built upon the successes of each other, and have reinforced the subtle changes in Germany’s foreign policy that has led to a more independent, self-aware German government that values stability.

¹⁵⁴ “German Parliamentary Elections Diagram,” Creative Commons, August 31, 2015, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:German_parliamentary_elections_diagram_de.svg

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IV. THE GERMAN FAR RIGHT SINCE 1945: A TRADITION OF EXCLUSION

Since 1949, there have been four distinct waves of the German far right that have attempted to break into mainstream politics. This section chronologically examines the origins, development, political strategies, and electoral successes of the main parties in each wave. The examination will highlight the main leaders of the right-wing parties in each wave, and how those leaders influenced the orientation of their party's political platform and composition of their support base. A trend of right-wing exclusion from the federal government will be established, as well as six continuities between all the right-wing parties examined.

A. 1949–1952: THE DKP-DRP AND SRP

The period from 1949 to 1952 encompasses what can be considered the first wave of right-nationalism in the FRG. While right-wing organizations and radical nationalism existed in West Germany since 1945, the self-governing political environment in which right wing competed was not established until 1949. The right wing DKP-DRP won five seats in the first Bundestag, and all five seat were filled by DRP members, three of whom has had Nazi pasts.¹⁵⁵ The three members that were associated with Nazism were Adolf von Thadden, Franz Richter, and Fritz Dorls. Their inclusion into the Bundestag was a result of a deal between the DRP-DKP and the Fellowship of Independent Germans (GuD) shortly before the election in 1949 which placed them one, two, and three on the DRP's party list.¹⁵⁶ Adolf von Thadden was a former member of the Hitler Youth member and DRP party chair in Göttingen.¹⁵⁷ Richter and Dorls came from the GuD and represented the radical element of the group. Franz Richter lied on his denazification questionnaire and claimed no Nazi affiliation. Richter had been a NDSAP member since 1930 and rose to the

¹⁵⁵ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 66, 84, 86.

¹⁵⁶ Tauber, 86.

¹⁵⁷ Tauber, 66.

position of Office Chief in the Nazi Party's Propaganda Division.¹⁵⁸ Dorls was a co-founder of the GuD, and a former Nazi District Chairman who was released early from an internment camp by claiming that he was arrested by the Gestapo for being part of a resistance party.¹⁵⁹ The unsavory bunch was joined by NDP's founder, Heinrich Leuchtgens, who formed a partnership with the FDP just before the election to earn a spot on its list. After being elected to the Bundestag off the FDP's list, Leuchtgens immediately defected to the DKP-DRP.¹⁶⁰

Politically powerless in the federal government, the DKP-DRP parliamentary members repeatedly tried to urge nationalists to follow Leuchtgens' lead and defect to the DKP-DRP delegation. Accomplishing this task proved difficult considering their political bankruptcy. The political power of the five DKP-DRP members in the Bundestag was so small that they were not even permitted to make a motion in the Bundestag, only submit requests.¹⁶¹ In order to do attract defectors, the DKP-DRP had to appeal to the conservative-nationalists in the Bundestag while simultaneously remaining in good standing with its largely radical support base. Evidence of this can be seen when Franz Richter addressed the Bundestag during the seventh session of the parliament. There, Richter told his fellow parliamentarians the following:

We see in this state—to which we assume an entirely positive attitude—a first step towards the German Reich in which all Germans who so desire may find their homeland... we reject all radicalism...for we shall never commit the mistake of those who believe that they can pick up precisely where they were once forced to leave off.¹⁶²

Once he addressed the conservatives in the room, he turned on the nationalist rhetoric. Richter went on to say:

It is a breach of every law of warfare that millions of Germans are still being kept prisoners of war...it was and is a crime against the self-awareness of

¹⁵⁸ Tauber, 87.

¹⁵⁹ Tauber, 84.

¹⁶⁰ Tauber, 100.

¹⁶¹ Tauber, 754.

¹⁶² Tauber, 743.

nationhood.... What misery has been brought about by denazification! We demand, therefore, categorically, a final stop to all defamation ... we demand the unconditional restitution for all that has been done to them [victims of denazification].¹⁶³

Richter's attempts were to lure nationalist defection in the Bundestag were unsuccessful. To make matters worse, the underlying ideological differences in the party which had existed since the merging of the splinter parties, had resurfaced. Subsequent internal struggles for control between the conservative DKP leaders and the radical-nationalist DRP leaders tore the party apart. Dorls and Richter were expelled from the DRP on 2 October 1949. On the same day, Dorls immediately founded the Socialist Reich Party (SRP) and operated as an SRP member for the remainder of his Bundestag tour.¹⁶⁴

The SRP claimed to be the direct political successor of the NDSAP and quickly developed the party into the top right-wing threat in the FRG. The SRP's political platform was extremist and tailored to the resentments of its target electorate. The SRP wholly rejected the entire political establishment since 1945, claiming that the Third Reich never legally ceased, but was rather in a temporary state of siege that had to be endured and overcome.¹⁶⁵ According to Kurt Tauber, the SRP viewed "all Germans as a people who had been deprived of legal justice and defrauded by currency reform, a nation of expellees and victims of bombing attacks, a people of internees and victims of denazification, and [a] nation of innocent prisoners and of war widows and orphans."¹⁶⁶ Tauber characterized the SRP's political outlook best when he said, "Politics, for them, was a struggle which could be understood only in terms of Carl Schmitt's notorious categories: Friend-enemy. The enemy they saw, above all, in the occupation authorities and also the German democratic politicians, whom they defamed as servile tools of collaborationists of the foreign oppressors."¹⁶⁷ The SRP's use of propaganda and symbols highlighted the party's ties to the NDSAP, the party's insignia depicted as a black eagle on top of a red background

¹⁶³ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 743.

¹⁶⁴ Tauber, 98.

¹⁶⁵ Tauber, 706.

¹⁶⁶ Tauber, 707.

¹⁶⁷ Tauber.

with a white border was easily to associate with the Nazi swastika.¹⁶⁸ The SRP's exhaustive activism in Lower Saxony drew significant numbers of radical nationalists away from both the DRP and the German Party (DP). In the Lower-Saxony state election of 1951, the SRP received 11 percent of the vote and gained 16 seats on the state parliament. The SRP's support base in Lower-Saxony was socioeconomically diverse, but the majority were young, uneducated, and unemployed radicals who felt deprived by denazification.¹⁶⁹

Despite the SRP's rapid success, the party was unable to turn its regional success into national success. The SRP failed at solving the German right wing's eternal dilemma of how to appeal to both radical-nationalists and bourgeoisie conservatives, while simultaneously conforming to established democratic norms. To be politically viable, the SRP had to both exhibit radical nationalism and denounce it. On the one hand, the SRP's parliamentary delegation in Lower-Saxony unconditionally accepted the authority of the state as an act of conformance. On the other hand, the party's Nazi-like public speeches and widespread extremist propaganda violated the democratic and sociopolitical norms that frowned upon nationalism.¹⁷⁰ Ultimately, the SRP was unable to reign in its radical element and solve the right-wing dilemma. Because of SRP's extremist antics, which directly linked them to Nazism, the federal government invoked Article 21 and charged that SRP's political actions were unconstitutional. According to Article 21 of the Basic Law, political parties that seek to undermine or destroy the free democratic order of the FRG are prohibited.¹⁷¹ On October 23, 1952, 11 months before the 1953 general election, the Constitutional Court determined that the SRP's violated Article 21 of the Basic Law and must be dissolved¹⁷² As part of the SRP's dissolution, the party lost its parliamentary seats in all levels of government, had all its property confiscated, and were prohibited from

¹⁶⁸ Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika*, 709.

¹⁶⁹ Tauber, 704.

¹⁷⁰ Tauber, 711.

¹⁷¹ Tauber, 713–714.

¹⁷² Tauber, 714.

establishing spin-off organizations.¹⁷³ SRP's demise marked the end of the first wave of right-wing politics in the FRG.

After the demise of the SRP, the continuous splintering combined with fear of constitutional condemnation kept the right wing politically bankrupt. From 1952 to 1964, no right-wing party came close to achieving the same level of success as the DKP-DRP in 1949 or the SRP in 1951. Although the right's influence on the government was insignificant, its continuous publication of radical-right and extremist literature kept the spirit of the right's anti-liberal rejection of the post 1945 order alive.¹⁷⁴ After SRP's dissolution, the government's attention shifted towards the containment of communism and its writings, ignoring the right wing's highly antagonistic body literature produced after 1952.¹⁷⁵ The two most revered and longest running papers catered directly to the radical-right were the monthly *Nation Europa* and *Deutsche Soldatenzeitung*.¹⁷⁶ According to historian Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Nation Europa* "claimed to be—as did most publications of the radical right, with their traditional emphasis on 'culture'—the paper of an intellectual elite thwarted in the realization of its national and European goals by a 'forcibly imposed democracy.'"¹⁷⁷ The *Soldatenzeitung* used writings about the German military tradition and the glorification of war as a hook to build a large support base that included many in Bonn. The monthly paper later combined to be the *Deutsche Nationalzeitung und Soldatenzeitung* which combined elements of nationalism and Europeanism, attributing the latter as the legacy of National Socialist expansionism.¹⁷⁸ These writings were also meant to appeal to larger portion of the population who passively ascribed to the nationalist line. A public opinion poll taken in 1953 showed that 32 percent of West Germans believed that Hitler was an outstanding statesman, maybe even then best statesman of the past

¹⁷³ Tauber, 706.

¹⁷⁴ Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure and Consequences of National Socialism* (New York: Praeger), 1970, 472–475.

¹⁷⁵ Bracher, 477.

¹⁷⁶ Bracher, 473.

¹⁷⁷ Bracher, 474.

¹⁷⁸ Bracher, 474.

century.¹⁷⁹ In a 1956 poll, 16 percent of the young German men asked said that that National Socialism was a good idea, 33 Percent said it partly good and partly bad, 29 percent had no opinion, and only 22 percent thought it was a bad idea.¹⁸⁰ Despite the right wing's governmental irrelevance from 1952 to 1964, the nationalist ideals and potential support base survived, merely waiting for a change in the political atmosphere to create a right-wing storm in the FRG.

B. 1964–1969: THE NPD

The second wave of the right-wing nationalism commenced with the founding of the National Democratic Party (NPD) in November 1964 in Lower-Saxony.¹⁸¹ The formation of the NPD vindicated 12 years of work by the DRP, and combined the DRP, DP, and the All-German Party (GdP).¹⁸² Unlike the SRP which proclaimed that it was the direct successor the NDSAP, the NPD strongly objected to the charge that it was the successor of the Nazi Party.¹⁸³ To demonstrate that break, DRP leader Adolf von Thadden made sure that a moderate was placed at the top of the organization.¹⁸⁴ Fritz Thielen, a former CDU politician who had been associated with the DP since 1958, was subsequently elected as the party's first chairman.¹⁸⁵

Thielen's political prestige was meant to serve as the acceptable face for an organization that was staffed by former DRP members like Adolf von Thadden whose background has been previously documented, and DRP deputy and NPD Propaganda Chief Otto Hess, who was a former high-ranking SA officer.¹⁸⁶ Despite the party's attempt to distance itself from the NDSAP, the association with Nazism was clearly evident. More

¹⁷⁹ Bracher, 478

¹⁸⁰ Bracher.

¹⁸¹ Bracher, 479.

¹⁸² Bracher, 480.

¹⁸³ Bracher.

¹⁸⁴ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 196.

¹⁸⁵ Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 480; Art, 196.

¹⁸⁶ Bracher; Art.

than two-thirds of the party's executive leadership and regional officers were active National Socialists, and over half were DRP members.¹⁸⁷ The party advertised itself as all-inclusive right-wing party that embraced national, liberal, social principles that were being neglected by the FRG's narrowing political spectrum.¹⁸⁸ Although the political rhetoric pointed to a reformed right wing, the NPD was plainly just a reinvigorated version of the DRP.

The NPD faced the same dilemma that first wave of right-wing parties were confronted with, how to project its commitment to the established democratic system while simultaneously rejecting the post-war government and all it stands for.¹⁸⁹ Twelve years of political banishment taught the right wing that its political legitimacy would require a deeper integration into the established democratic system. The election of a former CDU politician as the party chairman, and the decision to use the term democratic instead of socialist in the party name, were both indications that right-wing was attempting to project a deeper political integration.¹⁹⁰ Likewise, the official party statutes called for the radicals to observe public restraint when speaking.

According to Karl Bracher, the call for restraint was imparted to members of the old guard by NPD Propaganda Chief, Otto Hess, who told them, "Beware of the tone you once learned!"¹⁹¹ Von Thadden also tried to restrain the radical element by providing party members with model speeches and prohibiting them from discussing the "Jewish question."¹⁹² In terms of its target electorate, the NPD faced the same dilemma as the DKP-DRP and SRP. How could the party tap into to the flush population of closet-nationalists, while simultaneously appealing to radical-right and extremist groups? Moreover, could the NPD avoid the fearsome infighting between the leadership of the conservative faction and the radical faction of the party?

¹⁸⁷ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 196.

¹⁸⁸ Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 480.

¹⁸⁹ Bracher, 479

¹⁹⁰ Bracher, 479.

¹⁹¹ Bracher, 482.

¹⁹² Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 196.

Although the NPD faced the same political pressures as its predecessors, NPD's rise coincided with the FRG's first post-war recession and occurred under vastly different geopolitical circumstances. The economic recession of 1966 most affected the middle-class and economically challenged, who found themselves in competition with more than one million guest workers from Turkey and Southern Europe who were allowed to migrate to the FRG during the post-war economic boom.¹⁹³ The crisis provided an opportunity for the NPD to rouse support from those affected, especially those closet nationalists who had thus far restrained from overtly supporting a right-wing nationalist party.

According to Bracher, by 1967 the "vague program, ideology, propaganda, and social structure of the NPD [were], as had been the case with the NDSAP, attuned to the 'panic of the middle class,' to its fear from above (capitalism) and from below (socialism)."¹⁹⁴ The NPD's message appealed to the poor, the middle class, skilled workers, small business owners, industrial workers, and the military.¹⁹⁵ The emergence of the Grand Coalition of the CDU/CSU and the SPD from 1966 to 1969 increased the NPD's appeal to closet nationalists. The mainstream's convergence towards the center created a politically viable space to the right of the CDU/CSU where the NPD could exist.¹⁹⁶ Additionally, the perceived erosion of German social values due to increased consumerism, combined with Chancellor Erhard's political endorsement of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, drew heavy opposition from the various social movements that emerged during this time.¹⁹⁷ In light of the socioeconomic deterioration and political reconfiguration in the FRG, the NPD was given an extraordinary amount of publicity which helped increase its popularity and provided them access to a mass audience.¹⁹⁸ By 1968, it appeared that the

¹⁹³ Richard Stöss, "The Problem of Right-Wing Extremism in West Germany," *West European Politics* 11, no. 2 (1988), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402388808424680>: 40; Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 146.

¹⁹⁴ Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 486.

¹⁹⁵ Bracher, 484–486.

¹⁹⁶ Stöss, "The Problem of Right-Wing Extremism in West Germany," 43–4; Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 197.

¹⁹⁷ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 144–145.

¹⁹⁸ Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 483.

NPD had found the recipe to overcome the sociopolitical barriers that prohibited the success of the DKP-DRP and SRP. Leading up to the 1969 federal election, the NPD had obtained representation in seven of the eleven FRG state parliaments.¹⁹⁹ All signs pointed to the NPD's likely inclusion into the federal government for the first time in 20 years.

Despite the momentum established by the NPD leading up to the federal election of 1969, the NPD adhered to the right-wing tradition of party infighting between the conservative and radical leadership. By 1967, Von Thadden's penchant for Nazism and authoritarian leadership style led to over 1,800 defections by conservatives who accused the radical wing of the party of acting like godless zealots."²⁰⁰ The internal strife came to head in the March 1967 when Von Thadden had ousted several NPD officials who were not devoted to him.²⁰¹ Thielen responded by attempting to ban Von Thadden and his most loyal deputies from the party.²⁰² According to David Art, lack of support for Thielen's motion to expel von Thadden forced Thielen's acknowledgment that "at the moment, the NPD cannot be cleansed," and his official resignation in June 1967.

Before the elections, the Grand Coalition ended and the CDU shifted subtly back to the right where the closet nationalists felt most comfortable.²⁰³ The recovery of the economy by 1969 also helped to bankrupt the NPD at the polls. The culmination of these factors resulted in a crushing defeat for the NPD in the 1969 federal election, when the party only received 4.3 percent of the second vote.²⁰⁴ The elimination of the external political and economic factors, which had contributed to NPD's rise, left the exposed and busted. Von Thadden, who represented the older radical element of the party, himself lost control of the party to the younger extremist element of the party. In October 1969, Von Thadden's extremist bodyguard shot two anti-fascist protestors at an NPD rally. Von

¹⁹⁹ Stöss, "The Problem of Right-Wing Extremism in West Germany," 41.

²⁰⁰ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 198.

²⁰¹ Art.

²⁰² Art, 197.

²⁰³ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 144–145.

²⁰⁴ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag."

Thadden, who had been a DRP member since 1946, was unable to control the extremist element subsequently resigned.

According to David Art, Von Thadden's parting shot claimed "that he was neither ready, nor suitable for a dance on a volcano of irrational folly."²⁰⁵ In the end, Von Thadden found himself in the same position the DRP was in back in 1949, unable to reign in the extremist members of the party and capitalize on regional successes. By 1972, the NPD lost all of its seats in state parliaments and would remain politically dead for the next 30 years.

C. 1983–1994: THE REPUBLIKANER PARTY AND THE NEW RIGHT

The third wave of the German far right was ushered in to the FRG by the Republikaner Party in 1983. The Republikaner was characterized as a New Right party because of its neoconservative-revolutionary values that were against western integration, the post-war settlement and collective war guilt, immigration, and the established democratic order.²⁰⁶ The ideology of the New Right was eloquently described by historian Jan Herman Brinks, who said:

The ideas of the New Right can be traced back to Hegel and propagate reverence for the State, the nation and history. New Right views have great similarities with the ideas of the 'conservative revolution of the Weimar Republic.' Those former conservative-revolutionaries, like Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Hans Freyer, Edgar Julius Jung and Ernst Jünger, turned out in practice to be direct precursors of National Socialism. Their 'counter-revolutionary' activity was directed at the time explicitly against the ideals of the French Revolution: freedom, equality and fraternity.²⁰⁷

The New Right's political credibility was given a boost by the Historikerstreit that began in 1986.²⁰⁸ Charles Maier best sums up the Historikerstreit debate when he pointed out that the "central issue has been whether Nazi crimes were unique, a legacy of evil in a class

²⁰⁵ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 199.

²⁰⁶ Jan Herman Brinks, *Children of a New Fatherland: Germany's Post-War Right Wing Politics* (New York: I.B Tauris), 1999, 111, 113–115.

²⁰⁷ Brinks, 111.

²⁰⁸ The Historikerstreit (1986-1989), which means the historians' controversy, encompassed academic and political arguments centered on how the FRG should best remember the Holocaust and the Nazi era.

by themselves, irreparably burdening any concept of German nationhood, or whether they are comparable to other national atrocities, especially the Stalinist terror.”²⁰⁹

Ernst Nolte was a revisionist historian that sparked the Historikerstreit. Nolte reinforced the views of the New Right through his 1974 book *Germany and the Cold War*, and his 1986 essay published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, “The past that will not pass away.” In *Germany and the Cold War*, Nolte tried to place the Third Reich into a historical context of an ongoing world ideological conflict, the Reich’s existence being necessary to transcend fascism. Nolte pointed out that every powerful nation has experienced its own Hitler era filled with monstrosities and sacrifices.²¹⁰ In “The past that will not pass away,” Nolte argued how the mass murder committed by Third Reich had also been committed by the Turks during in 1915 and by the Russians during World War Two. Nolte pointed out that the only difference was the technicality of using gas to commit genocide.²¹¹ Nolte intended the piece to help Germans put the Nazi terror into context, put the past away, and move to break the taboo against nationalism to once again develop a positive association with the national identity.²¹² Nolte’s Arguments were ultimately defeated by philosopher Jürgen Habermas whose retort was published in the *Die Zeit*. Habermas rejected Nolte’s views by claiming that Nolte was attempting to cancel out the Holocaust and the uniqueness of Germany’s deeds. Habermas indicted Nolte as trying to turn the FRG inward, away from the west with which Germany had been oriented since the end of the War.²¹³ Despite the defeat of Nolte’s academic attack on the taboo against nationalism, the New Right was able to find success once again in the FRG.

The Republikaner Party founded in 1983 by two Bavarian CSU members, Franz Handlos and Ekkehard Voigt, and a former Waffen SS member Franz Schönhuber. The trio founded the party in response after the CSU Chairman voted to approve a DM 1 billion

²⁰⁹ Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (London: Cambridge University Press), 1997, 1.

²¹⁰ Maier, 28.

²¹¹ Maier, 29–30.

²¹² Maier.

²¹³ Maier, 39–42.

loan to the GDR.²¹⁴ The party's first program was a political extension of the CSU's program without the religious fervor. The program expressed a conservative-nationalist agenda that rallied around reunification and European Integration.²¹⁵ In keeping with the right-wing tradition, a fierce power struggle between the right-leaning Schönhuber and the conservative ex-CSU politicians ensued, and Schönhuber took over the party in 1985.²¹⁶ As was the case with NPD twenty years earlier, once the nationalists seized control, the party took a sharp right turn. According to historian Thomas Saalfeld:

The programme of 1987 contained authoritarian, anti-pluralist, neutralist and anti-European elements. A strong state was to guarantee law and order, individual and group interests were to be subordinated to the national interest, the role of trade unions in the process of free collective bargaining was to be restricted, the mass media were to be controlled by 'independent* state agencies, the legal and social status of foreigners in Germany was to be limited to the status of 'guests' without equal rights, German reunification was to be achieved outside NATO if necessary.

An integral piece of the Republikaner's program was its anti-establishment position and refusal to accept the division of Germany.²¹⁷ Like its right-wing predecessors, the Republikaner was able to leverage the surge of nationalism to achieve regional success at the polls.

In January 1987, the Republikaner won 7.5 percent of the state vote in West Berlin and gained 11 seats in the state parliament.²¹⁸ In the European Parliamentary elections held in June 1987, the Republikaner received 7.1 percent of the vote and won six seats in the European Parliament.²¹⁹ The unexpected fall of the Berlin wall in November 1989 ushered in a rapid series of events diplomatic events that led to reunification of Germany

²¹⁴ Brinks, *Children of a New Fatherland*, 115.

²¹⁵ Thomas Saalfeld, "The Politics of National-Populism: Ideology and Policies of the German Republikaner Party," *German Politics* 2, no. 2 (1993): 185, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09644009308404323>

²¹⁶ Uwe Backes and Cas Mudde, "Germany: Extremism Without Successful Parties." *Parliamentary Affairs* 53, no. 3 (2000): 459, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cas_Mudde/publication/47379671_Germany_Extremism_without_Successful_Parties/links/56bb4e0508ae2d6f2013a623.pdf

²¹⁷ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 200.

²¹⁸ Art, 199.

²¹⁹ Art.

on October 3, 1990.²²⁰ With the first federal election set to take place in a reunified Germany on 2 December 1990, the Republikaner hoped to translate its regional successes to the national level.²²¹ Before the fall of the Berlin wall, many analysts predicted that the Republikaner would become the fifth largest party in the FRG.²²² However, with reunification, a significant portion of the party's platform disappeared.

In 1990, the Republikaner issued a new Program that again tried to assume a more conservative tone while simultaneously appealing to both Old Right and the New Right. The economic principles of the 1990 program tried to appeal to the middle class. The party claimed that the liberal policies of the Christian Democratic benefited only big businesses, while the Social Democrats aligned with trade unions. The program claimed the dominance of those two parties, and resulting bureaucracy, left the middle class and small business owners neglected and forgotten.²²³ The program also tried to appeal to the rural population of the East by claiming that agriculture was an important part of the German economy that needed to be protected because a thriving agriculture industry reduced the nation's dependence on food imports.²²⁴ The Republikaner vowed to quit subsidizing the agriculture of other nations as required by the European Community's common agriculture policy, and instead subsidize German agriculture.²²⁵ The 1990 program called for the tightening of fiscal policy, simplification of tax law, and reduction or abolishment of many taxes.²²⁶ In many regards, the Republikaner's program attempted to blend the issues of the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats, only offering a better solution for the middle class.

Despite the Republikaner's attempt to appear moderated, a quick review of the program's views on nationalism and immigration reveal that the party was more of the

²²⁰ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 252.

²²¹ Tuner Jr., *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 252; Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 199.

²²² Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 199.

²²³ Saalfeld, "The Politics of National-Populism," 187.

²²⁴ Saalfeld.

²²⁵ Saalfeld.

²²⁶ Saalfeld, 188.

same. The 1990 program clearly spelled out that that the party viewed the people (volk), nation, and state as indivisible, and that political citizenship should be based on cultural purity.²²⁷ The program clearly expressed the Republikaner Party's views that Germany was not multicultural society.²²⁸ According to historian Thomas Saalfeld, at rallies Republikaner leaders "tied to stimulate fears Germany's ethnic over-alienation 'Überfremdung' through migrant workers, asylum seekers, and other immigrants who are seen a danger to the country's national identity."²²⁹ The party believed that Germany's 1937 borders should be restored, and accuses the government of permitting the hidden occupation of Germany by the western powers. The party called for the rejection of dual citizenship, the repatriation of migrants, only the naturalization of foreigners who exhibit a good attitude towards integration, and the tightening of asylum laws.²³⁰

The program also charged government with distorting Germany's history by perpetuating the western powers' over exaggeration of the Third Reich.²³¹ The Republikaner claimed that integration into NATO and the European Community should be viewed with skepticism, and that Germany's foreign and security policy should be reoriented to support ethnic German in Eastern Europe.²³² In addition to its anti-western claim that Allies have continued the occupation of Germany, the party was also highly critical of the American influence on Germany, which it blamed for the AIDS disease, drug-trafficking, and crime.²³³ Although much of the nationalist rhetoric expressed by the Republikaner was done while campaigning, the nationalist tome found in the party program clearly demonstrated that the Republikaner expressed a level of nationalism that exceeded the tolerance of the most conservative-nationalists.

²²⁷ Saalfeld, "The Politics of National-Populism," 188, 191.

²²⁸ Saalfeld, 191.

²²⁹ Saalfeld,

²³⁰ Saalfeld,

²³¹ Saalfeld, 190

²³² Saalfeld, 189.

²³³ Saalfeld, 191.

Despite the potential for success, by the time the first elections since reunification took place 2 December 1990 the Republikaner party had already fallen victim right-wing trap that has doomed all of its predecessors. The ethnic-nationalist beliefs of the party attracted large numbers of young extremists, and created the destructive internal party strife that has plagued the right wing since 1945. A mere 10 months after the party's electoral success in West Berlin, the party's leaders there started a new party called the German Democrats. According to David Art, a *Der Spiegel* article captured the cause of the split when it said:

The Berlin REPs produce a wave of party and legal proceedings, brawl during meetings, and denounce one another with anonymous dossiers that are sometimes produced by an internal party security service. According to statements from former REP functionaries, the party has not only been infiltrated by right-wing extremists from Wiking-Jugend, the DVU, and the NPD, but its leading figures possess dubious pasts.²³⁴

The fractioned Berlin sect of the Party never recovered from this conflict. By March 1990, Schönhuber claimed the party had been overtaken by the NPD and resigned. Despite his resignation, he was reelected as party chair in July and subsequently ejected the extremist leader Harald Neubauer from the party.²³⁵ Neubauer took his supporters and the Deutsche Liga für Volk und Heimat."²³⁶ By the time of the federal election in 1990, all mainstream parties had publicly refused to work with the Republikaner at any level of government. Since the time of its electoral success in 1989, the Republikaner lost 40 percent of its membership due to party splintering and social pressures.²³⁷ According to David Art, "The leader of the REP in one German state claimed that he had lost at least a third of his friends once he joined the party."²³⁸ In addition to the social pressures associated with breaking the taboo against nationalism, Chancellor Willy Brandt implemented a decree against radicals, which prohibited people who hold radical political

²³⁴ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 200.

²³⁵ Art, 201.

²³⁶ Art.

²³⁷ Art, 202.

²³⁸ Art.

views from working in Civil Service jobs, and applied to approximately 3.5 million Germans.²³⁹ The culmination of the events since 1989 led to a dismal showing for the Republikaners on 2 December 1990. The Party only received 1.7 percent of the first vote and 2.1 percent of the second vote.

Although the party continues to exist to this day, it never recovered from its 1989 implosion. In 1992, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution started monitor the party's actions on the grounds that the party exhibited extreme-right tendencies and could potentially be unconstitutional.²⁴⁰ In 1994, Schönhuber issued a joint statement with Gerhard Frey of the German People's Union (DVU) which again signaled the parties return to the far right.²⁴¹ His actions invoked a negative response from party officials and Schönhuber resigned in 1994. Schönhuber was replaced by party Vice Chairman Rolf Schilerer, a Stuttgart lawyer who has been unable to find any electoral success since he led the party to win 10.8 percent of the vote in Baden-Württemberg in 1992.²⁴²

D. 1987–2013: THE DVU AND RETURN OF THE NPD

The fourth wave of the German Right encompasses the political activities of the DVU and the NPD. The DVU began as a right-wing association founded in 1971 by millionaire publisher Gerhard Frey, and was the largest extra-parliamentary right-wing extremist organization in the FRG.²⁴³ Frey led the DVU into politics in 1987 behind a political program official program was mainly focused on the past-war settlement.²⁴⁴ Frey's political program was mostly broadcast via one of his two radical-weekly publications, and focused on downplaying the horrors of the Third Reich, anti-Semitic

²³⁹ Art.

²⁴⁰ Simon Borschier, *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right: The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 2010, 173.

²⁴¹ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 201.

²⁴² Backes and Mudde, "Germany: Extremism Without Successful Parties," 463.

²⁴³ Backes and Mudde, 464.

²⁴⁴ Backes and Mudde, 462.

anecdotes, and romantic stories that glorified the German soldier and eastern German lands that were lost after the war.²⁴⁵

Frey spent DM 17 million of his own money in 1989 on 70 million DVU pamphlets in the run-up to the European elections, but only mustered 1.6 percent of the vote.²⁴⁶ Another mass mailing campaign would produce the DVU's best result in 1998, where it won 12.9 percent of the vote in Saxony-Anhalt and gained 16 seats in the state parliament.²⁴⁷ However, just like the Republikaner Party in West Berlin after its success, the DVU party in Saxony-Anhalt imploded after party infighting and disorganization. Within one year of its largest electoral success, 25 percent of the Saxony-Anhalt group defected to other parties. The party was able to remain alive made a pact with the NPD to not compete for vote in the state elections in Brandenburg and Saxony, and the DVU won 6.1 percent of the vote in Brandenburg in 2002, but it was never able to climb on to the national stage of politics in the FRG.²⁴⁸ In 2009, an aging Frey stepped down and was replaced by Matthias Faust who led the party to a merger with the NPD in 2010.²⁴⁹

The NPD experienced a political awakening in the 1996 when it ditched party head Günter Deckert in favor of Udo Voigt, a former German Air Force Captain. After reunification, the numerous after school clubs and organizations provided by the East German government disappeared, and the neo-Nazi sub-culture seized the opportunity fill the void by inculcating many young East Germans into their brotherhood.²⁵⁰ The most notorious of these extra-parliamentary organizations was The Movement, or Die Bewegung. The Movement consisted of a network of underground neo-Nazi organizations across Germany. During the 1990s, German authorities banned many of them due to the

²⁴⁵ Backes and Mudde, 462.

²⁴⁶ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 203.

²⁴⁷ Art; Backes and Mudde, "Germany: Extremism Without Successful Parties," 462.

²⁴⁸ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 204.

²⁴⁹ "NPD Decides to Merge with the DVU," *Der Spiegel*, June 11, 2010, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/rechtsextreme-parteien-mpd-beschliesst-fusion-mit-der-dvu-a-727700.html>.

²⁵⁰ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 204.

increased level of violence against foreigners.²⁵¹ In 1998, the Office for Protection of the Constitution estimated that the ban had simply forced The Movement to reorganize into as many as 80 different small cells.²⁵² Deckert, who was fixated on Holocaust revisionism failed to see the potential of the East German population and the NPD almost became irrelevant in East Germany. Where Deckert saw trouble, Voigt saw opportunity.

When Voigt assumed command in 1996, he was immediately with faced the same dilemma as his right-wing forefathers. Voigt needed to create a program that somehow appealed to both conservatives and radicals. Voigt began in 1996 by developing a moderate nationalist party line mixed nationalism with anti-capitalism to lure in the voters who were negatively affected by globalization and immigration.²⁵³ The NPD's unofficial program was anti-Semitic, and promoted hostility toward the United States, which the NPD considers to be Jewish controlled.²⁵⁴ Like many of its right-wing predecessors. The NPD called for restoration of Germany's 1937 borders and embraced a historical revisionist perspective on the Nazi era. Since the party's radicalization in the 1990s, several known neo-Nazis militants with criminal convictions have entered the NPD's executive committees.²⁵⁵

In 1997, Voigt opened up the NPD's ranks to the neo-Nazi sub-culture in Eastern Germany. The effects of Voigt's actions are best summarized by Tom Mannewitz when he said:

With the implementation of Udo Voigt's ambitious four-pillar strategy in 1997 (fight for the parliaments, the streets, the minds and the organised will) that included the creation of local networks and tying in with informally

²⁵¹ Backes and Mudde, "Germany: Extremism Without Successful Parties," 462.

²⁵² Backes and Mudde.

²⁵³ Uwe Backes, "The electoral Victory of the NPD in Saxony and the Prospects for Future Extreme-Right Success in German elections." *Patterns of Prejudice* 40, no. 02 (2006), 138, DOI:10.1080/00313220600634303.

²⁵⁴ "The Far-Right Threat to Germany's Democracy," *Der Spiegel*, February 16, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/prohibition-debate-the-far-right-threat-to-germany-s-democracy-a-815242.html>.

²⁵⁵ *Der Spiegel*.

organised nationalist circles ('Freie Kameradschaften'), the NPD eventually succeeded in getting a firm foothold in the East, particularly in Saxony.²⁵⁶

Since Voigt opened up the party to neo-Nazis, the NPD has been associated with violent crime against foreigners. From June 2000 to January 2001, four violent attacks against foreigners were committed, leaving many injured and an immigrant from Mozambique dead.²⁵⁷ On January 31, 2001, the Bundestag, Bundesrat, and Chancellor's cabinet agreed to submit a request to the attempted to ban the NPD for violating Article 21 of the Basic Law by seeking to undermine or destroy the free democratic order of the FRG. Despite the government's thrashing of the NPD, the nationalist fervor in Germany remained alive. Just days after the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, Voigt blamed the United States for its forcible attempts to Americanize and Israelize the world.²⁵⁸ Amid much clamor against the wars that ensued, including Chancellor Schröder's vocal opposition, anti-American and anti-Semitic sentiments were high in Germany at this time. Because of the banning attempt in progress, the NPD had a miserable outing at the 2002 federal election receiving only .4 percent of the second vote.²⁵⁹

In 2003, the Constitutional Court dismissed the trial against the NPD because many of the witnesses were employees of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution who had infiltrated the NPD and the government refused to identify any witnesses who were active government agents in the NPD.²⁶⁰ Fresh off a major victory in court, should the NPD won 9.4 percent of the vote in Saxony in 2004 and gained 12 seats in the state parliament.²⁶¹ Shortly after, the NPD and the DVU signed a pact that pledged their

²⁵⁶ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 205.

²⁵⁷ "The NPD and the Petition to Ban it," *Deutsche Welle*, January 3, 2002, Accessed 10 August 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/1kE1>

²⁵⁸ Lars Rensmann, "From High Hopes To On-Going Defeat: The New Extreme Right's Political Mobilization and its National Electoral Failure in Germany," *German Politics and Society* 24, no. 1 (2006): 77, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=579f6f46-f15e-47b8-8aa3-81856d025954%40sessionmgr101>.

²⁵⁹ Rensmann, 81.

²⁶⁰ Frank Decker and Lazaros Miliopoulos, "From a Five to a Six-party System? Prospects of the Right-wing Extremist NPD," *German Politics and Society* 27, no. 2 (2009), 95.

²⁶¹ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 205.

political cooperation in an attempt to maximize electoral results.²⁶² The off-cycle federal election of 2005 gave the NPD little time, and even with the DVU cooperation, the NPD mustered just 1.8 percent of the first vote and 1.6 percent of the second vote.²⁶³ Despite the failure at the national level, the NPD was not dead. The party on to achieve local success in extended its success to 2006, when the party won 7.3 percent of the vote in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, and gained six seats in the state parliament.²⁶⁴

The period from 2006 to 2009 saw the NPD's continuing radicalization. In 2006, Voigt, was charged with incitement after publishing a leaflet that opposed the selection of Patrick Owomoyela a black man, to the German national soccer team. The leaflet showed a soccer player from behind with Owomoyela's number on the jersey, and above the number was the caption, "White. Not just the color of a team shirt! For a true national team!"²⁶⁵ After the election of Barack Obama as the President of the United States in 2008, the NPD published a piece on its website entitled, "Africa Conquers the White House," where party leader and elected Saxony parliamentarian Jürgen Gansel blamed Obama's victory on "the American alliance of Jews and Negroes."²⁶⁶

The racist orientation of the NPD did not help at the polls in the 2009 federal election, where the party won no direct seats and just 1.5 percent of the second vote.²⁶⁷ In 2010, the NPD and DVU agreed to merge the parties as their combined membership dropped to about 10,000.²⁶⁸ The merger had no effect on the NPD's electoral success in 2013, where the party again received no direct elects and on mustered 1.3 percent of the

²⁶² Rensmann, "From High Hopes To On-Going Defeat," 80.

²⁶³ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag - Results Lookup," accessed 30 June 2017, <http://www.electionresources.org/de/bundestag.php?election=1949&land=DE>

²⁶⁴ Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, 205.

²⁶⁵ "Head of Germany's Far-Right NPD Charged With Racial Incitement," *Der Spiegel*, March 25, 2008, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/accusation-of-soccer-race-baiting-head-of-germany-s-far-right-npd-charged-with-racial-incitement-a-543287.html>

²⁶⁶ Craig Whitlock, "Racism Rears Its Head in European Remarks on Obama," *Washington Post*, November 11, 2008, Accessed August 9, 2017, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/10/AR2008111002810.html>

²⁶⁷ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag."

²⁶⁸ "Far-right NPD Votes for Merger with Like-Minded Party," *Deutsche Welle*, November 7, 2010, Accessed August 9, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/Q0gl>

second vote.²⁶⁹ Germany's newest right-wing party that was founded in 2013, the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), managed to triple the NPD's success amongst achieved greater national level success in its first year than NPD ever has. In January 2017, the NPD survived the second attempt by the government to ban it on the grounds that the party is unconstitutional.²⁷⁰ The NPD's influence on the political and social discourse in Germany have far exceeded the party's influence on the government. Despite all attempts to discredit the NPD, the party has remained active and proved that despite the amount of time that has elapsed since the Third Reich, that integral nationalism is still very much alive in Germany.

²⁶⁹ German Bundestag, "Elections to the German Bundestag."

²⁷⁰ "Germany's Constitutional Court Rules Against Banning Far-Right NPD Party," *Deutsche Welle*, January 17, 2017, Accessed August 9, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/2VtnY>

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V. ALTERNATIVE FÜR DEUTSCHLAND (AFD): THE FIFTH WAVE OF THE GERMAN RIGHT WING

This chapter examines the AfD's origins, evolution, and political strategy. The chapter begins with and a detailed look at the AfD's programmatic evolution since its inception, highlighting the party's leadership and political platform. Next, the chapter examines the sociopolitical conditions that contributed to the AfD's rise, and how the AfD leveraged those conditions to achieve electoral successes. The chapter then analyzes how the AfD has thus far avoided the right-wing trap of radicalization and extremism, which has doomed every right-wing party in Germany since 1949. The chapter closes by examining the element in the AfD that openly exhibits integral nationalism and racism in an attempt to destroy Germany's taboo against nationalism in politics.

A. AFD'S ORIGINS AND THE EVOLUTION OF ITS POLITICAL PLATFORM

AfD was borne out of the 2008 Great Recession, a product of the political fallout from German led financial bailout of Greece and other Mediterranean EU member states in 2013.²⁷¹ The party's three founders, Bernard Lucke, Alexander Gauland, and Konrad Adam, created AfD with an anti-Euro and EU-reform agenda. Lucke was an economics professor who broke away from the ruling CDU. Gauland was a critic of Angela Merkel who left the CDU after 40 years of devoted membership which included four years as Minister-President of Hesse. Adam, also a former CDU member, wrote several books about reforming German domestic politics and education.²⁷² The first party congress in 2013 elected Adam, Lucke, and non-founder Frauke Petry as party co-chairs.²⁷³ A chemist by

²⁷¹ Elizabeth Schumacher, "AfD: No Longer for Amateurs," *Deutsche Welle*, January 31, 2015, <http://dw.com/p/1ETyF>.

²⁷² Frank Decker, "The 'Alternative for Germany': Factors Behind its Emergence and Profile of a New Right Wing Populist Party," *German Politics and Society* 34, no. 2 (2016): 9–10.

²⁷³ Kai, Arzheimer, "The AfD: Finally, a Successful Right-Wing Populist Eurosceptic Party for Germany?" *West European Politics* 38, no. 3 (2015): 535–556, <https://doi.org/101080/01402382.2015.1004230>.

trade, Petry has gained her doctorate from Goettingen University, and later founded a company environmentally friendly polyurethanes company in Leipzig²⁷⁴

Closely following the party's founding principles, AfD's 2013 manifesto focused heavily on the problems with the EU monetary policy. The budding manifesto demanded that Germany refuse to guarantee any member states' sovereign debt, reintroduce the national currency, and prohibit legislation that would further diminish the sovereignty of German fiscal policy.²⁷⁵ While the Eurocrisis and subsequent Greek bailout was a heated topic for Germans, the anti-bailout public sentiment did not transfer into results during the 2013 federal election.²⁷⁶ AfD won just 4.7 percent of the vote, narrowly missing the five-percent threshold required to enter the federal government.²⁷⁷ Thus, the election results clearly indicated that AfD needed to expand its anti-Euro centered program to appeal to a wider electorate.

After its disappointment in the federal election, AfD's leadership worked to create a program that addressed all mainstream political issues. However, AfD's leadership collided with contrasting desired direction of the party's new program. Lucke and Adam pushed for an economy-based liberal agenda, while Gauland aligned with co-speaker Frauke Petry, to push for a more nationalist agenda that was strongly opposed to immigration. Evidence of AfD's lean right can be seen as early as 2014. The party's 2014 European election manifesto slogan, AfD's *Mut zu Deutschland*, which translated means, "Dare to stand by Germany."²⁷⁸ This provocative slogan was a direct challenge to the socio-political taboos associated with exhibiting national pride and indicated the strong level of influence that nationalist faction had on the party's program development. The use of this type of fractious language, cunningly weaved into a legal-based political agenda, is the trademark style of AfD

²⁷⁴ "Profile: German Right-Wing AfD Leader Frauke Petry," BBC News, March 10, 2016, Accessed July 9, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35775513>

²⁷⁵ Arzheimer, "The AfD," 3.

²⁷⁶ A February 2012 *Bild* newspaper poll showed that 62 percent of Germans were against a second bailout for Greece.

²⁷⁷ Decker, "The 'Alternative for Germany': Factors Behind its Emergence," 7-8.

²⁷⁸ Decker, 7-9; Arzheimer, "The AfD: Finally, a Successful Right-Wing Populist Eurosceptic Party for Germany?" 9-10.

nationalist leaders. Petry and Gauland managed to produce a manifesto that contained enough nationalist undertones to catch the attention of those who embrace ethnocentrism, nationalism and radicalism, but also to those mainstream Germans who felt threatened by endless Europeanization and immigration. AfD's 2014 manifesto announced policy positions that called for social curtailed benefits for long-term immigrants.²⁷⁹

Additionally, AfD called for increased funding for southern EU member states who are responsible for carrying out EU regulation 603/2013, also known as the Dublin III regulation, which states that the responsibility for initial processing of asylum seekers rests with the member state where the applicant first arrives.²⁸⁰ The clear take away from AfD's new manifesto was that that party intended to place a heavy focus on asylum and immigration as a means for nationalism to once again gain a foothold in German politics.

As AfD drifted further right, its leadership made repeated xenophobic and anti-Semitic statements. The repeated crossing of the established right lateral limits of German politics caused many mainstream politicians to compare AfD to other sinister German extremist and racist organizations, like the NPD and PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West.) Germany's Vice Chancellor, Sigmond Gabriel, went so far as to compare AfD to the Nazi Party.²⁸¹ Not dissuaded, AfD's 2016 party congress further highlighted the internal strength of the nationalist faction's leadership by producing a new manifesto that featured the slogan, "Islam does not belong of Germany."²⁸² This pointed charge illustrates just how far to the right AfD had moved since the 2014 party congress that rallied around "Mut zu Deutschland"—courage to be/have Germany. The callousness of the party's new slogan suggested that AfD was steadily creeping toward the same

²⁷⁹ Arzheimer, "The AfD: Finally, a Successful Right-Wing Populist Eurosceptic Party for Germany?" 9–10.; Decker, "The 'Alternative for Germany': Factors Behind it Emergence and Profile of a New Right Wing Populist Party," 15.

²⁸⁰ European Regulation no 603/2013, European Union, June 26, 2013, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:180:0001:0030:EN:PDF>.

²⁸¹ Rory Mulholland, "German Vice Chancellor Compares AfD Party to the Nazis," *Telegraph*, June 12, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/12/german-vice-chancellor-compares-afd-party-to-the-nazis/>.

²⁸² Artur Ciechanowicz, "The Political Manifesto of the Alternative for Germany – The Sum of All Fears," Center for Eastern Studies, May 11, 2016, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-05-11/political-manifesto-alternative-germany-sum-all-fears>

xenophobic domain as NPD and PEGIDA. Petry confidently delivered this anti-Islam message during the party congress, staking her political survival on the power of populism to continue to attract support from German voters who fear the Islamisation of Germany and terrorism.

The trend of using legal arguments to justify racism appeared to be a continued throughout AfD's Manifesto. Illustrating this tactic is AfD's anti-Islam argument that has claimed Islam is unconstitutional because it holds the power of religion above that of the state, and therefore is contradicts the Basic Law.²⁸³ As part of its rejection of Islam, AfD believes that Islamic organizations should be refused public juridical status, which entitles them to receive funding from taxes by Muslims to build places of worship. AfD justified its position by claiming that to be eligible for public judicial status, organizations are required to exhibit "[r]ecognition of religious freedom, the ideological neutrality of the state, and the parity of religions and confessions."²⁸⁴ AfD then circled back to argument that Islam places religion above state, thereby nullifying the conditions of juridical status eligibility.

Accordingly, AfD has called for a ban Minarets in Germany based on legal precedent. AfD continued to try and legally isolate Muslim cultural practices by calling for a ban on Muslim women wearing the face covering burkas in public. AfD justified this legal proposition by arguing that facial concealment of just the women does not foster cultural integration and German social values.²⁸⁵ AfD also uses immigrant crime to renew Carl Schmitt's "friend-enemy" political distinction, which was twisted by the Nazi party to dehumanize Jews.²⁸⁶ A prime example of this tactic can be seen in AfD's response to the Cologne New Year's Eve assaults in 2015. Concerning those assaults, Thuringia's AfD head, Bjorn Höcke, stated, "The events at the Cologne train station on New Year's Eve gave our country a taste of the looming collapse of culture and civilization. Hundreds of

²⁸³ "Manifesto for Germany," AfD, May 1, 2016, 49, https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/111/2017/04/2017-04-12_afd-grundsatzprogramm-englisch_web.pdf

²⁸⁴ AfD.

²⁸⁵ AfD.

²⁸⁶ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, Expanded ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 27–28.

women were victims of a group of 1,000 North African young men.”²⁸⁷ These sentiments were echoed and expounded on by the leadership of NPD and PEGIDA, and clearly exemplify AfD’s willingness to leverage local tragedies for its political gain.

AfD’s 2016 party program called for immediate border control measures to be put in place, and that a clear delineation between asylum and irregular immigration be made in every case. AfD has insisted that asylum seekers be held at geographically distanced locations, similar to the Australian model, which placed refugees in shelters on the non-Australian pacific islands of Nauru and Manus, until their applications for asylum are received, processed and approved.²⁸⁸ AfD has called for an end to irregular immigration and proposes an immigration system based off the Canadian Model, which bases adjudication on an immigrant’s skillset and willingness to integrate. However, AfD has noted that this skill-based system would not apply to immigrants coming from other EU member states because they would not threaten the western values or cultural preservation of German society.²⁸⁹

In 2015, an estimated 1.5 million irregular immigrants and asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Arica made their way into Germany. AfD has demanded the expedited deportation of all rejected asylum applicants, and that jurisdiction in these cases be removed from the state and transferred to the federal government to expedite deportations.²⁹⁰ AfD’s proposed systematic tightening of immigration and asylum policy has been directed squarely at the large Muslim population that has flooded Germany since 2013, and aims to legally disenfranchise this population who AfD views as a cultural enemy of Germany.

AfD’s 2016 manifesto produced the multi-issue platform that it lacked in 2013 and 2014. In addition to addressing the mainstream issues, AfD’s current manifesto has

²⁸⁷ “Chaos and Violence: How New Year’s Eve in Cologne Has Changed Germany,” *Spiegel Online International*, January 8, 2016, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/cologne-attacks-trigger-raw-debate-on-immigration-in-germany-a-1071175.html>.

²⁸⁸ AfD, “Program for Germany,” 49.

²⁸⁹ AfD, 30–31, 44–45

²⁹⁰ AfD, 60.

aggressively called for a departure from Europeanized liberal policies that have become the norm in Germany. Most notably, AfD has called for the following policy positions to be adopted: anti-EU policies; a UN security council reform agenda; major restrictions on participation in NATO out-of-area engagements; the removal of all foreign military forces and nuclear weapons from German soil; a new European security architecture that includes Russia; incentivized child birth and programs that promote the traditional family; and a ban on non-medically essential abortions.²⁹¹ These policy propositions have not received the same level of media attention and public scrutiny as have AfD's immigration and asylum policies.

These stark departures from the norm lurk beneath the surface of the populist wave of support that AfD is riding. Thus, AfD's extreme policy positions are being unknowingly advanced by a politically uninformed electorate that has become frustrated with Merkel's government. These policy positions, combined with the actions and statements of AfD's leadership, undoubtedly demonstrate the party's steady course towards the radical right. This steady shift right has been picked up by mainstream politicians and educated Germans, who have opened the debate about whether AfD is simply a far-right party pursuing legitimate political objectives, or if AfD is a radical right-wing party that encourages the type of nativism, xenophobia, and discrimination, that is often associated with the national socialists of the Third Reich and other modern day blacklisted extremist organizations. Based on the review of the definitions of the spectrum of the right wing in the literature review, and on the documented nationalist, xenophobic, and populist rhetoric of the party, AfD irrefutably evolved into a radical right-wing political party that uses cultural pride to walk the fine line of between patriotism and nationalism in Germany.

B. AfD'S RISE: WHY AND HOW IT HAPPENED

AfD's shift to an anti-immigrant and asylum program has been the primary reason for its rapid success. The Syrian Civil War ignited a mass inflow of refugees and irregular migrants into Europe, primarily to Germany. The Federal Office of Migration and

²⁹¹ AfD, 60.

Refugees (BAMF) reported that 1.14 million migrants arrived in Germany in 2015.²⁹² The speed of the refugees' arrival became a serious problem for Germany as it strained the nation's capacity to house, feed, and accurately track all migrants who entered Germany.²⁹³ AfD linked the rapid flow of refugees into Germany to Chancellor Merkel's August 2015 announcement that Germany was a welcoming country for those seeking refuge from war torn regions.²⁹⁴ Reinforcing the Chancellor's remarks was a twitter post from BAMF stating that Germany was not currently enforcing the Dublin Regulation as of September 2015.²⁹⁵ As a result, vast numbers of immigrants attempted to make their way to Germany where Merkel's "Welkommenskultur" presented them with a friendly, altruistic respite from their sullied homelands.

The perception that Germany was a friendly, welcoming refuge, was further reinforced by Chancellor Merkel's visits to refugee shelters and her strong public appeal to the German people that together, "wir schaffen das," which means "we can do this."²⁹⁶ The flood of refugees quickly revealed that Germany's migration and asylum system lacked the economic capacity and infrastructure to accommodate the surging number of asylum seekers. According to German Labor Minister, Andrea Nahles, the costs of caring and educating these refugees would require an unplanned increase of €1.5 billion to the Labor Department's 2016 budget.²⁹⁷ Reports of this increased fiscal expenditure drew sharp criticism from Germans opposed to Merkel's open door policy, and AfD did not waste time to tap into that discontent. AfD effectively used the European Migrant Crisis to influence the political narrative in Germany, forcing many mainstream parties to gradually

²⁹² Federal Office of Statistics, "Net Immigration of Foreigners in 2015 at 1.1 Million," press release No. 105, March 21, 2016, https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2016/03/PD16_105_12421pdf.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

²⁹³ Federal Office of Statistics.

²⁹⁴ "Germany Suspends 'Dublin Rules' for Syrians," *Deutsche Welle*, August 25, 2015, <http://dw.com/p/1GLMQ>.

²⁹⁵ *Deutsche Welle*.

²⁹⁶ Rupert Wiederwald, "'We Can Do This!' Merkel and the Refugees," *Deutsche Welle*, August 27, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/1Jqvo>.

²⁹⁷ Klaus Ulrich, "What Helping Refugees Costs Germany," *Deutsche Welle*, April 9, 2015, <http://p.dw.com/p/1GRA4>.

adopt aspects of AfD's policy positions as their voters turned their support towards AfD. Fully leveraging the global wave of populism that surged in 2016, AfD capitalized on Germans' physical security by successfully linking terrorism to Muslim immigration.²⁹⁸ This fear-based strategy has greatly boosted support for AfD and improved its chances of joining the federal Bundestag for the first time in September 2017.

Polls taken in January 2017 indicated that 12 percent of the German population supported AfD, a significant increase from the 4.7 percent that AfD posted in 2013.²⁹⁹ In addition to the increase in projected national support, AfD achieved success in 2016 state elections, winning 24.4 percent of state in Saxony-Anhalt, 15.1 percent in Baden-Wuerttemberg, 12.6 percent in Rhineland-Palatinate, and 20.8 percent in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in March 2016.³⁰⁰ AfD even achieved success in the historically left swinging electorate of Berlin when they won in 12 percent of the vote in September 2016.³⁰¹ AfD's 2016 state elections successes startled the mainstream and shook up coalition dynamics in the state parliaments. The right-wing surge established high expectations for AfD in the 2017 federal election, but then populist wave crashing down. The backlash from Brexit and from the U.S. election of Donald Trump led to a dismal start for AfD in 2017.³⁰² In the 2017 state elections, AfD only pulled 6 percent of the vote in the western state of Saarland, 5.6 percent of the vote Schleswig-Holstein, and 7.4 percent in North-Rhine Westphalia.³⁰³ Whereas AfD's 2016 electoral results exceeded the polls, its 2017 results disappointed. Regardless of this slump, AfD's rapid rise set a record for

²⁹⁸ Simon Shuster, "How the Berlin Terror Attack Exposes Angela Merkel's Weakness," *Time* December 21, 2016, <http://time.com/4608314/berlin-terror-attack-angela-merkel/>.

²⁹⁹ "How Would Germans Vote Today?" Spiegel Online International, August 24, 2016, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/a-965159.html>.

³⁰⁰ "German State Elections: Success for Right-Wing AfD, Losses for Merkel's CDU," *Deutsche Welle*, March 13, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/11CJw>

³⁰¹ Spiegel Online International, "How Would Germans Vote Today?"

³⁰² Steven Erlanger and Alison Smale, "After French Vote, Mainstream Europe Breathes a Sigh of Relief," *New York Times*, April 24, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/24/world/europe/france-election-europe.html?_r=0.

³⁰³ Erlanger and Smale.

the right-wing representation in state parliaments by gaining 129 new state parliamentary seats since 2015.³⁰⁴

Support for AfD has fluctuated by state, remaining the highest in the Eastern States, where there exists a more radical support base, the party, however, has unexpectedly slowly gained support in the west too. This cross-cutting success was achieved by AfD's ability to tap into the fears of Germans by exploiting violent events like—the 2015 Cologne New Year's sexual assaults; the July 2016 Würzburg train attack by a 17 year-old unaccompanied Afghan asylum seeker; the July 2016 Ansbach bombing committed by a 27 year old Syrian refugee who pledged his allegiance to ISIS; the October 2016 rape and murder of a 19 year-old female German medical student by an unaccompanied 17 year-old Afghan refugee; and the horrific Berlin Christmas market attack in December 2016.³⁰⁵ AfD vigorously used these tragedies to attack Chancellor Merkel's welcoming of refugees, accusing her of placing a higher value on political correctness of internationalism than on the physical security of Germany.³⁰⁶

AfD eagerly turned the government's mishandling of these incidents into an attack on the Merkel government, which was not only responsible for the refugees being allowed into Germany in the first place, but also for trying to downplay such serious crimes against Germans. When combined with AfD's strategy of harnessing the security fears of Germans, discrediting the mainstream government has proven effective in drawing voter support away from the mainstream and in the criminalization Muslims. The results of

³⁰⁴ Matthias Cantow, Martin Fehndrich and Wilko Zicht, "Parliamentary Elections on 14 May 2017 in North Rhine-Westphalia," *Walrecht News*, May 14, 2017, Accessed August 18, 2017, <http://www.wahlrecht.de/news/2017/landtagswahl-nordrhein-westfalen-2017.html>

³⁰⁵ Naomi Conrad, "As Attacks Rattle Germany, Chancellor Merkel Finds Herself in the Spotlight," *Deutsche Welle*, July 25, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/1JVQ7>; Melissa Eddy, "German Mood Is Shaken as Attacks Show Vulnerability to ISIS," *New York Times*, July 26, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/27/world/europe/germany-attacks-terrorism-anxiety.html>; "Family of Murdered Maria Ladenburger ask for Refugee Charity Donations in Tribute," *Express*, December 6, 2016, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/740490/Maria-Ladenburger-murder-family-refugee-charity-donations>; "Echoing the AfD, Left party's Wagenknecht Says Merkel Partly to Blame for Berlin Terror," *Deutsche Welle*, January 6, 2017, <http://dw.com/p/2VQP5>

³⁰⁶ Conrad, "As Attacks Rattle Germany, Chancellor Merkel Finds Herself in the Spotlight,"; Eddy, "German Mood Is Shaken as Attacks Show Vulnerability to ISIS,"; "Family of Murdered Maria Ladenburger ask for Refugee Charity Donations in Tribute,"; "Echoing the AfD, Left party's Wagenknecht Says Merkel Partly to Blame for Berlin Terror."

AfD's have contributed to the destabilization Germany's domestic political system, where previously non-existent space on the right of the political spectrum has opened up for AfD. Unthinkable in German politics for the past 72 years, a nationalist party has once again obtained a political microphone in Germany, and it is using it to promulgate nativist, xenophobic ideologies.

AfD is not solely responsible for creating the space in German politics that it now occupies. The mainstream was a large contributor to the creation of this space. The past 20 years of German politics has seen all parties steadily converge towards the center.³⁰⁷ This spectacle is best described by Jürgen Habermas, who summed it up as follows:

Since Clinton, Blair and Schröder, social democrats have swung over to the prevailing neoliberal line in economic policies because that was or seemed to be promising in the political sense: in the “battle for the middle ground” these political parties thought they could win majorities only by adopting the neoliberal course of action. This meant taking on board toleration of long-standing and growing social inequalities. Meantime, this price – the economic and socio-cultural “hanging out to dry” of ever-greater parts of the populace – has clearly risen so high that the reaction to it has gone over to the right. And where else? If there is no credible and pro-active perspective, then protest simply retreats into expressivist, irrational forms.³⁰⁸

This convergence over time was unremarkable in itself, but after the refugee crisis hit Germany, the abandoned spaces on the ends of the political spectrum were in high demand with no one to act on their behalf. AfD's timed its populist rhetoric impeccably, portraying themselves as a Germany first alternative to the mainstream, one made for Germans who no-longer felt represented by the Europeanized mainstream coalitions.

One must simply look back to AfD's foundation to see this phenomenon in action. AfD's founders all left their center-dominated parties because of the dispassionate culture of compliance in those organizations that subjugated key aspects of Germany's national sovereignty to Brussels, and placed Europeanization above cultural preservation. No longer

³⁰⁷ Jürgen Habermas, “For A Democratic Polarisation: How To Pull The Ground From Under Right-wing Populism,” *Social Europe*, November 17, 2016, <https://www.socialeurope.eu/2016/11/democratic-polarisation-pull-ground-right-wing-populism/>

³⁰⁸ Habermas.

has the “Professors Party,” AfD now draws support from across the political spectrum. As AfD’s support base has grown, its demographics have shifted from a disproportionately high number of degree holding males, to a more diverse group that exhibits overall lower education.³⁰⁹ The significance in this shift manifests in the mathematical strength of the party, permitting AfD to overcome the barrier that has stopped all previous post-World War II German right-wing parties from entering the government—a mass support base.³¹⁰

C. AFD’S BALANCING ACT: AVOIDING THE RIGHT-WING TRAP

As AfD’s support base has grown, so too has the volume and scope the AfD’s xenophobic rhetoric. Petry, Gauland, and others rooted deep in the nationalist faction, have repeatedly trampled the social taboos that made nationalism an untenable platform in German politics. These leaders adhere to their hallmark political style, openly using inciting language that draws in extremists and radicals whom could never have secured an accepted political platform. While this type of racially charged rhetoric shocks most Germans, the leadership’s nationalist niche remains slightly inside the scope of the Basic Law, and therefore is accepted as legitimate.

Working out of this narrow niche in the German political environment, AfD has successfully masked the dark face of integral nationalism under a purifying layer patriotism. Petry can be seen applying this cleansing approach by linking AfD’s nationalist vantage point to a widely accepted public debate about patriotism proctored by Thilo Sarrazin in his 2010 book, *Germany Abolishes Itself: How We are Gambling with our Country*. Petry used this link to explain to how AfD’s political rhetoric was being misinterpreted as extremist, but in reality is just patriotism being subjected the taboos created by Germany’s post-war guilt and lack of national identify.³¹¹ This tactic can be

³⁰⁹ Kroh and Fetz, “The Profile of the AfD-Followers Has Changed Significantly Since the Founding of the Party.”

³¹⁰ Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange, and Matthijs Rooduijn, “Into the Mainstream? A Comparative Analysis of the Programmatic Profiles of Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe Over Time,” in *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream?* edited by Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange, and Matthijs Rooduijn, (New York: Routledge), 2016, 47–48.

³¹¹ Peter Martino, “Will Germany Abolish Itself and France Commit Suicide?” Gatestone Institute, December 3, 2014, <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4921/germany-france-suicide>.

seen clearly when Petry discussed nationalism and immigration with Der Spiegel reporters in 2014 when she stated the following:

People say: We have to do this or that because we Germans have weighed ourselves down with a special kind of guilt. One hears that we need to merge Germany into a larger Europe so as to forever prevent the resurrection of German nationalism. But nationalism and patriotism are regularly thrown in the same pot. Even Germany's current, disastrous migration policy can't get by without references to Germany's past. Just a few weeks ago in Dresden, the former president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Charlotte Knobloch, warned against equating guilt and responsibility, and encouraged us to have more values-based patriotism. The real responsibilities that we should draw from Germany's past are the preservation of democracy, freedom and the rule of law. I'm not against immigration, but why do you think the respect for other opinions makes immigration a necessity? For decades, there has been a lack of an ideology-free debate on this issue. Yet such a debate is imperative because the economic and social consequences on both home and host countries are equally momentous, as Oxford economist Paul Collier described in his book "Exodus." One thing is clear:

The immigration of so many Muslims will change our culture. If this change is desired, it must be the product of a democratic decision supported by a broad majority. But Ms. Merkel simply opened the borders and invited everybody in, without consulting the parliament or the people.³¹²

This perceived reality, combined with AfD's modus operandi of cloaking nativist ideology in academic legalese, has blurred the once clear line between patriotism and integral nationalism. AfD has benefitted from this murkiness as many Germans feel that is okay now to be patriotic.

Under Petry's leadership, AfD continued to veer further right towards nativism when it took a page from the Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West the PEGIDA movement and adopted a far more aggressive political set of goals than the party under Lucke. Sticking to AfD's pattern of appealing to all sides of the political spectrum, Petry denied an official partnership with PEGIDA whose radical, racist, and violent

³¹² Susane Beyer and Jan Fleischhauer, "Interview with Frauke Petry of the Alternative For Germany," *Guardian*, March 30, 2016, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/interview-with-frauke-petry-of-the-alternative-for-germany-a-1084493.html>.

characteristics are a liability in civil landscape that rewards political correctness through an unspoken set of taboos that invalidate nationalism.

While officially denying any link between AfD and PEGIDA, Petry also acknowledged that there is overlap between the organizations in the areas of patriotism, asylum, and immigration laws.³¹³ Petry's capricious approach to PEGIDA has been made possible by basing the grounds of her support for PEGIDA demonstrators on their legal right to peacefully take to the streets to advocate for issues that are important to them.³¹⁴ While she fully supports the rights of PEGIDA demonstrators, she also sheepishly condemns the often radical and violent actions of those same demonstrators. Petry's careful balancing act is obvious when examining her comments about PEGIDA. In one instance Petry stated, "PEGIDA started as a small group of friends demonstrating against German weapons deliveries to the Kurdish PKK, and then morphed into a movement critical of asylum and immigration laws. They were simply expressing that something is wrong in society, and expressed it on the streets. I think that's fine, as long as it's peaceful."³¹⁵ Since that comment, PEGIDA demonstrators have appeared at rally's displaying signs that depict Chancellor Angela Merkel hanging from a noose.

In a 2016 interview with *Der Spiegel* reporters, Petry was asked if her support for those who take to the streets extends to the type of protestors who promote those type of violent suggestions. To which, Petry replied, "We are currently seeing a radicalization at the top of the [PEGIDA] leadership. A year ago, we made sure to speak with the people who join the Monday protests in Dresden, and I still think that was the right thing to do, but we believe that the solution for our country can't be found on the street."³¹⁶ Petry's conflicting comments clearly expose AfD's strategy of trying to balance a nativist political agenda, one that often flirts with radicalism, with the established liberal order in Germany.

³¹³ Beyer and Fleischhauer, "Interview with Frauke Petry of the Alternative For Germany."

³¹⁴ Beyer and Fleischhauer.

³¹⁵ Kate Connolly, "Frauke Petry: The Acceptable Face of Germany's New Right?," *Guardian*, June 19, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/19/frauke-petry-acceptable-face-of-germany-new-right-interview>.

³¹⁶ Beyer and Fleischhauer, "Interview with Frauke Petry of the Alternative For Germany."

The comments regarding PEGIDA, like almost all of AfD's controversial comments, need to appeal to many sides of the political spectrum in order to draw the mass support required to enter the federal government. This strategy has thus far helped AfD avoid the cataclysmic self-destruction trap that has prevented all post-World War Two German right-wing political groups from obtaining mainstream political representation.

D. AFD'S ACHILLES HEEL: RADICALS AND INTEGRAL NATIONALISM

Despite Petry's best attempts to carefully manage AfD's right lateral limits, she and many other AfD leaders have brazenly challenged Germany's social taboos against nationalism by making statements that resemble the type of integral nationalism practiced by the National Socialist Party of the 1930s. Petry, seeking to tap into that particular flow of nationalism, has attempted to rehabilitate a term that is palpably linked to Nazism—*völkisch*.³¹⁷ With no direct translation in English, *völkisch*, in the spirit of German Romantic Johann Gottfried Herder, can be defined as an organic community stemming from the basic unit of human existence, the *volk* or people, fused together by a common language and culture.³¹⁸ In *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler tapped into Romantic Nationalism's concept of *völkisch*, twisting its ethnocentric bias into justification for Social Darwinism.³¹⁹ Petry's attempt to rehabilitate the term, even in the spirit of Romantic Nationalism, was a risky play due to its punitive Nazi association. Petry's attempt to bring back the *völkisch* concept exemplifies AfD's willingness to challenge longstanding taboos in an effort to make what once considered radical right-wing philosophies an acceptable part of mainstream German politics.

³¹⁷ Beat Balzli and Matthias Kamann, *Die Welt*, November 9, 2016, <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article158049092/Petry-will-den-Begriff-voelkisch-positiv-besetzen.html>.

³¹⁸ Hans Kohn, "Romanticism and the Rise of German Nationalism," *Review of Politics* 12 no. 04 (1950): 456.

³¹⁹ Adolf, Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Om Books International, 2000, accessed Nov 16, 2016, 354–355, <http://libarch.nmu.org.ua/bitstream/handle/GenofondUA/18603/d3ab36477e705b8176ea95b8c721bb14.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

AfD leaders and party members are responsible for a great number of incidents that could be considered representative of Hitler's interpretation of *völkisch*.³²⁰ In November 2015, the AfD head in Thuringia, Bjorn Höcke, invoked sharp criticism both from the public and from within his own party, by his suggestion that the European Union's asylum policies reinforce Africa's [irresponsible] reproductive habits that have produced overpopulation in Africa.³²¹ In late January 2016, when daily floods of Muslim refugees arrived in Germany, Petry suggested that policed use armed force against refugees, if necessary, in accordance with the law. Petry later clarified that although the use of armed force was legal, it was not something she wants to happen.³²²

The following week, AfD member and European Union representative MEP Beatrix Von Storch, born Duchess Beatrix Ameile Ehrengard Erika of Oldenburg, whose grandfather served as Finance Minister under Hitler, was questioned on Facebook about whether or not firearms should be used against women and children asylum seekers crossing the border into Germany. Von Storch replied yes via Facebook, only later to claim that her mouse had slipped, clarifying that she meant force could legally be used against women but not children.³²³ Also in February 2016, AfD party member Thomas Hetze was replaced as the director of the refugee shelter in Clausnitz because it was revealed that he participated in an anti-refugee rally in Freiberg where he stated that he believed the United States deliberately caused the refugee crisis by destabilizing the Middle East.³²⁴ It was later learned that his brother, Frank, helped organize the violent protest that took place in front of the Clausnitz refugee shelter that Thomas ran.³²⁵

³²⁰ Dagmar Breitenbach, "AfD Leaders and Their Most Offensive Remarks," *Deutsche Welle*, February 21, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/2Xyln>

³²¹ "Germany's AfD Distances Itself from Höcke's 'Almost Racist' Remarks," *Deutsche Welle*, December 12, 2015, <http://p.dw.com/p/1HNBh>.

³²² Beyer and Fleischhauer, "Interview with Frauke Petry of the Alternative For Germany," *Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/19/frauke-petry-acceptable-face-of-germany-new-right-interview>.

³²³ Beyer and Fleischhauer.

³²⁴ Ben Knight, "Clausnitz Copes With Ugly Scenes at Refugee Shelter," *Deutsche Welle*, February 24, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/111Kp>.

³²⁵ Thomas Meaney, "The New Star of Germany's Far Right," *New Yorker*, October 3, 2016, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/03/the-new-star-of-germanys-far-right>.

Petry, was quick to blame the refugees for inciting the confrontation by provoking the crowd of protestors, stating, “Of course masses will get out of control. Most of the Saxon protesters stay peaceful, but these are never talked about. We have to distinguish between the causes and the symptoms. In order to get rid of the symptom, you have to get rid of the problem. After all, if there were no immigrants there would have been no protests.”³²⁶ Petry’s trivial responses fit neatly into AfD’s modus operandi of skirting the edges of Germany’s accepted social norms to tilt the narrative in its favor.

Shortly after AfD adopted its anti-Muslim manifesto in May 2016, the World Champion German soccer team lost to Slovakia as it prepared to enter into the Euro 2016 tournament. Not missing an opportunity to push the socio-political boundaries further right, AfD co-founder and Deputy Chair Alexander Gauland, sparked public outrage when he commented that concerning Jerome Boateng, one of the country’s star Muslim players, “People find him a fine footballer, but they don’t want him to be their neighbor.”³²⁷ Petry followed up by criticizing German soccer player Mesut Ozil for refusing to sing the German national anthem but eagerly posted photos on social media of his journey to Mecca, noting that the company of women that he keep “do not wear the veil.”³²⁸ June 2016 saw AfD’s leadership struggling to decide how to deal with the fallout from years old anti-Semitic published writings of Baden-Württemberg’s MP Wolfgang Gedeon, whose work minimized the Holocaust memorial to Murdered Jews in Berlin and asserted that Judaism is the “domestic enemy of the “Christian West, while Islam was the external enemy.”³²⁹

Regional Deputy, and AfD speaker in Baden-Württemberg, Jörg Meuthen, called for Gedeon’s immediate removal from office but Petry preferred to wait until the writings were formally investigated. Meanwhile, Gedeon announced that he would resign as to not hurt the

³²⁶ Meaney.

³²⁷ Mark Hallam, “‘Jerome, Be Our Neighbor!’ Boateng’s German Fans Rally Round,” *Deutsche Welle*, May 29, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/1Iwn5>.

³²⁸ “German Populist Party Slams Muslim Soccer Player Ozil,” *The Local*, June 5, 2016, <https://www.thelocal.de/20160605/german-populist-party-slams-muslim-soccer-player-ozil>.

³²⁹ Elizabeth Schumacher, “German Nationalist AfD Moves to Boot Lawmaker for Anti-Semitism,” *Deutsche Welle*, June 21, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/1JAZx>; “Germany’s AfD Party Declines to Expel Lawmaker Over Anti-Semitism Allegations,” Reuters, June 21, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-antisemitism-idUSKCN0Z72FN>.

party if they did not kick him out.³³⁰ This incident saw Petry come to the aid of the nativist cadre, underlining her strict observance of legal precedence and her willingness to look the other way when it comes to the nationalist agenda.

At the end of 2016, Baden-Württemberg's AfD faction also made headlines when the party's Deputy, Claudia Martin, told reporters that she was leaving the party because of the lack of parliamentary work, and because of the brutal plans formulated by the AfD to detain refugees in special camps where they would wait until they could be sent back to their homelands.³³¹ To Martin, the plans seemed eerily similar to the Madagascar Plan developed by the National Socialists in 1940 to help deal with the Jewish Problem.³³² In September 2016, newly elected Berlin MP Kay Nerstheimer brought criticism to the party when he posted on social media that refugees were "disgusting worms and parasites which are feeding off the German people."³³³ This situation was exacerbated by the fact that Nerstheimer was a member of German Defence League, an organization that advocates for maximum resistance to the Islamisation of Germany.³³⁴ Immediately following Nerstheimer's media blasting, the press published reports that Rudolf Müller, AfD's lead candidate for the March 2017 elections in Saarland, sold Nazi swastika medals and currency from Nazi concentration camps in his store, which is illegal in Germany.³³⁵ Petry again added to AfD's track record of hate and discontent in September by comparing the "colorful" diversity that accompanies immigration to a compost heap, suggesting that just because something is colorful does not mean it is pleasant.³³⁶ Petry's comments endorsed the viewpoint of the radical element of the party that was determined to revive the völkisch interpretation of German nationalism.

³³⁰ Schumacher and Reuters.

³³¹ Rüdiger Soldt, "Krasser as the NPD," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 16, 2016, <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/abgeordnete-verlaesst-afd-krasser-als-die-afd-14578190.html>

³³² Soldt.

³³³ "AfD Caught in Nazi Scandal as Members' Activities Revealed," *The Local*, September 22, 2016, <https://www.thelocal.de/20160922/afd-caught-in-storm-as-over-refugee-worm>

³³⁴ *The Local*.

³³⁵ *The Local*.

³³⁶ Axel Schmidt, "German Right-Wing Leader Compares Migrants to Compost," Reuters, October 6, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-afd-idUSKCN1261F6>.

These brazen incidents of racism clearly demonstrate that the most powerful faction in AfD's embraces integral nationalism. Due to a lack of resistance within the party, this poisonous ideology has de-facto become the unofficial doctrine of AfD, even for those party members who do not whole-heartedly agree with this chauvinistic mentality. The totality of these taboo-bursting deeds and comments would have amounted to political suicide in 2013, but the social pressure created by the European migration crisis, combined with AfD's intentional deconstruction of the social taboos in Germany concerning nationalism, opened a new era of political discourse in Germany that mirrors the rest of the radical right-wing populist agendas found throughout Europe. Although common in most European countries, the unprecedented shift to the right in Germany gives many of its neighbors pause. The emergence of a nationalism in Europe's largest, most stable, staunch defender of Europeanization, represents the most potent threat to the European project and continental peace.

E. AFD AND THE EUROPEAN RIGHT-WING: UNDERMINING EU SOLIDARITY AND THE TRANS-ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

On top of AfD's pro-Moscow policies, which range from the end of economic sanctions against Russia to a European security architecture that includes the Russia, AfD has a political relationship with Russia that is harmful to European solidarity. The leader of AfD's youth organization, Young Alternative (JA), has been in contact with Russian officials since at least 2014 when it invited senior members of the Russian embassy to a youth meeting, after which the JA published a newsletter stating that the meeting produced an agreement that the "disastrous escalation of the situation in Ukraine clearly lies with the scarcely forward-looking and extremely uneven EU foreign policy."³³⁷ In April 2016, JA's head Markus Frohnmaier met with Robert Schlegel, a member of the Duma and a leading official with Putin's United Russia party, to discuss a partnership with Russia ruling party's youth organization—the Young Guard.³³⁸ According to *Der Spiegel's* reporter Pavel

³³⁷ Melanie Amann and Povel Lakshin, "Moscow's Fifth Column: German Populists Forge Ties with Russia," *Der Spiegel*, April 27, 2016, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-populists-forge-deeper-ties-with-russia-a-1089562.html>.

³³⁸ Amann and Lakshin, "Moscow's Fifth Column: German Populists Forge Ties with Russia."

Lokshin, “The 150,000 member strong Russian Young Guard is best known for its anti-Western and homophobic propaganda.”³³⁹ Alexander Gauland stated the he has no reservations about the JA forging a partnership with the Russian Young Guard, and why would he? He himself travelled to Russia in 2015, on a trip paid for by a Russian backed religious charity, where he met with members of the Duma and a Putin’s neo-fascist personal advisor, Alexander Dugin.³⁴⁰

Continuing the Moscow connection, AfD party head in North-Rhine Westphalia and EU MEP Marcus Pretzell, Petry’s husband as of December 2016, travelled to Crimea in the spring of 2016 as Europe’s Guest of Honor at the Russian sponsored Yalta International Economic Forum where he shared a stage with eight prominent Russian and Crimean political members, five of whom are the international sanctions list.³⁴¹ When asked to speak, Pretzell stated, “We at Alternative for Germany represent not only a threat to the Ukrainian government, but also to the German government.”³⁴² Pretzell would go on to say that sanctions against Russia should be lifted immediately because good economic relations with Russia is in Germany’s best interests.³⁴³ Gauland, who knew about Pretzell’s planned visit to Crimea said that he wished him luck before he went, and that Crimea was once Russian land, is again now, and will never go back to Ukraine so Germany must embrace this fact.³⁴⁴ Russia’s influence on Germany’s right is not that surprising, but what is surprising is that Russia has extended its influence in mainstream German politics.

This realization became evident Horst Seehofer of CSU, a member of Merkel’s governing coalition, travelled to Russia at the beginning of 2016 to meet with President Putin during the German domestic backlash from Merkel’s open door refugee policy, a time when

³³⁹ Amann and Lakshin.

³⁴⁰ Amann and Lakshin.

³⁴¹ Amann and Lakshin.

³⁴² Amann and Lakshin.

³⁴³ Amann and Lakshin.

³⁴⁴ Amann and Lakshin.

Merkel was at her lowest point of popularity.³⁴⁵ Seehofer openly criticized Merkel's refugee policy and claimed that the War in Syria could not be controlled without Russia's involvement, and calling for closer relations with Russia and an end to sanctions.³⁴⁶ In February 2017, Petry travelled to Russia and met with high-level Russian politicians, including Putin's Chief of Staff Vyacheslav Volodin.³⁴⁷ A statement released about the meeting by the Duma read, "During the meeting they discussed issues of cooperation between regional parliaments, inter-party cooperation, as well as the development of contacts for youth organizations." These political relationships undermine the foreign and security policy of the EU and the politics of the NATO.

Russia's influence on the European right-wing ranges from explicit actions, like providing funding or resources to right-wing parties, to leveraging the right's shared conservative values, anti-establishment rhetoric, and anti-American sentiment, to create European domestic instability while promoting the anti-liberal narrative throughout European society. According to an analysis done by the Political Capital Institute, leveraging the shared values of Europe's right-wing became a Russian tactic with the roll-out Putin's 2010 Eurasia Doctrine, which called for "political initiative taking; this involves the contacting of foreign policy actors, the establishment and coordination of pro-Russian parties, and the export of political know-how and expertise"³⁴⁸ The end state for Russia in this portion of the doctrine is to build pro-Russian, radical right-wing political party families throughout Europe by encouraging right-wing parties to forge partnerships and hold collaborative conferences with Russian assistance.³⁴⁹

This strategy can be seen played realized as many right-wing parties have established political partnership, like the one forged by Germany's AfD and Austria's FPÖ.

³⁴⁵ Volker Wagener, "Seehofer in Moscow: Not in Merkel's Interest," *Deutsche Welle*, February 3, 2016, <http://dw.com/p/1HpKL>.

³⁴⁶ Wagener.

³⁴⁷ "Head of the AfD Frauke Petry Meets with Russian Officials in Moscow," *Deutsche Welle*, February 20, 2017, <http://dw.com/p/2XwiC>.

³⁴⁸ Political Capital Institute, "The Russian Connection," 5

³⁴⁹ Political Capital Institute.

AFD party head Petry and FPOe party head Heinz-Christian Strache met in Dusseldorf, Germany in February 2016 and formed a “Blue Alliance” between the two parties.³⁵⁰ Strache has since signed a cooperation agreement with Russia ruling party.³⁵¹ Germany has also seen several of AFD’s politicians, and even politicians from Merkel’s governing coalition, travel to Russia as political representatives of Germany in support of Russia’s agenda to minimize its actions in Ukraine and Syria.

Aside from the “Blue Alliance” between AfD and FPÖ, Petry has not officially formed partnerships with other European right-wing parties due to fear of losing voters, but the stage is set for such partnerships to emerge after the March election in the Netherlands, the April and May elections in France, and the September election in Germany. In January 2017, Petry met France’s FN leader Marie LePen at a conference of European right-wing parties in Koblenz, Germany.³⁵² For the most part, these European right-wing parties share the same philosophy—anti-immigration, nationalism, and Euroscepticism.³⁵³ Only some differ in their economic philosophy, but all have a pro-Russian inclination.³⁵⁴ Despite these differences, the parties seemed determined to leverage each other’s success to further their shared goals.

³⁵⁰ Alison Smale, “Austria’s Far Right Signs a Cooperation Pact With Putin’s Party,” *New York Times*, December 9, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/19/world/europe/austrias-far-right-signs-a-cooperation-pact-with-putins-party.html>; James Crisp, “AfD Links to Austrian Far-Right ‘Final Straw’ for ECR MEPs,” *Euractiv*, March 9, 2016, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/social-europe-jobs/news/afd-links-to-austrian-far-right-final-straw-for-ecr-meps/>.

³⁵¹ Smale; Crisp.

³⁵² Christoph Hasselbach, “The AfD and FN Leaders to Meet in Koblenz,” *Deutsche Welle*, January 20, 2017, <http://dw.com/p/2WAA2>.

³⁵³ Amann and Lakshin, “Moscow’s Fifth Colum: German Populists Forge Ties with Russia.”

³⁵⁴ Amann and Lakshin.

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VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY GERMAN POLITICS

AfD has representation in 13 of the 16 German state parliaments, and in September 2017 became the first radical right-wing party to enter the German federal government since 1949. AfD's success marks an unprecedented development in post-war German politics and has the potential to present serious security concerns for Europe and the trans-Atlantic Alliance. The conclusion begins by considering AfD in the historical context of the German right wing, identifying continuities and discontinuities in the right-wing's leadership, platform, and electoral successes. The thesis closes by assessing AfD's impact on contemporary German politics and foreign policy, and the prospects AfD's continued success in Germany.

A. AfD IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE GERMAN RIGHT

From 1949 to 2013, the German radical right-wing political parties have exhibited six continuities, five of which are found in the AfD. By most measures, AfD is a typical German post-war radical right-wing political party. The one discontinuity between AfD and the five other right-wing political parties examined in this thesis is that AfD was not born out of a merger between a conservative-nationalist group and radical-nationalist group. All other previous right-wing parties shared this trait, and all parties had a strong radical support base. The DKP-DRP, SRP, and NPD of 1964 all had direct ties to the NDSAP, and many of parties' leaders were former office-holding Nazis.

That AfD's founders, Bernard Lucke, Alexander Gauland, and Konrad Adam were all conservative-nationalists and had no radical association. Even Frauke Petry, whom the founders elected as the one of the party's first co-chairs, did not have a radical background. One factor that surely contributed to the lack of a radical AfD co-founder was the large amount of time that has elapsed since the end of World War Two. Even a devoted member of the Hitler Youth who grew up to be a respectable radical-nationalist like Adolf von Thadden of the DRP, and Ekkehard Voigt of the Republikaner, would have been in his late '70s or '80s when the AfD was founded in 2013. Even so, the neo-Nazi subculture was still

strong in 2013 as evident by the NPD's existence, but the professional pedigree of AfD's founders created distance between themselves and the likes of Udo Voigt and the Thor-Steinar wearing neo-Nazi extremists that flock to the NPD.

While AfD took shape without radicals, there is no doubt that a radical faction exists within the party today. One could even argue that Alexander Gauland was a closet radical, as his comments regarding German Soccer Player Jerome Boateng before the Euro 2016 tournament were eerily similar to the message relayed about German soccer player Patrick Owomoyela by the NPD's Udo Voigt in 2006. In 2006, Voigt, published a leaflet that opposed the selection of Patrick Owomoyela, a black man, to the German national soccer team. The leaflet showed a soccer player from behind with Owomoyela's number on the jersey, and above the number was the caption, "White. Not just the color of a team shirt! For a true national team!"³⁵⁵ In 2016, when referring to Muslim soccer player Jerome Boateng, Gauland said, "People find him a fine footballer, but they don't want him to be their neighbor."³⁵⁶ Despite the like-mindedness of Gauland and Voigt, the AfD's founding members' disassociation with Nazism represents a significant discontinuity from all previous right-wing parties.

Not long after AfD's founding, it followed the German right-wing trend of developing internal party strife between the conservative-nationalist faction and the radical-nationalist faction. By 2015, AfD began to transition from an anti-Euro platform to an anti-immigrant platform. This shift right was the first sign that AfD indeed had a radical element in the party, and that the leaders of that element were Gauland and Petry. Just like every right wing party that came before AfD, the radicals seized control of the party and ousted the conservative-nationalist, Bernard Lucke. In keeping with the right-wing tradition, Petry and Gauland steered the party further to the right once they had control. Under Petry, AfD's platform developed into an updated version of the same platform that German right-wing has put forth since 1949—anti-American, anti-immigrant, anti-European integration, with undertones of integral nationalism. Due to the length of time

³⁵⁵ "Head of Germany's Far-Right NPD Charged With Racial Incitement."

³⁵⁶ Hallam, "'Jerome, Be Our Neighbor!'"

that has passed since the end of World War II, AfD has dropped the right-wing argument post against the post-war order that the DKP-DRP, SRP, and NPD of 1964 all embraced. The rest of the party platform remains nearly identical though, AfD just identified Muslims as the new enemy of the German culture and volk.

As AfD made its predictable right face, the party was faced with the same dilemma that all its right-wing predecessors had to confront, creating a platform that appealed to both a mass base of conservative-nationalists and radical-nationalists. This dilemma has historically caused the death of the German right wing. Every party from the time of the DKP-DRP to the NPD has failed to reign in its radical leaders, and ultimately lost their conservative-nationalist support base as a result. Petry tried to avoid this right-wing trap by presenting AfD's program and a moderated right-wing approach to important German issues that have been subordinated to the EU, and the Atlantic Alliance. Petry revived the nationalism debate that was covered by the Historikerstreit in 1986, and by Thilo Sarrazin in 2010, when she claimed that the AfD's version of nationalism was simply modern German patriotism, not the biologically based Social Darwinism that characterized viewpoint of the NDSAP, the SRP, the Republikaner, and the NPD. Despite her attempted present AfD's nationalism as patriotism, she and other leaders in her party made comments that placed AfD's nationalist views in-line with all previous right-wing parties who believed that German citizenship is organically linked to the volk. AfD's 2016 program motto, "Islam is not part of Germany," is a common tactic of the German right wing that embraces Carl Schmitt's friend-enemy distinction to identify what is not politically or culturally part of Germany.³⁵⁷

Once AfD gained regional success, many of the radicals and extremists from the NPD threw their support behind AfD, and while AfD was aware of this, they avoided officially forming a partnership with the NPD or the PEGIDA movement. As AfD's radical element unleashed its racist rhetoric, the public began to associate AfD with extremist organizations like the NPD, and mass support for AfD began to decline. Just like the conservative-nationalist population that abandoned every right-wing party that became

³⁵⁷ Schmitt, 27–28.

radicalized since 1949, many Germans began to see AfD for the typical German right-wing party that it is. At this point, AfD's support base came to mirror the support base of every right-wing party since 1949—uneducated, unemployed, and fostering feelings of deprivations that they blame on globalization and Germany's increasing internationalization.

Petry was cognizant of the correlation between the party's radicalization and its loss of mass support, and tried to avoid the right-wing trap by attempting to moderate the party. Petry understood that AfD had to retain the support of the conservatives if the party had any chance of achieving national level success, or remaining a viable coalition partner in the Bundestag if it did get into the federal parliament. Petry, tried to stay on the right side of the eternal right-wing dilemma and by strongly denouncing the radical actions of leaders in her party, like Bjorn Höcke who publicly broke the post-war tradition of atoning for Nazi crimes during a Dresden speech in January 2017.³⁵⁸ Petry's call to expel Höcke's from the party was a testament to her commitment to moderation as in the run up to the election, but it backfired on her. Mass support gathered behind Höcke, and even Deputy Chairman Alexander Gauland and her federal co-leader Jörg Meuthen criticized Petry's action as being divisive and damaging to the party.³⁵⁹ Seeing the writing on the wall, Petry stepped down as the party's lead candidate for Chancellor, and cleared the path for the further radicalization of AfD.³⁶⁰ Petry, once the director of radical takeover, had become the conservative voice of the party and was effectively ousted in German radical right-wing tradition. Despite Petry's best efforts to avoid the right-wing trap, she was unable to prevent AfD from following down the path of radicalization that has led to the destruction of every right-wing party since 1949.

³⁵⁸ Jefferson Chase, "Local AfD leader's Holocaust Remarks Prompt Outrage," *Deutsche Welle*, January 18, 2017, <https://p.dw.com/p/2VyaH>

³⁵⁹ "Populist AfD Unity Challenged Over Frauke Petry Election Strategy," *Deutsche Welle*, April 8, 2017, <https://p.dw.com/p/2auZh>

³⁶⁰ Jefferson Chase, "AfD's Frauke Petry will Not Stand as Lead Candidate in 2017 German Elections," *Deutsche Welle*, April 19, 2017, <https://p.dw.com/p/2bVP2>

When AfD's rise is placed into the historical context of contemporary Germany's radical right wing, it is evident that AfD represents the latest iteration of radical right-wing nationalism in German politics. AfD's sudden rise is in-line with the radical right-wing historical trend, it was precipitated by a crisis and capitalized on by a group of conservative nationalists who were dissatisfied with Germany's monopolistic political system. AfD's program development and radicalization was also in line with the right-wing trend, and although modernized, still adhere to the right-wing trend that preaches anti-American, anti-immigrant, and biologically racist positions. What differentiates AfD from its predecessors is its ability to gain enough mass support to enter the Bundestag in force.

B. AfD'S IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY GERMAN POLITICS

AfD is the first right-wing political party in Germany to enter the Bundestag since the DKP-DRP in 1949, and its overwhelming success at the state level represents an unprecedented revival of the German right. Despite the lack of press coverage given to the party immediately before the federal election in September 2017, AfD collected a stunning 12.6 percent of the national vote and won 94 seats in the Bundestag. The magnitude of AfD's election success is apparent when placing AfD's elections results in the historical context of the German right wing's electoral success since 1949 as seen in Table 1 and Figure 3.

Table 1. German Right-Wing Election Statistics 1949–2017³⁶¹

Election Year	Party	% First Vote	% Second Vote
1949	German Conservative Party/German Right Party (DKP/DRP)	1.8	N/A
1961	All-German Party (GDP (DP-BHE))	2.7	2.8
1965	National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD)	1.8	2
1969	NPD	3.6	4.3
1990	Die Republikaner (REP)	1.7	2.1
1994	REP	1.7	1.9
1998	REP	2.8	1.8
	German People's Union (DVU)	>1	1.2
2002	Schill Party for Germany	0.6	0.8
	REP	0.3	0.6
2005	NPD	1.8	1.6
	REP	0.1	0.6
2009	NPD	1.5	1
	REP	0.1	0.4
2013	Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)	1.9	4.7
	NPD	1.5	1.3
2017	AfD	11.5	12.6

Distribution of seats

Bundestag election 2017, Germany
Final result

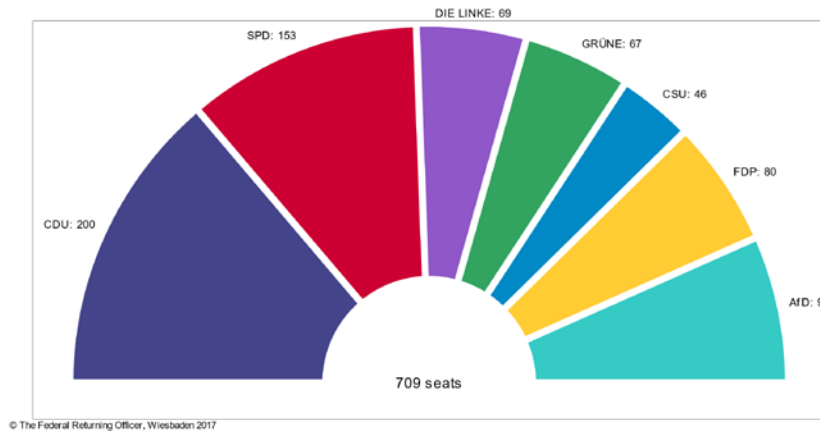


Figure 3. 2017 Bundestag Composition by Party³⁶²

³⁶¹ German Bundestag, “Elections to the German Bundestag - Results Lookup,” accessed 30 June 2017, <http://www.electionresources.org/de/bundestag.php?election=1949&land=DE>

³⁶² The Federal Returning Officer, “Bundestag Election 2017,” *German Bundestag*, accessed 2 November 2017, <https://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/en/bundestagswahlen/2017/ergebnisse/bund-99.html>

AfD's overwhelming success has made them largest opposition party in the Bundestag and unlike the five DKP-DRP members who made it to the Bundestag but were not even afforded an opportunity to speak to the parliament, AfD will be able to bring the voice of the radical right wing into the federal government. However, without the outright majority and any coalition partners AfD parliamentarians will have little power to directly challenge the majority coalition's political initiatives. Even before the 2017 federal election, every mainstream party publicly stated that they will not seek a partnership with AfD at the state or federal level. Regardless, AfD's rise has come at the cost to the other mainstream parties – both in terms of electorate and in terms of coalition dynamics as seen in Figure 4 and Figure 5.³⁶³ This is apparent when assessing the election results in terms of Bundestag seats. A quick comparison between the Bundestag seat distribution across parties in 2013 and in 2017 reveals that AfD's success mainly came at the expense of the CDU, SPD, and CSU. These tangible results are easily measured, but AfD's impact effects many intangible political dynamics in Germany and the European Union.

Political Party	2017 Seats	Diff. on 2013
CDU	200	-55
SPD	153	-40
AfD	94	94
FDP	80	80
DIE LINKE	69	5
GRÜNE	67	4
CSU	46	-10

Figure 4. Bundestag Seat Distribution Comparison (2017 to 2013)³⁶⁴

AfD's nationalist discourse, which primarily feeds off the security fears created by the migrant crisis, could serve as the catalyst that reshapes the balance of power within the government. Just before the election, the SPD matched or exceeded the CDU on any given day in the polls, and these statistics opened a realm of new coalition possibilities that could

³⁶³ The Federal Returning Officer.

³⁶⁴ The Federal Returning Officer.

usurp the CDU's longstanding political dominance. The SPD's options ranged from partnering with the left, Die Linke, and the Greens, making a red-red-green coalition which would be capable of toppling Merkel's reign in Germany. The party's strong showing in the polls raised hopes, and Sigmar Gabriel unexpectedly chose to forego his opportunity to be the lead SPD candidate for Chancellor to allow Martin Schulz, the popular former EU Parliament President and SPD member, to make a run at Merkel in the 2017 general elections.³⁶⁵ According to polls taken just weeks before the election, the red-red-green coalition has the support to establish a majority coalition as seen in Figure 5.



Figure 5. 2017 German Federal Government Coalition Outlook³⁶⁶

A red-red-green coalition would likely vote against participation in any NATO military actions, as would the AfD, and an SPD led government would likely produce another period of cooling period in German-U.S. relations. To retain power, the CDU/CSU Union could seek to add AfD as a junior partner in a coalition, but such a move would be contradictory to both the CDU/CSU's and AfD's campaigns. The SPD ultimately failed to win enough of the federal vote to realize the red-red-green coalition, but when viewed through a lens of party politics, AfD's impact on the political atmosphere in Germany is profound. AfD's success thus far has opened a new era of political dialogue in Germany that questions Germany's future concerning the Schengen Agreement, EU Monetary Union, and EU Common Foreign and Security Policy objectives.

When AfD's impact on politics is viewed through a lens focused on the state level, it is easy to see how AfD's success has the potential to have an even more profound impact than at the national level. AfD has blown its right-wing predecessors out of the water in

³⁶⁵ Richard A. Fuchs "Martin Schulz Reenergizes SPD Ahead of Crucial Election Year," *Deutsche Welle*, accessed February 2, 2017, <http://p.dw.com/p/2Whd3>

³⁶⁶ "How would Germans Vote Today?"

terms of state representation, achieving representation in 13 of the 16 state governments. The state elections determine the composition of the upper house the German federal government, the Bundesrat. The composition of Bundesrat determines the composition of the Federal Council, which has the power to impact any federal legislation that can effect states. Additionally, Germany wholeheartedly believes in the principle of subsidiarity, where governance is delegated to the local levels. German states have tremendous power over all aspects of government within the state.

This impact is best described by Berlin’s Mayor, SPD member Michael Müller, who highlighted the significance of AfD’s success in the Berlin election. Mayor Müller stated that if elected, AfD representatives will then be endowed with a “kind of governmental responsibility...The district councils have influence over budgets worth millions and hundreds of administrative employees.”³⁶⁷ According to Mueller, placing this level of responsibility into the hands of AfD presents big problems for the domestic governance of the capital. This perspective emphasizes the scope of importance that the state elections have toward the realization of right-wing policies at the local level. It is at the local level that catalyzing issues of international importance unfold, a fact that maybe lost on those AfD supporters that have only focused on immigration and terrorism when making their political bed. If the AfD wins a dozen seats in the Bundestag, they simply will not have the numbers to affect the will of parliament. However, AfD members elected to state parliaments have an elevated level of power over local governance, and larger ability to set the local agenda in a negative manner and otherwise complicate the due process of legislation—as was the case in the parliamentary deadlocks in the world prior to 1914 and especially in the 1920s and 1930s.

When examining AfD’s impact through a European lens, AfD’s use of the migrant crisis to create security fears has contributed to nationalist wave of populism that has spread across Western Europe since 2015. The ISIS claimed terrorist attacks in Germany and the rest of Europe represent a real and immediate threat to Germany and Europe, and have

³⁶⁷ “Berlin’s Mayor Warns of Growing AfD Support,” *Deutsche Welle*, accessed August 21, 2016, <https://p.dw.com/p/1JmYf>

placed Merkel's government in the difficult position of trying to eliminate threats without embracing the divisive, populist anti-immigrant sentiment advanced by AfD. AfD's campaign has helped to focus the public's attention internally, while Germany's stature requires it to also lead international security efforts. AfD's radicalization perpetuates the Carl Schmitt friend-enemy distinction between Germans and Muslims, and elevates the potential for violent xenophobic incidents thus increasing security concerns.

AfD has partnered with other European right-wing parties, who collectively have tried to adapt the friend-enemy distinction to Europe, pitting Europeans versus Muslims. Additionally, AfD has undermined European solidarity during a critical time of international instability. AfD has joined the like of France's NF as a family of parties who openly praise Russian President Vladimir, criticized America and NATO, and constantly question the validity of the European Union. In this regard, AfD has contributed to European instability and opened the discussion of whether or not the EU can survive the migrant crisis and nationalist surge across Europe, or if it will break down into a loose union comprised of strong nation states, each pursuing their own version realpolitik. In the current European security environment, Germany's domestic discord has greatly benefit Europe's most dangerous, and closest external threat—Russia.

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