“The past cannot triumph over the future”
- A Study of Israel’s Legitimation by the Remembrance of the Past, in the United Nations General Assembly 2009-2017

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1. Introduction

“Ultimately, the past cannot triumph over the future” said Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when addressing the United Nations General Assembly during the General Debate of 2009 (United Nations 2009). Perhaps it is true that the future will always win over the past. In this study, however, it is argued that the past can be very influential in the political present. The idea that the past can be an important aspect of politics and power is not a new insight, but in political science, the topic of memory and history as affecting the political present has not been very frequently studied. An exception to this, are studies on transitional justice, like by Alexandra Barahona de Brito et al. asserting that:

> [m]yths and memories define the scope and nature of action, reorder reality, and legitimate power holders. They become a part of the process of political socialization, teaching people how to perceive political reality and helping them to assimilate political ideas and opinions (Barahona de Brito et al 2001:38).

Today, however, the past has increasingly become a topic of interest in the public eye. The destruction of historic monuments in Iraq and Syria, an increasing research focus on use of history in political discourse (e.g. Noreen et al. 2002), are just two examples of how the past is becoming an integral part of political issues. Therefore, I argue that it is of great importance that both political scientists and policy makers take into account the political implications of how the past is remembered and portrayed, and what effects that may have for policies and unfolding of events. The scope of this paper is to further the understanding of how state elites use the invoking of the past to attain interests, goals, and security, among others. This is done by merging the theory of legitimation, meaning how actors justify their political stance, with the theory of official public memory. On the topic of politics intermingling with perceptions of the past, Israel holds a special position. A substantial scholarly literature has focused on how the past in various forms has been an important part of Israeli national identity and state legitimacy. Therefore, the scope of this paper is to do a descriptive, qualitative case study on how the evoking of events and occurrences from the past, real or mythologized, are expressed to justify Israel’s political actions and stance in the present political context. The forum chosen to study is the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2009-2017, where world leaders once a year gather to discuss.

In extension, this new combination of theoretical perspectives will hopefully also provide insights into a broader perspective of how legitimation strategies can be studied, and into how the invoking of the past can be studied as playing a role in the international political context.
The disposition of this paper runs as following: It starts out with previous research, which orientates the field and identifies the research gap, then follows the purpose and research question, then a short background. Thereafter is the theoretical framework given, beginning with legitimation, and then official public memory. The theoretic framework is ended with some remarks upon the choice of theory. Then follows the section on research design, constituting of methodology, analytical framework drawn from the theory, and the material of the study. Then, the empirical study is conducted. This is ordered in accordance with the analytical framework, and covers both descriptive elements and analysis. Following the study, there is a section on key findings and the discussion of them. Lastly follows the conclusions and suggestions for further research, and sources.
2. Previous Research and Research Question

2.1. Previous research

In political science, studying how the past, real or mythologized, is perceived or interpreted to serve contemporary political purposes has primarily been a point of interest in works on transitional justice and retribution. For example, in Subotic’s study of the aftereffect of the Yugoslav Wars, Barahona de Brito’s et al. anthology on memory in democratizing societies, and Pettai’s writing on historical truth commissions (Subotic 2009; de Brito et al. 2001; Pettai 2015; Meyer 2008:173). This topic has however been more prominently studied in other disciplines. Research in history and archaeology has frequently studied the overlap between history or memory, and a state’s or other actor’s legitimacy or legitimation. In these studies, a recurring theme has been nationalism and nationalization of history, but other topics, like security issues, have been studied by for example Legnér and Noreen et al. (Berger et al. 1999; Berger & Lorenz 2010; Kohl et al. 2007; Legnér 2017; Noreen et al. 2002).

Israel represents a case of its own when it comes to studying how the interpretation and perception of the past affect the political context. The scholarly literature is extensive on the seminal role that the interpretation of history and memory has had for Israeli state legitimacy and Israeli self-identity (al-Jube & Seidemann 2018:4; Diner & Templer 1995:148; Said 2000:183; Sorek & Ceobanu 2009:480).

Coming back to the literature on legitimation, scholars have to some extent touched upon the importance played by the evoking of the past. For example, Beetham pointed out the importance that historical accounts play for the present-day legitimacy of power (1991:103), and von Soest and Grauvogel identified the recalling of a “foundational myth” as a crucial strategy for actors striving for legitimacy (2017:290). The connection between memory and legitimation was also a focus of sociological study for Olick, and Olick and Levy (Olick 1993; Olick & Levy 1997). The centrality of the perceptions of the past for contemporary politics and in political debate has been extensively noted by scholars in the field of memory studies, among them Radstone, and Roediger and Wertsch (Radstone 2008:32; Roediger & Wertsch 2008:14).

But a concrete study of legitimation with the remembered past as the focal part of legitimation strategies has not been done before. Combining insights from memory studies with legitimation theory will therefore hopefully aid in furthering the study in political science of how the perception of the remembered past, like Barahona de Brito et al. argued in the introduction, is a crucial part of the political world (Barahona de Brito et al. 2001:17).
2.2. Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis draws from the research gap identified in the end of the previous section. Through studying the *legitimation strategies* – how political actors justify political claims – connected to *official public memory* – the interpretation of the past that political elites favour in order to obtain goals and avoid threats – the overarching aim is to further knowledge into how legitimation strategies are constructed and used in multilateral fora.

The study takes off from the theoretical assertion put forward by Stacie Goddard and Ronald Krebs, stating that legitimation strategies are important for how state elites construct the perception of national interests, threats, potential options for action and in the mobilization of publics (Goddard & Krebs 2015:8-9). In a way, viewing the elites’ portrayal of the past as legitimation strategies in accordance with the rationale of official public memory works to demystify the past as serving a function in the political presence.

As acknowledged in the previous research, Israel holds a special position in the scholarly literature on how history and memory is important in the political context, and is a case that stirs up strong opinions and polemical arguments on the topic of legitimacy and legitimate action. This makes Israel a highly relevant actor to study when it comes to legitimation and the past. The purpose is thus to contribute to the scholarly debate on how the interpretation of the past is important for the legitimation of political claims, by studying the case of Israel in the international multilateral forum.

From this purpose, I pose the following broader research question to guide the inquiry:

*How can the past, in the form of memory and history, be used as states’ legitimation strategies in a multilateral international context?*

Before setting out, one position ought to be made clear: the purpose of this paper is not to assert any normative claims concerning legality or statehood of Israel, Palestine or other entities. Therefore, the referral to these are done either with the same name as stated in the document in question, or to maintain clarity for readers, in accordance with the United Nations’ definition when discussed in general. An illustrative example being the West Bank, which in Israeli government terms is often referred to as Judea and Samaria (OCHA 2018).
2. Background: The United Nations and Israel

Of the United Nations’ six main organs, the General Assembly (UNGA) is the only one where all of the organisation’s member states have equal representation and voting rights. The UNGA is the central policymaking body of the UN, with the power to make recommendations through the adoption of resolutions, for example to member states or on topics covered in the Security Council (United Nations 2018a). The UNGA does not have proper legislative powers, like the Security Council, but being an organ where all member states are present, it constitutes a unique forum for discussions between the states. The General Debate of the UNGA is an annual event which gathers world leaders to discuss and make statements regarding international political topics (United Nations 2018b).

One of the United Nations’ earliest acts was the adoption in the General Assembly of resolution 181(II) in 1947, concerning the implementation of the partition plan of the British Mandate for Palestine. The partition plan envisioned an independent Jewish state and an independent Arab state, with the City of Jerusalem in international regime, which would be administered under the United Nations Trusteeship (UN 2003). When the British Mandate expired in 1948, the State of Israel, as a Jewish state, was declared, which was followed by the direct eruption of war between the new state Israel and its neighbouring countries.

Becoming a UN member state in 1949, the relations between the state of Israel and the UN and its organs have not been uncomplicated through the years. From Israel’s side, a common topic has been the opinion that the UN would be treating Israel biased, and claiming that Israel is treated unfairly hard (Israeli Government in The Hague 2018). This was the reason that Israel also decided to leave the UN cultural agency UNESCO in 2017, following suit after the US (BBC 2017).
3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Legitimation

Legitimation is closely connected to the notion of legitimacy, but in this thesis, distinguishing between the two is vital. To demonstrate the difference, this section starts out with legitimacy.

Differing perspectives on legitimacy have existed, from Buchanan and Keohane who envisioned a normative legitimacy, with universal moral criteria (Buchanan & Keohane 2006:14), to an empirical approach, like Nye’s, where legitimacy of a ruler or elite is dependent upon whether the subjects perceive it as legitimate (Nye 1990:167). A giant within the field was Max Weber. He put forward a descriptive interpretation of legitimacy, which asserted that a regime is legitimate when certain beliefs concerning it are held by its participants (Weber 1964:382).

The modern study of legitimation initially drew from a part of Weber’s work that Barker called obscured and overlooked. There, Barker asserts, Weber identified legitimation as an observable activity, separate from the quality of legitimacy, and which constituted a distinguishing characteristic of a regime (Barker 2001:13). This distinction is the core of the difference between the two terms. Hurd described it as legitimacy being an individualistic and subjective quality, while legitimation refers to a social and political process (Hurd 2007).

With a heightened interest in the topic during the last decades, closer definitions of legitimation are bountiful (e.g. von Haldenwang 2017:270; Hurrelmann et al. 2013:517; Mazepus et al 2016:354; Barker 2001:13). On a general level, Gaus described legitimation as “all kinds of acts and processes that (aim to) establish the general view that a political order is (not) acceptable” (Gaus 2011:3). In line with this broad definition, several scholars have perceived legitimation strategies of actors as consisting of two parts. On one hand instrumental actions, like institutional reforms or distribution of services and goods, and on the other of rhetorical claims (Mazepus et al. 2016:354; von Soest & Grauvogel 2017:288). Concerning the latter part, Stacie Goddard and Ronald Krebs call it a form of “public talk” (Goddard & Krebs 2015:6). It is this type of legitimation that this paper is concerned with, and I formulate the paper-specific theoretic definition of legitimation in line with Goddard and Krebs. They define legitimation as the manner in which “political actors publicly justify their political stances before concrete audiences, seeking to secure these audiences’ assent that their positions are indeed legitimate thus potentially to garner their approval and support” (Goddard & Krebs 2015:6). Therefore, when onwards referred to legitimation, it refers to this form, focused on how actors articulate their political stance. If that is legitimation at large, then legitimation...
strategies constitute the different reasons given for the justification of a particular issue (Goddard 2006:40).

Legitimation, and whether it is a notion worth studying or not, has been treated quite differently by different schools of thought, Goddard and Krebs highlight. Realists and rationalists have denounced its theoretical value, likening it to mere ‘window dressing’ which lacks causal effect. Constructivists, on the other hand, have favoured the study of legitimation, by assuming that language and rhetoric play key roles in political processes (Goddard & Krebs 2015:7). Goddard, and Goddard and Krebs, reject the singular claims of both rationalists and realists, and constructivists, instead focusing on bridging the divide (Goddard 2006:40; Goddard & Krebs 2015:15). The procuring of legitimacy via legitimation, Goddard argues, is an integral part of political actors’ strategic interactions. But the choice of legitimation strategies for these actors, she theorizes, is also constrained by the social and cultural context (Goddard 2006:42). In line with this reasoning, Goddard and Krebs theorize that legitimation has a viable effect on a state’s formation of grand strategy (2015:7). By initially quoting Barry Posen’s definition of grand strategy as “a state’s theory about how it can best ‘cause’ security for itself” (Posen 1984:13), Goddard and Krebs describe four constituent elements of grand strategy, whose rendition, they theorize, are affected by legitimation (Goddard & Krebs 2015:8). While I do not focus on grand strategy in itself in this study, these elements make up a good understanding for how the way legitimation is used affects how state actors identify and perceive their security. These elements are:

1. Identifying national interests
2. Identifying threats
3. Selecting strategies for action
4. Mobilizing resources

(Goddard & Krebs 2015:8). As already hinted on in the section of purpose, this is the key theoretical point drawn from the framework of Goddard and Krebs. The theoretical argument of Goddard, and Goddard and Krebs highlight why the study of legitimation strategies in the UNGA General Debate is interesting. The notion that political actors, like the states, are both social and strategic, and that legitimation has an effect on how states perceive national interests, threats, possible options and in how to mobilize the public, means that the investigation of the legitimation strategies of a state gives us a hint into how a state’s perception on creating security through grand strategy is created. The UNGA also constitutes a form of concrete audience, which is part of the definition.
3.2. Official Public Memory

Complementary to legitimation, my theoretical framework also draws from insights from the discipline of memory studies, namely through the term official public memory, drawing from John Bodnar’s theory on public memory.

As a research field, memory studies first rose to attention in the 1980s, mainly drawing from the rediscovery of Maurice Halbwachs work on the notion of collective memory. His theory asserted that memory is not objective, but to some extent socially constructed in a group setting (Halbwachs 1925:195; Radstone 2008:31). There exists a wide variety of designation of forms of memory. But a broad description of the function of memory, as it is considered in this thesis, can be given in the words of Schwartz: “[t]o remember is to put a part of the past in the service of the presence” (1982:374). The idea is that what, how and in what context things are remembered, is related to it serving a function in the present.

Albeit becoming a popular area of study, memory studies have been criticized regarding its methodology and theoretic operationalizability. Confino, for example, pointed out that collective memory of a nation cannot be conformed to one memory, but should be approached as consisting of a plenitude of perspectives, often opposing each other (Confino 1997:1399-1400). John Bodnar, in his book on public memory of the United States, addressed this issue by theorizing public memory as created at the intersection between official and vernacular cultural expressions (Bodnar 1992:13). He defined public memory as a collection of ideas and beliefs regarding the past through which a society is aided to understand not only its past, but also its presence and in extension its future. Public memory, he writes, is created from political discussions about society’s fundamental issues in terms of power structures, society’s organization and the very interpretation of reality (1992:13-15). By having a research scope that focuses on the state’s perspective, I only draw from the official aspect of this theory, which I then refer to as official public memory. In Bodnar’s theory, he asserts that the official part of public memory refers to society’s elites being interested in maintaining status quo by promoting interpretations of the past that they hope will diminish the power of competing interests that could hinder them from attaining their goals (1992:13). For the purpose of the theoretical framework of this paper and reason of clarity, I have divided this definition in three parts, referring to the reasons behind elite’s focus on some interpretations of the past. These parts are not mutually exclusive, but can exist simultaneously.
The reasons are:
I) Maintaining status quo
II) Diminishing competing interests
III) Attaining own goals

A last mention can be made concerning the scope of memory: the distinguishing between history and memory has been a debate within the discipline of memory studies, even causing some terminological questions about what is put into the term. While prominent memory scholar Pierre Nora asserted for example that they are distinctly different from one another, others have argued that history and memory are, if not the same, so intertwined (Nora 1989; Kansteiner 2002:180; Tamm 2008:500). Since the scope of the past, and the remembrance of it, is long-ranging in Israel, I conclude that memory in this thesis refers to all occurrences in the past which are remembered in the presence.

3.4. Remarks on the Choice of Theoretical Framework

One should always be cautious about interdisciplinarity, meaning drawing from theories from different disciplines, since it brings risks of ‘traveling concepts’ or other problems to the theory (Radstone 2008:35). At the same time, if done correctly, the adding of elements from other disciplines to political science can bring new, useful theoretical substance to a subject, as long as it connects to politics (Esaiasson et al. 2012:30-31). In this vein, I argue that drawing from official public memory in viewing Israel’s legitimation strategy in the general debate, adds theoretical strength to the study of legitimation. As theoretical perspectives, both official public memory, and Goddard’s and Krebs’ model of legitimation, do demonstrate some similarities. Primarily their pragmatic position on assuming that, what could be perceived as merely social activities, remembering the past and justifying political stance, are done for a real power political purpose (Bodnar 1992:15; Goddard & Krebs 2015:34).
4. Research Design

4.1. Methodology

With the stated purpose and research question, the focus of this thesis is to conduct a descriptive case study into the legitimation strategies of Israel in the international forum. It is important to remain cautious about the strengths and the drawbacks of a methodology. The descriptive scope comes with limitations on what kind of conclusions can be drawn, and it must limit itself to only drawing conclusions from what can be found in the material. While the scientific weight of it in terms of generalisability is lighter, it is also a methodology that favours clarity and surety (Neuendorf 2002:53). Likewise, a case study design means that the external validity, in terms of allowing for generalizations outside the case, is lower than in comparative studies (de Vaus 2001:28). In short, this research design, in focusing solely on Israel during a limited time scope, means having to acknowledge that we are restrained in using the conclusions to generalize over a bigger population. Nevertheless, I argue that this form of study is still valuable, even if it refrains from beating the big drum regarding universal results. The limited scope allows more precise, albeit more humble, conclusions to be drawn. And descriptive studies, if done well, provoke the questions of why, which can become research questions for further explanatory research (de Vaus 2001:2).

The method chosen to conduct this study is a qualitative textual analysis into official statements made by Israel in the United Nations General Assembly. Naturally, putting the scope of the paper on state representatives comes with limitations. For one, states are not necessarily unitary actors, but complex webs of actors, interests and opinions, which the scope does not allow to include. However, studying the statements made in the name of the state is appropriate if one is interested in studying the elite of the state and the state in an international context. Qualitative studies of texts, often conceptualised in the form of discourse, narrative or rhetorical analysis, have been a frequent choice of method in studies on legitimation and legitimation strategy, as well as in studies on collective memory.\(^1\) The reason for the popularity of qualitative methods is easy to understand: it is especially suitable if one is interested in deeper analysis of a text, of power relations or to critically study how texts are constructed (Esaiasson et al. 2012:210). Going back to my research question: its descriptive scope, focused on bringing forward and clarifying the legitimation strategies of Israel, is in line with the type of research question Esaiasson et al. describe as suitable for qualitative textual analyses (2012:211).

\(^{1}\)See for example discourse analysis on legitimation processes in the EU (Hurrelman et al. 2013:519-521), or concerning memory studies, narrative analysis (Tamm 2008:502).
However, it is important to recognize the backside of the method: that the result of qualitative research, especially with forms of open-ended questions, which can be dependent on who does the interpretation and who reads it (Esaiassion et al. 2012:229). The negative effects can be countered in a similar way to the other issue: by being aware of the problem and be transparent in the argumentation concerning the interpretation (Esaiassion et al. 2012:229).

A term worthy of explanation is the somewhat vague *the past*. I focus on the remembrance of events further back in time than 1967, including in biblical time periods. This is due to primarily wanting to focus on remembrance of occurrences further back, in order to be able to include the form of remembrances of a past both long gone, and possibly a myth, like biblical sources.

4.2. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework operationalizes the theoretical framework of legitimation and official public memory into specified questions that I then pose to the material (Esaiasson et al. 2012: 216). These questions then constitute the empirical indicators of the theoretic framework that are “measured” through studying the material (Esaiasson et al. 2012:216). Esaiasson et al. assert that in order to maintain validity of a study, it is vital to construct an analytical framework that studies the subject it sets out to study, meaning that the theories are adequately operationalized to study (Esaiasson et al. 2012:58-59, 217). Therefore, I give an overview of how the operationalisations of the theoretic framework have been done in order to transparently show the translation of theory to operationalization.

The analytical framework is formulated to follow from a to d, as described in the section below, in identifying a reference to the past in the text, and then ‘zooming outwards’ in investigating how a reference to the past feeds into a wider scope on legitimating a political stance. Question a serves to locate and describe the references to the past in the statements, while question b brings up and connects the contemporary political issues that the past occurrences are connected to in the material. Then follows the questions c and d, which builds upon a and b and operationalizes legitimation.

Official public memory is operationalized partly as the overarching focus on the references to the past, and in the reasons behind elites’ choice of what interpretation of the past to encourage, as brought up in question d. As Barker argued, legitimation is an observable activity of actors. This makes legitimation easier to operationalize than legitimacy, which is an abstract and precarious concept to operationalize (Barker 2001:24). This lower level of abstraction
makes it less complicated to create empirical indicators for legitimation, that accurately correspond to the theoretic framework. The theoretical definition of legitimation – as political actors’ justification of political stance in front of specific audiences (Goddard & Krebs 2015:6) – is operationalized by taking the answers of a and b, and looking at how the recollection of the past justifies the Israeli political stance in the present political situations. Question d increases the abstraction of the analysis by interpreting the legitimation on what it says in terms of overarching political aim. D also constitutes a part of the operationalization of official public memory, by taking into account the reasons behind elites’ choice of what interpretation of the past to encourage. Its operationalization is also in terms of the overarching focus on the references to the past.

Below is the analytical framework found. It is completed with examples in italics from Israel’s statement at the UNGA General Debate 2014, page 22, in order to demonstrate how it functions in analysing the material.

a) Which past events are brought up? And in what way?

_Eighty years ago, the Nazis, with the radical ideology of believing in a “master race”, murdered six million Jews._

b) Which current political issues are connected with the different past occurrences?

_In relation to the Nazis, Iran is brought up. Iran possesses nuclear capabilities, and is perceived to demonstrate radical Islamist tendencies. Radical Islamism being a radical ideology that is gaining ground._

c) What political stance is justified by mentioning of the past occurrence?

_Radical Islamism, believing in a “master religion” poses a threat to Israel and the Jewish people, as well as to the rest of the world, by possibly being able to create nuclear weapons. Warning the international community who doubt this by recalling the global ambitions of the Nazis. Urging the international community to act._

d) What appears to be the overarching political aim with referring to the past occurrence?

_Identifying threat, by seeing similarities between Nazis and Iran. Mobilizing publics by calling the international community to act, lifting how the Nazis aspired for world domination. Wanting to maintain status quo, by sparking action._

I primarily apply an open-end approach to the questions in the analytical framework. This means that the answers to the questions are not defined in terms of before-hand provided possible alternatives, but are answered by what is provided by the material (Esaïasson
2012:217). The strength of this approach of open-end variables is that it allows for nuances in the answers, and with a qualitative scope wanting to clarify the structures of thought in the material, that is a preferable line to take. A backside to this approach is similar to one associated with descriptive analysis in general: that the conclusions become dependent on the material (Esaiasson 2012:218). By demonstrating reflexivity concerning what other results that could have been possible, this problem can however be diminished. Keeping in mind that the scope of this thesis is to conduct a case study specifically focused on Israel, thus wanting to primarily draw conclusions regarding this specific case, this problem also becomes less severe.

4.3. Material

The focus material of this paper comes in the form of the statements made by representative of Israel in the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly, between 2009 and 2017. 2009 marked the year of the latest shift in prime minister, from Ehud Olmert of the centrist liberal party Kadima, to Benyamin Netanyahu from right-wing party Likud, thereafter getting re-elected as leader in 2013 and 2015. While Netanyahu’s terms in office have been in different government coalitions, his party Likud has consistently been the largest. By focusing on this timeframe, it is possible to observe the legitimation strategies of the state for a slightly longer timeframe than one mandate period. The statements at the general debate have for every year, except for in 2010, been delivered by Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In 2010 the statement was given by Deputy Prime Minister Avigdor Liberman. The choice of time span naturally has an impact on the conclusions that can be drawn from the material. However, focusing on this material gives valuable understanding into understanding the present situation in terms of legitimation strategies.

I have chosen to only include the statements made at the regular debate sessions, and thus excluding the statement made during the high-level plenary meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in 2010. This is due to wanting the comparability between the units of analysis to be as high as possible. The material consists of transcripts from the statements, published online by the UN.

This choice of material relies on both methodological and theoretical reasons. On a methodological level, these statements by state representatives are delivered in the same format every year, making the statements comparable units of analysis over time. Picking the statements in UNGA is a strategic choice. It delimits the scope of the study, while it is assumed to constitute a form of ‘typical material’ (Esaiasson et al. 2012:220). This assumption is drawn
from that the UNGA General Debate statements are delivered in front of both the political elite of the world and the public, and can thus be thought to encapsulate the official stance of Israel in political issues in an international forum. Choosing a typical material is suitable giving the descriptive aim of the study. The direct study of statements also circumvents the validity problems that can arise if the study only draws from secondary sources.

On a theoretical level, the UNGA General Debate provides the primary opportunity for important political actors to justify policies, make claims for political action, proclaim their political positions in front of other state leaders, or discredit others, through the statements they make. In short – it is an excellent forum to focus on if wanting to see how a state actor formulates its legitimation in front of the international community. This makes UNGA General Debate a highly interesting forum to study if interested in the general legitimation strategies of a state, instead of choosing a forum specialized on the issue of history and memory, like UNESCO. The choice also stems from the theoretical definition of legitimation, as being in front of specific audiences (Goddard & Krebs 2015:6). The choice of material does come with limitations: the focus on the official public debate of UNGA means excluding the perspectives of the rest of society in the terms of legitimation, with the focus falling exclusively upon the state elite’s legitimation strategies.

While being aware of the issues of secondary sources, I have to some extent in complementary reading relied on them in order to provide context to the situation. This secondary material has primarily been in the form of books and articles by scholars. Due to the sensitivity and great polarization of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, as well as the risk for biases, I have done my utmost to proceed with caution. As a guiding line, I follow the criterion for source material set up by Esaiasson et al., with emphasis on the criteria on ‘tendency’ (Esaiasson et al. 2012:285). I have also aimed at drawing from sources with diverging opinions to get a more holistic perspective to the background information.
5. Empirical Study

The empirical study, organized in accordance with the analytical framework, describes the material in 5.1. and 5.2., and proceeds to analysing the findings under 5.3. and 5.4. All references to sources are for the UNGA General Debate statements, 2009-2017.

5.1. a) Which past occurrences are brought up? And in what way?

An important aspect in all of the material is the creation of the State of Israel and the right to it. This creation is divided between the historical ‘state’ of Israel, going back to biblical times, and the creation of Israel as a nation state in 1948.

Firstly, the old Israel. Throughout the statements, Israel is referred to as the ‘ancestral homeland’, or ‘the land of our forefathers’, and as being a place where the Jewish people have roots reaching far back (2009:35; 2010:9; 2013:32; 2017:27 etc.). It is a part of the claim that the Jewish people have ties going very far back in Israel, as a group being described as an ‘ancient people’ (2013:32). Of this, a segment of its own is Jerusalem, called ‘the eternal capital’ of the Jewish people (2011:31; 2012:37; 2015:29, 31; 2017:27). In both 2011 and 2012, the city is described as the capital of King David 3000 years ago (2011:31; 2012:37). In 2011, the time of Jerusalem’s creation as the capital of the Jewish people by King David is situated 1000 years before Christianity and 1500 years before Islam (2011:31; 2015:31).

Like the description of King David having lived 3000 years ago, a commonly featured occurrence is to designate biblical times and people with a point in time, equating them to proper historical figures. As illustration: the prophet Isaiah, 2,800-2,700 years ago (2014:36; 2017:28), the prophet Joshua, 3000 years ago (2009:39) and the patriarch Abraham and his sons, 4000 years ago (2013:32). In referring to these biblical people, they are on several occasions referred to as having talked, walked and lived in the area of Israel and Palestine, as exemplified in the following quote concerning Isaiah: “2,800 years ago as he walked in my country, in my city, in the hills of Judea and in the streets of Jerusalem” (2009:38). Another occurrence from the Bible ascribed with a point in time is the return to Israel from the Babylonian exile under the Persian king Cyrus, 2,500 years ago (2013:32).

Secondly, the very old connection of the Jewish people to Israel and the creation of Israel as a nation state are expressed as tied together. An illustrative example is from 2009, where the UNGA’s adoption of the Partition Plan in 1947 is expressed as the UN “recognizing the rights of the Jews, an ancient people 3,500 years old, to a State of their own in their ancestral homeland” (2009:35). It is also described as “the historical and moral rights to the ‘homeland’”
Connecting to the Partition Plan, it is brought up several times that the Israelis accepted this resolution, but the Palestinians did not, and that it was refused by the Arab states (2009:38; 2016:31). In the years around the centenary of the Balfour Declaration in 2017, it was brought up, and referenced to the text in the declaration, of the State of Israel as a “national home” for the Jewish people (2016:31).

The creation of the State of Israel is often expressed in terms of ‘rebirth’, ‘re-establishing’, ‘restoring independence’ or as ‘ingathering the exile’, conjuring up the notion that the absence from Israel from the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem 70 CE to the formal creation of the state was an involuntary extended absence (2012:37; 2013:32; 2017:28). This absence of the Jewish people from Israel, referred to as ‘the exile’, is a dark and sad feature in the portrayal of the past. It primarily focuses on two aspects: On one hand, it describes the Jewish people's continuous yearning and longing for the land of Israel and Jerusalem, with no time that could sever the tie between the Jewish people and the promised land (2010:9; 2015:29). On the other hand, it describes Israel during the time of the 2000 years of exile, as being under “interim conquest” by Byzantines, Mamelukes, Arabs, etc. (2010:9).

The Holocaust, and Nazism’s horrific crimes against the Jewish people during the Second World War, by murdering six million Jews, is a sensitive and frequently occurring topic (2009:35-36; 2011:28; 2012:38; 2015:28). The Holocaust and Nazism is brought up often, sometimes together with persecutions of Jewish people in the Diaspora, as a ‘lesson of history’ or ‘cautionary tale’. “Have they learned nothing from history?” laments Netanyahu in 2013 and highlights an important point in several statements: that historical anti-Semitism, persecution and oppression of the Jewish people have made the Israeli cautious of risks and dangers of the present day (2011:29; 2012:38,40; 2013:34; 2014:33; 2014:35; 2015:28; 2015:29). The failure of the Western Powers to draw red lines against Nazi Germany, thus not being able to stop Germany’s aggression is brought up as a lesson from history (2012:40).

But, as is lifted several times throughout the statements, the Jewish people have overcome all prosecutors. In contrast to the dark, oppressed exile, the creation of the state is several times portrayed as a triumphant victory of the Jewish people over historic oppression. From the ancient Babylonian and Roman empire, through middle ages with the expulsion from Spain, and the pogroms and Nazism (2011:30; 2015:29). “Together we have transformed a bludgeoned Jewish people, left for dead, into a vibrant, thriving nation, defending itself with the courage of modern Maccabees, developing limitless possibilities for the future”, states Netanyahu after
recalling a story about his grandfather being beat down by an anti-Semitic gang and then vouching to leave for the ‘Jewish homeland’ (2013:35).

In 2009, Netanyahu states that the horrors of the Holocaust and the Second World War, and the dedication to not repeat past mistakes, is the foundation for the creation of the UN (2009:35). The history of the UN, its purpose and its, at times rocky, relations to Israel comes forward in the material a few times. Like in 2016, when Netanyahu expresses his perception of a UN bias against Israel, and treating the state unfairly, through the words of UN’s “history of hostility” (2016:30).

A term used several times in the material is ‘historical truth’ – importantly in 2010. Then, Liberman refers ‘historical truth’ to the Jewish people having lived in the land of Israel during 4000 years (2010:9). This ‘telling of truth’ is also connected to historic artefacts, brought up in 2011 and 2015 concerning archaeological findings, and in 2016 through the designation of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif as a Palestinian cultural heritage site (2016:29). The areas of Judea and Samaria, referring to the West Bank, are brought up, as a place where the Jewish people come from (2011:40), and as a place where the prophet Isaiah walked 2,800 years ago (2009:38;). Apart from the biblical reference, it is also brought up as an historical truth that Judea, Samaria and Gaza were under Arab control 1948-1967 (2010:8).

Throughout history, the Jewish people have wanted peace and progress (2011:27, 30), with dignity and compassion being ‘timeless values’ of the Jewish traditions (2012:41). This links to the recurring mention of Israel combining tradition with progress (2012:38; 2016:33). This combination is put in contrast to medieval times (2012:38). These times are perceived as dark and unenlightened, envisioned primarily through militant Islamists wanting to bring the world back to the ninth or eleventh century (2009:36; 2012:38). However, examples are also given about how the introduction of the printing press during the middle ages yanked Europe out of ignorance and darkness (2012:38).

5.2. b) Which current political issues are connected with the different past occurrences?
The first and foremost political issue connected to references to the past is the topic of Israeli statehood and the right to the territory, which to some extent also ties in to other areas, like security. Statehood and the right to territory for Israel is often tied to references to biblical time. But in extension from the biblical aspects, are references to the right to the state by invoking historical ‘hard facts’, like archaeological or historical ‘truth’ of Jewish people having lived in Israel historically (2010:9; 2011:40). In proximity to the issue of territory is the centrality of
the status of Jerusalem as a present-day capital. Like the rest of the territorial issues, it also closely connects to biblical history (2011:31; 2017:27).

Territoriality intrinsically ties to the issue of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, which is naturally also heavily mentioned. The West Bank, referred to as Judea and Samaria by the Israeli government, is brought up several times (2009:38; 2010:8; 2016:31). Here, the past in relation to the West Bank is either mentioned in how the Arab States refrained from creating Palestinian independence, or connected to the recalling of Judea and Samaria as places belonging to biblical Israel. Like the prophet Isaiah, walking through Judea (2009:38). Palestinian President Abbas declaration of the intent to sue the Balfour declaration, brings up recollections of biblical persons (2016:31).

Another important particular issue is the rockets launched by Hamas from Gaza into Israel, and Israel’s response by striking back with rockets into Gaza in 2009. Here, Israel brings up an historical allegory with the bombings of the Allied in the Second World War which heavily affected and targeted the civilian population (2009:37).

A heavily featured political issue throughout the material, is Iran and the threat Israel perceives that Iran poses. Primarily, it is in relation to Iran’s potential nuclear capabilities (2009:36; 2011:37; 2012:39; 2013:32; 2014:33; 2015:28). Most of the times when Iran is brought up, it is introduced by relating to the past. Most prominently in relation to the Holocaust and Nazi Germany, and Iran’s President Rouhani’s denial of the Holocaust, which is brought up on several occasions (2009:35). In 2014 for example, the threat of Iran is evoked by reminding the audience, and the world, of the megalomaniac ambitions and fanatic, racist ideology of Nazism (2014:33).

The UN’s and its member states’ actions towards Israel is a recurring topic, often raised in critical terms, connoting to a perceived bias against Israel. In terms of the past, this bias is portrayed as something that has been going on for a long time, like the previously mentioned “historic hostility” (2016:30). This is expressed in the specific issue of a report issued by the UN Human Rights Council about Israel, and Netanyahu refers to the ‘moral farce’ of UN.

The progress made by Israel, and how the state contributes to the international technical and scientific revolution, is focused on how Israel bridges history and modernity (2009:36; 2012:37; 2016:33). This is juxtapositioned to the ‘medievalism’ of militant Islamism and fanaticism, which is highlighted as threatening the world. Islamism is portrayed as wanting to turn back time to the Middle Ages and work against progress, equality and the rights of people (2012:37). The fight against it is “civilization against barbarism, the twenty-first century against the ninth”
(2009:36). Bringing up militant Islamism and the dangers of medievalism is often a segway into talking about the threats of Iran or Hamas (2009:36; 2012:38).

To some extent, the relations to Israel’s neighbouring countries are also lifted as political issues in the present. Mostly, however, the only connection these would have to the past beyond 1967, is in deeming agreements between them and Israel as “historic” (2013:35; 2014:35-36).

5.3. c) What political stance is justified by mentioning of the past occurrence?

“Jewish people are not conquerors of Israel. It is the land of our forefathers”, said Netanyahu in 2009 (2009:38). This encapsulates the part of the legitimation carried out concerning the rights of Israel to the territory of Israel and Palestine: drawing from old history, most often biblical, is common in justifying why the Israeli claim to the territory is superior. This is very much the case when it comes to Jerusalem. Using the term ‘eternal capital’ for Jerusalem, or “re-establishing our sovereign state” are clear examples of how the use of contemporary concepts in recollection of the past justifies a present day position (2012:37). Another example is to assert the right of Israel to having Jerusalem as the Israeli capital, by recalling how the war in 1967 “reunited [Israel’s] eternal capital” (2017:27).

Israeli entitlement to the territory of the West Bank specifically, is in the statements often drawing from biblical historical reasons. Like Isaiah walking in the hills of Judea, or the name of the Jewish people being derived from the name Judea (2009:38; 2011:40). In 2011, however, the issue of the West Bank is first introduced by acknowledging the Israeli strategic security issue of having this territory (2011:38-39). This is interesting, since it hints about how current strategic issues can be legitimated through means of the past.

The Israeli stance on the condemnation by the UN Human Rights Council for the firing of rockets into Gaza in 2009 is that the condemnation was unjustly done, due to their actions being a defensive response to maintain Israeli security. This stance is legitimated by comparing it with the Allied Forces’ bombings over Nazi Germany: The Allied targeted civilians to a large extent, but were not condemned, while Israel, carrying out surgical strikes to erase the threat of Hamas, are (2009:37).

This political stance, that the UN treats Israel unfairly, is brought up as being a bias that has existed during the history of the organisation. Nevertheless, the UNGA’s recognition of Israel’s right to state in the Partition Plan, is used as way to demonstrate that Israel got the right of the international community to obtain a state. Israel’s acceptance, and Palestine’s decline thereof
is also applied as a way to justify the stance that Israel is neither the one who created, nor is fuelling, the conflict (2009:38; 2016:30).

With Iran and its nuclear capabilities, Israel’s political stance if twofold: One, that Israel has the right, and the will, to protect itself against Iran and will react if indications appear of Iran developing Weapons of Mass Destruction. Two, urging the international community to be aware of the threat and react accordingly. Here, two strategies of legitimation are applied. One is associated with the Holocaust, Nazism and the persecution of Jewish people. This is important for the legitimation of how Israel does and will act: Israel lifts that signs similar to the Nazi takeover are visible when it comes to Iran. The Jewish people have learned the hardest possible way of the danger associated with this, and will never again allow a “radical regime” to threaten them (2013:34). This legitimation is also applied when calling for a response from the international community (2009:36). However, there, the Holocaust and Nazism and its aspiration to take over the world, is compared to Iran to demonstrate the big danger Iran, and its potential nuclear weapons, pose to the entire world (2009:36). Persecution of Jewish people is highlighted as foreboding the persecutions of others (2009:36). Bringing up how the Iranian President Rouhani’s denial of the Holocaust should make the world aware of the Iranian threat, is a clear example of how memories of the horrors of the Holocaust become indicators of threat in the present (2012:38). The stance that the international community should have red lines against Iran is also legitimated through recalling that if the Allied would have put up and followed red lines against Germany, maybe the Second World War would never have happened (2012:40).

The other legitimation strategy is connected to ‘medievalism’, and Iran, being a “radical Islamist state”, wanting to bring back the Middle Ages and destroying the world. This legitimation is concerned with the stance that Iran poses a threat to the entire world, and that the international community has to act (2012:38). This legitimation through medievalism, however, is never applied to the issue of Iran without also referencing the Nazis and their crimes (2012:39). Once, the story of the Persian king Cyrus is brought up, who lived 2500 years ago and is accredited with letting the Jewish people return to Israel from the Babylonian captivity. This is brought up to demonstrate that the relationship between Israel and Iran has not always been bad, and that the deterioration of the relationship primarily depends on Iran (2013:32).

The recollection of the Jewish people’s plight throughout history justifies several political stances of Israel. As mentioned, it relates to the stance on Iran and to the right to statehood and territory, but it is also brought up on general issues of how Israel behaves politically. Like the high importance of security and defence, and the will to produce agreements to peace (2011:27).
In a way, it is also triumphant. It contrasts the oppression of the Jewish people in the past, from the Babylonian captivity to the Holocaust, with the scientific advances in the present and how the Jewish people after all, have been right (2011:30; 2012:37).

An interesting form of legitimation strategy sometimes applied, is the use of examples from the past to trivialize and ‘delegitimate’ another political actor. This spans over different political issues. This occurs for example in relation to the condemnation of Israeli robot attacks against Gaza in 2009, where Netanyahu highlights the perceived absurdity by suggesting that Churchill and Roosevelt then should be deemed war criminals due to their ruthless attacks on Nazi Germany (2009:37). Another time is 2016, when the Palestinian President Abbas declared the intention to sue the UK over the Balfour Declaration. Then, Israel rhetorically questions if Palestine is also going to sue biblical persons King Cyrus and Abraham over their giving of rights to the Jewish people (2016:30).

5.4. d) What appears to be the overarching political aim with referring to the past occurrence?

The referral to events and persons from biblical time seems to most often be connected to the determining of Israeli national interests, due to its core being in the assertion of the right to statehood and territory by being the descendants of the people living in Israel for thousands of years until the Diaspora (2010:9).

Like stated above, it is in the statements often highlighted that Israel, and the Jewish people, do not forget, neither for their own sake, nor for the rest of the world. The past has taught Israel a lesson about the need for caution and vigilance (2012:40). The important example of this is Iran, to which most often the recollection of past atrocities committed against Jewish is brought up. By drawing the attention of the public to the similarities between Iran and Nazism – anti-Semitic, fanatical ideology, aspiring for world domination – in how the Nazis overtook Germany, exterminating six million Jews and wanting to achieve world domination, it very distinctly justifies the stance of perceiving Iran as a great threat to security if it got nuclear weapons. To Israel as the Jewish state in particular, but also to the world. Through legitimating the stance that Iran is a threat, by evoking the painful remembrance of how Jewish people have been prosecuted in the past, the legitimation strategy also aids in presenting a course of action: Great powers have tried to annihilate the Jewish people before, but never again (2011:29). Therefore, Israel’s line of action must be to act if the threat of Iran becomes too big. In
extension, Israel also uses this legitimation strategy to try and get the international community to act, as a mobilization of publics.

Similarly, the argument of how militant Islamists want to bring back the oppressive Middle Ages which would destroy all modern values, works both in defining a threat, determining the line of action (that it must be eliminated), and tries to mobilize the publics by asserting that militant Islamism poses a threat to the entire world if allowed to spread. Israel also tries to mobilize support by positioning the backwards-thinking militant Islamism against Israel. Israel, in comparison, appreciates traditions, but is progressive and contributes to innovation in a modern world (2016:33). Of the Islamists, Hamas and Iran, as well as ISIS are mentioned (2014:32).

In terms of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, one key issue is the status of Judea and Samaria/ The West Bank. As mentioned above, the stance on why Israel needs to remain there is legitimated partly by referring to biblical history: But at the same time, a justification heavily focused on a security issue of national interest and avoiding threats is simultaneously given (2011:38-39). This is interesting in how it clearly demonstrates an apparent need for legitimation of the Israeli action, despite being a clear security issue.

The issue of security is also at the core of the situation in 2009, concerning Israel’s firing of rockets into Gaza to target Hamas and the subsequent condemnation by the UN Human Rights Council. Like written above, Israel, in asserting that it was a necessary defensive act of Israel, legitimates their action by invoking, and comparing, Israel with the Allied Powers during World War Two. This justification through comparing the cases, puts Hamas in the role of Nazi Germany. It demonstrates both how it was within the national interest to fire back, due to wanting to protect Israeli civilians, and highlights the extent of a threat that Hamas posed. The example also puts forward how Israel could have acted like the Allied, ruthlessly targeting civilians, like Hamas, but that they chose to conduct surgical strikes. Therefore, the legitimation highlights, that the UN’s condemnation of Israel is unfair.

The legitimation in relation to the theoretic premises of official public memory, is throughout focused on attaining Israel’s goals. Be it to have Jerusalem as a capital, or getting international support to deter Iran. When it comes to maintaining status quo, this is primarily visible concerning Israeli statehood and status of Jerusalem, in that the legitimation clearly focuses on the continuation of the claims. Jerusalem and Israel are portrayed as historical, biblical places that the Jewish people may have left, but that never left the Jewish people. The right to both the land of Israel and Jerusalem has thus been consistent over time, with the exile as an involuntary pause, to which the ‘re-establishing of sovereignty’ by creating the Israeli nation state in 1948,
put an end to. It is also highlighted in the mentioning of the reunification of Jerusalem 1967. However, when it comes to territory, the legitimation also focuses on diminishing competing interests: The Jewish people having an historical right to the land, which Palestine cannot compete with, even if Israel recognizes their wish and wanting for a state of their own.
6. Key Findings and Discussion

In this part, I lay out the results from the study and analysis of the material.

All of Israel’s statements in UNGA do not in equal amount demonstrate legitimation through invoking the past. For example, it is very significant in 2011, but noticeably less so in 2016. Notwithstanding, it is still highly prevalent in all statements, often introducing the entire statements or the specific topics the statements bring up.

The central findings of the study, are part of the overarching assertion that the invoking of the past is very frequent in Israel’s legitimation in the UNGA General Assembly. The result of the analysis seems to be in line with Goddard’s and Krebs’ hypotheses on legitimation, that a state actor’s use of legitimation is important for how the actor asserts national interests, perceives threats, see options and mobilizes resources. This is particularly apparent in the case of Iran, as well as of the status on statehood, territory and security. The latter does to a significant extent connect to the issue of Palestine. The demonstrated connection between Israel’s legitimation and the managing of the political situation also highlights the applicability of Bodnar’s theory on why elites promote a particular image of a past in the form of official public memory.

The results also demonstrate how the legitimation strategies of what part of the past that is invoked differ, in the case of Israel, depending on the type of issue. If a broad pattern were to be discerned, it would be that those issues closer relating to security, like the risk of Iran and answering Hamas’ robot attacks, are justified with one form of past, and territorial issues, like the West Bank and Jerusalem, are related to another. The political stance on Iran is legitimated primarily through references to the Holocaust, the suffering of the Jewish people, and the lessons of miscalculations from the past. The Israeli stance on the status of Jerusalem, and the territory of the West Bank, are primarily legitimated in terms of biblically connoted issues, or in the case of Jerusalem, also by referring to the Diaspora.

The intermingling of history and religion in the legitimation is very apparent. The line between the two is heavily blurred in the statements of Israel, most notably shown in the consistent mentioning of the point in time biblical figures would have lived and biblical events would have occurred. From the lives of Abraham and the prophets, to king Cyrus’ decree of allowing the Jewish people to leave the Babylonian captivity. The combination of this with the argumentation for an ‘historical truth’, makes it a legitimation strategy that raises questions on how other political claims could be met. With this insight, it becomes very apparent how
Goddard came to the conclusion that how legitimation is done can affect whether issues become indivisible (2006:36).

Another interesting finding relates to how the statements of Israel appears to move away from legitimation through the past when other actors seem to invoke the past on their own, or when Israel connects an opponent to a specific time in history. One example is the avid opposition to the image of the past conjured by the medievalism of militant Islamists, where Israel positions itself as both much older, as well as in tune with modernity (2009:36). The other is the assertion of Palestine being “stuck in the past” when wanting to sue the British Government in 2016 for the Balfour Declaration, and this statement being one of the least amount focused on justifying political stance by invoking the past (2016:30).
7. Conclusions and Further Research

Israel is often a controversial topic. The aim of this paper has not been to normatively state anything about Israel’s policies. It studies and analyses what can be found in the material and how Israel portrays itself and other, not whether the policies correspond to reality or not.

With this descriptive scope of study, especially when conducting a case study, one should naturally be cautious about what conclusions that can be drawn. One should not exaggerate the generalizability of the results, but nevertheless, the study does make it possible to draw some conclusions about the case of Israel, and about legitimation.

The conclusion is that the way legitimation strategies are applied by Israel, seem to affirm the theoretical hypotheses put forward by Goddard and Krebs: The justification of political claims by referencing the past, is closely connected to the description of a state’s national interests, how threats are identified, what options that are available and how to mobilize publics, even if not all cases fill in every constituency. The legitimation also shows how political elites, in accordance with Bodnar’s official public memory, promote some forms of official memory to maintain status quo, diminish competition and attain goals. This assertion could prove useful for further study into the issue of legitimation as a part a power politics, but also into studying how the past is utilized for the present political reality.

On the research question, it can be said that the past, in the case of Israel, can be used for legitimation strategies concerning a wide range of political topics, where the legitimation for different topics draw from different areas of the past, depending on the point of the political stance. For example, issues closer related to issues of threat and security, like Iran and Hamas, are legitimated through recalling the past as cautionary – like the historical prosecution of Jews and thus, the conviction of never being threatened again. On issues closer to territoriality, and the right to territory, the referencing of the historical right from biblical time is more common.

In order to avoid the problem of having to rely on the material in studies with qualitative textual analysis as a method, Esaiasson et al. proposes to contemplate over what other results would have been possible with another material (2012:219). It is quite obvious that the results would have been different if another state than Israel would have chosen. I chose the case of Israel, due to its extensive scholarship on how the history and memory was closely connected to state legitimacy, which means that the results from another state probably may have shown a lower level of legitimation that invokes the past.

Perhaps, the result would also had differed if the material had been drawn from another international multilateral forum. UNESCO, for example, could maybe be focusing even more
on using the past as legitimation. Choosing the UNGA, however, seemed like it would give the most representative result of how the Israeli state wants to portray itself in the international context.

By being an indicative, descriptive study into the role of the past in the political context, the generalizability is not high enough to make reliable claims on other cases based on these findings. However, as the conclusions suggest, the findings could easily be used as spring-board into other interesting inquiries.

A given first step would be a comparative study between Israel and Palestine in terms of the legitimation strategies and use of official public memory when acting around the same issue. Another would be to draw from the results of this paper and compare whether the past has been so prominently featured in Israeli legitimation at earlier points in time. Further research may also take into account the parts of the theories of legitimation and public memory that this thesis had to exclude (see p. 16 of this study): namely in studying the legitimation of the rest of society in relation to the state.
Sources


