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## **The German press coverage on France after World War II. A quantitative and qualitative content analysis of newspapers from 1946 to 1970<sup>1</sup>**

*Kurzfassung:* Wie spiegelte sich der fortschreitende Aussöhnungsprozess zwischen den früheren so genannten "Erbfeinden" Deutschland und Frankreich von 1946 bis 1970 in den deutschen Tageszeitungen wider?

Mit der Methode der quantitativen Inhaltsanalyse wurde eine repräsentative Stichprobe von Zeitungsartikeln über Frankreich bzw. Frankreich betreffende Themen aus diesem Zeitraum untersucht. Zwei Aspekte standen dabei im Vordergrund: A) Die Auswahl von Nachrichten und mögliche Abweichungen zu den Vorhersagen aus Galtungs "Vier-Faktoren-Modell der Nachrichtenkommunikation", und B) die Konstruktion von Protagonisten und Ereignissen in diesen Artikeln. Zusätzlich wurde eine qualitative Inhaltsanalyse einiger, in Hinblick auf "konstruktive" Berichterstattung vielversprechender Artikel aus dieser Stichprobe durchgeführt, um A) zu untersuchen, ob und inwieweit die bislang hinsichtlich Deeskalationsprozessen eher theoretischen Ableitungen aus dem Konflikt-Modell von Kempf sich in der Nachkriegsberichterstattung wiederfinden, und B) konkrete, von Journalisten – auch unbeabsichtigter Weise – verwendete Stilmittel zu identifizieren, die potenziell zu einem besseren Verständnis des ehemaligen Feindes und – auf lange Sicht – zu Frieden und Versöhnung zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich beitragen konnten. Die übergeordneten Fragen dieser Studie sind: (Was) können wir aus der Berichterstattung in der Zeit eines erfolgreichen Aussöhnungsprozesses lernen und wie lassen sich diese Erkenntnisse auf die gegenwärtige Berichterstattung über Nachkriegsprozesse übertragen? Einige wesentliche Ergebnisse aus beiden Teilstudien werden präsentiert.

*Abstract:* How is the continuing reconciliation process between the former "hereditary enemies" Germany and France reflected in German daily newspapers between 1946 and 1970?

Using quantitative content analysis, a representative sample of coverage of France and French-related topics published during this period was examined with an emphasis on a) the choice of news topics and possible deviations from the predictions of Galtung's news-factors model and on b) how protagonists and events were portrayed in these articles. A further qualitative analysis was made of some promising journalistic attempts to achieve "constructive" coverage during the same period. This was intended a) to determine whether and how several theoretical deductions from Kempf's conflict model of de-escalation processes are manifest in post-conflict coverage and b) to identify the stylistic "tools" journalists used – even unintentionally – to further a better understanding of the former enemy and – in the long run – to build peace and reconciliation between Germany and France. The overarching questions addressed by this study are: (What) can we learn from coverage during a successful reconciliation process, and how can these lessons be transferred to contemporary coverage of post-war processes? Major findings of the two studies will be presented.

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## 1. Introduction

This case study of post-war coverage asks how news coverage in post-war societies can contribute to reconciliation, democratization and peace building. As the successful historical reconciliation process between Germany and France after World War II is an important example of two former enemies overcoming a long history of animosity and eventually becoming partners, it provides rich material for studying the characteristics of a more conciliatory media discourse. The focus of the study, though, is on the Western German press that after 1945 was gradually permitted by the Allied occupation authorities to resume publication. How did it explain to its readers that former enemies – and in the case of France a popular image of a “hereditary antagonism” had been widespread for nearly a century – were now partners who could be trusted and must be worked with? If there is evidence of press coverage of France that supported the reconciliation process between Germany and France, perhaps we can learn from the earlier journalists’ skills and see whether and how these conciliatory style characteristics can in general be used for the coverage of post-war reconciliation processes in other countries.

The Cold War was among the major background factors that framed post-war coverage of France and the French in West German daily newspapers. Other factors can also be named, e.g. the need to reconstruct a ruined country and a devastated Europe, the reconstruction and democratization of the political and economic systems in Germany, as well as the redefinition of Germany’s role in the international community and of its relationship with other nations. In any interpretation of the findings, these political and social framing conditions must be kept in mind.

## 2. Theory

As concerns the basic theoretical framework, we share the widespread conviction that the media do not just communicate events, they also play an active role in the social construction of reality and the constitution of meanings via communication (cf. Berger & Luckmann, 1969; Tuchman, 1978; Wolfsfeld, 1993). News media provide a link between the various social segments of a society and are used by them in order to learn about the others, as well as about events happening somewhere “outside”, in distant countries and societies (Kunczik, 1990). They inform a broader public about political decisions, as well as communicating public discourse to political decision-makers. Moreover, they process this information. They put certain issues on the public agenda and neglect others, provide information about facts and events and combine this information, emphasize some facts, ignore others and offer a cognitive frame for their interpretation (cf. Kempf, 2003).

This “intermediate” role of the media is not the only factor that suggests they can never be comprehended as completely independent social actors. With regard to political decision-making, they can be seen in a two-fold role, serving both as input and as an output environment for policy-making and decision-making with complex feedback loops (Naveh, 1998; 2002).

Research on media during conflicts or post-conflict situations not only show political decision-makers’ and interest groups’ successful attempts to influence media coverage to their own advantage (cf. e.g. Kunczik, 1990; MacArthur, 1993; Shea, 2001), it also shows how media impact on political decisions, on the political and social climate, and on the way events are discussed. Media coverage does have an actual influence on this media-created reality, even though it is still not quite clear how “direct” this impact is (cf. e.g. Jakobsen, 2000, Schallenberger, 1999).

## 3. Overall approach

The aim of this study is to determine whether there is evidence that West German post-war media coverage contributed to overcoming the differences between France and Germany. That means asking:

- Can we find specific style characteristics that possibly supported the reconciliation process,
- or can we at least find characteristics showing some reserve with regard to the continuance of antagonism?

To operationalize these questions, we asked how France, the French people and French interests and subjects were structured and portrayed in everyday German coverage.

The study has two parts. Each focuses on a different aspect of the coverage and therefore uses a different methodological approach:

### Part 1: Quantitative content analysis

The basic model of this content analysis is the “Four-factor model of news communication” proposed by Galtung (1998; Galtung & Vincent, 1992). These factors provided the basis for a coding schedule designed for making a long-term evaluation of the coverage of France and French concerns.

The questions in this section are: Is there evidence of a different routine for *selecting* news, topics and the focus? Were there different ways to develop the topics and portray the French actors? And can we find *change over time*?

## Part 2: Qualitative content analysis

The bases of the subsequent qualitative content analysis are the model of "escalation vs. de-escalation oriented conflict coverage" (Kempf, Reimann & Luostarinen, 1996; Kempf, 2002) and the model of "peace/conflict journalism vs. war/violence journalism" (Galtung, 1998, 2002). Exemplary and at first glance particularly "constructive" looking articles from the quantitative sample were selected and evaluated in an in-depth analysis.

The questions of this section are: Can we identify *specific characteristics* (e.g. argumentation, introducing topics, writing style, way of situating events, etc.) of these articles, and what is their specific contribution to the reconciliation process?

## 4. Part 1: Quantitative content analysis<sup>1</sup>

### 4.1 Sample and sample characteristics

Coverage was studied that appeared in four nationwide and one regional daily German newspaper:

- *Süddeutsche Zeitung*
- *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*
- *Frankfurter Rundschau*
- *WELT*<sup>2</sup>
- *Südkurier*<sup>3</sup>

The investigated period is from 1946 to 1970. The 25-year time-span of relatively peaceful interaction, stretching over nearly a generation, seems reasonably long to assess major changes and to be able to speak of consolidating friendly relations. The Franco-German Treaty of Co-operation, i.e. the formal establishment of both sides' willingness to cooperate, was signed in 1963, and, in addition, there is an examination of a period of several years subsequent to the signing of this treaty.<sup>4</sup>

Since it was not possible to investigate the entire coverage of these years, a random sample was taken, with the strategy as follows:

- From each month of coverage in the 25 years, one weekend per month was randomly selected  
→ A sample of 300 randomly chosen dates
- The different newspapers were randomly assigned to the selected dates. One of the newspapers was assigned to each date  
→ Sample of 300 newspaper editions to investigate
- Basis for the collection of the articles was the entire newspaper edition
- The sample included articles dealing with France, the French and French topics, even if covered only as a secondary subject (i.e. among the topics were sports, reviews, travel, entertainment, etc.)
- Excluded were: letters to the editor, very small news flashes, reprints from other newspapers, pictures and subtitles incomprehensible without visual information, reprints of French literature, France only as a meeting place for delegations from other countries without French participants, etc.)

Applying this strategy, 1750 articles were included in the sample. In order to get a better overview, they were organized in blocs of five years (cf. Fig. 1).

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1. The author wishes to thank her French co-worker Aude Plontz for all of her contributions and assistance in carrying out the quantitative study
  2. All four papers are widely distributed in Western Germany and were licensed by the Allies in 1945. The exception is the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, which first appeared in November 1949.
  3. The *Südkurier* is distributed in the Lake Constance region on the Swiss border, which was occupied by France after the war. It was included in the study in order to study whether there were differences in reporting which could possibly be attributed to more direct contacts between the local population and the French troops.
  4. Furthermore, Charles de Gaulle passed away in 1970, after his resignation in 1969. He and Konrad Adenauer are regarded as symbolic, representative figures of German-French friendship. Though coming from different political backgrounds and parties, they seemed to appreciate each other and cultivated French-German dialogue. With General de Gaulle, an era in French history ended, symbolizing the "old" days.

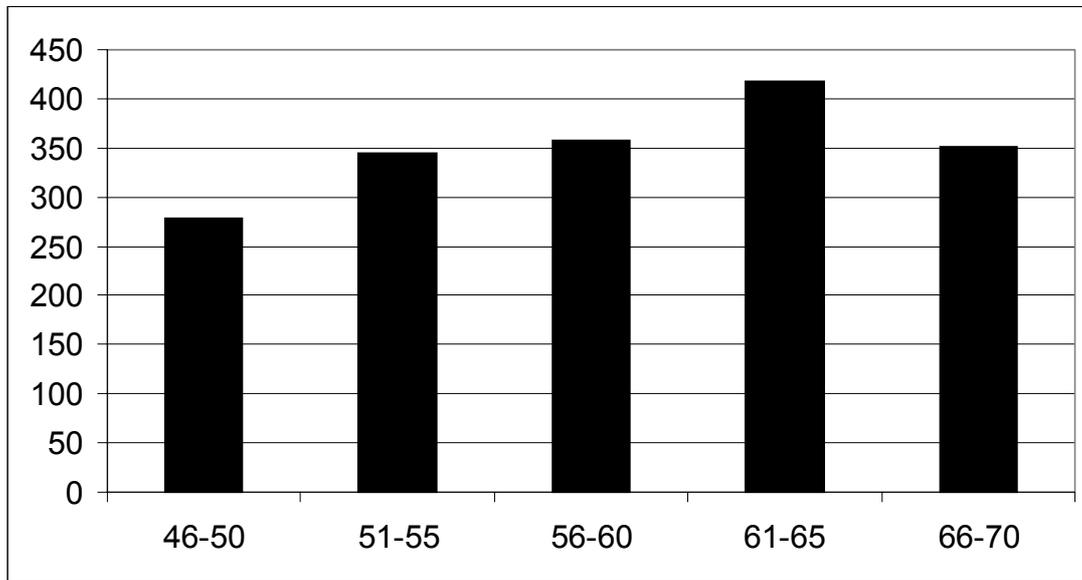


Figure 1: Number of relevant articles (five-years-steps)

During the first post-war years, the amount of coverage is relatively low compared to the other years, especially for the time span from 1961 to 1965. As far as the early years are concerned, the newspapers were very thin (sometimes only four pages), due to paper shortages. The number of pages later increased dramatically, as did the number of relevant articles. In the early 60s, the relationship between Chancellor Adenauer and General de Gaulle intensified, and these meetings led to the signing of the Franco-German Treaty of Co-operation between France and Germany in 1963, which was widely and heatedly discussed. According to that agreement, a cultural program for supporting and intensifying German-French youth exchanges was also set up (Franco-German Youth Office).

The rate of the number of relevant articles per studied issue also increases, and most of the newspapers reach a peak in the time span from 1961 to 1965 (cf. Fig. 2).

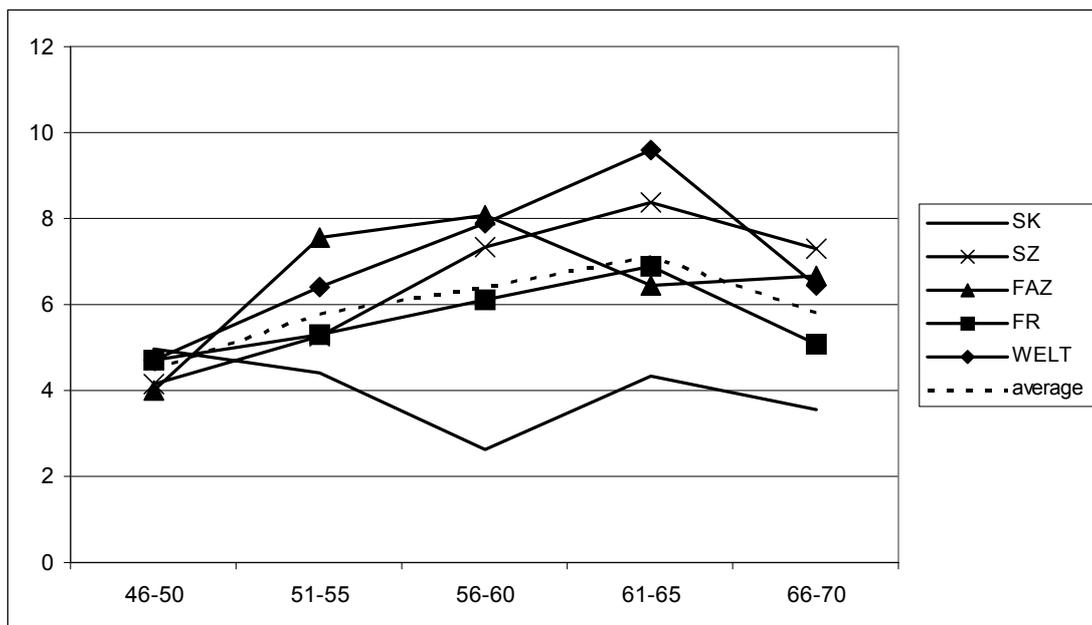


Figure 2: Rate of relevant articles per investigated edition

The *Südkurier*, though, differs from the others. Its rate rather decreases with time, which is possibly because it never expanded its coverage in terms of pages, extension of political coverage, adding extra pages for culture, travel, etc., as did the other newspapers.

Over the years, the share of articles also increased in which France and the French are the main subject. This is partly because during the years of Allied occupation, France was often covered as part of the Allied forces, and the focus was on what the Allies as a whole were doing. The later the articles appear, the more specific is the coverage overall, e.g. there is more coverage of French cultural events, unilateral actions on the part of French politicians, events and processes specifically concerning France, etc., which is also a matter of the development of the newspapers themselves (cf. Fig. 3)

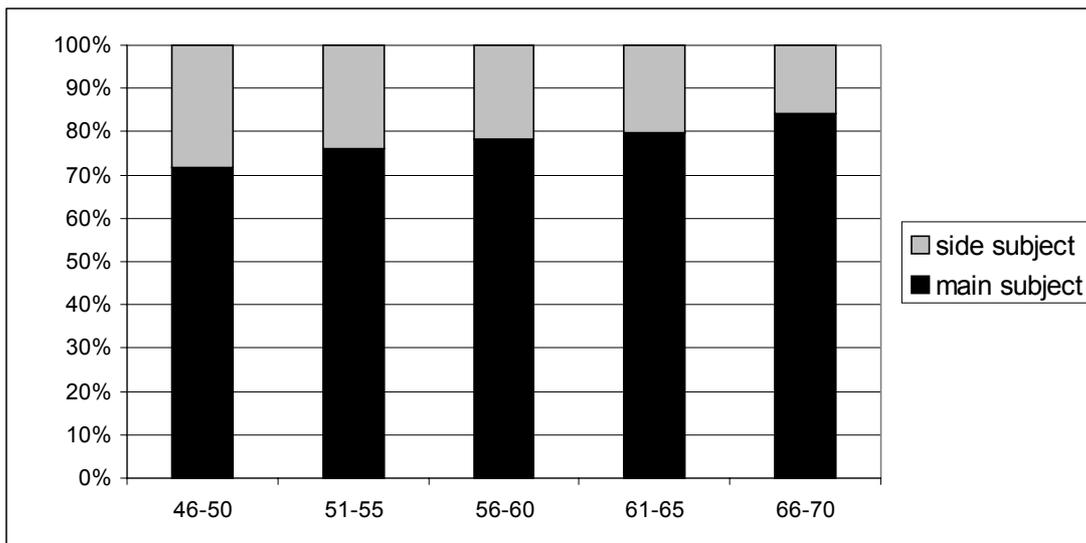


Figure 3: Share of articles covering France as a main or as a secondary subject ( $p < 0.01$ , Chi-square = 15,294;  $df = 4$ )

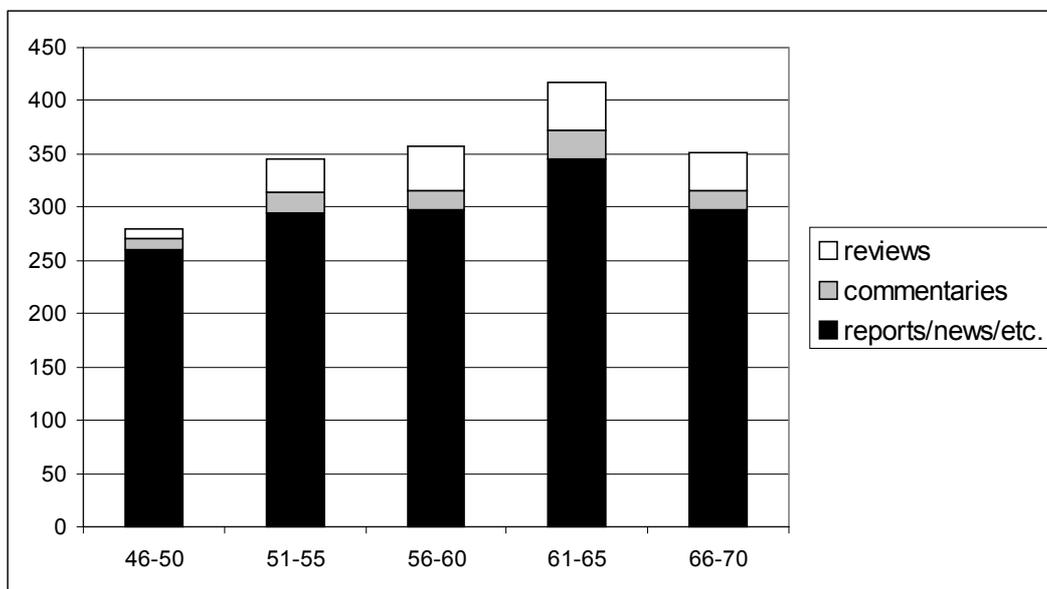


Figure 4: Number of articles of different text genres ( $p < 0.01$ , Chi-square = 21,014;  $df = 8$ ).

Text genres were also coded (cf. Fig. 4): Reviews of French books, movies and musical productions form one category. The other consists of commentaries (which had to be marked as such by placing, frame, subtitle, etc.). The rest are mainly news and news flashes, but also include articles from the sections on culture and other topics. Fig. 4 shows that in the first post-war period there are almost no commentaries or reviews (probably partly due to the lack of paper), while later on the

number of those text genres increases, with the highest *number* of both occurring in the time span from 1961 to 1965. Nevertheless, there is almost no change in the number of reviews compared to the previous time span. The largest share of reviews with regard to the number of articles investigated is found in the late 1950s.

#### 4.2 Theoretical framework of the analysis

The theoretical framework of the quantitative analysis is derived from the "Four-factor news communication model" proposed by Vincent & Galtung (1992; Galtung, 1998; cf. Tab. 1), which makes specific predictions about how news are selected.

		Person		Structure	
		Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive
<b>Elite country</b>	<b>Elite people</b>	No problem: any rumors; however false ++++	Happy family events +++	Cabinet falls +++	Elections, even minor change +++
	<b>Non-elite people</b>	Accidents +++	Prizes, lottery, wealth ++	Economic crashes ++	Economic growth +
<b>Non-elite country</b>	<b>Elite people</b>	Scandals (drugs) +++	Prizes, lottery, wealth ++	Coup d'état ++	Elections, but major change +
	<b>Non-elite people</b>	Mega-accidents ++	Miracles +	Revolutions, 'trouble', riots +	No chance: however true (-)

Table 1: Four-factor news communication model (according to Vincent & Galtung; 1992; Galtung, 1998): The darker/the fewer the crosses in the cell, the lower the event's chance to become "news."

According to this model, the ideal top news event is:

- negative (not positive – this is less interesting)
- happens to a person (not structural/institutional, abstract – less interesting)
- belonging to an elite (not ordinary person – less interesting)
- in an elite country (not a second, third or fourth world country – less interesting)

If an event has low news value in one factor (e.g. concerns ordinary people), this can be compensated for by high news value in another factor (e.g. the event must be negative, or should be highly personalized).

A blindfold news-selection routine, based on these factors, could pose several risks for reconciliation processes, e.g.:

- Negativism: One has no chance to change one's impression of the other by getting to know his positive side.
- Elite-Bias: One does not really learn about ordinary people in the other country, about shared problems, about the other side in its entirety and variety – and peace seems to be something prescribed by handshaking elite persons.
- Personalization: One does not learn about long-lasting processes, because events are removed from their structural context and attributed to the unilateral actions of particular politicians. There is also a danger of trivializing events.

#### 4.3 Variables and method of the content analysis

The coding process for the articles, as concerns German post-war coverage of France and the French, follows a two-step strategy (cf. Fig. 5)

Step 1: Identification of the general subject of the article

- What is the main event focused on in the article, and what part of French society is the chief focus?
- What kind of event is it, and what is the general mood of the article?

The results of step 1 should indicate the overall direction of the article.

Step 2: Identification of the actors and actions in the article

- Who are the actors referred to in the article, and how are they portrayed?
- The results of step 2 should indicate how the subject was developed in general.

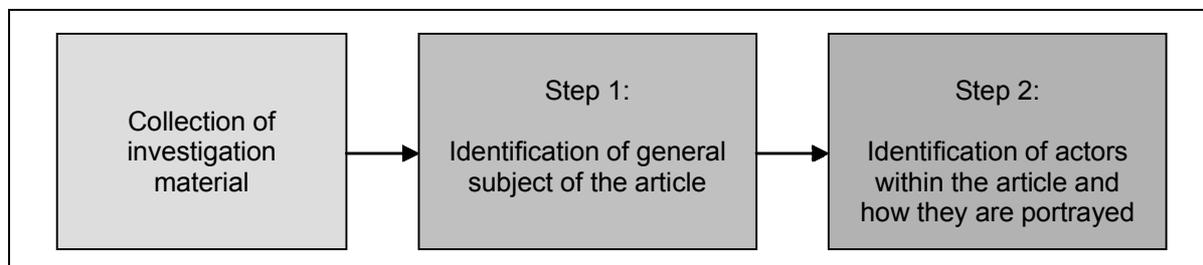


Figure 5: Overall procedure of quantitative analysis

### Step 1: Variables of the general subject

The general subject was defined as *the main event focused on by the article*. If there are several subjects, the main event is the one with the highest amount, extension and intensity of coverage, measured by the number of paragraphs it receives.

There are three coding decisions, depending on the three relevant news communication factors.<sup>1</sup>

- Person vs. Structure?
- Elite vs. Non-Elite?
- Positive vs. negative vs. ambiguous?

With each variable, a choice of one of the possible categories was necessary.

Table 2 shows the definitions of the variables:

<b>Person vs. Structure</b>	<p>Person: event concerning only a single person, his/her private life or event is pictured as result of the personal character of the person etc...</p> <p><i>Examples: portraits, course of life, family events, personal scandals, achievements of a single person, luck, crime (no organization, not political), private life of statesmen, writers, movie makers, etc., state visits only, if the character of the person in centre, success of a politician, artist etc. only if due to his singular personality, etc.</i></p>	<p>Structure: event concerning a group/mass of people, an institution, or event is pictured as a result of social /political/economical forces, culture etc...</p> <p><i>Examples: elections, pol. relationships, meetings, treaties, negotiations, riots, war, revolutions, assassination, econom. events (e.g. reconstruction. fusions, crashes), crime (organized), portraits of organizations, government, companies, system, population's living conditions, disasters, catastrophes (if they concern more than a single person), literature, movies, art, music (if not focus on artist's life situation /lifework/course of life, etc.</i></p>
<b>Elite vs. Non-Elite</b>	<p>Elite: event concerning mainly high-status people/groups (or at least depiction of event like that), ...</p> <p><i>Examples: Anything concerning system/ government/ mighty and well-known organizations/companies/structures and not focusing on the effects for the living conditions of the French population, portraits of and events concerning well-known persons, decisions of the occupation forces in Germany, etc...</i></p>	<p>Non-Elite: event concerning ordinary people, society in general, low-status people, their culture, their life ...</p> <p><i>Examples: focus on living conditions of the population, reconstruction in general (not focus on governmental decisions or debate about it), economy in general (if not well-known company in centre), music /art/theatre/literature (if not focus on lifework of the artist/artist group), marginalized oppositional groups, etc...</i></p>

1. France is regarded as an elite country, so this factor is not investigated. The variables were defined according to the examples given in the model and carefully supplemented by lists of examples. Nevertheless, as concerns the meaning of some variables, there still may be some interpretational differences between Galtung and the study presented here.

<p><b>Positive vs. negative vs. ambiguous</b></p>	<p>Positive: Event is something mostly positive/neutral or depiction of event as something positive/neutral  <i>Examples: state visits, neutral government devices, elections, administration decisions (any of them without negative undertone in the article), peace and reconciliation, growth of relationship, friendship between Germans and French, reviews of French cultural products without negative undertone in article, acknowledgement and acknowledging depiction of French achievements and success, luck of some French actor, inventions, etc...</i></p>	<p>Negative: Event is something mostly negative or depiction of event as something negative  <i>Examples: war, riots, revolts, attempted assassinations, accidents, disasters, catastrophes, terrorism, death penalty, economic crashes, miserable life conditions, query of the righteousness of some French action, negative/downgrading depictions of French persons, culture, lifestyle, clear accusations of the French, negotiation success for the French but construction of them as pigheaded hardliners, etc...</i></p>	<p>Ambiguous: Event or depiction of it in a way, that decision for one of the other variables would give wrong impression  <i>Examples: governmental success (with slight allusions of negative outcome for Germany), military success (event positive for the French + neutral depiction, but event as such negative), not clearly classifiable econom. events (neutral depiction but event makes slightly worried and both negative and positive outcome can be imagined), good diplomatic relations with communist leaders (but no frank reproaches), reviews with equally positive and negative aspects or not indicating whether they're really meant in a positive way, etc...</i></p>
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Table 2: Definitions of variables of the general subject

**Step 2: Variables of the actors within the article**

Actors are defined as:

- French persons or institutions/groups
- appearing in the article as
- actively doing something neutral/positive or something negative or
- as being the merely passive object of an action that can be either neutral/positive or negative for them.

Coding of non-French actors was excluded. Fictional persons are only coded if they symbolize real members of the French population.

The variables for actors are

- Elite-Person vs. Non-Elite-Person vs. Elite-Structure vs. Non-Elite-Structure
- Active positively/negatively vs. being passive positively/negatively

For the definitions, see Tables 3 and 4.

<p>Elite-Person (EP) Any single actor who is well-known, famous, mighty, has got a name, and is <i>not</i> defined within the article <i>only by his function</i> (e.g. the president of France does something = Elite-Structure, de Gaulle does something = Elite-Person)</p>	<p>Non-Elite-Person (NEP) Any single actor who is a member of the civil society, a small group of persons who are not organized and only accidentally together (e.g. playing children André and Elaine), (vs. single fictional persons representing the French population → Non-Elite-Structure)</p>	<p>Elite-Structure (ES) Famous, well-known and/or mighty groups/ institutions/ companies that represent the Elite, politicians/ diplomats/ policemen only portrayed in their function (not with their name), e.g. "the French army", "army units"</p>	<p>Non-Elite-Structure(NES) Group of ordinary people with a common goal, the entire population of France, a group of dissidents (marginalized group), France as the entire country (vs. France as the governmental system → Elite-Structure), the ordinary soldiers on the battle field</p>
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Table 3: Definitions of actors

It was necessary to classify any French actors appearing in an article into one of the categories.

Being active is defined as:

- *actively doing something*, even including speaking (expressing oneself).

Being passive is defined as:

- *being the passive object of someone else's actions or of an event*; receiving something, perceiving something in a passive way (not *causing* something by expressing one's feelings), being the subject of others' conversation.

On this level, multiple coding for each of the classified actors was possible.

Positively active	Negatively active	Positively passive	Negatively passive
The actor is doing something positive/ constructive/fair, building up something good (like friendship, economy, movie), inviting someone, receiving a visitor, praising someone (who earns it in the eyes of the journalist), criticizes injustice, has success caused by him, makes wise decisions, etc...	The actor is doing something negative/ destructive/unfair, causes pain/misfortune on others, is fighting, criticizing or blaming others, makes a bad movie, writes a bad book, attacks, accuses, causes trouble, does illegal things, puts someone to death, is incapable in his actions (not by handicap), etc...	The actor is appreciated by others, receives some good message, is just fine, is delighted, has success, is greeted, visited, welcomed, perceives some happy events, has luck, has success (but is not the direct source of success), etc...	The actor is criticized by some others, suffers something bad for him, is not well, receives bad news, is being accused, treated badly, is put to death, has to die, etc...

Table 4: Definition of actions

Although the coding decisions were sometimes very hard, the reliability of the coding was enhanced because the coding table was developed in close cooperation with a French co-worker. Also, we carried out the coding procedure jointly. The reliability of the coding decisions was increased by intensive training sessions and controlled by Cohen's kappa (1960).<sup>1</sup> The kappa values of the variables indicate sufficient inter-coder reliability (cf. Tab. 5).

Coefficient kappa:	
Min = 0.55	Max = 0.96
Range = 0.41	Median: 0.82
1st Quartile = 0.695	3rd Quartile = 0.88
Quartile difference = 0.185	

Table 5: Inter-coder reliability

Some brief remarks about the definitions presented thus far: These seem to reflect sometimes very conservative thinking. Acts such as eliminating a threat, revolting against an unjust legal system, fighting injustice, etc. are not necessarily to be automatically placed in the "negative" category, nor is "being friendly" automatically to be placed in the "positive" one. We kept this in mind while coding and responded to doubtful cases in a more flexible manner than the examples presented here suggest. The question remains of how we distinguish the "good" from the "bad." This decision is culturally biased and naturally reflects – beyond the model – our socialization, values and the ideology of our political systems. As we share the role of media consumers, we can assume that we reflect the ways audiences respond to articles. Moreover, we discussed doubtful coding decisions before agreeing on a final coding.

#### 4.4 Results

##### General subject

Contrary to Galtung's predictions (cf. Fig. 6), there are far more articles covering structural than personal events or written in structural terms. There is a slight change over time, though: In the early post-war years, personalization had nearly no significance, and the share of subjects that were persons was only 3.2% (9 articles out of 279). Later it ranged between 8.6% (1956 to 1965) and 15.1% (1966 to 1970: 53 articles out of 351). This effect is probably partly due to the media development itself: The more pages available, the more space for covering trivial issues. Moreover, in the early post-war period it surely was more important to German audiences to know what the French, as the occupation force, had decided and how France as a whole had acted, than to read portrayals of or personal stories about individual French actors.

1. This statistic is used to assess inter-rater reliability. It gives a relatively strict statistical measure for the quality of inter-coder reliability compared to using % agreement by also taking the possibility of random coding into account. The coefficient can range from -1 (completely different ratings) to +1 (perfect accordance of the raters). In this study, the coefficients indicate good (0.60 - 0.75) to very good (0.75 - 1.00) inter-coder reliability (cf. Wirtz & Casper, 2002, 59). The statistics are based on 50 randomly selected articles and concern 24 variables. 7 other variables appeared in fewer than 5 cases (all of them concerning Non-Elite-Persons as actors), so the calculation of kappa was not reasonable there and was not included in the statistics shown in Table 5.

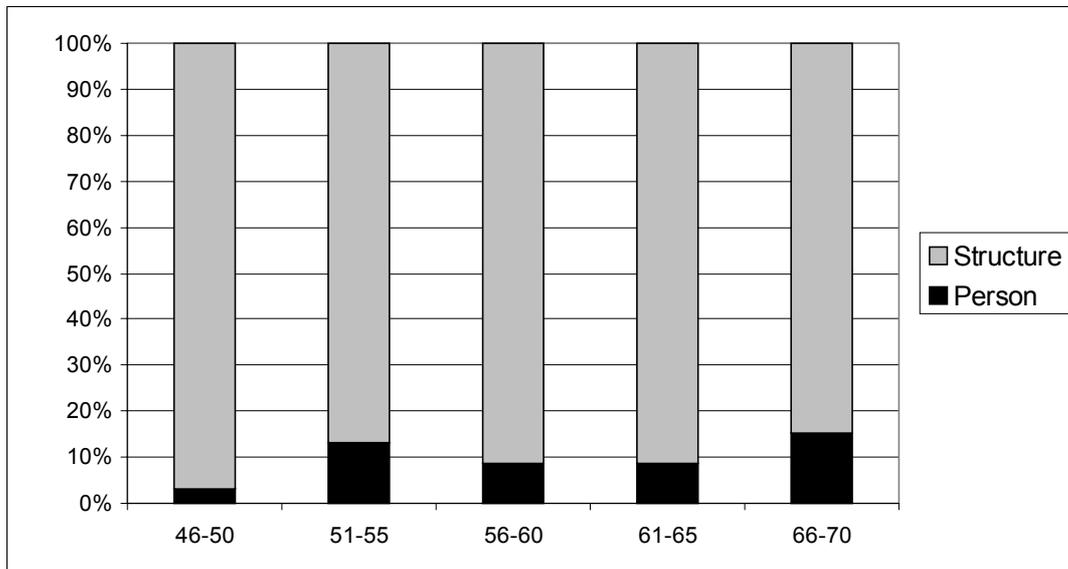


Figure 6: Share of structural vs. personal subjects ( $p < 0.001$ ; Chi-square = 29,644;  $df = 4$ ).

The elite-bias prevails, but not as significantly as in the prediction, above all if we look at the variability of this bias over time (cf. Fig. 7). While from 1946 to 1950 there was an absolute dominance of subjects concerning the French elite (73.8%), this share decreases over time to 55.6% (1956 to 1960) and later recovers only slightly (61.8% from 1966 to 1970). These results suggest an extended interest in what ordinary French people were doing and how they lived after the occupation period, with its high dependency on Allied policies.

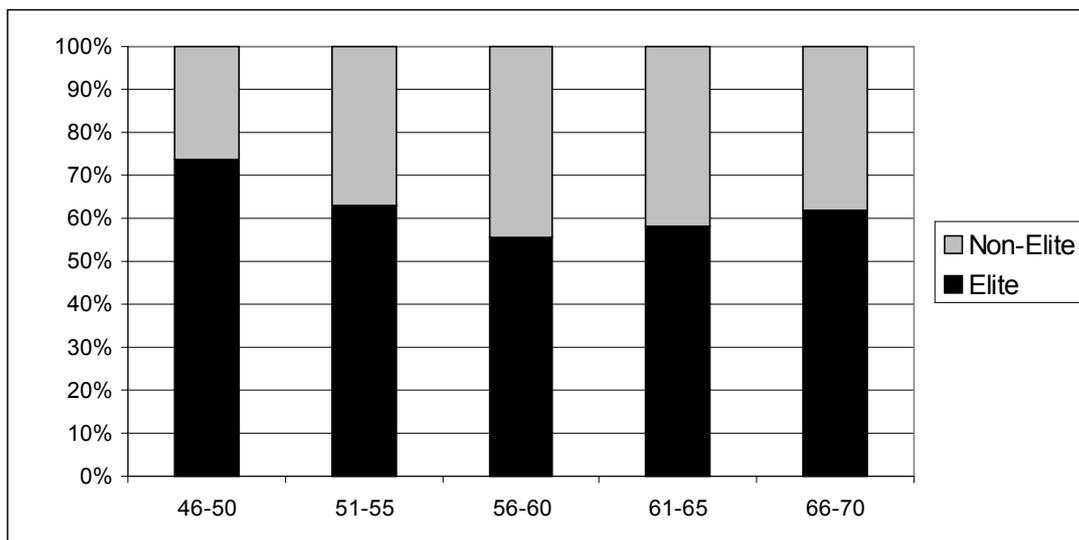


Figure 7: Share of elite- vs. non-elite-subjects ( $p < 0.001$ ; Chi-square = 25,647;  $df = 4$ )

There are more articles with a positive/neutral general subject and attitude than expected (cf. Fig. 8). The media tendency of negativism is not completely supported by the investigated material, although there is some variability over time. This can be seen as chiefly a result of the selected text material, which covers events of a period when peace with France and the creation of a better relationship was actually on the political agenda<sup>1</sup>.

1. Moreover, the selection of articles was based on entire newspaper editions and didn't focus only on political news.

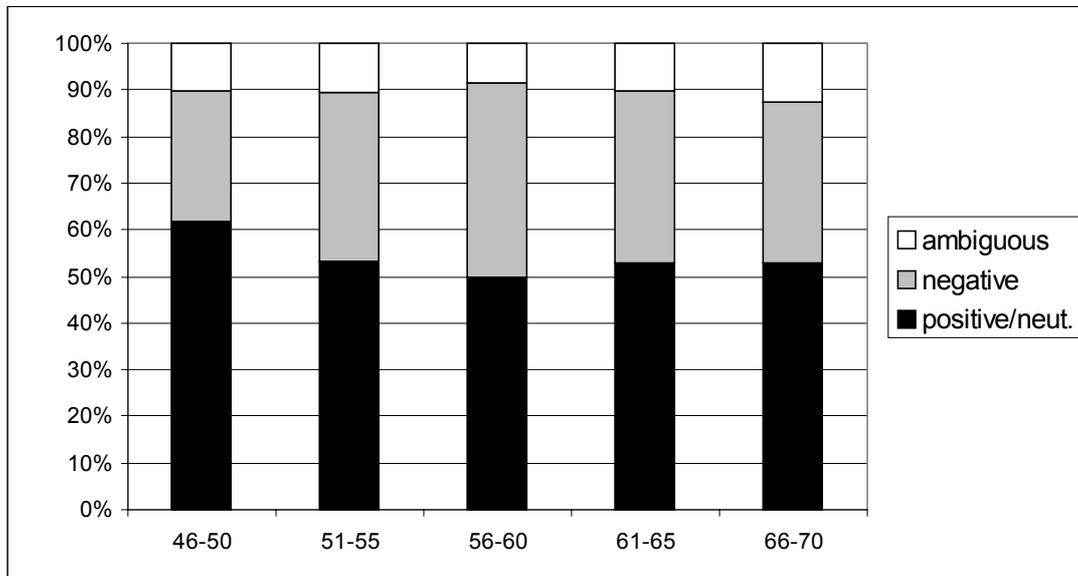


Figure 8: Share of positive/neutral vs. negative vs. ambiguous general subjects ( $p < 0.05$ ; Chi-square = 15,527;  $df = 8$ )

We find a relatively high share of positive/neutral coverage in the first period (61.6%), which can be partly explained by dependency on the Allies (press control, availability of independent information sources, compliance and good will of newspapers, etc.). Subsequently the share of this category goes down to around 53% and remains stable, except for the period from 1956 to 1960, when it is only 49.7%. In this period, the share of clearly negative subjects or moods is the highest (41.6%), while it normally hovers around 35%. In the early post-war years, though, this share is only 28%.

The share of ambiguously coded articles seems to compensate for the not overtly negative articles. Thus, if we view the data as distinguishing between neutral/positive subjects and negative/ambiguous subjects, the only major change of mood is between the early years of the occupation and the years after the occupation ( $p < 0.05$ ; Chi-square = 9.6088;  $df = 4$ ), and even then there is no clear dominance of negative/ambiguous subjects.

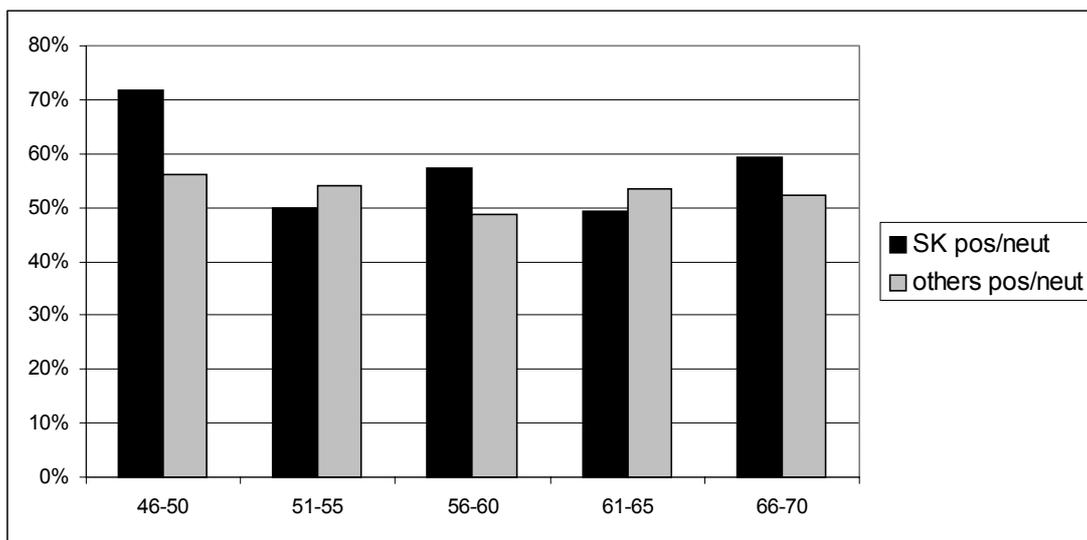


Figure 9: Share of positive/neutral general subjects in the *Südkurier* compared to the other newspapers

A special case is coverage in the local newspaper *Südkurier* (cf. Fig. 9). This is the only one of the newspapers that displayed significant change over time in regard to this variable.<sup>1</sup> None of the other newspapers showed significant change. The share

1. Chi-square = 11,4433,  $p < 0.05$ ;  $df=4$ .

of positive subjects in the *Südkurier* is exceedingly high during the occupation (1946-1950: 71.7%). At that time, the *difference between the Südkurier and the other newspapers* in the share of positive/neutral and negative/ambiguous subjects is significant.<sup>1</sup> Later on, the share of positive coverage is close to the average of the other newspapers, and variations in frequencies are insignificant.

### Actors mentioned in articles

As expected, most of the actors in the articles belonged to the elite. Surprisingly high, though, is the number of institutions/groups/organizations compared to individual persons, both in terms of elite- and non-elite actors. According to Galtung's model, we would expect some personification of events, at least in the article, even when the subject is not an individual person. This seems to be more or less the case as far as the elite is concerned, since there are many elite-person actors, but there is a striking difference, with regard to non-elite actors, between abstract structures and individual persons. (cf. Fig. 10)

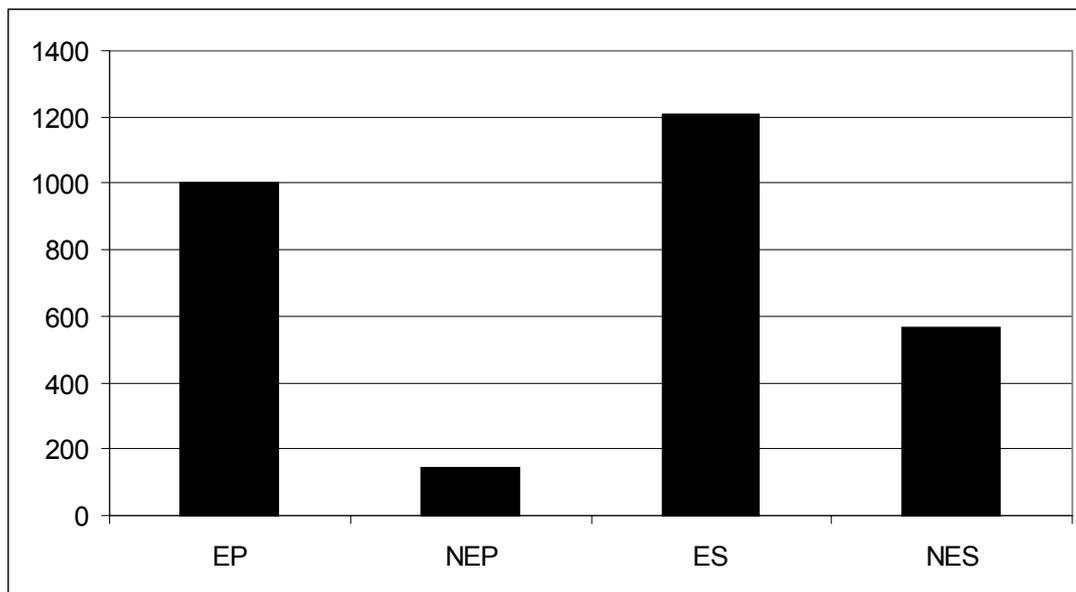


Figure 10: Absolute number of actors in the articles

As one would expect, the elite-actors who rule the world are more often depicted as active than as the objects of others' actions, while with non-elite actors the opposite is the case (cf. Fig. 11).

1. Chi-square=6.5794,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $df=1$ .

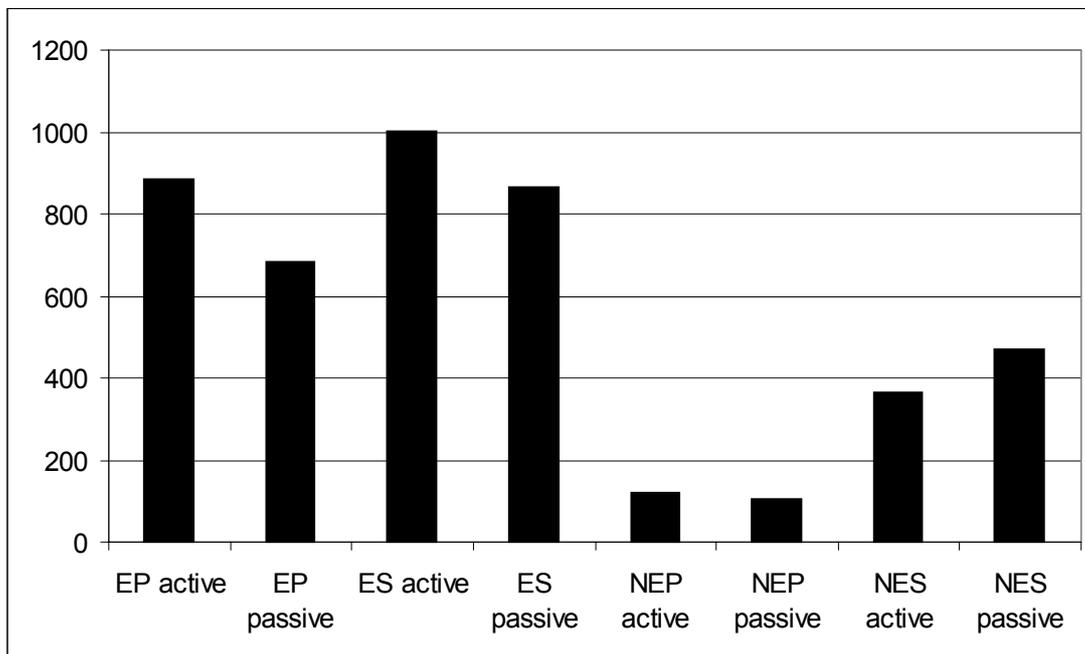


Figure 11: Absolute number of actors portrayed as being active or passive

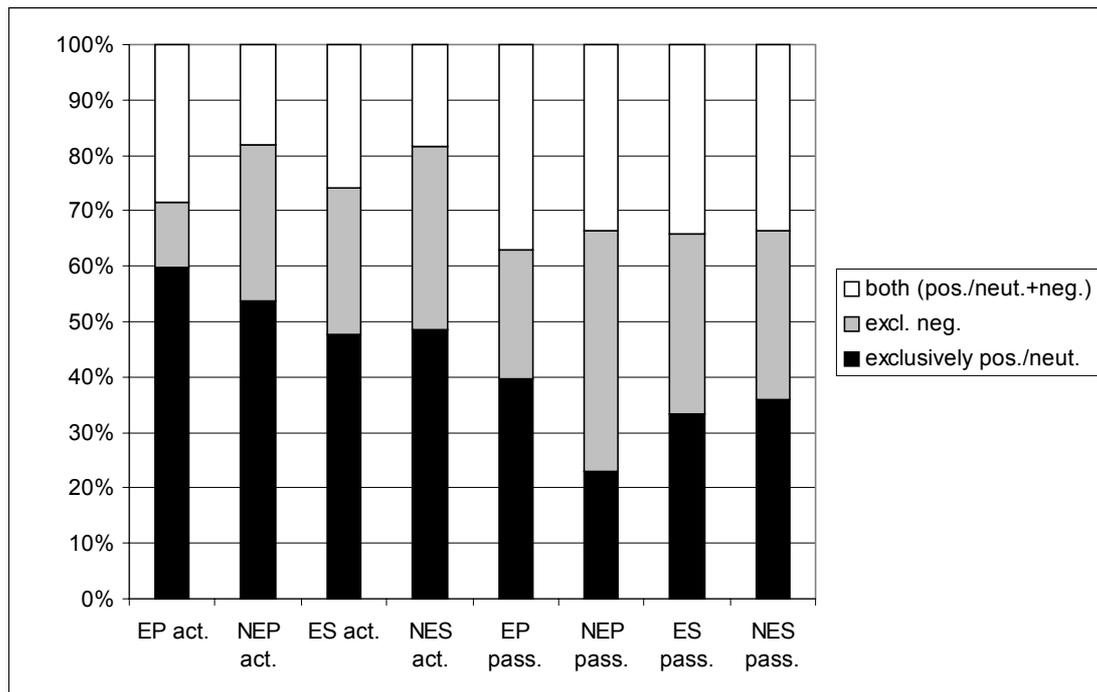


Figure 12: Shares of actors' portrayed (active and passive) actions

If we examine the relative frequencies of the actors portrayed as *active* (cf. Fig. 12), we find a remarkable share of elite-persons depicted as acting exclusively positively. In the active mode, when it is a matter of elite-actors, we also find a higher share of persons acting both positively and negatively, which also means showing a broader picture of their actions. If we compare the different actors depicted in the active mode, the differences between them are significant.<sup>1</sup>

1. Chi-square = 98.9271; df = 6; p < 0.01

If we concentrate on actors portrayed as *passive* (cf. Fig. 12), there is a lower probability of elite-persons being depicted as the "victims" of others. Instead, both positive and negative actions are attributed to them simultaneously. Non-elite persons have to suffer in order to get newspaper coverage – if they are merely participating positively, nobody seems to care very much. The differences among protagonists depicted in the passive mode are also significant.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 13 shows the change over time of the different actors' rates of appearance in articles. Interrupted lines stand for non-significant changes. This is the case with non-elite actors. Non-elite structures occur in nearly every third article, no matter in what period. Non-elite persons occur in only about every tenth article.

We find significant changes, though, with elite-actors: The focus on elite-structures decreases, while the share of articles telling about elite-persons' actions increases. In the time span from 1961 to 1965, it nearly reaches the amount of coverage of elite-structures, which may be due in part to the personal relationship and repeated meetings between Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer. However, it may also be a result of the high number of artists' portrayals, at that time, of political events having personal consequences (e.g. OAS terrorism and the trials of dissident military men), and many others. Major changes with regard to the coverage of both kinds of actors are found between the earliest period and that from 1951 to 1955.

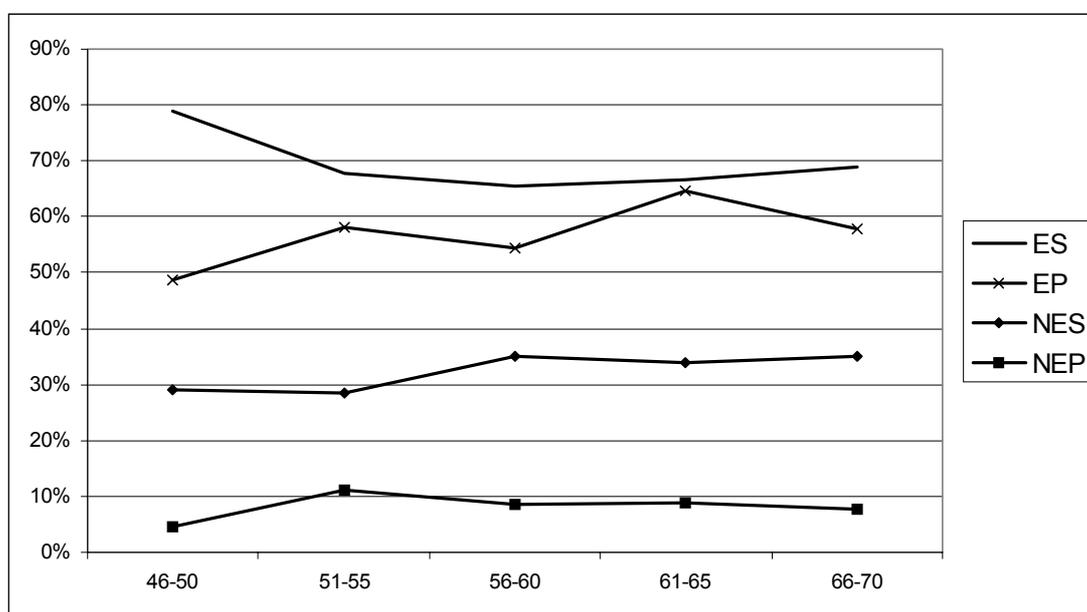


Figure 13: Shares of actors' mention over time (df = 4; EP: Chi-square = 19,081; p < 0.001; ES: Chi-square = 15,852; p < 0.01; NEP: Chi-square = 8,565; n.s.; NES: Chi-square = 6,483; n.s.)

If we take a closer look at the individual actor groups and investigate the manner of portraying them, elite-persons seem to be a very interesting sub-group, because there is a clear change over time (cf. Fig. 14).

1. Chi-square = 28.5796; df = 6; p < 0.01

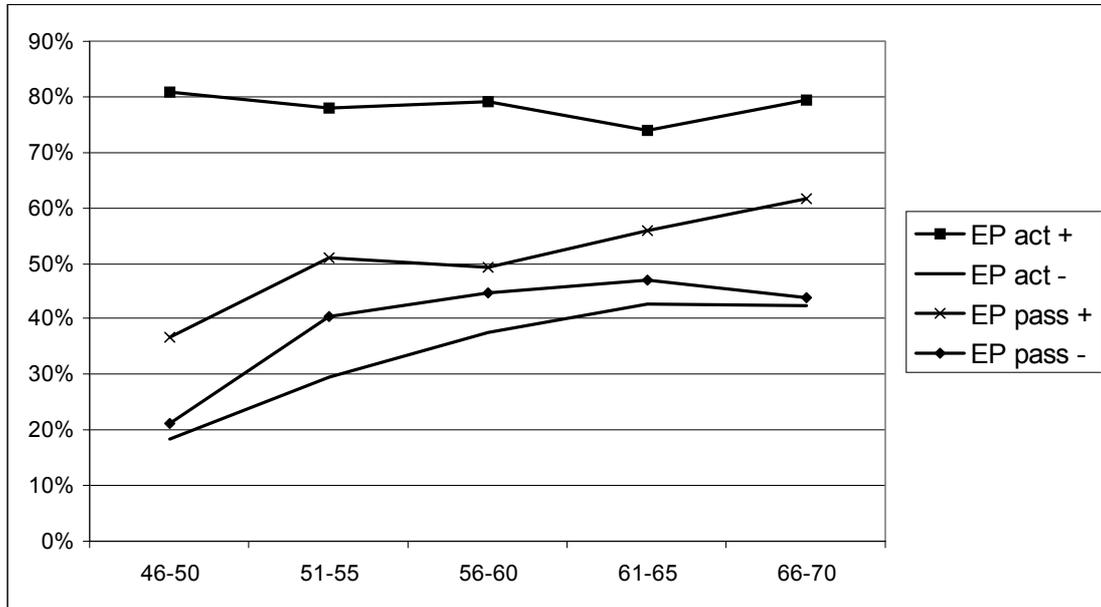


Figure 14: Shares of elite-persons' actions (Condition: elite-person mentioned) (df = 4; EPact+: Chi-square = 3,345; n.s.; EPact-: Chi-square = 30,905 p < 0.001; EPass+: Chi-square = 22,445; p < 0.001; EPass-: Chi-square = 27,552; p < 0.001)

Regardless of at what time elite-persons are mentioned in the text, they are mostly depicted as acting positively/neutrally. However, other ways of portraying them increase significantly over time, which signifies a trend towards a more diversified depiction compared to the more one-dimensional portrayals of the early post-war years. Although portrayals of them acting negatively increase almost monotonously, this kind of depiction remains the least common over the years. And if we only distinguish between descriptions of elite-persons' positive vs. negative actions/passive actions, this picture is confirmed again. Positive depiction remains stable and has a share of 90% of the respective articles, while negative depiction increases until 1965, then drops again slightly (cf. Fig. 15).

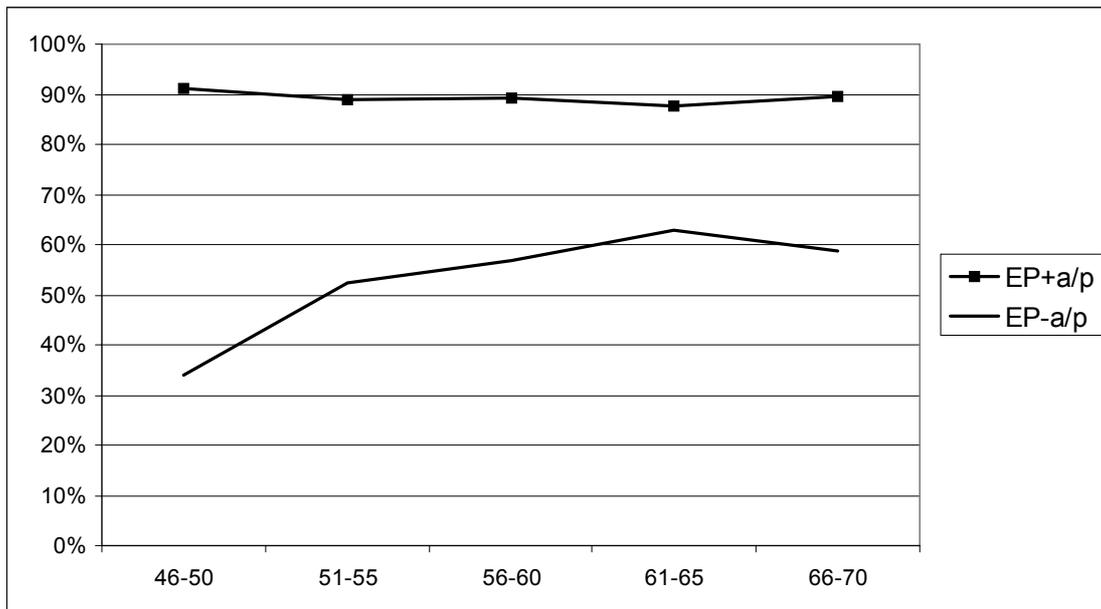


Figure 15: Shares of elite-persons' actions (Condition: elite-person appears) (df = 4; EP+a/p: Chi-square = 1,162; n.s.; EP-a/p: Chi-square = 33,409; p < 0.001)

The depiction of elite-structures/institutions/groups' actions/passive actions is not so consistent (cf. Fig. 16).

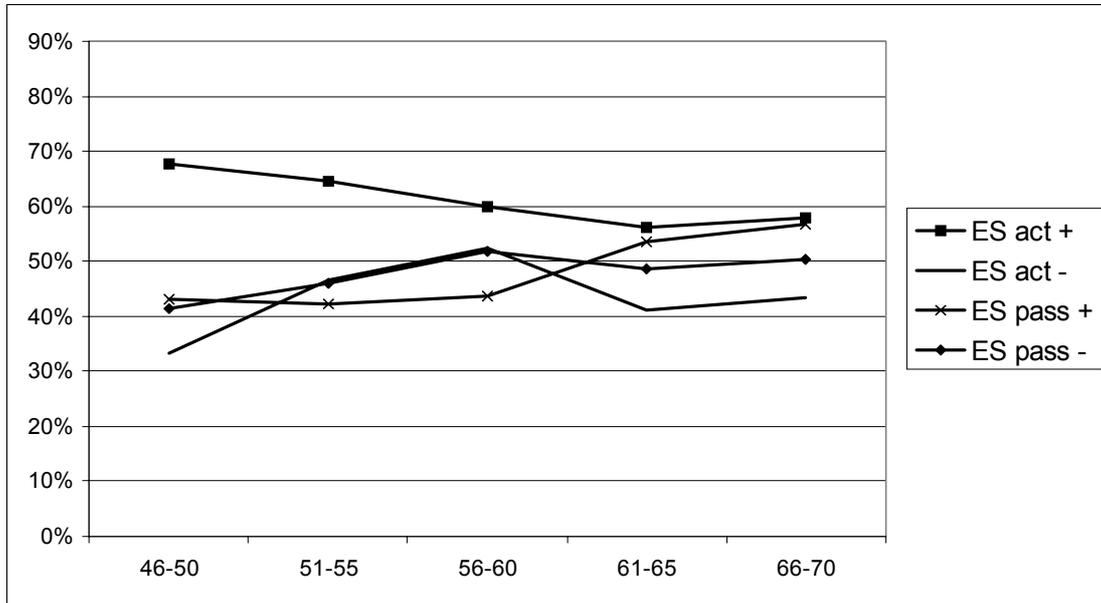


Figure 16: Shares of elite-structures' actions (Condition: elite-structures appear) (df = 4; ESact+: Chi-square = 9,302; n.s.; ESact-: Chi-square = 18,614; p < 0.001; ESpass+: Chi-square = 17,371; p < 0.01; ESpass-: Chi-square = 6,228; n.s.)

Constant over 25 years is their depiction as mostly positively acting and (less often) as being the passive object of a negative action. Portrayals of them as positively passive increase slightly, above all after 1960. Portraying them as negatively active increases from a third of the articles mentioning elite-structures (1946 to 1950) up to over 50% of the articles (1956 to 1960). Afterwards the share decreases again and remains the least-used mode of portraying them. One has to keep in mind that in the 1950s, and in particular in the late 1950s, France was involved in several military actions and violent decolonization processes (Indochina war, Suez crisis, liberation movements in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria), which is partly reflected by the data.

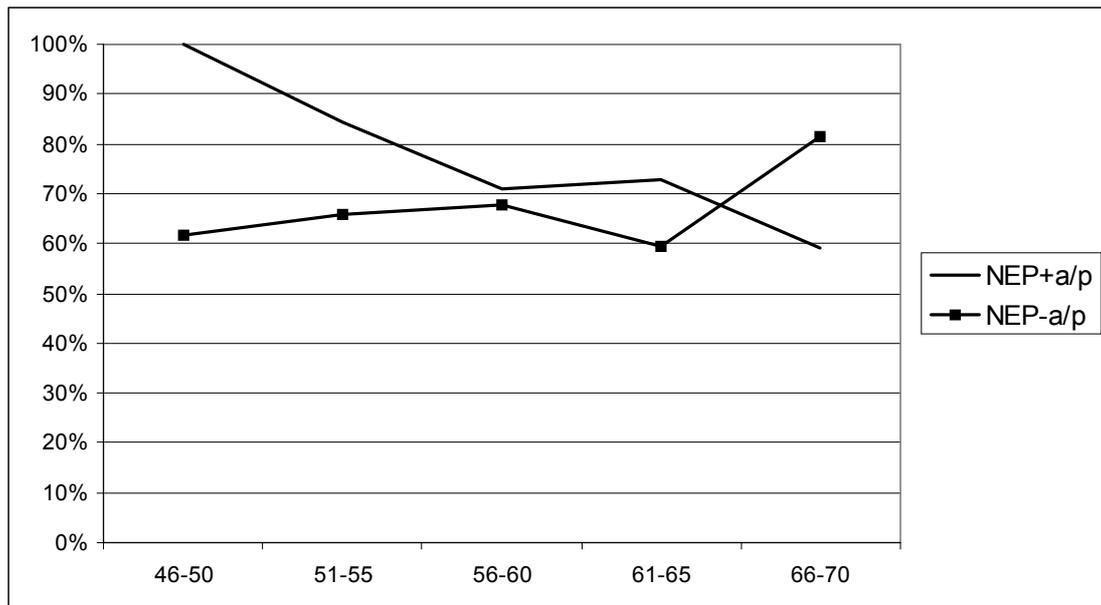


Figure 17: Share of Non-Elite-persons' actions (Condition: non-elite-persons appear) (df = 4; NEP+a/p: Chi-square = 10,054; p < 0.05; NEP-a/p: Chi-square = 3,727; n.s.)

Non-elite persons appear in only 145 articles over the entire 25-year span. Significant changes in coverage are found only if we distinguish between their actions/passive actions being depicted as positive or negative (cf. Fig. 17). The share of negative descriptions remains relatively stable, and variations are not statistically significant, while the share of positive descriptions decreases significantly from 100% in the first years to below 60% in the last time span. This supports the model's predictions that these actors have to suffer or do something negative in order to get media attention. This does not change over time. What does change is that in the early years the investigated newspapers showed slightly more flexibility with regard to depictions of non-elite persons than in the later years, and this is possibly also due to the development of the particular self-image of high-quality newspapers: they try not to focus on human interest stories unless they involve really major issues.

The depiction of non-elite structures/institutions/groups does not change significantly over the years. Mostly they are portrayed in a passive mode, and less often as acting negatively.

#### 4.5 Conclusions

The data from the quantitative study indicates that the German newspapers actively followed the ongoing reconciliation process.

The selection of subjects was less dominated by news values like negativism and personalization, as one would expect from Galtung's model. To some extent, the newspapers even managed to overcome elite-bias and made efforts to show a broader picture of France and the French lifestyle than only focusing on political issues.

The German newspapers showed their confidence in French actors by depicting them in a mostly positive/neutral way instead of emphasizing their negative actions. They also emphasized French cultural accomplishments. In the investigated material, we found current reviews and presentations of French art, literature, music, movies, etc., mostly in the late 50s and early 60s.

The German press also expressed confidence in French society and the ordinary French population by making them a subject of coverage and depicting them in a generally less negative way than would be expected according to Galtung's model. The only exceptions are individual non-elite persons, who had almost no chance to get media attention except when suffering or doing something negative.

The newspaper coverage of France and the French changed over time. Major differences are found between the early post-war period and the time after the Allied occupation. This can be partly seen as a result of the newspapers' dependency on the Allied powers, the availability of information and the availability of paper and materials with which to print newspapers (cf. Dix, 1995). As well, it may be due to the newspapers' development (increase in number of pages, diversification of subjects, supplements, etc.) and the change in relevant subjects on the public agenda.

Over time, there is a tendency to a more diversified depiction of French elite actors, as well as a tendency for slightly more "negative" coverage. There is also a tendency to more non-elite coverage and to slightly more personalization of events.

Allied press control does not seem to have had overly severe implications, though. The only newspaper showing significant changes of mood over time is the local newspaper *Südkurier*. In the early post-war years, it offered highly positive coverage of France and French-related issues, but later, after the years of Allied press control, there were no significant differences compared to the other newspapers. If there were any lingering feelings of resentment because the French administration had placed restrictions on the *Südkurier*, there is no evidence that the paper later tried to retaliate by focusing more on the negative side of France than did the other newspapers.

With any interpretation of the results, though, the limitations of a quantitative approach should be taken into account. The results look promising with regard to press contributions to German reconciliation with France, but one should also consider the framing conditions: to name only a few, the situation of Germany's complete capitulation and the need for cooperation with France, as well as with the other occupation powers. Not only did an honest desire to overcome the effects of National Socialism influence the political agenda, but also German interests like regaining sovereignty, dependency on international support for reconstruction, as well as a desire to avoid a loss of face. These all surely contributed to the "cooperativeness" of the press, and it is hard to decide which of these motives predominated.

Moreover, there was surely a sense that German policy and public discourse were being monitored by the international environment. As the media are not only windows on the world (Tuchman, 1978), but also allow a look into the house itself, one had to be careful to keep one's affairs in order. Not least of all, a significant factor can be seen in the Cold War and the current framing of public discourse in terms of Western Cold war propaganda, where anything having to do with communism was suspect (including left-wing French art, literature, trade union movements, etc.).

In regard to French culture, one should remember that German admiration of French culture has a long tradition and continued even during the war (it manifested itself for example in the looting of French artworks by the National Socialists). It

is no surprise that this admiration was revived after the war and provided a reliable common basis for rapprochement with the French, for regarding them as equal human beings and as a highly civilized nation.

Nevertheless, the results indicate that some news values are not self-evident and that the media dispose of more free space in constructing realities than is often grasped or apologetically maintained.

## **5. Part 2: Qualitative content analysis**

### **5.1 Aims, models, expectations**

In addition to the quantitative content analysis, a qualitative study was made of several exemplary articles selected from the quantitative sample. It is based on already-existing models of peace journalism:

- "Escalation vs. de-escalation oriented conflict coverage" (Kempf, Reimann & Luostarinen, 1996; Kempf, 2002)
- "Peace/conflict journalism vs. war/violence journalism" (Galtung, 1998, 2002)

Both models provide systematic approaches to the question of how peaceful and conciliatory conflict coverage could be and also offer ideas about how events can be covered by the media, e.g. coverage that does not fan the flames of conflict with biased presentations, that leaves free space for peaceful options, that supports peace initiatives and non-violent conflict resolution, etc.

Nevertheless, pure "peace journalism" is hard to find in media reality. In repeated analyses of war and conflict coverage, the thus-far theoretically deduced de-escalation oriented characteristics seldom could actually be identified. And even the analysis of the coverage of peace negotiations and treaties has shown a dominance of escalation orientation in articles (e.g. Hamdorf, 2000; Annabring, 2000).

Accordingly, the following qualitative study was, on one hand, motivated by theoretical interest. One of the aims of this study is:

- to look for de-escalation oriented aspects in post-war coverage and determine whether and which of these aspects appear, as well as how they are applied.  
→ Do the de-escalation oriented characteristics of the model correspond in any way to empirical media reality?

On the other hand, there is a very practical interest in learning from empirical examples, as well as transferring the acquired knowledge to a broader public. If suitable journalistic skills are already present, if there is an intuitive knowledge of how to cover events in a de-escalation oriented way, this can serve as evidence that peace journalism is not an abstract construction of researchers, but is already being regularly practiced and can be systematized and also taught. Other aims of the study, consequently, are

- to identify specific style characteristics of at first glance constructive and conciliatory articles that go beyond the model and can make coverage contribute to peace and reconciliation
- to systematize those characteristics and – if possible – reintegrate the findings into existing models of peace journalism or de-escalation oriented conflict coverage  
→ What can researchers learn from journalists?

The above-presented quantitative part of the study has indicated some active German media contributions to the reconciliation process. So, by investigating the material in a more detailed way, we should be able to find articles dealing with the reconciliation process itself and even supporting and promoting it. There should also be texts covering other subjects and nevertheless presenting them in a way suitable to support the reconciliation process. Regardless of the topics, all of these articles are expected to contain some de-escalation characteristics, according to Kempf's model, as well as characteristics of Galtung's notion of peace journalism, but also other characteristics beyond the two models that enable the texts to contribute to reconciliation. Moreover, they are expected to contain several style characteristics making the articles exciting, interesting, credible, and thereby facilitating the acceptance of the message by the audience.

## 5.2 Method and procedure of qualitative content analysis

Figure 18 gives an overview of the procedure of analysis:

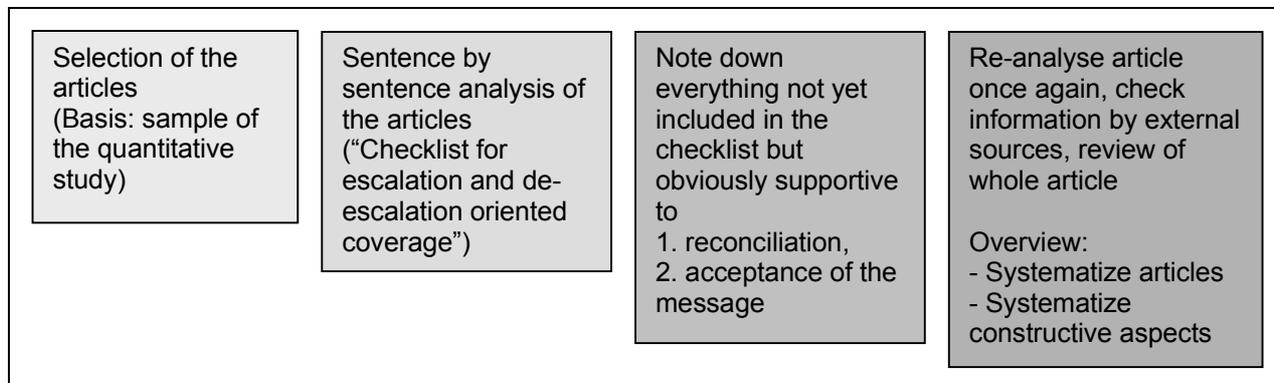


Figure 18: Overall procedure of the analysis

### Selection of the articles

As the aim of the analysis of exemplary, conciliatory articles was to 1.) study their constructive power for reconciliation with regard to de-escalation oriented characteristics proposed by the models and 2.) find constructive characteristics in the empirical material that go beyond the models, this had several implications for the selection of articles and led to the following selection strategies for the sample:

- *Formal characteristics:* Adequate length of the article (max. half a page but not too short because of lack of content) and articles from various newspapers, periods of time, text genres and writing styles.
- *Subject characteristics:* Articles dealing with a great variety of subjects.
- *Model characteristics:* Articles containing, at first glance, some of the de-escalation oriented characteristics from Kempf's model or the characteristics of Peace Journalism (Galtung).<sup>1</sup>
- *Characteristics beyond the models:* Articles containing at first glance eye-catching stylistic and subject characteristics going beyond the models, e.g. raising issues, selection of title, framing of topic, portrayal of actors, use of quotations, dealing with the past, flow of argumentation, writing style, symbols and allegories, etc.

Reading the text twice should confirm the impression of dealing with an article that is constructive with regard to reconciliation, or at least offers a sympathetic depiction of the French situation and should not leave a "foul taste" in the mouth. There should be no ambiguous hidden messages that are not clearly defined, cartoons beside the text that depreciate and detract from the positive content,<sup>2</sup> too obviously supporting anti-communist ideology instead of dealing with French cinematic trends as claimed,<sup>3</sup> etc.

So far, 22 articles have been selected for investigation (cf. Tab. 6)

Text code	Title	Source	Content
T16	<i>Die Straßensänger in Paris</i>	Südkurier, 8.2.1946, p. 3	Feature of the flourishing street life in Paris after the ending of the German occupation – The Nazis couldn't really affect the French joy of life.
T15	<i>Frankreichs wirtschaftlicher Aufbau</i> Viel ist schon getan, aber immer noch große Schwierigkeiten	Südkurier, 8.2.1946, p. 4	Detailed description of the war-caused damage in France and of the reconstruction efforts of both the French population and politicians

1. As the aim of the study is to empirically identify as many characteristics that can potentially contribute to peace and reconciliation as possible, and not simply to test a model, this selection approach serves to a priori exclude articles with no conciliatory potential.
2. E.g. "Kiesinger: Quite far ahead – de Gaulle emphasizes 'active friendship' / dialogue on GDR" (FR, 14.1.1967) plus cartoon subtitled, "Monsieur Kiesinger – for once wouldn't you like to try wearing only one hat?" (Kurt Kiesinger was a conservative German Chancellor.)
3. E.g. "The intellectual France and the French movie" (SZ, 16.10.1948)

T4	<i>Die Stimme der Frau</i> Die politisch denkende Frau in Frankreich	Frankfurter Rundschau, 28.06.1946, p. 7	Enthusiastic report about the French women association „Union des Femmes Françaises“
T20	<i>Frankreich für einheitliches Deutschland</i> Reuters Parisbesuch - Verständnis für Eingliederung Berlins gewachsen	Die Welt, 12.2.1949, p. 1	Article about the successful visit of the mayor of Berlin in Paris. He was able to achieve concessions of the French with regards to the Berlin status by negotiation.
T1	<i>Der Prozeß gegen Otto Abetz</i>	Frankfurter Rundschau, 23.7.1949, p. 16	Detached report about the trial against the former German ambassador in Paris during the Nazi occupation
T2	<i>Das Gespräch ist im Gang</i> Deutsche und französische Jugend singt und wandert	Südkurier, 5.11.1949, p. 3	Report about German and French young people travelling in each other's country, the problems and perspectives of re-establishing a youth hostel movement
T6	<i>Was die Welt so über uns denkt</i> Echo des Mannes auf der Straße zur deutschen Wiederbewaffnung - von Madrid bis Kopenhagen "FRANKREICH BRAUCHT FELDGRAU NICHT ZU FÜRCHTEN"	Süddeutsche Zeitung, 28.10.1950, p. 3 [French part of a big article written by various correspondents in several European capitals, S.J.]	French statements with regards to the German rearmament suggest that there is less objection in France than expected.
T14	Ein französisch-deutsches Zwiesgespräch <i>Deutschland - Frankreich – Europa</i> Vertrauen stärkt Verständigungswillen - Verzicht auf lähmende Vorurteile	Südkurier, 25.11.1950, p. 3	A French and a German author write about the mood in their countries with regard to the German rearmament – the newspaper emphasizes the need of a frank dialogue between the two countries.
T10	<i>Eine Träumerei von Robert Schuman</i>	Südkurier, 12.1.1952, p. 1 (commentary)	The European Coal and Steel Community is highly welcomed by the author. He explains structure and advantages of this union.
T12	<i>45 Todes-Urteile im Oradour-Prozeß</i> Auch Todesstrafe für Elsässer Boos	Südkurier, 14.2.1953, p. 2 (report and commentary)	The final sentences have been spoken in the trial of the Oradour massacre. The author condemns the crime and reflects about responsibilities.
T3	<i>Monsieur Lecompte frischt Erinnerungen auf</i> Ehemalige französische Kriegsgefangene besuchen die Moosburger Neustadt	Süddeutsche Zeitung, 4.9.1954, p. 12	Report about a meeting of former French and German war prisoners during a French visit of the former prison camp in Germany
T11	<i>Ein Brief aus Sombornon</i> "...daß mein Freund Ludwig Fabricius, Hamburg-Nienstedten, 70. Geburtstag hat"	Die Welt, 14.5.1955, p. 5, "Tagesbericht Hamburg"	A French old lady has saved a German officer during a Résistance fire. In reverse he has saved the village from destruction by SS-troops. After the war they have become friends.
T17	<i>Internationale Verständigung</i>	Südkurier, 26.5.1956, p. 11, "Konstanzer Zeitung"	Report about a German boy and a French soldier having become friends in Konstanz.
T19	<i>So reisen Jean und Jeannette</i> Ein französisches Mosaik	Frankfurter Rundschau, 28.7.1956, p. 12	Story about travelling in France framed by the portray of a fictional French couple, who don't have much money but know how to enjoy life and travelling nevertheless
T18	<i>Skeptisch</i>	Frankfurter Rundschau, 17.11.1956, p. 3 (commentary)	How the common people in Paris experience the Suez war
T8	<i>Colette lernt tanzen</i> Deutsch-französischer Schüleraustausch	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 22.8.1959, "Die Frau"	The author tells his experiences with the students' exchange and reflects about the French school system.
T9	<i>Der Algerien-Rapport des Reserveobersten Jules Roy</i> Ein französischer Schriftsteller beschwört seine Landsleute zum Verhandeln mit seinen Landsleuten	Süddeutsche Zeitung, 4.2.1961, p. 6	Jules Roy has written a book condemning the Algerian war. His ideas and parts of his book are introduced.

T5	<i>Die Partner von Baden-Baden</i>	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 17.2.1962, p. 1 (commentary)	Adenauer and de Gaulle have different ideas about the political integration of Europe. The author argues towards seeing their common background, neutral evaluation of both sides' interests and finding a compromise.
T21	<i>Eine neue Generation in Frankreich</i>	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 21.4.1962, p. 7	Article about the changed economical culture in France since the Common Market has been established. The author is rather enthusiastic.
T22	<i>Fast alle 900 000 Algerienflüchtlinge eingegliedert</i> Nur 4500 Arbeitslose / Erfolg der französischen Verwaltung und der Heimkehrer	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 16.11.1963, p. 3	Evaluation of the state of integrating Algerian Refugees in France. Both have been successful: Refugees as well as authorities.
T7	<i>Die dünne Decke</i>	Südkurier, 6.2.1965, p. 1 (commentary)	De Gaulle's press conference has revealed a still persisting mistrust against the Germans. The inner-German debate about the statute-barred prosecution of crimes during the Nazi regime fuels it even more and should be brought to an end.
T13	<i>Nur noch ein Rest alten Argwohns</i> Die Wahlkampf-Bundesrepublik in französischer Sicht / Anerkennung für unsere Sozial- und Wirtschaftsstrukturen	Süddeutsche Zeitung, 20.9.1969, p. 4	Germany is at high risk that the nationalist party will gain considerable support during the next elections. How do the French perceive this situation? How has the German-French relationship developed anyway?

Table 6: List of investigated articles

### Analyzing the articles

For the purpose of studying and evaluating post-conflict coverage, the model of "escalation vs. de-escalation oriented conflict coverage" (Kempf et al., 1996) had to be slightly adapted. Some variables were tailored explicitly to violent conflicts and were defined too specifically. So they had to be modified in order to be able to assess the characteristics of less violent processes.

The adapted model was transformed into a "Checklist for escalation and de-escalation oriented coverage" (cf. Kempf, 2003; Bläsi, Kempf, Jaeger & Möckel, 2004) that served as the basic guideline for a sentence-by-sentence-analysis of the articles. Any characteristic of the checklist that occurred in the text has been recorded.

Additionally, any other outstanding characteristic not yet in the checklist but potentially seeming to contribute to a more empathic understanding of the French, to reconciliation, to a cooperative comprehension of the situation, etc. was recorded. Special attention was given to elements like, e.g. raising the issue itself, selection of title, provision of background information, context of the article, flow of argumentation, dramaturgy of the article, framing of the article, use of a certain writing style, of expressions, symbols, ways of dealing with actors, with quotations, with topics like the German-French past, the war, etc. So, more general and sentence-overlapping constructive characteristics that are at risk of being overlooked with a simple application of the checklist to each individual sentence could be ascertained as well.

With ongoing analysis of the article, some of the elements of the checklist that were found turned out to be used or meant in a contrary sense, so the article and the sentences had to be reviewed again until the meaning of the article and the characteristics were sufficiently clear.

For a better comprehension of the article and a broader knowledge of the depicted events, a comparison of text information with external sources was also allowed. The underlying intention was not to find out whether the reported event was correctly depicted or not, but rather how the author of the article meant to depict it. External sources could be other articles in the relevant newspaper edition, history books, biographies, information provided by the Internet, e.g. about the author of the article, about the mentioned French organizations or institutions, etc. As much information was collected as was available and necessary to determine the meaning of the article. Contradictory information was evaluated in terms of the reliability of sources (e.g. official vs. personal reports).

After the first analysis, the article was reviewed again, a review was written, and a list was made of escalation and de-escalation oriented aspects, as well as a list of additional constructive elements.

### 5.3 First findings

At this point, the quantitative analysis is still not complete. Nevertheless, this paper presents the preliminary results:

1. Nearly all the de-escalation oriented characteristics described by the model could be found in the sample.
2. The articles also contain constructive stylistic elements going beyond the checklist: Not only do these elements have the power to contribute to reconciliation, beyond that, some of them contribute to making the articles highly attractive and credible to recipients.
3. Conciliatory elements could be found in the articles, no matter what topic was dealt with.

Other findings are less encouraging:

1. Even if the results of the preceding quantitative analysis indicate something else: Articles not explicitly dealing with the reconciliation process itself and at the same time containing predominantly constructive elements were especially rare and hard to find.
2. Even articles dominated by constructive elements often contain problematic phrases or aspects that are not only not conciliatory, but also express continuing distrust between Germany and France, or even an escalation orientation.

### Options for conciliatory coverage in various contexts

The articles can be grouped by the contexts dealt with and how these could potentially contribute to reconciliation. The groups are not mutually exclusive. Often, one and the same article contains elements fitting into more than one context.<sup>1</sup>

#### Reconciliation within the political context

Topics and opportunities:

These articles often deal with meetings between politicians (not only, but also French and German) where agreement could be reached or at least there was a less conflict-laden dialogue (e.g. T5, T20). In these articles recipients can learn about French intentions, learn to listen to French needs and fears and evaluate them in a less polarized manner (e.g. T5, T7). The articles sometimes try to deconstruct the distrust between France and Germany by emphasizing shared visions and possibilities for present and future cooperation (e.g. T5, T10, T14). They express confidence in French politicians, in their actions and intentions, their values and comprehension of democracy.

There are also articles dealing with the political behavior of the French people (e.g. T14, T18, T9). For example, one is about the political activities of Frenchwomen organized in the "Union des Femmes Françaises" in 1946 (T4). It praises their political consciousness, shows the compatibility of being a woman and being politically active and implicitly encourages German women to take French women as examples and become politically active.

Problematic aspects:

These issues are often raised in response to domestic events (e.g. forthcoming elections in Germany, states visits, meetings, domestic discourse about controversial subjects concerning German policy) (e.g. T13, T5, T7, T20, T14). This need not necessarily be a shortcoming. Often enough, though, the deeper meaning of the content can be understood by taking into account the overall situation at the time the article was written. By doing so, the article implicitly places an emphasis on promoting *German* needs and interests, even if French politicians and policy are superficially depicted in a correct, if not friendly fashion. Articles about meetings between French and German politicians often contain self-upgrading elements, and identification with one's own side's "wise" statesmen is supported. French statesmen, in contrast to the upgraded Germans, come off less well in the end (e.g. T5). In some articles, cooperation with the French seems not to be motivated by a stated desire to become friends or by honest appreciation of French policy (even if the article claims this). Instead, it is a result of rational calculation to make use of this externally praised collaboration in order to improve one's own situation or to achieve hidden goals (T7).

#### Reconciliation within the socio-cultural context

Topics and opportunities:

These articles portray French everyday life, problems ordinary French people have to face and how they cope with them. They investigate the social situation in France, as well as French culture and art.

The articles dealing with French problems after the Second World War express great empathy with these "brave" people: So much damage was done, but as wise and industrious as they are, the French are doing their best to reconstruct their country. (e.g. T15, T16, T4). Such a depiction of the French social situation does not overtly state, but it suggests implicit parallels between the problems the French and the German populations have to cope with, and it also gives examples of

1. The codes in brackets refer to the corresponding articles listed above (cf. Tab. 6)

how to overcome them (e.g. T4, T22). The later the article appears, the less emphasis is placed on topics like post-war reconstruction. Instead, there is often a depiction of the French as just 'charming people in a beautiful country with a rich culture' that is worth getting to know better (e.g. T19).

Problematic aspects:

In the early years, there was still talk of a sort of "folk character," which suggests Nazi terminology and ways of viewing Germany and other nations (e.g. T4, T16). Even later, there was a danger of maintaining and projecting stereotypes about the French by celebrating merely the "l'art de vivre en France" in the articles (e.g. T19) and not reporting on the great variety of life styles and personalities found in the French population. In these kinds of reports, there often is a search for clues as to whether stereotypes of the "laissez faire" style of living, the "not so systematic" French working methods were still true or not (e.g. T21), which signifies a German interest in "how French people really are." But at the same time, this is still just *talking about* the other and not really *listening to* him/her. Even worse is that in some articles the German system (economy, education, etc.) is upgraded by negative comparisons with the "backward" French system (e.g. T8, T13). A sort of pseudo-empathy with the French people is expressed, while simultaneously pointing out how successful the German system is. All in all, this gives the impression that French social policy and the French educational system – instead of contributing to the welfare of the French people – are "leaving them in the lurch."

### **Reconciliation within the socio-economic context**

Topics and opportunities:

Closely related to the socio-cultural context and already mentioned is the coverage of the French economy (e.g. T13, T21, T15). Many of these articles also deal with post-war reconstruction and contain above-mentioned characteristics like showing the good example of the industrious French people. Of course, economic pacts and international cooperative institutions like, e.g. the European Coal and Steel Community, European Currency Union, and Common Market are described constructively, if the agreement was beneficial to Germany in terms of regaining international acceptance and influence. In this case, we find coverage expressing confidence in French statesmen such as, e.g. Robert Schuman, praising them for their far-sightedness and wisdom (T10). There are also texts concerned with topics like how well the French people get along with an economically united Western Europe (e.g. T21) and how beneficial the Common Market is for the French.

Problematic aspects:

As time passed, more emphasis was put on the economic competition between Germany and France. Or at least the articles offer a competitive frame with regard to the situation (T13). There is sometimes talk of a French "inferiority complex" in face of "German economic achievements" (T21) or of a "certain French envy" (T13). There is also a self-congratulatory tone in the articles: German achievements are enthusiastically praised, and there is a tone of affected sympathy for the French, which explicitly or implicitly downgrades French economic policy, as well as the traditionally important role and culture of the French trade union movement (T13).

### **Building a new relationship**

Topics and opportunities:

In the investigated period, we can find numerous articles about programs or meetings between French and German groups (as in T8: student exchange, T2: youth hostel movement, T3: veterans meetings). There are also articles giving examples of existing friendships among the German and French peoples (e.g. T11, T17) or emphasizing the need for a frank dialogue in order to build friendship (T14). Some of these articles additionally provide implicit suggestions on how to participate in these programs. The overall message of the articles: If we only become friends, war will become impossible! Let us have confidence in the youth of both countries who want to be united and will not fight against each other in the future! Let us also have trust into the gradual passing away of an older generation burdened with war experiences and sometimes unable to overcome them! The problem will be solved over time ... (e.g. T2, T13). But there are also articles showing that the war generation could actively overcome some mutual mistrust (e.g. T3, T11). The articles are mostly upbeat. They combine enthusiastic anticipation of a united future and an emphasis on the similarity of the German and French peoples.

Problematic aspects:

The publication of these articles is often a matter of domestic and actual relevance (as e.g. T3: veterans meetings the week before somewhere in Bavaria, T11: a letter from a Frenchwoman to the editor). They are not published just because a German journalist finds this an important subject to write about, but seem to require an actual domestic event related to the topic (like most of the other contexts).

Moreover, the message "Just look forward, don't look back!" (e.g. T2) is ambiguous. On one hand, it seems to have been reasonable at that time to ascertain the status quo and take the present as a starting point instead of endlessly brooding over old wrongs and agonizing about the past. An emphasis on the structures of already-existing cooperation and friend-

ships, as well as on perspectives of a new, now shared future can motivate, inspire and animate the audience to join in existing exchange programs or to build up friendships on their own. Nevertheless, the depiction of this "united world" and the glib dismissal of the emotional damage caused by the war seems somewhat naïve (e.g. T2, T11, T13). It implies the self-serving message, "... after all, we're harmless and well-meaning people." It tends to neglect the diversity of feelings left on both sides by the various and differing war-related experiences – above all with promising topics which could have offered an opportunity to really learn about how the other had experienced the war, without stereotyped repetition of how bad it was for everyone and without the article losing its positive power.

## Dealing with the hostile past

### Topics

There are two types of articles dealing with the past: The first type focuses directly on this subject, and the major part of the article is concerned with the depiction of present events closely related to or caused by World War II. These articles cover war crimes trials of Germans (T1, T12), veterans meetings (T3), personal friendships formed during the war (T11), the background of the French stance towards German rearmament (T6, T14), etc. The other type does not appear to be concerned with such topics, but there are some allusions to the war in the articles, such as subordinate clauses, expressions, short summaries of how it was and how it is now, etc. (e.g. T16, T2, T13, T21). Neither type of article differs with regard to specific characteristics and argumentation, even if the ones directly dealing with the past use them more extensively.

### Constructive elements

- Showing the amount of destruction caused by the war and the German occupation of France  
A few articles depict in detail the harm suffered by France due to the war and the German occupation. This harm is portrayed in terms of economic destruction (T15), but as well in terms of human victims and the emotional effects of the war (e.g. T13, T11, T1). Repeatedly, there is a hint that the war has left the French with deep-seated feelings of distrust towards Germans.  
Amazingly, even twenty years after the war one article emphasizes in two paragraphs the socio-demographic damage the war has caused to the German population (T21). The author regrets that almost an entire German generation was lost in the war and is now unavailable to aid the developing economy.  
In some articles the damage to the German-French relationship is also emphasized, as well as the global distrust of Germany due to National Socialist crimes and the war, the international loss of face and the problem of how to regain international trust (e.g. T7, T14).
- Expression of will to make amends  
Especially the above-described articles dealing with the rebuilding of a new relationship focus on starting over again and emphasize the need to "make friends, not war" (e.g. T14, T2). There are expressions by the articles' authors of support for this logic, as well as examples of Germans who already have the right attitude.  
But also the need to stay politically and economically in touch, the international integration of Germany in political, military and economic unions, as well as to engage in dialogue with each other are comprehended and promoted by the journalists as means to overcome the German past (e.g. T5, T14, T10).
- Overcoming the past in a more specific sense  
Both articles about war crimes trials contain at least some acknowledgement of the French right to try German war crimes committed in France. Their respective forms, though, are very different. While one expresses a relatively detached attitude (within limits, as follows below) and makes serious attempts to demonstrate the fairness of the French and the French justice system (T1), the other condemns the crime itself but trivializes the perpetrators' guilt and questions the correctness of the judgment (T12).  
Also, more than one of the investigated articles acknowledges at least implicitly the French right of resistance against the German occupation during the war. The resistance fighters are portrayed as courageous, sacrificing their lives for the liberation of France (e.g. T4, T6). Their actions are described as closely related to the occupation situation and framed as a kind of self-defense. Now that the war and the Nazi regime are over, they have no desire for revenge (e.g. T1), so the articles indicate, and the resistance fighters have returned to civilian life. Nevertheless, in one other article a specific action by the resistance is framed as an illegal attack on a "legally operating" German military unit (T11.)

## Destructive or at least dubious elements

Trivialization of the war and German occupation: 3 examples

*"... after all that has happened in France ..." (T1)*

There are many formulations like this, implicitly admitting that the French too had suffered from the German occupation and the war, but the formulation is rather vague. Something "happened," even World War II "happened," which is more the way one would refer to a natural disaster that could have befallen anyone and that no one could have prevented – and the responsibility of those who took the fatal decisions, as well as of those who carried out their orders is obscured.

*"... they are not in the mood to hurt each other ..." (T2)*

The article is about young French and German people, now visiting the others' country, making new friends there and wanting peace. This sounds good, but the expression "to hurt" is a rather euphemistic way of talking about war, invasion, plundering homes and possessions, murder, massacre, and the like. The phrase also suggests it is a simple matter of a personal "hostile mood" that decides for war or peace, and this denies the role of German nationalism and its ideology of superiority and territorial expansion, i.e. the political dimension of war.

*"With the Wehrmacht invasion, street musicians disappeared from the Parisian cityscape. On one hand, the Parisians felt like anything but music and singing, on the other hand, the occupation authorities had banned any street music." (SK, 8.2.1946) (T16)*

According to the author, German occupation authorities had banned street musicians because they "feared" satirical songs about them. This seems to be an imaginative but rather trivializing and euphemistic way of portraying the situation during the German occupation of Paris. Street musicians simply "disappeared," the Parisians were in a bad mood, and the occupation forces just had no sense of humor and self-irony ...

- Showing the "good" sides of the war

As a special kind of trivialization, some articles seem to be insisting on the war's good sides. On reading these texts, that also contain the above-mentioned vague expressions and trivializing elements, one gets an impression of the Second World War as a kind of international migration movement or organized trans-national tourism. Everybody had for once in his life an opportunity to travel abroad, get to know other countries, even make new international friends (T11). Also, German soldiers were seemingly enabled to overcome old stereotypes of "the superficial, frivolous Frenchwoman" by getting to know real life Frenchwomen (who, moreover, were of the "less worthy kind" [O-tone], as they were street walkers) (T4). Also, the soldiers' stay in the other country or captivity as a POW seemingly offered them a chance to learn foreign languages (T3)!

- Self-upgrading by showing one's own side's "heroes of peace" and own side's good will

An article covering the French trial of the former German ambassador to occupied Paris is written in a relatively detached style (T1). The arrangement of testimonies and their content, the presentation of protagonists, as well as repeated statements by the author give the impression of a very fair trial. The overall tone is generally neutral. The only point where the author shows more enthusiasm is when writing about the testimony of a German general:

"Not least of all, and particularly worth mentioning, is the testimony of General von Choltitz, the former military commander of Greater Paris, who in August 1944 received the order to blow up Paris (which had already been undermined at many places). Due to his disregard of the order Paris is nowadays not a sea of ruins, but one of the most beautiful and best-preserved cities of Europe. He declared that Abetz had helped him then by not objecting that he didn't execute the order." (FR, 23.7.1949)

Ironically enough, Germany lies in ruins and the French owe the rescue of their capital, Paris, "one of the most beautiful and best-preserved cities of Europe," to a German general who simply disobeyed orders. The glamour and halo of this, of course, honorable action also spreads to the defendant, Otto Abetz, who is accused, among other things, of contributing to the deportation of Jews, to the plundering of French works of art, to the murder of French politicians and resistance fighters. This is not the only example of articles becoming enthusiastic about German good deeds in France during the war and about signs of German resistance from within the military. These need not automatically be counterproductive for supporting the reconciliation process, if they aim at showing that free space had existed and been used even under the conditions of war for individual courageous humanitarian behavior and refute those who claim there was no alternative but compliance. In some articles (e.g. T11), though, the presentation of Germans as resisters follows a well-worn defense strategy in Germany – that of reasoning that "we weren't all that bad, it was just Hitler", which strongly reduces personal moral responsibility.

- Downplaying German war crimes

The following quotation was found in an article covering the French trial for the Oradour massacre, in which nearly the entire population of a French village, including many women and children locked in a church, was slaughtered by a SS unit

consisting of both Alsatian and German soldiers (T12):

"... even if on that 10th of June 1944 they fired on human beings only because they didn't want to be shot themselves. And countless soldiers here and there have experienced similar situations, because in every war the same horrible alternative is repeated day after day. A crime requires a criminal intention. ... Or are they already guilty solely because they carried out a criminal order under duress?" (SK, 13.2.1953, commentary part)

In the end, the perpetrators become the true victims – of circumstances, and of others who obviously do not really (want to) understand the "rules of war." This is phrased as universal wisdom. While some texts tend to explain the war in terms of an individual hostile impulse, here the author puts the blame on some anonymous authority and strongly trivializes the share of individual responsibility for the massacre, which also seems naive. Moreover, he questions the true guilt of ordinary soldiers for war crimes, because it was "their job" to obey to orders and to protect themselves.

Of course, these examples of dubious elements in the constructive articles received so much space that the reader might ask what if anything the constructive parts of the articles are. Nevertheless, they were depicted not least of all in order to demonstrate the problem of finding "the" reconciliation-oriented article. The variety of dubious argumentations even in the, at first glance, not really negative texts is broad, and they are not isolated cases, but occur frequently, mostly in the rejected material, and, as far as war is concerned, more often in the earlier years of investigation.

There seem to be two major ways in which the past is dealt with, and both hamper a realistic and honest examination of it: One, as has been demonstrated, is trivialization, downplaying war and German responsibility, as well as lack of self-criticism. The other, sometimes in combination with the first, is to completely reverse the positions. It expresses such an enormous distance from the National Socialists that one could almost believe the Nazis had not only occupied France, but also Germany (e.g. T16). This goes along with the rationale that Hitler was the only real perpetrator, and Germans too were victims of Nazism and war.

As the selected material is limited to the coverage of France and the French, this may not be the appropriate context in which to get a broader picture of the newspapers' different expressions of German post-war self-reflection. On the other hand, the results are in complete accord with current research on "memory regimes." For example, Langenbacher (2003) depicts the investigated period as one where "German-centered" memory dominated. The characteristics of this phase are a concentration on self, inner-directed working through of German suffering, downplaying Germans-as-perpetrators, etc., whereas only in the late 50s was there a gradual process of working through the past which also extended to the National Socialists' victims. This was enforced by "generational interventions," though the process still had only a limited diffusion throughout German society. The coverage of the investigated period, comprehended as part and mirror of the collective narrative at that time, reflects these results.

From today's point of view, it seems important to reflect on Germany's violent past in order to understand what went wrong and to plan a better future. Nevertheless, from the 1950s point of view, it may have seemed more "reasonable" to keep quiet, let time pass and heal one's own wounds, instead of focusing on the actual problems that the French and the Germans had to face. What is striking, though, is that in the articles of the later period (1960s), the opportunity to review these war experiences again, now from a more distanced stance, was missed. Instead, they seem to be almost entirely left out of coverage, and war and the "Third Reich" are portrayed as sufficiently worked through. Some expressions indicate that the author is slightly annoyed by some French people still holding onto their memory and mistrust (e.g. T13, T6), or the author even emphasizes German suffering caused by the French occupation of Southern Germany.<sup>1</sup>

#### 5.4 Conclusions of the qualitative content analysis

These preliminary results offer some initial insights into the possibilities of post-war coverage to contribute to peace and reconciliation. Instead of focusing on the detailed analysis guided by the checklist, here the perspective was to give an overview of the analyzed articles' contexts, their constructive power in the different contexts and their limitations and deficiencies.

The results of the analysis show that conciliatory characteristics can be found periodically in German post-war coverage of France. They are easier to find in articles dealing with the reconciliation process itself or with the socio-cultural situation of ordinary French people. Unfortunately, these articles often express an attitude of: "We've never had any big problem with the French people and try our best, so they also can overcome their problems with us soon," which is also rather condescending, as if the French were mentally-disturbed and in need of therapy. The news value of domestic relevance can be found in most of the articles. Sometimes it seems to be used as a peg on which to hang a story about French-related issues and get the audience interested in the topic. It also provides a chance for raising issues otherwise ignored.

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1. These kinds of articles were a priori rejected for the analysis.

As far as political and economic subjects are concerned, a competitive framing of events increases over time. On one hand, this is a clear expression of growing self-confidence in German policy, growing German self-esteem and identification with the German system. On the other hand, the increasing emphasis on competitive processes may simply reflect the structure of political and economic processes in the capitalistic world.

Last but not least, it has to be taken into account that the historical process of reconciliation between Germany and France cannot be simply transferred to other post-war reconciliation processes like a recipe, without keeping in mind the context of this process and the framing conditions. Here, we're dealing with a relationship between two more or less equally strong partners that have had the burden, but also the chance of growing under the pressure of the need for reconstruction and of the increasing antagonism between East and West. Nevertheless, carefully considering the specific context of the coverage, the preliminary results indicate that most of the identified constructive elements in the articles can probably be generalized and applied, not only to the case of German coverage of France, but also to the coverage of other post-conflict situations, as could be demonstrated by Bläsi (cf. Annabring, Bläsi & Möckel, in print).

## 6. Concluding overall remarks

The quantitative content analysis of German press coverage of French-related issues from 1946 to 1970 indicates that the German press actively contributed to the reconciliation process by, e.g. overcoming media selection routines and the depiction of French actors in a mostly positive or at least neutral way. The qualitative study of exemplary articles, though, discloses steppingstones within texts that give a distorted review of the German past. Nevertheless, this qualitative sample contains decidedly conciliatory articles and articles providing a view of France and the French that may be helpful for overcoming past distrust. In this coverage, we can find various constructive elements and expressions of an honest desire on the author's part to contribute to the reconciliation process, as well as to a sympathetic attitude towards the French. In the forthcoming study, these constructive characteristics will be put into a more systematic order, and their transferability to other post-war coverage will be examined. The opportunities they provide for reconciliation and the risks they pose if applied in a routine manner will also be carefully evaluated.

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