Master of Arts Thesis in Euroculture

“The visit of the Shah to Berlin in 1967 and its contradictory images in the German press”

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Pictures on front page from the tabloid *Bild* 1967b.
Abstract

On the 2nd of June 1967 the Persian Shah Mohammad Pahlavi together with his wife Farah Diba visited West-Berlin. This event became crucial for German history. It was supposed to strengthen the ties between Germany and Iran as countries of the Western alliance; enhance the international recognition of West-Germany and the reputation of Iran, and further a closer economic cooperation. The events, however, took another turn. At most places the Shah visited in Berlin he was met with vigorous protest. In the resulting turmoil the student Benno Ohnesorg was killed, due to the protests the relationship between Iran and Germany burdened.

Before and during this visit the Shah was extensively portrayed in various German mass media. They spread a variety of images about him. Among them were the image of the Shah as a royal, as a modernizer, as a member of the high society and as a dictator. Although these images did not necessarily exclude each other they caused different impressions and were, therefore, used by different media. After describing these images the thesis tackles the question why such a variety of images emerged and why the German public took an intensive interest in the Shah. The facts behind these images, i.e. the situation in Iran and the policy of the Shah, are only one part of this explanation. In addition, one has to take into account the character of the German newspapers as well as the interests of their audience who, due to their experience with World War I and World War II, had lost a royal family they could take interest in. Taken together, these factors explain why such a variety of images emerged.
1. Introduction

1968 is a turning point in recent European history. It stands for the so-called student-revolution. A whole generation - “the 68ies” - is named after it. This revolution changed the political landscape of Europe as well as everyday details like the way people dress and communicate with each other. In the aftermath many institutions, in academia as well as in politics, underwent a dramatic change. Hence it is interesting to look at the events which caused this revolution. It is difficult to isolate them because “1968” is rather a serial of interwoven events than a singular one.

Nevertheless, some moments stand out as particularly memorable. Among them is the visit of Shah Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and his second wife Farah Diba in June 1967 in West-Berlin which is widely understood as the starting point of the 1968-revolution (e.g. Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 4). It was intensively covered by the press and became, due to the tragic death of Benno Ohnesorg, part of German’s collective memory. In the aftermath massive protests all over Germany started. The following picture showing the shot Ohnesorg held by a woman was printed innumerable times and became an iconic picture of Germany’s post war history.

Picture from FU-Spiegel 1967
This picture shows the dramatic moment of Benno Ohnesorg’s death. The female student holding his head looks with a mixture from anger as well as horror to the bystanders. In the background one can see a car with the official signs “B” for West-Berlin and “D” for West-Germany. They summarize in a nutshell where this death happened and which places are connected to it.

At the first glance, it is hardly understandable why a visit by a foreign statesman could cause so much attention that people would come to a demonstration although they had never been in Iran before. This was surprising as the Shah’s visit in Berlin was in political terms nothing extraordinary. No peace or alliance was concluded, no territory exchanged or ceded, no fundamental change in politics achieved. The visit was not supposed to change the already existing ties between Germany and Iran. Therefore, the explanation for the attention lies rather in the peculiarity of the Shah’s images rather than his visit as such. These images are thus an interesting subject for research.

Even before his visit to Berlin the Shah was a well known and controversial figure in the German public. Partly, he was portrayed as a traditional emperor with a royal suit, in a festive uniform or inside a royal carriage. Partly, one could find him portrayed as a modern statesman in an uncommon appearance even for elected politicians: in short trousers at the beach or drinking beer (Die Welt 1967e). Contrary to that, he was also shown as a cruel dictator degrading people by forcing them to kiss his shoes (Konkret 1967).

For all of these images one could find supporting facts and pictures. On the one hand, the Shah lived as a traditional monarch in a palace and formed Iranian politics according to his personal convictions and did not depend on the public. As his father, he tried to modernize Iran, i.e. to bring about fundamental changes in Iranian culture, economy and life-style. Many Iranians opposed his plans and were prosecuted and tortured for their
protest. This suppression drew the attention of human right activists, students and the European press. Many of them compared the Pahlavi rule to the Nazi regime. Others regarded these actions as necessary side-effects of modernization and a protection against insurgence. A significant part of the German population, however, was not interested in these interior questions of Iran but rather in the glamour surrounding the Shah and his wife. There were thus many ways the German public thought about the Shah. It is surprising how these hardly combinable images were present at the same time in the same public.

The aim of the following paper is, therefore, to describe and understand these different images. Its main questions are: Why were so many people interested in the visit and the personal character of the Shah as well as his family? Which images about the Shah did the media construct? How can one explain their variety?

In order to answer these questions it is necessary to tell first why this visit was important both for Iranian and for German politics and describe thus the background in front of which it took place. Without this background one can neither understand the importance of the Shah’s visit to Germany nor the image he had in the German press (2). Afterwards, the major events of this visit shall be looked at. Although there were initially competing versions about them, there is now a rough consensus about, at least, the major facts. They show to what extent the images of the Shah motivated people to act in a certain way. They demonstrate which consequences the Shah’ images could have and help to explain whether the Shah’s visit and the events surrounding it contributed to the student revolution of 1968 (3). With this background in mind it becomes possible to look at the images the media spread about the Shah before and during his visit to Berlin. For that some methodological reflections about the character of media analysis are necessary (4).

The next part of this paper shall categorize the images of the Shah.
Among them are, on the one hand, the positive images about the Shah as a royal, as a modernizer, and as a representative of the high society. On the other hand, the paper looks at the negative image of the Shah as a dictator (5). The variety of these images is astonishing because the Shah as a foreign king hardly played a role in German politics. Therefore, it needs an explanation. Three factors for that shall be looked at: the content of the constructed images, the character of the publishers and papers, and the audience. Each one contributed to the variety of the images.

Finally, it is useful to look at the aftermath of the Shah’s visit. It partly shaped how later generations perceived and thought about it. The most important events in this aftermath are the revolution in Iran, the student revolution in Germany and the recent discovery that the police officer killing the student Benno Ohnesorg was a spy for the East-German secret service Stasi (7).

The paper uses as its major sources the contemporary press of 1967 as well as documentaries and autobiographies in books and journals. Although they differ in the constructed image they mostly agree on the facts. The variety of the images about the Shah needs, therefore, an explanation.
2. The historical background

Let us first look at the historical situation amidst which the Shah’s visit took place. In 1967, more than 20 years after World War II, the Cold War between the Soviet Union and its allies on the one side and the US with its allies on the other side was on its peak. Most influential among the Western alliance was US-president Lyndon Johnson. He had gradually intensified the American military efforts in Vietnam, whereas his Soviet counterpart Leonid Brezhnev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, secretly supported the communist Vietnamese communists fighting against the US troops. Any moment this indirect confrontation could turn into an open war. West-Berlin and Iran were despite their tremendous historical, geographical, and cultural differences in a similar way affected by the Cold War. Both countries were formerly occupied by the Red Army and had a border to the Eastern block, i.e. the GDR and the Soviet Union. Therefore, both were states at the frontier of this War. Nevertheless they had different political and economic interests so that the reasons for the Shah coming to West-Germany (A) differed from the ones why West-Germany was receiving him (B):

A. Importance of the Shah’s visit for Iran

Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi came to power in 1941 as a 22 year “old” man. His father was still alive but, because of his connection to the Hitler regime, Great Britain and the US forced him to step down. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was educated in a college in Le Rosey, Switzerland, and was hence familiar with the French and German culture (Pahlawi 1349: 99). He could therefore fluently speak French, English and German and in addition Russian (Spiegel 1947: 8). As his father, Reza Shah Pahlavi, he wanted to establish a Western life-style in Iran but was, in contrast to him, more ready to make compromises with the clergy and the
Muslim traditions. For instance, he allowed women to wear the chador, although his father had prohibited this in 1937. In the 1950ies the Shah survived a deep political crisis and almost lost his power. The main quarrel behind this was the decision by the Iranian Parliament and the Prime Minister Mossadegh to nationalize the oil-industry which was owned so far by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, later known as the British Petroleum Company. During this crisis the Shah was isolated and not allowed to have any contact to foreign diplomats. Finally, he was forced to go into exile to Italy (Gronke 2009: 2). He could regain political power with the help of the CIA that organized a coup against prime-minister Mossadegh in 1953.

After his return to Iran the Shah was faced with bitter opposition by various parties. Among them was the communist Tudeh party aiming at an alliance with the Soviet Union. The Shah prohibited this party in 1949 after an assassination was attempted against him. Despite this prohibition, the Tudeh party, supported by the neighbouring Soviet Union, worked in the underground. In addition, the Shah was opposed by the conservative National Front of former prime minister Mossadegh demanding independence from Britain. This party was supported by the emerging middle class to which intellectuals, engineers, and doctors belonged. Many of them had studied in the West and pursued the idea of a Westernized democratic Iran. Although they profited from the modernization they were disappointed about the lacking possibilities to participate in the ruling of the country (Bayat-Philipp 2009: 3). The most noticeable opposition came from the Islamic movement lead by Ayatollah Ruhollah Musavi Chomeini. It stood against westernisation in general and propagated a traditional Islamic life-style in accordance with the Shia law. In 1964 the Shah forced Chomeni to go to exile. Even among monarchists the Shah was disputed as his father was not from the nobility and became Shah after the Parliament had abolished the Qajar dynasty in 1925 (Spiegel 1947: 8). Therefore, he lacked the authority of a noble family over centuries ruling a country.
Because of these various parties and groups Iran was ideologically as well as politically torn into pieces and the Shah could rely only on a comparatively small fraction of the population that would support him. As a result the Shah lived in permanent fear of an assassination or a revolution that would as 1952 in Egypt and 1958 in Iraq abolish the constitutional monarchy. Two such attempts were made in Iran in 1949 and 1965. Despite the progress in the modernization and a growing support of farmers as well as workers the Shah relied more and more on the army and the Savak, the secret police, that was trained by the American CIA as well as the Israel Mossad. The Savak rigourously prosecuted political opponents (Bayat-Philipp 2009: 5). Throughout his governance the main ambition of the Shah was to protect the monarchy and to enlarge his power vis-à-vis the parliament (Gronke 2009: 2). As a consequence he was inside and outside Iran more and more regarded as a despotic ruler. Nevertheless, the CIA kept supporting him in the 1960ies as the US regarded him at that time as a reliable ally at the front to the Soviet Union.

In the beginning of the 1960ies the inner Iranian tensions grew after the so called White Revolution. This revolution was initiated and planned by the Shah in order to modernize the country. The old feudal system was abolished, land and forests expropriated from the landlords, and the national industries privatised. Women got the suffrage. Programs were installed to make more Iranians literate. Like the name “revolution” hints many of these actions were implemented by force. For example, the army was used to educate people in the countryside. People who did not obey were forced by the army to do so. As a reaction heavy riots took place in 1963 to which the Shah responded with severe prosecution of his opponents (Gronke 2009: 2). The modernization required more money than the Shah would get by taxes and the income from the oil-industry. Therefore, he took credits from Western banks and governments, including Western Germany. In addition, he tried to accelerate the modernization by encouraging Western companies to invest in Iran.
When the Shah came to Germany in 1967 he had, therefore, a variety of aims: First of all, he wanted to strengthen his ties within the Western alliance from which he depended both militarily and economically. West-Germany was one of the major allies of the US in Europe and a front-state to the communist block. Building and strengthening the relationship to it could further his own position within the Western alliance. Therefore, it was not an accident that he visited West-Berlin which was surrounded by the Communist GDR and under a permanent threat of a Soviet invasion. Visiting this “island of freedom” as many Western politicians liked to call it was a symbol of support. It made clear that the Shah was against the communist regimes, wherever they would exist. The threat by them was in Iran as real as in West-Germany as both were direct neighbour to the Eastern block. The Western alliance was crucial for the Shah not only because the permanent threat by the communist Tudeh Party and the Soviet Union but also because Iran lacked other allies. His relationships to many middle eastern countries like Egypt was problematic as they had discontinued the diplomatic relationship because of Iran’s recognition of Israel (Bayat-Philipp 2009: 5). For these reasons the Shah depended on the Western alliance of which West-Germany was a part.

Moreover, the Shah’s visit to West-Germany in 1967 was part of his coronation campaign. Although he became king in 1941 he decided to hold a coronation on the 26th of October 1967. Just in this ceremony he acquired the name “king of king”, a traditional title of the Persian imperator. In the same ceremony his wife Farah Diba got the title of an Empress and the position as representative of the Shah in case he dies or becomes ill. To gain international recognition for this coronation the Shah tried to enhance his international reputation by extensive state-visits and by invitations to the coronation. Foreign statesmen were invited to come to the official coronation celebration which was held together with the 2,500 year celebration of the Persian Empire in 1971. They could hardly reject this invitation once the Shah had visited their own country. The German foreign minister and latter
chancellor Willy Brandt, for instance, came to this ceremony in Shiraz although he had several times publicly criticized the Shah’s visit to Germany.

Third, the visit in 1967 was supposed to strengthen the economic ties with West-Germany. Traditionally the economic ties between the two countries were strong. At that time 25% of the Iranian imports came from Germany (Die Welt 1967c). Iran had received credits from Germany before and further credits were planned (Bild 1967c). German companies like the former Berlin based Siemens AG had considerable investments in Iran and the question was whether they should be continued over even extended. The Shah hoped to keep the trust of these companies and path the way for further investments. Moreover, he hoped that through these investments the Iranian industry would rise to a level where they could export goods to Germany. This was necessary as considerably more goods and services were exported from Germany to Iran than the other way around and the trade balance thus deficient (Die Welt 1967c).

Because of these economic and political aims, the Shah was accompanied by foreign minister Ardeshar Zahedi, by the minister for economy Ali Naghi Alikhani and by the energy minister Mansur Ronham all of which were asking for German investments (Die Welt 1967d). It was thus not only the visit of the Shah to Germany but also the visit of the Iranian government to Germany. Part of the economic mission was to encourage Iranian students to return after their study to Iran. This was especially important in regard to the 3,000 Persian medical students that were living in West-Germany because Iran lacked doctors (Die Welt 1967c). Despite the protests of many Iranian emigrants the Shah stressed how important it is that they return home (cf. Tagesspiegel 1967a). This was no accident, as in the past many Iranian students had preferred to stay in West-Germany and to enjoy its greater economic opportunities as well as political freedoms instead of practicing in the Iranian countryside where they had to spend the first 5 years of their career (Die Welt 1967c). The greatest population of Iranian students lived in West-Berlin so that it was natural to come there.
Finally, there was a personal aspect of his visit to Germany in 1967. His second wife, Soraya, was half-German and became a public figure in the German press. The Shah had been with her to West-Germany in 1955. As the daughter of the former Iranian ambassador to Germany she had played a prominent role in the relationship to West-Germany. The press continued reporting about her even after the Shah divorced her in 1958 (Spiegel 1967a: 42). The interest in her was so intensive that the press in the absence of news about her started to fake interviews (Spiegel 1994: 102). The yellow press reported about her so extensively so it acquired the nickname “Soraya-press” (e.g. Spiegel 1966: 163). This shows the enormous popularity she had. Accordingly, the danger emerged that the ties between Iran and West-Germany would be associated with Soraya and the Shah as well as his new wife Farah Diba left out. Farah Diba even said that everything which she does in Germany reminds her that it is the country of Soraya (Köhler 1967: 30). The Shah’s first visit to Germany after the divorce was therefore also aimed to ban this danger and to establish relationships to Germany independent upon his former wife Soraya.

B. The importance of the Shah’s visit for West-Germany

Similar to the Shah, the West-German government and the mayor of West-Berlin pursued various aims in inviting and receiving the Shah. They become understandable by looking at Germany’s situation in 1967.

Ever since Germany was divided in the aftermath of World War II German’s policy was dominated by the question whether and how the country could be reunited. The East was allied with the Soviet Union and the West with the US, France and Britain. In the 60ies, however, the division became stronger. The Berlin wall was built in August 1961 and Germany thereby totally separated. The last opportunity to move from east to west without the control of the East-German GDR disappeared. Especially in the first years following the construction of the wall hardly anybody was
allowed to pass the border. Although Germany was thus in fact divided into two countries they preserved the ambition to be one and lacked, therefore, international recognition. West Germany acted as a representative for the whole Germany but the states from the Eastern questioned its legitimacy to do so. Vice versa, the Western states questioned the legitimacy of the GDR. East and West Germany thus blocked each other to gain full international recognition. Both became just in 1973 full members of the UN and had until 1990 no peace treaty with the allied forces, i.e. the USA, the UK, France and the Soviet Union. As a consequence neither West-Germany nor the GDR was in 1967 sovereign or internationally fully recognized.

For West-Germany the main means to overcome this lack of recognition was the strengthening of the relationships to other countries and the integration into the Western alliance. Therefore, the post war period was dominated by the integration of West-Germany into the newly founded NATO and the European Community. A crucial part if this integration was the visits of German politicians abroad and the reception of foreign guests at home. Due to the so called Hallstein-doctrine this was not an easy task. According to this doctrine no state with a diplomatic relationship to East-Germany could have a diplomatic relationship to West-Germany. Especially in the first years after the war many countries abstained from taking sides and hesitated to come for an official visit to either East or West-Germany. The Shah was the more welcome. His visit of Berlin in 1967 was, therefore, part of West-Germany’s struggle for full international recognition.

Besides, receiving the Shah was important as Iran was a crucial player in the Middle East. Germany’s Middle East politics underwent at that time a dramatic change as West Germany started in 1965 to deliver tanks and other military equipment to Israel that was preparing for a war with Egypt and its other Arab neighbours. As a consequence tensions between West-Germany and Egypt as well as the Arab countries grew. Egypt’s president Nasser as a revenge started to develop a relationship to the GDR and received its prime-
minister Ulbricht in 1965 (Borowski 2009: 9). Instead of abruptlying the diplomatic relationship to Egypt the West-German government decided to recognize Israel (Borowski 2009: 10). This had the unforeseen consequence that most Arab states abruptlyed their diplomatic relationship with West-Germany. Its government was, therefore, in an urgent need to compensate for that loss and to preserve a role in Middle-East politics. The only way for that was to strengthen its relationship to Iran.

In terms of international recognition the visit to West-Berlin was even more important than the trip to other West German cities. Despite more than 20 years of division West-Berlin’s status remained unclear and stood under dispute. Whereas the Western powers considered it as part of West-Germany, the Soviet Union regarded it as an independent political entity. As a consequence, West-Berlin was, on the one hand, in many regards a part of West-Germany as it had the same currency, was subsidized by it and its people could easily move to West-Germany. On the other hand, the allied forces including the Soviet Union preserved the supremacy over West-Berlin and had the final say in all political questions. The West-Berlin senate had to report to the Allied Control Council and to explain its policy. The representatives of West-Berlin in the West-German parliament in Bonn had no right to vote and were just observers. The city of West-Berlin was not allowed to have its own military and lived therefore in permanent fear of a Soviet invasion. The main protection against such an invasion was the international surveillance. As the Berlin mayor Reuter demanded in 1948 “Nations of the world look at this city!” (Reuter, cited in: Die Welt 2008). This was best possible by receiving foreign statesmen to the city and showing them the wall and the permanent threat of an invasion.

Any foreign statesman coming to West-Berlin would, therefore, take sides in the dispute about Berlin. Integrating a visit of Berlin into the visit to West-Germany would strengthen the position that the latter is part of the former and would symbolically connect the two (Albertz 1984: 115). It
would draw international attention to a city which was totally surrounded by East-German territory and which already had once to survive a blockade by the Soviet Army. The border was heavily protected. Just 24 hours before the Shah’s visit a man trying to flee from East to West-Berlin was shot at the border (Bild 1967e, 1967d3). Having the Shah in Berlin and drawing attention to the situation was one of the few things the mayor of West-Berlin Albertz could do in order to protect West-Berlin. He could thereby make clear that this situation was unacceptable and that there still was the “German question” whether and how Germany’s division should be overcome. As Albertz said in the greeting ceremony of the Shah in the city hall of Schöneberg: “we can not waive the right of our nation to decide ourselves about our own future. That is not always understood in the world” (Tagesspiegel 1967a). This quotation shows to what extent the Berlin mayor tried to involve foreign guests like the Shah in the discussion about the future of Germany and the separation between East and West-Germany. For the same reasons, the West-German president Heinrich Lübke would officially receive the Shah in his residency in West-Berlin although he already had seen him at his main seat in Bonn.

In order to understand the motivation of German politicians to invite the Shah one does not only have to look at the reasons concerning the future of Germany but also at the reasons connected to its past. Despite West-Germany’s efforts to integrate into the Western alliance many states remained sceptical about Germany and its politicians. The atrocities of World War II and the holocaust dominated the collective memory of many nations. This hampered their relationship to Germany. A considerable part of Germany’s political, cultural and economic elites was after all involved in the war. For instance, the chancellor Kiesinger ruling since 1966 for the Christian Democrats was a former member of the fascist NSDAP and worked during the Nazi regime in the ministry of foreign affairs where he was responsible for the propaganda and influence of foreign radio stations (Mosler 1977: 268). Therefore, the relationship between Germany and other
countries in the 1960ies was to a considerable part influenced by the memories about its past. For these memories the so called *Auschwitz*-process played a cruel role. More than 1.300 witnesses reported in the Frankfurt court about the mass killings in the concentration camps. For great parts of the international public the judgements of the Frankfurt court was disappointing as the death of millions of people stood in no relation to the judgements which consisted in just six life sentences, and eleven prison sentences for a length between 3 and 14 years (Borowski 2009: 6). Behind this background other nations hesitated to develop strong political and cultural ties with West-Germany and reduced them to the minimal level necessary to integrate it into the Western alliance. Any foreign statesman that could break this half-hearted relationship was warmly welcome in Germany. Inviting and receiving the Shah was thus also part of West-Germany’s effort for better acceptance on an international level.

A further reason for Germany’s interest in the Shah was its economic policy. As any other industrialized Western nation Germany relied heavily on foreign supply of oil and gas. Due to the economic boom of the early 1960ies the demand was growing. After the revolution in Iraq in 1958 and the 1967 conflict between the Arab states and Israel, the oil-supplying Iran became more and more into the focus of economic policy. It seemed politically more stabile than the neighbouring countries. Besides, Iran had for a long time close trade connection to Germany. Even before World War II Germany was the main exporter of goods into Iran (Die Welt 1967c). These ties were renewed after the War in the 1950ies and 1960ies and were central to the Shah’s plan to further develop Iran’s industry. The German industry as well as German politics were interested in these exports as Iran, due to its growing population, was a market with an increasing significance.

The need for economic cooperation with Iran as well as other countries was felt in 1967 in Western Germany considerably strong as it underwent since 1966 a deep economic crisis. For the first time in post war
history West Germany had in 1967 a negative gross national product and an decreasing economic activity (Borowski 2009: 14). The West-German society, used before to an economic boom and continuous growth in consumption, became frightened that the good years would be over (Schildt 2008: 2). The main reason for this crisis was the diminishing domestic demand as many of West Germany’s after the war reconstructing projects had come to an end. The crisis had a huge psychological impact on the population which was used to an ever growing success and a virtual full employment (Borowski 2009: 14). One of the efforts to overcome the crisis was to strengthen the exports by pushing the foreign demand for industrial and other products. The relationship to other countries became an integral part of Germany’s foreign policy. Iran was a promising trade partner as it had, due its oil recourses, the ability to pay for exports and, due to its growing population, a huge demand.

For both sides West-Germany and Iran the visit was thus important for a variety of historical, political and economic reasons.

C. The beginning of the student revolution

Although the visit of the Shah is widely remembered as the starting point of the student revolution it is worthwhile remembering that even before this visit, students increasingly were engaged in political actions. These actions were connected to the dramatic changes in politics and culture in the 1960ies. In November 1966 for the first time in the post war history the left wing social democratic SPD became part of the government as it formed a great coalition with the conservative CDU. This happened during the economic crisis in which the former coalition of conservatives and liberals could not agree on the right tax policy (Borowski 2009: 16). The social democrat Willy Brandt became foreign minister and his conservative counterpart Kiesinger chancellor. Before, the conservatives had dominated West-Germany’s policy. The great coalition pursued an active economic policy by financing public projects and thereby supporting domestic
These political changes had many repercussions. A wider public got the impression that, contrary to previous conservative claims, social democrats could govern the country without implementing a communist policy similar to the one in the Soviet Union. This made the whole population more perceptible for left wing policy.

At the same time, however, the left was disappointed by the governance of the social democrats that could not fulfil the previously declared aims. They lost their role as the left opposition which they had played for a period over 20 years. The only party not participating in the government was the liberal FDP representing less than 10% of the votes. Together with the conservative CDU it had governed West-Germany before so that it was hardly in the position to fundamentally criticize the politics of the new government. Especially people at the left were disappointed that their critical voice would not longer be heard in parliament (Borowski 2009: 17). This led to first protests and to the so called extra-parliamentarian opposition. Especially students were afraid that the democratization and growing plurality of political as well as social life would stop and a new conformity arise.

Although in the first half of the 1960ies students were perceived as inactive and politically neutral they gradually turned left and started to criticize the prevailing political, social and economic conditions (Schildt 2008: 1). Among them two related groups stood out as especially important. The first was the Socialist German Student-Union SDS aiming at a fundamental socialist change of the society. It gathered people who were, on the one hand, disappointed by the reformist politics of the Social Democrats and, on the other hand, did not want to join the communists close to the GDR (cf. Schildt 2008: 7). When asked by emigrant Persians to join in the protest against the Shah the SDS first refused to do so because it wanted to concentrate on actions against the war in Vietnam (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 3). Besides, the SDS was rather interested in the abstract analysis
and critique of the society than in particular actions. However, it finally joined the protests against the Shah and acquired even a dominant role in it.

Inside the SDS different opinions and ideologies competed with each other. Most of its members assumed that an all-encompassing international capitalist system exists in which all events are connected to each other. The revolutionary movement in Cuba, for instance, was perceived as connected to the working conditions in the USA, these conditions were seen together with the war in Vietnam which in turn would be perceived as related to the politics of West-Germany. As a consequence the general awareness of international political events grew and it was, therefore, natural that the domestic politics of Iran and the conditions of its population would become a hotly debated issue in Germany. This tendency was called internationalism (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 1). As expressed in a leaflet circulated during the Shah’s visit students wanted to protest “inhuman living conditions, no matter whether they exist in Germany, Vietnam, Greece, Persia or another part of the world” (Ruetz 1980: 32).1

Part of this internationalism was the solidarity of students with the liberation movements against dictatorships around the world. As the Iranian Bahman Nirumand, one of the initiators of the protests against the Shah, later explained “Every member of the third world was here prompted to play the role of a political hero, whether he wanted that or not” (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 3). When the Iranian opposition movement CISNU asked the SDS to support the protests against the Shah, it could, therefore, rely on this feeling of solidarity. Similarly, the ruling classes of the countries in the West and in the third world were perceived as similar and related to each other. As Nirumand said in hindsight

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1 “gegen unmenschliche Daseinsbedingungen gleich, ob sie in Deutschland, Vietnam, Griechenland, Persien oder einem anderen Teil der Welt bestehen”
“if one compares Che Guevara and Heinrich Lübke or Kurt Georg Kiesinger, simply from the outside, one gets a lot of explanations” (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 4).

The protests against the Shah was in this perspective part of a general protest against the exploitation and suppression in the world. The idea that a great deal of the international order rests on violence was also widely shared within the Socialist Student Union SDS and its supporters. They assumed that a “latent violence” in the West is the equivalent of the open prosecution of opponents in dictatorships around the world and that this latent violence could any moment turn into an open one. The aim of the protests in the West would be to provoke the ruling class to make the already existing violence visible (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 4). The existing democratic liberties of freedom of speech, right to participate in a demonstration, and the right to vote were regarded as a superficial and preliminary façade which the ruling class could any time take away.

An especially hotly debated topic were the so called emergency laws.² These laws were about to be adopted and prescribed the procedures how the government would act in the time of emergency like a war, an attack of terrorists or similar events. They contained thorough constraints of civil rights and were for this reason regarded as a preparation to establish a dictatorship. The theory that the latent violence of the “ruling system” would one day become obvious gained support. These laws were thought to help in this transition from latent to open violence. The fact that the student Benno Ohnesorg would later be killed in the protests against the Shah was from this perspective not surprising. Seemingly, the SDS had predicted such violence before.

Another group of students which supported the protests against the Shah was the so called Commune I, a group of left wing students sharing a community flat. Already before the arrival of the Shah it was well known

² “Notstandsgesetze”
for its actions and had severely criticised other students for being a “slow coach”, i.e. remaining inactive (Becker/Schröder 2000: 134). In contrast to the SDS, with which it had in the beginning a close connection, the Commune I was less interested in the abstract analysis of the society and rather oriented towards political actions. It was the symbol of the so called fun-guerrilla that tried with new forms of protests to ridicule the government, the police, and other established institutions. This was inspired by a new style in fashion as well as music to which the twist, rock and beat music as well as the long hair cut belonged (Schildt 2008: 3). Even the left wing SDS could not tolerate the new non-dogmatic style of protest and excluded the member of the Commune I from the SDS (Mosler 1977: 101, Becker/Schröder 2000: 133).

Besides the emergency laws, there were other points of criticism. The main one was the US lead war in Vietnam. Although neither East- nor West-Germany was directly involved in the war in Vietnam, it became the most discussed topic in the German public in the end of the 1960ies. Especially the left perceived the US engagement in Vietnam as an “imperialistic” war against an independent country and against its liberation movement from the colonial times. Reports and pictures supported the impressions of atrocities against the civilian population. The impression was widespread that the US war in Vietnam was similar to the Hitler’s war against Poland, Russia and the other countries involved in the World War II. Slogans like “SS = SA = USA” were used. To connect it to the Shah as another ally of the USO it was changed into “SS - SA - Shah”.

The protest against the war in Vietnam culminated during the visit of US-president Hubert Humphrey in April 1967 in Berlin. In many regards, this visit foreshadowed the Shah’s visit three months later. Both statesmen were greeted as “murderers” (cf. Bild 1967c). The police was frightened that the Commune I and other left wing activists would protest against “HH” as the Commune I called Hubert Humphrey reminding thereby the audience
about the fascist greeting “Heil Hitler” (Save Hitler), also abbreviated as HH. Therefore, the police put the Commune I under surveillance about what the Commune I was aware. To ridicule the police it acted as if it would prepare an assassination (Mosler 1977: 269; FAZ 1967 f). It practiced the throwing of bombs, was observed by the police and eleven members of the Commune I arrested. Only in court the Commune I presented the evidence that no real assassination was planned and that the prepared bomb was made from pudding powder. This inspired other students to protest against the vice president. Over 2,000 students came to the streets, many of them would throw stones and bottles at the car of vice-president Humphrey. Nevertheless, this got less media-attention than the preparation of the faked assassination with pudding (cf. Mosler 1977: 269).

When Iranian students asked the Commune I to support the protest against the Shah it spontaneously agreed (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 4). It immediately integrated it to its other actions. In several leaflets it mentioned the Shah. The first one was issued a week before the Shah’s arrival to Berlin. The main topic of this leaflet was the burning of a department store during a so called “American week” in Brussels. 300 people were killed in it. After that the Commune I distributed leaflets linking this tragedy to the war in Vietnam by saying that “for the first time in a European city we get that cracking Vietnam-feeling (of participation and burning)”. In the same sarcastic vein it described “Coca Cola and Hiroshima, the German economic miracle and the Vietnam war, the Free University and the University of Teheran” as signs of “American entrepreneurship” (Commune I, cited in Mende 2007: 1). The support of the Shah by the USA was thereby linked to the support of West-Berlin and the Free University where most of the critical students studies. Some links were indeed beyond doubt. The Free University of Berlin as Teheran University got grants from American foundations and was, as West-Berlin as a whole, to a considerable part influenced by American ideas and institutions. This was another reason for the already described feeling of internationalism.
Even more explicit was another leaflet by the Commune I under the headline “When are you burning, consumer?” It not only criticized the one-sided orientation of consumers towards capitalism and a consumerist society but also the Shah. It suggested that members of the Commune I will enter the Hilton-hotel in which the Shah would reside and let him know “how comforting a castration is - in case there is still anything to cut … there are so bad rumours” (Commune I, cited in Mosler 1977: 55; FAZ 1967f). With these provocative words it resumed reports that the Shah had no son from his first two wives because of his own infertility. It linked these rumours to the reports about the torture carried out by the Iranian secret service. Because of its unorthodox style this leaflet got huge attention and became a widely discussed issue. Due to its sarcasm it was not clear whether the Commune I would indeed try to enter the Hilton-hotel or whether this was like the “pudding assassination” another not seriously intended threat to irritate the police and cause discussions.

Most decisive for the later events was a public lecture at the eve of the Shah’s visit to Berlin. The Iranian emigrant Bahman Nirumand presented his book “Persia. A Modell of a developing country or the dictatorship of the free world” in the Free University of Berlin. 3,000 students came to hear him. Nirumand had been active in the communist underground in Iran and flown to Germany in 1965. He knew Germany from before as he went in Germany to school. His book painted a disastrous picture about Iran: Wide parts of the rural population live in hunger, people feed themselves from straw and worms, the Shah arrests everybody opposing his politics and exploits the country for his personal advantage. He described prisons for the political opponents as concentration camps similar to the ones built by the Nazis. Nirumand even proposed to kill the Shah. This part of the book was, however, not published, due to an intervention of the editor Fritz Raddatz (Winkler 2006). Nevertheless it conveys how radical and far reaching Nirumand’s critique was. The Shah and his administration in turn tried to prosecute him and Nirumand later even maintained that the Shah paid a
killer in order to eliminate him (Nirumand 2006: 3).

Because of this opposition against the Shah and the aura of an underground fighter Nirumand became a popular figure among the left in 1967 and one of the heads of the student movement. He went from city to city to present his book (Becker/Schröder 2000: 132, 133). His book was one of the three books which the leader of the student revolution Rudi Dutschke recommended as essential. The other books were the so called Mao-bible and a book about Vietnam (Nirumand 2006: 4). These recommendations show the popularity of Nirumand’s book and the extent to which Iran became a hotly debated issue. The delegation of the Shah considered the mere fact that Nirumand spoke in front of the students as “an unfriendly act” (Bild 1967a). It exerted pressure on the Senate of Berlin to prevent this lecture by threatening not to come to Berlin at all, if Nirumand would speak in the Free University. This attempt however proved unsuccessful as academic freedom and freedom of speech prevented a prohibition of this lecture. Moreover, the rector of the University already was in a tense relationship to the students and did not want to enhance this by prohibiting a popular academic event for mere political purposes.

Most students believed Nirumand’s reports to be true. He was after all Persian and had just returned from Iran. One of the leaders of the student revolution Lefevre said in hindsight “We did not know anything about the Shah, we had to leave it all to Nirumand and were happy to have somebody like him”3 (Lefevre, cited in: Lönnendonker/Rabehl/Staadt 2002: 331). The impression was widespread that the students should not, as their fathers during the Hitler regime, stay silent. Something had to be done. The minimum they could do is to demonstrate against the Shah and remind him of the crimes committed in Iran. When reports spread at the eve of the Shah’s visit to Berlin that he was well accepted in Praha, Czechoslovakia, a group of students spontaneously decided to protest in front of the Czech

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3 “Wir wußten über Persien nichts, wir mußten Nirumand praktisch alles überlassen und waren froh, dass wir einen hatten.”
Military Mission which was close to the Free University.

This activism against the Shah can best be understood in connection with the general criticism against the older German generations that they, at best, remained passive during the Hitler regime and did nothing to prevent the atrocities. In order to avoid a similar accusation, students in 1967 were eager to become politically active as soon as there was an injustice worthwhile fighting against. Especially in 1967 a strong necessity for this was felt as the already mentioned *Auschwitz*-process made clear that many Nazi criminals would for always get away unpunished. In addition, during the economic crisis in 1967 the neofascist party NPD gained a sudden increase in the popular vote and access to several federal state parliaments (Schildt 2008: 6; Borowski 2009: 12). In the eyes of many students this was one more reason to become politically active. After Nirumand’s drastic reports about concentration camps in Iran the protest against the Shah was in the eyes of the students part of the fight against fascism. This was crudely put in the slogan “SA – SS – Schah” (Ruetz 1980: 33; Trend 2007: 1). In no way did the Socialist Student Union SDS want to be guilty of staying passive and give the Shah the impression that they tolerate the violence against the Iranian population. As the theologian Gollwitzer said “A soup needs salt. The Free University of Berlin needs the SDS. Otherwise the Shah mixes up Teheran and Berlin.” (Ruetz 1980: 26).

The main part of the students neither belonged to the SDS nor to the Commune I. Nevertheless, many left-wing students had gathered in West-Berlin as this was the only way to escape from military as well as obligatory civil service. Due to the governance by the four allied powers, West-Berlin was not allowed to have its own army and could not force its youth to a military service. As a consequence Berlin became gradually the centre of the West-German left. However, conservative and liberal students alike were discomforted with the situation in the university. It was in their eyes badly equipped, had overly harsh examination laws, and an unmotivated staff
The economic crisis cast into doubt that the students would after graduation get as easy a job as the previous generations of students. So beyond the Socialist Student Union and the Commune I many students were dissatisfied with the prevailing state of affairs and ready to protest against the glamorous façade the Berlin senate tried to keep in front of the Shah. At this time no critical report about Nirumand’s book had been published so that there was no doubt about its factual claims. Because of that even the conservative Christian Union (RCDS) had prepared anti-Shah-leaflets that were signed by all student organisations (Mosler 1977: 133). The mayor of Berlin Albertz suspected these protests, tried to cancel the visit – but it was already too late for that (Albertz 1984: 116).
3. Major Events of the Visit

A. The Shah’s visit in West-Germany

Before the Shah came to Berlin he first visited West-Germany. His tour led through Cologne, Bonn, Augsburg, and Munich. Especially the visit to Bonn, at that time the seat of the West-German government, was crucial. The Shah and his delegation had to negotiate the asked for credits and to lead the other talks with the West-German government. During the whole visit the level of security was kept high. Altogether 30.000 police officers were engaged to provide security (Spiegel 1967a: 41). Train stations were blocked, airports restricted and high-ways closed in order to give the Shah a safe journey. Contrary to the visits of other foreign statesmen, the whole highway between Cologne and Bonn was blocked (Bild 1967b4). The police thought it insufficient to block just one or two lanes.

The heightened security ironically affected the visit itself. The minister of interior affairs Paul Lücke was denied access to the highway by German police and came too late for the reception of the Shah in Bonn (Die Welt 1967a). Similarly, Iranian ministers were blocked to accompany the Shah inside an Atomic Station which was part of his visit (Bild 1967c). The German police was at that time inexperienced with such events as hardly any foreign statesmen as controversial as the Shah had visited West-German before. Moreover, for the already explained reasons West-Germany had a manifest interest in the success of the visit and was afraid of an embarrassment in front of the foreign statesmen. Only with this background it becomes understandable that the Shah was accompanied not only by the Iranian entourage and the German police but also by twelve (!) German doctors (Die Welt 1967g).

Wherever the Shah emerged, massive police forces accompanied him. In many cities every ten meter one police officer or one army officer stayed
(Said, cited in DW-World: 2010). The police told restaurants to keep their windows closed in order to prevent an attack being carried out on the Shah through an open window (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 112). It demanded from Iranians students living in Germany to leave the cities that the Shah visited or to stay under house-arrest (Die Welt 1967a; Spiegel 1967a: 41). This caused the overall impression that Germany is in an emergency situation and that its politicians would do everything to please the Shah. For the students already critical about the emergency laws this was another proof that soon the democratic freedom would disappear and a new totalitarian state arise. Even Willy Brandt, the foreign minister in 1967, said that he understands the complaints of the population about the exaggerated security during the Shah’s visit (Die Welt 1967a). This was the more remarkable as he, being the foreign minister, had to take into consideration the diplomatic relationship towards the Shah who had insisted on such a high security.

However, this security had a real and not only an imagined background. A part of the emigrant Iranian students were ready for violent actions which became visible in the already mentioned appeal of Nirumand to kill the Shah and an attempt of a emigrant Persian in Bonn to throw himself in front of the Shah’s car (Bild 1967b3). During the visit of the Shah in Berlin one Persian student tried to kill him with a car-bomb but failed in doing so (Bild 1967i). This attempted assassination was thus no exception but part of a whole serial of violent acts. Never before in post-war Germany there were so many threats of assassinations and so many explosive parcels discovered like during the visit of the Shah in Germany in 1967.

Although the later events in Berlin became more famous than the preceding visit to other West-German cities, it is useful to remember that already the visit of the Shah in them was accompanied by heavy protests. Among them the wreath laying ceremony in Bonn’s University, the former castle, stood out. During this ceremony 400 German and Persian students shouted “Down with the Shah”, laid down a memorial wreath “for the victims of the Shah’s tyranny” and got arrested for that (Becker/Schröder
The mass media reported about this arrest immediately and the picture of a glamorous visit of an “imperial couple” started to change. When the Shah came to West-Berlin his visit had thus already a controversial character. The mayor of Berlin Albertz was thus right to expect actions against the Shah in West-Berlin, the “capital of protest”. Nevertheless their full extent was hardly foreseeable by anyone.

B. The Shah’s visit in the Schöneberg City Hall

In the morning of the 2nd June the Shah came by airplane from Munich to West-Berlin. He was met by the mayor of West-Berlin Heinrich Albertz. In addition, a group of Persians greeted him. They had come to Berlin in special flights before and were paid by the Savak, the Iranian Secret Police. During the visit they had followed the Shah and were due to their function to play the role of enthusiastic bystanders derogatorily referred to as “Persian claqueurs”. The German police knew about their background in the Persian secret service Savak and cooperated with them. The senator for interior affairs Buesch justified this cooperation later with the argument that it was internationally usual to give fellow countrymen of a foreign statesman privileged access to see him (Buesch, cited in FAZ 1967c). Predominantly, however, this cooperation was criticized even by the police and the politicians responsible for the visit (e.g. FAZ 1967b). For instance, the police president Duensing publicly said that the police “did not approve” that the Persians would come by a bus reserved for the press and go directly in front of the city hall (FAZ 1967e).

Among the citizens of Berlin the opinion about the Shah was split. A great part of the students, for the described reasons, thought that it is necessary to protest against him and thereby to support the people fighting for freedom and democracy in Iran as well as in other countries under the influence of the US. Due to the heightened security, many students felt like living in a beleaguered city. Just in Berlin 5,000 police officers were active for the protection of the Shah (Bild 1967d2). The mayor of Berlin Albertz
and the senator for interior affairs had ordered such heightened security because they thought that the Shah would otherwise not come to Berlin at all (Die Welt 1967a).

The official program for the visit at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of June 1967 was tensely organized: after the arrival at the airport the Shah was brought to the Hilton hotel, then a reception was held in the Berlin city hall where he was giving the honour of signing the Golden Book. Later he visited the Berlin wall and went to a reception in the castle Charlottenburg. The last event of his trip was a visit of the opera in the evening. From the reception in the city hall onwards the visit took a turn not foreseen by anybody. At 2.30 pm around 750 protestors had gathered in front of the city hall of West Berlin in order to demonstrate against the Shah. They were forced to wait behind barriers (Becker/Schröder 2000: 139). Most of them were Germans as many Iranian students critical of the Shah stood during his visit under house-arrest (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 112) and were thus prevented from joining the demonstration.

In order to greet the Shah members of the Socialist German Student Union (SDS) and of the Confederation of Iranian Students (CIS) had prepared posters with the headline “murderer” (Prante 2009: 1). The Commune I, in accordance with their idea of a fun-guerrilla, had distributed paper-bags with a caricature of the Shah in the evening. Protestors could make themselves unknown by wearing such a bag and thereby ridicule the Shah. At the same time they could thereby remain unknown for the police (Becker/Schröder 2000: 139). As soon as a group of students wore these bags the impression emerged that there is a whole army of cloned Shah-puppets. This referred to the image of the Shah as a puppet in the hand of the US.

Besides, leaflets prepared by the Socialist Student Union SDS were distributed that showed the picture of the Shah under the slogan “wanted” insinuating that he is a criminal looked for by the police. It had already caused wide attention because it was distributed and put to walls and street
lights in the whole city of West-Berlin (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 1). Altogether there were 750 protestors which was, compared to the later attention in the media and the numbers of students in Berlin, rather small. Nevertheless, it was later remembered as the protest of “the students”.

In addition, there was a group of about 40 Persians claqueurs who arrived in special buses reserved for the press. They could circumvent the barriers for the visitors and stood next to the city hall with a banner “Long live the white revolution!” (Henschel 1984: 114). The third and biggest group gathering in front of the city hall were approximately 3,000 German spectators curious to see the Shah and his wife (Becker/Schröder 2000: 139). They were attracted by the glamour of an imperial couple as well as happy that it would pay attention to the difficult situation of West-Berlin totally surrounded by the communist GDR.

As soon as the Shah arrived before the city hall the students started to shout “murderer”, “welcome Mr Dictator” (FAZ 1967d) and to throw eggs and smoke bombs in his direction. As a reaction the „Persian claqueurs“ started to beat the protesting students with sticks as soon as the Shah entered into the city hall. They also attacked bystanders like a conservative senator who had come to see the Shah but happened to stand next to the Persian protestors (Albertz 1984: 118). Some reports maintain that the Persian “claqueurs” also used steel rods (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 108; Dietze 1967: 2). This, however, seems unlikely as there are no reports about severely injured students. The attack of the Persian “claqueurs” took the protestors by surprise. They expected the German police to interfere. However, when the police arrived it first remained passive and started then to dispel the students. It arrested five protestors, but did not even document the identity of the Persian claqueurs beating innocent bystanders (Becker/Schröder 2000: 139).

The reason for the non-interference with the Persian claqueurs was, probably, that they did not want to provoke a conflict with the Iranian security forces which would have overshadowed the talks with the Shah. More-
over, the police had cooperated with the Persians before and regarded them as part of the security necessary for the Shah. The student protestors, however, were shocked not only by the open violence but also by the alliance of the German and Iranian security forces. This caused the impression that German police would, once again and like during the Hitler regime, support a dictator and cooperate with security forces responsible for killing political opponents. The assumption that there exists a latent violence in the current “capitalist system” that could any time break out seemed correct. The slogan spread that in the evening all the protestors should come to the opera. From this time onwards it was clear that the main protest was still to come.

The students, however, could not know that the Berlin mayor Albertz protested in front of the Iranian Security Forces about its actions against the students. He was given the – later broken – promise that this would not repeat itself in the evening. Even for the police the violence against the students was far from planned or foreseen. The mayor as well as the senate of West-Berlin was interested to keep a peaceful façade. The official reception inside the city-hall stood, therefore, in a sharp contrast to the hostile situation outside the city hall although the demonstrators were well-heard inside it (Albertz 1984: 116).

The mayor Albertz started the greeting ceremony with a speech in which he underlined the old ties between Persia and Germany (FAZ 1967d). He talked about the difficult situation due to the separation of Germany and Berlin. In regard to Iran he said explicitly “We know our duty to help those that in the area of economy and science do not have the conditions which we found in front of us” (Albertz, cited in Tagesspiegel: 1967a). Thereby he supported the decision to give Iran additional credits and technical assistance despite public criticism that this is unnecessary as long as the Shah and his wife display an enormous wealth in public. The Shah in turn spoke about the situation in Iran and the necessity to “fight poverty on an international level” (Die Welt 1967h). After the reception the Shah and his wife Farah Diba signed the Golden book of West-Berlin and exchanged presents -
a Persian carpet for Albertz and a set of Berlin porcelain for the Shah (Bild 1967f). More official talks were not planned. In contrast to the previous visit in Bonn the visit in Berlin was supposed to wear a festive and representative character. But exactly this character was overshadowed by the events taking place on the streets.

C. The Shah’s visit at the German Opera in West-Berlin

The most famous event on the 2nd of June 1967 was the Shah’s visit of the Berlin Opera where Mozart’s “Magic Flute” was about to be played (Kilb 2006: 1). The Shah and his wife Farah Diva arrived there shortly before 8 pm after they had been at the reception of the West-German president Lübke at the castle Charlottenburg. Already in this castle they were “greeted” by 200 protestors (Bild 1967f). The mayor of West Berlin Heinrich Albertz and the West-German president Heinrich Lübke accompanied the Shah and his wife Farah Diba to the opera (Zimmer: 1). According to diplomatic protocol, this was the highest possible accompaniment and showed the importance of the Shah. The Bismarck-Street, a broad boulevard with ten tracks in front of the opera, was blocked for traffic. Protestors were admitted only to gather at the opposite site of the street so that the Shah could hardly notice them. Even there the place was limited as a high reconstruction fence stood along the street. The police prevented journalists to take pictures and films which caused a first conflict (Henschel 1984: 115). Among the protestors nobody knew the police reports according to which the Iranian opposition had planned an armed attack in front of the opera (Ruetz 1980: 32). Therefore, they interpreted the restrictions as an unnecessary attack on their freedom.

When the Shah arrived the students threw eggs and tomatoes in his direction and shouted derogatory slogans like “murderer” and “Mo, Mo, Mossadegh” thereby referring to the mentioned Iranian prime minister that was forced to resign after the Shah returned from exile in 1953. As at the Schoeneberg city hall in the afternoon, the demonstrators were separated
from the street by barriers. Once again the “Persian claqueurs” were allowed to circumvent the barriers and meet the Shah close to the opera and beyond the fences for the spectators. Additional rows of police officers stood in front of the opera and shielded the Shah. The mayor Albertz who accompanied the Shah felt embarrassed about the protests, the noise and the throwing of stones, eggs, and tomatoes. He told the police that a similar situation should not accompany the departure of the Shah (Albertz 1984: 117).

The students were upset by the events in the morning, especially by the cooperation between the Persian and German security forces. They criticised and insulted the police officers by calling them fascists and, partly, spitted on them. The police in turn became more and more aggressive. It felt upset by the accusation that they would protect a murderer and have a fascist character and started to arrest individual students supposedly throwing eggs and accusing them. Moreover, the police tried to bring students sitting on the reconstruction fence down. The students resisted these attempts. The police was neither used nor trained to handle a mass of peaceful demonstrators. Even the visit of the American vice-president Hubert Humphreys in April 1967 in West-Berlin had not caused a similar protest or conflict. In comparison to this situation, the post war years had been relatively quiet and people were more occupied with the tension between East and West than with internal conflicts inside West-Berlin.

After the Shah went into the opera the situation on the street escalated. Initially, the students wanted to leave peacefully and to return when the Shah would leave the German Opera. The police, however, pursued another plan. It wanted to prevent further protests and, arguably, take revenge of the insults towards it and the Shah as a foreign guest. The president of the Berlin police personally gave the order to dispel the protestors by crushing into the middle of them and to use truncheons for that purpose. Because of the reconstructing fence along the road the students had no place to flee to. The way to the left or the right was blocked by police so that the students were closed in. They simply had to await the police’s attack. A panic resulted in
which people tried to flee but at either escape route again police officers would beat with truncheons on them. In the resulting tumult, demonstrators were beaten up, arrested and carried away by force. Many of them finally tried to flee into the neighbouring streets but were followed by police. Its aggressiveness grew after news was spread via loudspeakers that one police officer was stabbed by a student. Police officers who did not join in the beating of the students were pushed by higher police officer to fulfil their orders (Henschel 1984: 115). The rumour about the dead police officer later turned out to be wrong but incited at that evening the police to dispel the students with greater force (Soukup 2007: 46). As in front of the Schoeneberg city hall in the morning the Persian “claqueurs” would support the police in beating the protestors.

Among the fleeing demonstrators was the student Benno Ohnesorg who had already taken part in the demonstration in the morning. He had no connection to the Socialist German Student Federation SDS, the Commune I, or an Iranian opposition group. Nevertheless, he carried a banner saying “autonomy for the Teheran University” (Wehner 2007: 1) which symbolized the feeling of solidarity and internationalism that were typical for this protest. Ohnesorg’s only alliance was with the Protestant Student Community of Berlin. He studied Roman and German Philology; his professors would latter describe him as a quiet and hardworking student. At the demonstration he was accompanied by his pregnant wife and a friend (Bering 2007: 1).

During the flight from the police Ohnesorg came together with 20-30 other students to the neighbouring street “Krumme Straße”. There he departed from his wife and friend both of which decided to return home. Ohnesorg flew into a yard where other students already were hiding themselves. Police in uniform and in plain cloth closed the yard and prevented the students to come out of it. The students nevertheless tried to liberate themselves. During this action Ohnesorg was first beaten and then shot by a police officer, Mr. Kurras, twice in the head. As confirmed by witnesses there was no attack that Kurras had to prevent in an action of self-defence.
Even the fellow police officers criticized him for shooting (Wehner 2007: 8). After the shots, Ohnesorg lost blood and consciousness. An ambulance brought him to a hospital what took more than 45 minutes. Many hospitals denied access out of fear that they would later be accused of helping violent protestors. At the same evening Ohnesorg died. A criminal court later acquitted the police officer Kurras although the judge stressed that he had in many aspects not told the truth (Wehner 2007: 7). The court assumed that Kurras was in a psychological state of emergency in which he could not act rationally. So it did not convict him and merely stated that he had acted illegally (Höntzsch 1999: 155).

Just recently new facts about this event became public. In 2009 files were discovered according to which Kurras was spying for the former East-German secret service Stasi. He had access to internal information of the West-Berlin police and was considered by the East German Stasi as a top-source (Röbel/Sontheimer/Wensiersk 2009: 1). This casts into doubt the traditional picture that Ohnesorg died due to the “structural” violence of the West-Berlin police. Kurras nowadays admits to have acted as a spy but keeps silent about the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg. He is indicted at the criminal court for the illegal possession of weapons but can not be tried again for the killing of Ohnesorg.

Therefore, a lot of questions remain. The most urgent one is whether the killing of Ohnesorg is based on a fatal confusion. Before the Shah’s visit to Berlin, Kurras was as a West-Berlin police officer engaged in the prosecution of Bernd Ohnesorge who was at the same age as Benno Ohnesorge but not related to him. The similarity of the names (“Bernd” instead of “Benno” and “Ohnesorge” instead of “Ohnesorg”) might have initially rested on a coincidence. Bernd Ohnesorge was a spy who had changed sides many times. When he betrayed the East-German secret service Stasi in 1966, Kurras gave the information that Ohnesorge had spied to the West-Berlin prosecution service which led to the arrest of Ohnesorge.
Kurras gave the information about Ohnesorge’s betrayal to the Stasi who arrested the sister of Ohnesorge.

It looks like a strange coincidence that Kurras was responsible for the temporary arrest of Bernd Ohnesorge and as well responsible for the killing of Benno Ohnesorg (Röbel/Sontheimer/Wensiersk 2009: 2). It is, at least, possible to assume that Kurras confused Ohnesorg with Ohnesorge and thought that the occasion had come to take revenge for a betrayal. Kurras had after all stated that betrayers of the Stasi should be “liquidated” (Röbel/Sontheimer/Wensiersk 2009: 3). He was ready to kill them personally (Müller-Enbergs/Jabs 2009: 4). These circumstances cast, at least, a doubt on whether the killing of Ohnesorge by Kurras had nothing to do with his activity for the east-German secret service Stasi. Although there is no evidence that he got the order to kill the spy Ohnesorge (Müller-Enbergs/Jabs 2009: 5), it is plausible that he acted on his own decision to kill a betrayer. This is supported by the fact that Kurras was one of the best shooters of the West-Berlin police so that it is unlikely that the shooting on Ohnesorg was a mere accident. The spy Ohnesorge later died as well under mysterious circumstances in a Bulgarian prison after the Bulgarian police had arrested him and got the reports about his previous betrayal from the East-German Stasi (Röbel/Sontheimer/Wensiersk 2009: 1, 3).

Because this background became public only in 2009 it could not influence the perception of the Shah’s visit in 1967. The killing was seen as an act of violence by the police of West-Berlin (Nevermann, cited in Müller-Enbergs/Jabs 2009: 1). This news spread immediately trough the whole city. In the beginning the police and the city administration tried to make the students responsible for the death of Ohnesorg. They claimed that an accident had happened as the gun was supposedly not directed against Ohnesorg. Only gradually they admitted the truth. They were afraid of further protests and prohibited for the next days any demonstration in Berlin.

In the morning of the 3rd of June 1967 the mayor Albertz brought the Shah to the airport and told him that a student protestor had died. The Shah
replied that Albertz should not worry as this would happen in Iran on a daily basis (Albertz 1984: 117). Albertz should shoot more people. For then he would get some quietness (Soukup 2007: 157).
4. Methodology of media analysis

After the description of the visit of the Shah it is possible to analyse how the media portrayed him and his family. In order to do so, some methodological remarks are necessary. The first concerns the concept of an image. It can be conceived of as a representation created out of multiple sensory inputs (Stern/Zinkhan/Holbrook 2005: 31). An image has, therefore, to be distinguished from the pictures and signs creating it. It can be based on various sources. These sources might be founded on some picture, but this is not necessary so. Other sensory inputs like written and oral texts or sounds might constitute an image as well or, at least, contribute to its creation. If one wants to analyse the image of the Shah one has thus not only to look at the pictures portraying him but also to the other means with which information about him was conveyed. An image created by the press regularly rests on a combination of picture and text. Both mutually support each other.

When the yellow press, for instance, shows the Shah with his wife Farah Diba in a royal dress the words “the imperial couple” in the text underline what already has been shown in the picture. Vice versa, someone who first reads a text about a royal couple is reminded of the royal background when he later sees pictures of this couple in a royal dress.

The various sources creating a certain image are not confined to the mass media. They might include the personal experience of the audience as well. The inhabitants of Berlin, for instance, seeing the enormous amount of police and security forces during the Shah’s visit would be reminded of the image that he was an important person. The creation of an image about a certain person can insofar be compared to the creation of an image about a certain brand or product in advertising. It also consists in the emergence of constructed mental images by a certain media stimulus and includes the personal experience (Stern/Zinkhan/Holbrook 2005: 32). The main difference between the creation of a brand and the creation of an image about a person is that the brand has the clear aim that one purchases a certain product,
whereas the image about a person does not have such a necessary consequence like protest, support, etc.

Because of the many sources on which an image can rest, it is necessary to analyse the image of the Shah on different levels. They shall not only include the formal literary criticism of a media message but its context as well. That means that one has not only to analyse the verbal messages and pictures but also the described historical situation in which the audience was perceiving the various news and constructing their image about the Shah (cf. Stern/Zinkhan/Holbrook 2005: 31). It is thus necessary to look at the whole communication process from the publisher to the audience. This process takes always place in a particular historical situation. The details of this situation matter because they constitutes the context in front of which the creation of a certain image takes place. With a different context another image would arise.

If, for instance, a foreign statesmen would come to Germany nowadays it would rather be unusual that he visits Berlin at the last place and holds the political talks at some other place. Berlin is not longer a separated city deprived of its function as a capital. The situation in 1967 yet was different and such a cause of events natural. Although the image of a person can diverge from the real person, it still claims that it is a representation of him or her. Therefore, the “real person” is not just one among many sources that contribute to the creation of a certain image but is the object the image refers to. There is simply no image without such a reference (cf. Stern/Zinkhan/Holbrook 2005: 33). Only because of this reference the many sources in different media can be united in one image.

A second methodological remark that has to be mentioned before analysing the media concerns the methods with which the images shall be analysed. In media theory there are two main approaches for the analysis of newspapers: communication analysis and content analysis (Bucher/Fritz 1989: 144). Whereas communication analysis relies on qualitative methods, content analysis rests on quantitative methods with which a certain state of
affairs has to be described with formal criteria (cf. Frueh 2004: 24). According to that method, one would have to count, for instances, how frequently a certain concept was used or a certain issue discussed. The quantitative methods used in this process presuppose that there is consensus about the data used for further analysis.

This consensus, however, is missing in the interpretation of most texts. One might count, for instance, how many pictures of the Shah and his wife were printed in a certain newspaper during the visit. But this would hardly show which image this newspaper created. The various reports might contradict each other and support different images. If the Shah is shown in front of people greeting him another picture emerges than if he is shown in front of demonstrators. At least unconsciously, in the one case an image about a famous celebrity emerges, in the other case the image about a controversial figure.

Because of the mentioned dependency of the image on its context the same concept and the same picture might change their meaning with a varying context. For instance, the title of the Shah as “king of kings” in the midst of a report about the heightened security in Germany, due to which even the minister of interior affairs could not pass the security control, could acquire another meaning than in a report about the coronation in Iran. Due to this dependency on context it is impossible to analyse the concepts and pictures referring to the Shah with quantitative methods.

For this reason content analysis, as traditionally understood, is inappropriate to analyse the images of the Shah in the German press. It would have to neglect the context of the communication. Besides, the decision whether the Shah was portrayed as a dictator, a royal or a modernizer depends to such an extent on evaluative criteria that it is impossible to quantify it based on objective criteria. Otherwise one would have to pay too high a price for simplification (Bucher/Fritz 1989: 146).

Another disadvantage of content analysis consists in the fact that it neglects the function of a proposition and can focus solely on its semantic
properties (cf. Bucher/Fritz 1989: 147). These properties, however, do not
tell why a proposition in a certain paper was uttered in the first place, which
effect it had and which consequences the journalists intended. Content
analysis studies merely the manifest meaning of a communicative act and
has to neglect the reasons why something was said. All conclusions on mo-
tives, intentions are excluded (Berelson 1971: 16). All of these factors,
however, might explain how and why a certain image was created.

Contrary to that, communication analysis takes the whole context se-
riously, i.e. all factors contributing to the creation of a certain image
(Bucher/Fritz 1989: 148). Because of the multiplicity of factors that contrib-
ute to the image of the Shah communication analysis appears as the better
approach for the current topic. It can consider the variety of these circum-
cstances and pay tribute to the fact that each communicative act is embedded
in a net of other utterances, aims, intentions, etc.

The questions one has to answer in communication analysis can be
summarized in the questions “who is saying something to whom, which
channel he is using for that and which effects does his message produce?”
(Haseloff 1977: 104). To answer these questions communication analysis
has to start from three basic assumptions:

- The analysed sources have to be seen in context.
- Presuppositions and other axioms for the analysis have to be
  made explicit.
- The researcher has to be aware of the fact that he has no
  privileged access to the examined text (Bucher/Fritz 1989:
  143).

In order to consider the whole communication process it is necessary
to analyse three different aspects: the conveyed message, its producer and
its audience. First, one has to focus on the conveyed message. At this level
one considers the semantic and syntactic properties of the message, espe-
cially the used words and expressions (Hoeke 2007: 14). When it comes to
the producer of a certain message, it is necessary to look who is publishing
the message and which interests he might have in this. For that purpose one has to consider the publisher as well as the journalist (Hoeke 2007: 4). Finally, one has to pay attention to the audience perceiving the message. Its interests might explain why a certain image was created and why other aspects of a person were neglected. Only the combination of all aspects can provide a full picture how a certain image appeared and what exactly it consisted in.

In the present paper the object of such a communication analysis is the Shah’s image in the German newspapers during his visit to Germany in 1967. The question is thus which image about the Shah was constructed, disseminated and multiplied during and before this period. Due to the huge number of German newspapers it is impossible to analyse all of them. A selection is inevitable. For this reason the present paper focuses first on the national mainstream papers like the tabloid *Die Bildzeitung*, the magazines *Der Stern* and *Der Spiegel*.

Besides these mainstream papers the paper will look at the media used by the protestors. The most well-known of them is the journal *Konkret* whose articles were partly used as leaflets during the protests against the Shah and which gave key players of the student movement like Rudi Dutschke a voice. It was one of many means to create the “counter public”\(^4\) to the mainstream press as the student protestors used to call it. This journal supported by articles, advertisement and interviews Nirumand’s view on Iran.

By analysing this critical press as well as the mainstream press the extreme positions regarding Iran become visible. Whereas the conservative *Bildzeitung* was supporting the Shah, *Konkret* would heavily criticize him. The journal *Stern* and *Der Spiegel* tried to find a way between these extremes. Looking at these various sources helps to understand, why part of the audience went out to greet the Shah and another part wanted to protest against him.

\(^4\) “Gegenöffentlichkeit”
The analysis of the *Bildzeitung und Stern* is the more important as both of them belonged to the yellow press that had for a long time taken an interest in the Persian royal family. Due to the German descent of Soraya, the second wife of the Shah, the yellow press had intensively reported about the Shah and his relationship to her. The occupation with the Shah and his wives grew in the 1960ies to such an extent that the yellow press even got the nickname “Soraya press” (Spiegel 1966: 163). This not only explains why many people were interested in the Shah but also why he became the object of heavy criticism. Behind this criticism frequently stood a general critical stance towards the methods and themes of the yellow press.

The focus on newspapers is justified because it was the primary source of news at that time. People could not rely on personal reports and the oral conversation as hardly anybody had personally seen the Shah. Whatever the people thought about him was predominantly influenced by the images created in the papers. Television was already used but was less dominant in 1967 than nowadays. In the end of the 1960ies most people still watched it on black-white colour so that they had to rely on newspapers and journals if they wanted to see a full picture of the Shah. Accordingly, journals specifically advertised that only they would present the visit of the Shah in colour (Albertz 1984: 116). Besides, German television at that time was completely run by state agencies that tried to neutrally report about the events. If one wanted to get an articulated opinion one had to read newspapers. Especially, the perspective of the students was hardly represented in tv. For these reasons the analysis of newspapers seems preferable.
5. The portrayal of the Shah in the press

A. The Shah as a royal

When looking at the various reports of the yellow press, the first image which comes to mind is the one of the Shah as a royal. It entails not only the fact that he had the position as the king of Iran but also that this function permeated and dominated his whole character. The image of the Shah as a fairy tale like king having an extraordinary life had been consistently spread by the Germany yellow press in the 1959ies and 1960ies (see the documentation of Blank 1977: 87-138). When the media reported about the visit of the Shah to Germany they could refer to this already established image.

These reports emphasized his royal descent in many different ways. Frequently, it became the dominating feature behind which other aspects stood behind. Shah Reza Pahlavi was throughout almost all reports referred to by his royal function as “the Shah” and not by his real name Reza Pahlavi. This might show a certain acquaintance of the public but is remarkable as other representatives like Queen Elisabeth were not referred to in the German media just by their royal function.

The same is true for other words used by the press in order to describe the Shah. In many occasions it used the concept “imperial couple” (“Kaiserpaar”) for the Shah and his wife Farah Diba (e.g. Bild 1967a, 1967f, 1967g1, 1967h1). The Bildzeitung put this fantasy evoking description several times in the title of the whole page and repeated it there three or even four times (e.g. Bild 1967g1; 1967f, 1967h1). In this way the repeated word gained weight and the whole page acquired a special character as a report about a royal highness visiting Berlin.

Due to the royal attributes, even everyday events could turn into something special, when they became connected to the Shah. For instance, the tabloid Bildzeitung reported extensively about the carpets the Hilton hotel had brought for the reception of the Shah. Even the trivial fact that the
Hilton hotel cleaned the floor before the Shah and his wife would arrive was described in detail. Because of the royal background almost every event could turn into something special. So the Bildzeitung found it worthwhile reporting that the hotel cleaned every possible stain from stilettos, boots, and “slippers” so that the carpet would have a gloss as if freshly bought in a shop. The Bildzeitung suggested that this cleaning procedure was necessary because “the royal couple would put their foot on a virginal Hilton-floor” (Bild 1967 g2). In the same vein the paper showed a picture from the room in the Hilton hotel where the Shah and his wife stayed. Despite the modern character and the usage of the room for other guests the Bildzeitung described it as the “imperial bed-chamber” insinuating thereby that the hotel would turn into a castle as soon as the Shah arrives and that no other guests would at other times use this room (Bild 1967d2).

Most importantly, however, for the image of a royal were various pictures showing the Shah in a festive uniform with a ribbon representing his royal function or a royal carriage decorated with a multitude of golden ornaments (Stern 1967: 35):

The Shah and his wife in the royal carriage “the liberator of the farmers Shah Reza – an icon of power” - (Stern 1967: 35)
The carriage causes the impression that it had traditionally been used for coronations and conveys the meaning that the Shah was following a century long tradition. The fact which was not visible in this and in similar pictures was that the family of the Shah did not have such an old royal tradition. The father of the Shah Reza Pahlavi was an army officer and later prime minister that became king by a coup d’etat in 1925. The Pahlavi family, therefore, did not have royal carriage used for several hundreds years and thereby embodying the authority of a long living monarchy. Instead the Shah bought the carriage for the coronation in 1967 in Vienna where it was modelled after the Habsburgian carriage used in Vienna for coronations in the 17th and 18th century (Spiegel 1967b: 145). The Shah’s carriage was thus prepared at a time when royals already used cars and had thus an anachronistic character. Nevertheless, the picture of the Shah and his wife in the carriage published in the Stern supported the image of the Shah as a royal whose authority rests on a century old tradition. The journal Stern did not explain the anachronistic background so that the evoked image as a royal seemed natural.

Another means with which newspapers produced a royal image was their reports about third persons with which the audience could easily identify themselves with. If this person stated how much he or she was touched by seeing or meeting the royal couple, then this suggested that everybody would have the same impression if he or she would meet the Shah. The Bildzeitung, for instance, reported that the chambermaid in the Hilton hotel perceived the Shah and his wife as “a couple like in the fairy tale” (Bild 1967g1). Her impression linked the image of Shah Reza Pahlavi to the already existing images everybody had because of the fairy tales of Thousandandone Night. In this regard it is worthwhile remembering that Germany since 1919 did not have a monarch. As a consequence, the concept of kings, queens, and princes rather belonged to the world of fairy tales than real politics. Similarly, the Bildzeitung would report about children painting Farah
and writing letter to her as the “aunt from the Orient” (Bild 1967d1). This not only suggested that the visit had a general importance but also that Farah Diba was a princess as described in “Thousand and one night”.

Besides, the royal image of Farah Diba was supported by the traditional role she played as the wife of the Shah. As the Shah she was described with royal names like “queen” and “empress” (Bild 1967a) although both were not an equivalent to her real title, the Persian Shahbanou, which means “wife of the Shah”. Besides, Farah Diba was portrayed as a beautiful smiling queen which was like in a fairy tale the perfect accompaniment of the king.

Picture from the front page of Stern 1967

The extensive coverage of her personality and her action is explainable by her function as a royal, whereas wives of other statesmen would hardly play such a prominent role (with the noticeable exception of the First Lady of the American president). However, this royal function almost exclusively consisted in being the queen, bringing up the children and accompanying the Shah. Nowhere the newspaper described her personal view on politics. Instead she was shown cuddling a dog, looking at the newest fash-
ion, waving to the people (e.g. 1967g2, 1967h1) or even disliking the official protocol (Bild 1967h1). Her image of an accompaniment to the Shah indirectly increased his importance because he then appeared as the one who would make the decision inside his family and inside his country.

B. The Shah as a modernizer

Apart from the image of a royal the Shah had also the image of a modernizer. This image existed from the time when he as a 22 year old man became the king of Iran. Since then German newspapers had spread this image about him. For instance, as early as 1947, the Spiegel – one of Germany’s biggest magazines – described the Shah as a modern king that would as a passionate pilot fly over his country to surveil the growing oil industry (Spiegel 1947: 8). On his first visit to the US he said about himself that he is “a working monarch” and does not know what a oriental dictator is as he does not wear a turban but a “simple suit” appropriate for a person engaged with the problems of a modern kingship (Spiegel 1949: 19).

This image was preserved and referred to in various reports about his later visit to Germany in 1967. The journal Stern, for instance, consolidated this image by an extensive report in 1967 about the picturesque and yet modern everyday life of the Shah and his family (Stern 1967: 36-40). It described that the Shah used the newest technique and showed the Western lifestyle of his family by presenting his children in a state of the art play-car and the Shah and his wife in modern dress:
Some reports stressed this image by describing that the Shah likes to stay in a “simple modern” hotel and was despite the “arrangement” of flowers, picturesque collections of fruits and an artwork like cake in the suit of the hotel mainly interested in a television, a record player and the newspapers (Bild 1967d2). This topic of reading newspapers and being occupied with politics was a recurring theme. In the reports about the Shah’s way back from Berlin this fact even made the headline when the tabloid Bildzeitung reported that the Shah read the whole time the newspapers whereas his wife Farah Diba drank apple juice and the German crew was taking lunch (Bild 1967d2; 1967g1). This image of a king that works when the other people are resting is hardly combinable with the traditional understanding according to which it was below the king’s dignity to work.

Besides the outer appearance of the Shah and the technical equipment surrounding him, the Shah appeared as a modernizer because of the role he played in the political talks and negotiations in Germany. Unlike other royal families as the English one, the Shah did not visit Germany for
merely representational purposes but in order to get credits, strengthen the technological export from Germany to Iran, bolster the economy and thereby to overcome the difficult social and economic conditions of the Iranian population. For instance, papers reported about the Shah’s visit to a nuclear power Station (Die Welt 1967g) and the ambitions of the Shah to fight against poverty on an international level (Bild 1967f).

As with the image of a royal, a contributing factor to the image of the Shah as a modernizer was the description of his wife Farah Diba. The papers repeatedly showed her in a contemporary modern dress, unlike other women in the Muslim tradition not covered by the chador, and sometimes even with a short shirt. The yellow press in various reports described in detail how Farah Diba gradually changed her traditional outfit to a more modern one by cutting of her old bun (e.g. Bild 1967h1). Her love for fashion and her support for a “very young designer” from Teheran were described (Bild 1967h1). During her visit to Berlin papers printed pictures from a fashion show which had been organized for her. All these reports suggested that she, as the young generation of Iranians in general, belonged to a class of modern women and not to an outdated realm of fairy tales. This in turn supported the already established image of the Shah as a modernizer.

C. The Shah as a representative of the high society

A third image which one could frequently see in the mainstream press was the Shah as a representative of the high society. For this image it was less important that the Shah was from Iran and that he was from royal descent. It mattered more that he, together with his wife Farah Diba, embodied a life-style typical of the high society New York, Paris, Berlin, Teheran or another capital of the Western alliance. The publicly announced visit of the opera fit well to this image because the opera was traditionally the place where the high society met. Besides the Shah the political, economic and cultural elite of West-Berlin was attending the Opera. This was reported by the newspapers. Insofar it did not matter whether the Shah enjoyed Mozart’s
“Magic Flute”, whether this visit was part of his duties as a state representative or whether he would talk during the visit to the German president Lübke, the mayor Albertz or other politicians. It mattered simply that he was part of “the elite”.

A frequently used way with which this image became established was the detailed description of the luxury surrounding the Shah and his family. Pictures were printed that showed the family of the Shah in a supposedly private atmosphere in a festive dress.

![Picture from Stern (1967: 34)](image)

Even before the visit to Berlin, Farah Diba was already known to the German public for her luxury life-style. It was reported that she came to Paris just in order to buy shoes in the salon of Sophia Loren (Spiegel 1962). For the readers of the newspaper it came, therefore, hardly as a surprise that she would wear at her visit in Germany a million Deutschmark worthwhile handbag with a diamond handle (Bild 1967b2). Ahead of all other papers the Bildzeitung described her as an elegant lady and explicitly distinguished this image from her other images as “the wife” or “the girl” (Bild 1967b2). The
report about the luxurious reception the Shah held in Bonn fit well to this description. Newspapers reported that for this reception the Shah ordered 25 kg golden caviar directly from Iran (Bild 1967b3) and that he offered a gourmet diner of salmon, tortoise soup etc. at a time when wealth in the post war period was still not taken for granted and people in Iran were dying from hunger (Bild 1967b4).

Some of the exaggerated reports, however, were shortly after the visit criticized by the journal *Spiegel*. It pointed out that many reports about the luxury life style were wrong. For instance, despite some reports in journals the Shah did not fly to Paris not in order to buy luxury bathtubs made out of glass. Instead he just visited such a shop from Michel de Lacour and came to Paris for political talks (Spiegel 1967b: 132).

**D. The Shah as a dictator**

Having looked at the images of the Shah in the mainstream press it is worthwhile to analyse the reports in the so called critical press that mirrored and formed the opinion of the protesting students. In 1967 there were only a few of such papers and journals, among them the national left wing journal *Konkret* and the local student journal *FU-Spiegel* published in the Free University of Berlin. The differences between these papers on the one side and the mainstream press on the other side might explain why the Shah was met so differently.

In the critical press as well as among the students the Shah had the image as a dictator. This meant more than that he as king was not elected by Parliament. He had the reputation as a dictator that vigorously surveilled, oppressed and killed opponents and even produced drugs. For this image a variety of descriptions in leaflets and articles were used like “murderer”, “Mr Dictator” (FAZ 1967d) or “main butcher of Persia” (Said, cited in DW-World: 2010). The immediate consequence of this image was the assumption that the Shah had no support among the Iranian population and that it fought against him. The message was conveyed that it is just a matter of
time until “the Persian farmers” would become strong enough to take over the power.

Especially important for the image of a cruel dictator was an open letter of the then journalist and later terrorist Ulrike Meinhof in 1967. She published this letter in the journal Konkret which was announced on the front page. The letter was also spread as a leaflet and got therefore broad attention. It was accompanied by pictures from the journalist Heidemann who had made them for the magazine Stern. He could not publish them in the Stern because they did not fit to the Shah’s glamorous life the Stern was writing about (Stern 1967). These pictures showed the strong subordination of farmers thereby suggesting the despotic character of the Shah:

![Picture from Konkret (1967: 19)](image)

Meinhof relied on her open letter on facts from Bahman Nirumand. She had become acquainted with him and his book about Iran before (Meinhof 1967: 22). On the surface level the letter was a reaction to an article by Farah Diba in the yellow press journal Neue Revue in which she told about her personal life with the Shah as, for instance, about her habit to go “like most other Persians” in summer to the beach, etc. Against this background Meinhof dramatically described the situation in Iran: People died on average
in the age of 30, just in Teheran 200,000 people lived in rabbit-boxes below earth, children in south Iran ate worms, weed and spoiled fish. Instead of going to the beach 80 % of the Iranians in Mehran and Balutshestan had to fight with inherited syphilis. They did not eat rice and sweeties as Farah Diba described but instead straw soaked in water (Meinhof 1967: 21).

After this description of the social conditions in Iran Meinhof directly attacked the Shah. She contradicted the image, evoked by Farah Diba about the Shah as a simple “normal citizen”, and made him responsible for the bad conditions in Iran. She accused him of holding the monopoly of opium plantations, making 20 % of the Iranian population drug addicts and of becoming the main proliferators of drugs smuggled into the US. Moreover, according to her letter, the Shah was the “guarantor” that critical students would be eliminated and even members of parliament imprisoned, tortured and murdered (Meinhof 1967: 21). Later students could take up this report and construct the image of the Shah as a “drug trafficker” (student wallpaper, cited in Mosler 1977: 128).

Interestingly, Meinhof used in her accusation many images about Farah Diba and other images established in the mass media. She took the fairy tale like appearance of her seriously and described in detail how much her jewellery cost. However, she interpreted this jewellery as bribery goods which the Shah and Farah Diba got for selling Iranian oil for a minimal price to the British Petroleum Oil Company, Standard Oil and other foreign companies (Meinhof 1967: 22).

With a similar argument she referred to Farah’s description of the Shah as an intelligent and witty person. She proved this by reporting that the Shah had during the White revolution distributed useless land to farmers that had to pay for it unrealistically high rents, due to which the farmers would become even poorer than before. Her accusations culminated in the claim that the Shah was a specialist in the construction of concentration camps because political prisoners were arrested and brought to special

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5 “Ein kleiner Mörder und Opiumhändler”
camps similar to a concentration camp during the Nazi regime. Meinhof’s letter was surrounded by frightening pictures. One of them showed emaciated prisoners behind a barbed wire fence which reminded of similar pictures of German concentration camps:

![Picture from Konkret (1967: 20)](image)

The headline next to this picture was “torture and concentration camp” and made the accusation explicit that the Shah was a “specialist for concentration camps”. The combination of the picture and Meinhof’s text insinuated that the Shah was as evil as the Nazis and would use the same means as them. It was this image to which the students referred when they enrolled at the 2nd of June 1967 the banner “Iran – the concentration camp in the orient” in front of the Charlottenburg castle (Tagesspiegel 1967a). Because of such images political scientists like professor Abendroth later compared the Shah with the West-German president Lübke who had participated

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6 "Iran KZ im Morgenland"
in the construction of a concentration camp (FAZ 1967a). Similarly, because of this image the leader of the student revolution Rudi Dutschke would later evaluate the fact that the students did not use the “chance to shoot the Persian ‘ruler’” as a sign for the “mediocrity of the hitherto fight” (Dutschke, cited in Kraushaar 2007: 4).

In the opinion of the students, the violence of the Berlin police was a proof that it cooperated with the dictator and shared his character. At first glance, this might be surprising as the Shah was not in the position to order the Berlin police and was instead just a guest to the mayor of Berlin. However, as already explained, among the students the assumption was popular that an international system of oppression exists in which the Shah is as well a part as the USA and West-Germany. The violence in Iran, Vietnam and West-Germany would thus be connected with each other. As students wrote on a wallpaper in Tuebingen University “The Shah is for Persia what Ky is for Vietnam” (Mosler 1977: 128). The Persian “claqueurs” who in front of the city hall in Schoeneberg as well as before the Opera beat the protestors were a vivid illustration for this assumed connection. Because of it the violence of the Berlin police was perceived as part of the violence applied all over the world by “the ruling classes”.

Moreover, the students assumed that there is an interplay between the third world’s open violence and the West’s latent violence that any moment could turn into an open one. The reception of the Shah and the sudden decision of the Berlin police to expel the students in front of the opera were a proof for this interplay. Students who before the Shah’s visit did not believe in this theory became after it convinced about it. The picture of the dead Ohnesorg already shown in the introduction was therefore not just a proof that somebody had died. Moreover, it showed the open violence typical of the “system” and seemingly proofed the previous claims about its violent character (Henschel 1984: 115).

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7 See above 2.c.
8 The Vietnamese Prime Minister in 1967.
The Shah was aware of the severe accusations and the following destruction of his image as a fairy tale king and a modernizer. As Nirumand later explained it was “the worst” for him to see his picture as a modernizer and a king from Thousandandone Night destroyed by the student protestors and by the Iranian opposition in Germany (Nirumand 2006: 3). This destruction was the more annoying as he had come to the opera for mainly representative purposes. The result, however, was the deterioration of this image. According to Nirumand, the Shah as a revenge ordered the secret police officer to kill him (Nirumand 2006: 3).

Shortly after the visit the journal *Spiegel* published an extensive article doubting the truth of Nirumand’s claims. He showed that, at least, some of them were not based on reality but either outdated or totally wrong (Spiegel 1967b: 132). Nirumand accused the Spiegel of cooperating with the Iranian secret service Savak from whom the Spiegel supposedly got the information (Nirumand 2006: 4). He did, however, not dispute that many of his reports were not based on facts. Despite these corrections the Spiegel did not question the image of the Shah as a dictator. But he described mitigating factors like the economic growth, the improvement of the living conditions and of health care in Iran (Spiegel 1967b: 131-132). This report, however, came too late in order to influence the image of the Shah during his visit to Germany.

At the time when the Shah visited Berlin nobody had in public doubted the facts underlying Nirumand’s heavy criticism. The personal credibility of Nirumand as an Persian student just coming back from Iran led to the impression that he and the sepulchral picture of the Shah as a dictator were correct. As Schneider, one of the authors of the leaflet depicting the Shah as a murderer, later said about Nirumand: “I had the feeling that finally somebody knew what he is talking about. It was a liberation from the huge uncertainties …” (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 6).
6. Explanation of the differences

The analysis of the press shows that a great variety of images about the Shah existed. They contradicted each other in the same way as reports about the visit came to opposite conclusions. The contradiction were so severe that the Socialist Student Union SDS and the tabloid Bildzeitung exchanged immediately after the death of Ohnesorge inflammatory letters in which the SDS demanded the expropriation of the Springer company, the publisher of the Bildzeitung (Miermeister 1980: 139), whereas the Bildzeitung accused the students of being as “evil and stupid confused minds” trying to carry the terror from East Berlin to West Berlin (Bild 1967e).

Part of the background of this conflict was the differences in the Shah’s image. If one predominantly thought about him as a royal and as a modernizer, the protests of the students appeared as insults of a foreign statesman. If, on the other side, one thought about him as a dictator the admiring reports about the daily life of the Shah as a royal appeared as trivialization of his crimes. Therefore, the question arises how one can explain the variety and contradictory nature of the images about the Shah?

To do that one has to take into considerations all aspects which, according to media analysis, are crucial for the understanding of the press: the content of a message, its producer and its audience (cf. Hoeke 2007: 14)

A. The content of the constructed images

When looking at the different images of the Shah it is important to notice that they logically do not exclude each other. Although the image of a fairy tale like king is very different from a cruel dictator, both images are combinable with each other. For the fact that the Shah was from a royal background does not contradict the judgment that he ruled in a despotic way. The question merely is to which aspect of his character more attention

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9 Above 4.
is paid. If one, as the tabloid Bildzeitung, solely reports about the character and relationship of the Shah and his wife Farah Diba their responsibility for the conditions in Iran does not come to one’s mind. Vice versa if one merely speaks about these conditions the personal character of the royal couple are beyond one’s attention.

The compatibility of these images can be seen in media like the journal Spiegel that were, on the one hand, critical and characterized the Shah as a dictator (Spiegel 1967b: 132), but that were, on the other hand, not as radical as the protestors. They reported also about the wrong claims Niruman and the protestor would spread about the Shah. These media tried to draw a differentiated picture and to combine both aspects. This can best be seen in a picture published as early as 1962. It shows the Shah during his holiday at the Caspian Sea as he was exercising under the surveillance of army officers the shooting at a target.

![Picture “Mohammad Resa Pahlavi” from Spiegel (1962a: 124)](image)

This kind of activity can only be carried out by a king or another ruler, as hardly anybody else would get the permission to shoot at the beach. At
the same time this picture shows a despotic character of ruling because of the danger that exists when an officer is standing next to the target. This officer was supposed to tell the results of the shooting to the Shah. Obviously, the Shah did not care that the officer was himself in danger or this was, at least, what the journal *Spiegel* suggested.

If one takes the compatibility of the images as a royal, a modernizer and a dictator seriously, the question is less whether one of the journal reported something incorrect but rather why different media paid attention to different aspects of the Shah’s character and politics. For all of these images one could find a factual background.\(^\text{10}\) The Shah and his secret service *Savak* indeed severely prosecuted and tortured political opponents. Even the Iranian minister of interior affairs admitted that and justified it as a price for progress (*Die Welt* 1967c).

Moreover, it was, at first glance, difficult to discern the progress in Iran. The Iranian population in the 1960ies was still living under poor conditions. The life expectancy was 40 years, whereas in West-Germany it amounted to 74 years (*Spiegel* 1967b: 130). 80% of the Iranian population was illiterate and a change unlikely, as there was a huge deficiency of teachers. For a population of 25 million Iranians just 34,000 teachers were active, i.e. just one teacher for more than 700 people (*Die Welt* 1967b). Similarly, Iran lacked doctors especially in the countryside so that even a basic medical care could frequently not be provided. Due to the modernization, many workers lost their job or were, at least, not necessary for the production. The oil refineries in Abadan, for instance, needed just 1,000 out of formerly 17,000 workers (*Die Welt* 1967c).

On the other hand, there was a visible economic progress in Iran. The salary of the employed workers increased considerably so that the living standard was rising (*Die Welt* 1967c). In the 1950ies the life expectancy was even less, namely the 30 years as reported by Nirumand, so that the frightening number of 40 years already showed some progress. The Iranian

\(^{10}\) Above 2.A.
gross national product had doubled since 1959 and the black market disappeared in which products and services used to be paid in Dollar (Spiegel 1967b: 131). Overall, Iran was hence, at least in economic terms, a model for a developing country but, contrary to Nirumand’s title, in a positive sense (Spiegel 1967b: 131). For these reasons the situation in Iran had various contradictory aspects. The Shah as the representative of Iran and its rulers could thus be associated with opposing images.

The association of the Shah with the situation in Iran was natural as papers in general have a tendency to personalize an event and to present a so called human-interest story (Küchenhoff 1972: 15). The analysis of the social or political background is in these cases left to the characterization of a person (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 178). As the tabloid paper Bildzeitung said about itself: Whatever social or political development might happen, “Bild provides you with the person” (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 154). Due to this personalization the Shah served as a symbol of a general development. For his image, his personal character was less important than the situation in Iran.

The variety of the images about the Shah can thus, at least in part, be explained by the variety of images about the situation in Iran. Instead of particular news about the advantages and disadvantages of the economic development in Iran a “policital celebrity” was constructed (cf. Schulz 1989: 136). The Shah was associated with everything that happened in Iran and his image became a mirror of these events. The ambivalent character of this situation was a source from which contradictory images could emerge. The attention to different facts about Iran is hence part of the explanation why the images about the Shah in the German press varied so considerably.

11 „BILD liefert die Person dazu“
B. The character of the publishers and papers

Another crucial aspect in the explanation of the variety of the Shah’s images is the interest of the publishers and the character of the various papers. After World War II German newspapers had grown continuously. For news they had become the dominant source. Although in 1967 just 1/3 of the population bought newspapers on a daily basis, they were available in about 82% of all households (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 36-37). 92% of the population could, at least, once a week, be reached by newspapers. The importance of television was rising but still not as dominant in the 1970ies as nowadays (Schildt 2008: 3). Consequently, the pictures in the yellow press got a great attraction. One can thus understand the reports in the tabloid Bildzeitung full of pictures and with only short descriptions as an alternative of a tv report. Contrary to the newspaper market, there were in 1967 in West-Germany just two state television stations and no private tv station so that they were in comparison to the newspapers and journals less adaptive to the individual needs of the audience. They rather tried to report in an objective way (Kaupp 1979: 137). However, even at that time most people thought that television is the most reliable source (Kaupp 1979: 162).

The already mentioned economic crisis in 1966 to 1967 had strongly hit the newspaper market. For the first time in post war history profits of the tabloid Bildzeitung started to decline in 1966 and 1967 (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 41). The necessity to sell the paper successfully and the readiness to catch the attention of the readers by an aggressive marketing as well as sensationalist reports were, consequently, high. This might have contributed to the one sided reports about the Shah and his visit in Berlin as a balanced picture would have drawn less attention. This was especially true of the front page because the Bildzeitung was predominantly sold on a day by day basis and not by subscription. (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 70). The front page and the headlines were thus crucial for the number of papers sold because the deci-
sion to purchase the paper depended on them. The fact that the \textit{Bildzeitung} showed the Shah and his wife during the visit several time in a festive uniform or tailcoat on its front page (e.g. Bild 1967b, Bild 1967e) might thus be in part explainable by the attempt to attract readers. Mixed reports about the ambivalent character of the development in Iran and the Shah would have drawn less attention.

Interestingly, a similar argument applies for the critical journal \textit{Konkret}. The criticism of Farah Diba could hardly be illustrated with a picture. For all available pictures showed her in a representative dress and in a beautiful setting. Therefore, it does not appear as an accident that Konkret’s front page mentioned the open letter to Farah Diba only in small print and chose instead the topic “love in a foursome” as the eye catcher (Konkret 1967). Besides, if Konkret would have shown one of the many pictures of Farah Diba it would have appeared similar to the yellow press which it was criticizing.

Many students thought that the tabloid \textit{Bildzeitung} intentionally manipulated the public to pursue its economic and political interests (Chaussy 1984: 138). For them this paper was a “symbol how the thoughts and sensations of millions of people were manipulated” (Wolff/Windaus 1977: 18).\footnote{“wie das Denken und Empfinden von Millionen von Menschen tagtäglich abgerichtet wird”} They accused the paper of an abuse of freedom of speech by falsifying news, submitting the background facts and by “emotional incitement”\footnote{“emotionale Aufreizung”} (Küchenhoff 1972: 11). In this regard the contrast drawn by the \textit{Bildzeitung} between the description of the fairy tale like “imperial couple” and the supposedly criminal students was a primary example.

The \textit{Bildzeitung} did indeed selectively report about the events in Berlin. It described in detail how children were writing to “aunt Farah from the paintbox” (Bild 1967d1), but kept silent about the lecture of Nirumand to which 3,000 students came and which was decisive for the later actions of the students. It had mentioned only in advance that the Shah’s visit might,
because of that lecture, not have taken place at all (Bild 1967a). Moreover, it showed the picture of the Persian “claqueurs” beating the bystander and suggested that this were Iranian students fighting against the “wild rioters” and “bawling radicals” (Bild 1967f). It did not tell that the Persian “claqueurs” were not students and had started to attack the other demonstrators and that there was no riot which they could have prevented. Because of such one-sided reports and the dominance of the Springer-company a campaign for its expropriation started (Chaussy 1984: 138). Although it was in the end not successful it showed how severe the opposition between the students and the Springer-company was felt.

The influence of the Bildzeitung was considerable. Every day 4.5 million exemplars were sold – more then any other newspaper in Germany. Its publisher Springer had in Berlin a market share of 70 % of all papers which was close to a monopoly (Chaussy 1984: 138). In 1965 the Bildzeitung had initiated a qualitative analysis of its influence and role. This analysis was done by leading research institutes like infratest and “Deutsches Institut für Volksumfrage” (DIVO) which played a considerable role in post war German opinion research (Der Spiegel 1969: 51). The head of the marketing department of the Bildzeitung participated in the analysis. Nevertheless it came to the conclusion that the Bildzeitung provided the “stereotypes for the talk and discussion of million of people” (Küchenhoff 1972: 12) and was “social authority” and “social power” (cited in Küchenhoff 1972: 12). To these stereotypes belonged the portrayal of the Shah and his wife Farah Diba. Whereas the Shah was shown as a hard working ruler making the far-reaching political decisions, Farah Diba was shown as the charming wife not caring about politics at all.

However, one can not draw a direct conclusion from the character of the publisher towards the image that had been established. It is far from

14 “wilde Randalierer”
15 “gröhlende Radikalinskis”
16 “Stereotypen des Gesprächs und der Diskussion für Millionen von Menschen”
17 “eine soziale Instanz, als eine gesellschaftliche Macht”
clear that the tabloid Bildzeitung had an interest in suppressing important facts about the Shah. Some of the critical students were inspired by Marxist theory and had the suspicion that the Springer-company is part of the capitalist class and would thus pursue its interests. If this class wanted to import oil from Iran the Bildzeitung could not criticize the despotic character of the Shah.

This explanation, however, is hardly convincing. The Bildzeitung as any other daily newspaper was heavily dependent on advertisements which in 1967 covered about 50% of the production and distribution price (Kaupp 1979: 88). This influence of advertisements vis-à-vis the newspaper’s price had grown since World War II (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 52), as the price for the production of the paper had grown quicker than the price for the newspaper. Yet, the advertising companies were more interested in business than in politics (Kaupp 1979: 91). For them the content of the paper was less important than the question how many people would read it. This in turn depended more on the interest of the readers than on the character of the publisher.

Moreover, the character of the publisher is in regard to the Bildzeitung inconclusive. For the company Springer published both the tabloid Bildzeitung as well as the daily newspaper Die Welt which had criticized the Shah and the manner with which he was received in Germany. It had reported, for instance, that Iranian students participating in the protest would be arrested when coming to Iran and that in their estimation there were 20,000 political prisoners in Iran (1967b). Even in the tabloid Bildzeitung one could find voices critically asking whether it is appropriate to grant the Shah credits at a time when he is displaying his wealth in an extravagant way (Bild 1967c).

Apart from that, due to the various sources of information the possibilities to manipulate public opinion were even in the 1960ies limited (Kaupp 1979: 84). Hardly anybody relied solely on the newspaper and not also on other sources of information like journals, radio and television. Es-
pecially the public television was rather critical about the company Springer and its sensational reports (Fahlenbrach 2008: 6). The predominant part of the tabloid-readers were buying additionally another newspaper (cf. Kaupp 1979: 83). For these reason the possibilities of manipulation were even in the 1960ies and 1970ies limited (Kaupp 1979: 84). Ironically, the widespread accusation of manipulation towards the Springer company relied itself on the power to establish this opinion in the media.

Nevertheless, it is plausible that the Bildzeitung could at least in part, support and strengthen the pre-existing images, stereotypes and opinions (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 79, 178). Although a total manipulation was not plausible, some influence of the papers on public opinion can be assumed. Papers like the Bildzeitung could influence events by forming expectations of the participants and the perception of the audience (Schulz 1989: 144). The fact, for instance, that in front of the Schoeneberg city hall four times as much people gathered to greet the Shah than to criticize him is mainly explainable by the perception which the dominant part of the population got via newspapers. If more people would have been exposed to the critique like the one by Nirumand less demonstrators would have enthusiastically greeted the Shah.

In order to understand the differences in the images about the Shah it is necessary to have a look at the character of Konkret as well. It was a left wing journal in which Ulrike Meinhoff had published intensively before. This journal was founded on the basis of a secret decision by the East German communist youth organization FDJ and was since then financed by the GDR. The public, at that time, did not know about this background (Knabe 2000: 2). The aim of Konkret was a fundamental critique of the political system in West-Germany and its leaders. Accusing the Shah to be a specialist for concentration camps fit well into the overall accusation that West-Germany cooperated with Nazis and that the Western alliance used violence either openly or in a hidden way.
However, as with the Bildzeitung one can not draw a direct conclusion from the interest of the publisher of Konkret to the content of the message or the established image. Meinhoff had taken the information for the letter from Nirumand and there was no sign that she did not believe him and had published wrong information merely in order to discredit the policy of West-Germany. This policy played hardly any role in her letter (Meinhof 1967: 22). Nevertheless, her severe criticism fit well to the interests of the publisher and might as the interests of the Bildzeitung explain why different images were established.

C. The audience

A third factor which plays an important role in media analysis is the audience. To understand the variety in the images about the Shah it is, therefore, necessary to have a look at the character of the readers of the different newspapers. The attitude of the German audience towards the Shah was very well explained by Blank in his book “Sha Reza - the last German emperor”. In this book he ironically described the role of the Shah in the German yellow press 10 years after the visit to Berlin:

“Most of the Germans are Persians. Without a home country after 1945, without a history after the disappearance of the thousand-year empire, they are looking for an identity in a country they do not know … This book about Persia is a book about Germany.” (Blank 1977: 7).

The idea behind this statement was that the various stories about the Shah in the German press indirectly told more about the German audience than about the Shah. For the fact that the Shah and the Persian royal family got so much public attention was far from self-evident and needed an explanation.

18 „Die meisten Deutsch sind Perser. Heimatlos nach 45, geschichtlos nach der Auflösung des Tausendjährigen Reiches, suchen viele ihre Identität in eine Land, das sie nicht kennen … Dieses Buch über Persien ist ein Buch über Deutschland“
One reason for the wide popularity of the Shah and the interest in the Persian royal family was that Germany had lost its status as a monarchy in 1919. Since then it lacked the glamour surrounding a royal family. The changing presidents and chancellors could hardly substitute it. In 1967 president Lübke was 73 and the chancellor Kiesinger 63 years old and were therefore less attractive for the public than the picturesque couple of the Shah and his 28 years old wife. Apart from that, the Pahlavi family had the glamour that reminded many Germans about the imperial Hohenzollern family that had governed Germany since 1871. In 1967 no European royal family had this status any more. In addition, no European royal family had in 1967 as much power as the Shah. All of them were under severe democratic constraints. Reports about the English or Dutch royal family seemed, therefore, hardly as exciting as reports about the Pahlavis. For these reasons Blank called Shah Reza the “last German emperor” (Blank 1977: 7).

The interest of the audience in the Shah was also connected to his second wife Soraya who was half-German and had spent a considerable part of her life in Berlin. The public could hence easily identify itself with her and her life in the Persian royal family. Once the prominence of the Shah and the Persian royal family was established it was natural that her successor Farah Diba would get considerable attention, too. She was shown not only in the role of the queen but also as “girl” and a “wife” with whom one could easily identify with (Bild 1967b2). Reports that she is “not even a bit of an unapproachable empress” (Bild 1967h1) could bridge the distance between her and the readers. The same applies for repeated descriptions of her as a “natural” girl acting “completely unartifical” (Bild 1967h1) and who preferred things to be “emphatically simply”19 (Bild 1967h2). The suspicion is obvious that such a characterization and the fact that it was published in the most widespread German newspaper had less to do with the “real nature” of Farah Diba than with the interests of the audience.

19 “betont einfach”
Iran was geographically and culturally so far away from Germany that the German audience did not know much about it. It did not know much about the downsides of the Shah’s politics, i.e. about prosecutions, hunger, and tortures. To them Iran almost appeared as part of the fairy tale from Thousandandone night. During the Shah’s visit hardly any metaphor was cited as much as this comparison. In contrast to England, the Netherlands, Sweden and other monarchies there was no major involvement of Iran in World War II so that for the German audience no animosity had to be overcome. These circumstances explain the interest of the German public in the Shah and his family.

In regard to the longing for a monarch, it is worthwhile noticing that among the readers of the yellow press the older generations and especially women over 60 were overrepresented (Kodron-Lundgreen/Kodron 1976: 29). They had in their childhood either experienced the Hohenzollern monarchy before World War I or had, at least in its aftermath, an impression of it. The monarchical times seemed in comparison to later years with the World Wars, the division of Germany, the blockade of Berlin, and the construction of the Berlin wall as paradise. Before this background the glamour of a royal couple was a sharp contrast and seemed almost unreal.

The students of 1967, however, born in the last years of the war or afterwards lacked a similar experience. They had grown up during the economic boom years of the 1950ies and early 1960ies and had thus a very different experience. This first post-war generation was less interested in a glamorous but gone by world and started to challenge the older generations for their role during World War II. Whereas the older generation was involved in this and mainly wanted to leave it behind, a considerable part of the younger generation was eager to make the war-crimes public. Criticizing the Shah as a specialist in the construction of concentration camps was therefore part of a general criticism against the older generation that had participated in the war.
Beside the differences in age, differences in class and education might also have played a role in the construction of the different images. The readers of the tabloid Bildzeitung were, on average, less educated than the students. They bought the paper for entertainment and relaxation rather than information (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 70). A report about the royal families seemed attractive as long as it was entertaining and would thus help to escape for a moment the prevailing situation (Kaupp 1979: 188). In this regard the description and analysis of problems in Iran would have been counterproductive. They were frightening, did not personally concern the readers and could not fulfil the purpose of entertainment for which the readers bought the newspaper. As long as the Bildzeitung was oriented at the topics the audience would find most fascinating (Bechmann/Bischoff/Maldaner/Loop 1979: 85) it could not change its focus and establish another image of the Shah.

The opposite was true of the students who believed in the already described theory of internationalism, according to which the events in Iran, Vietnam, the US and Germany were all connected with each other. From their point of view it was necessary to analyse the social conditions in Iran as they were connected to German politics. Besides, the students were independently on the Shah and the situation in Iran interested in political actions. There was a longing to become politically active. As one of the authors of the anti-Shah-leaflet Schneider later said about Nirumand’s support of the protest “It was a liberation of all too big vagueness … he was the one who could show a clear aim” (Nirumand/Scharbach/Schneider: 6).20 Depicting the Shah as a dictator was a welcome step towards this political action. The contrast between the student’s interest in it and the reader’s interests in entertainment could hardly have been sharper.

The variety of the images about the Shah, at least in part, date hence back to the different interests and needs of the audience. Whereas the audi-

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20 „Es war eine Befreiung von all den großen Undeutlichkeiten … Es war sozusagen ein Abgesandter … der wußte, wovon er sprach. Der klare Ziele angeben konnte.“
ence of the mainstream press was eager to read a human-interest story about a picturesque royal couple, the critical students were looking for reasons to protest against the prevailing social and political conditions. Therefore, the mainstream and the critical press had a different focus and stressed different aspects of the Shah. Insofar, the variety if the images about the Shah in the German press is ultimately explainable by the variety of its audience.
7. Further development

According to media theory, one cannot understand a message without looking at the effect it produces (Haseloff 1977: 104). The reports about the Shah and his visit had tremendous consequences as they played a role in the so called student revolution of 1968. Therefore, it is useful to have a short look on them.

The death of Benno Ohnesorg caused massive reactions and has been considered as the starting point of the student revolution (Lönnen-donker/Rabehl/Staadt 2002: 331). The mourning caused a feeling of solidarity even among people who were not associated with each other before (Mosler 1977: 42). Radical ideas and theories previously confined to the Socialist student Union SDS were taken over by a considerable part of the students. The previous split between the SDS and the student organisations inside the university disappeared for some years (Mosler 1977: 133). A great number of German poets and publicly known intellectuals commented on the events and supported the students, so, for instance, the later Nobel price laureate Günther Grass. The theologian professor Gollwitzer responded in front of the students that they should not tolerate the rise of fascism as indifferently as the youth 35 years before. In a similar vein the philosopher Taubes, shocked by the violence of the Berlin police, said “the ghost of fascism goes around”21 (cited in Wolff/Windaus 1977: 32). The well-known professor Scheuch reacted by saying “The students are the new jews …!”22 (cited in Mosler 1977: 145).

These reactions showed an overall sentiment that the German police followed a totalitarian tradition and that it was for the students and youth to prevent the rise of a new fascism. The students associated the Shah with the totalitarian politics of the Nazis. This was most vividly represented in their slogan “Schah – SA - SS”. Interestingly, the students alike were criticized

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21 “Das Gespenst des Faschismus geht um.”
22 “Die Studenten sind die neuen Juden …“
for using Nazi like methods which shows how much the political debate at that time was dominated by the comparison to the Nazi regime. Immediately after the events in front of the opera the Bildzeitung commented on the protest of the students “we neither need a brown nor a red SA” (Bild 1967e2).

The yellow press in general reacted in a hostile way to the protests against the Shah. They held the students responsible for the death of Benno Ohnesorg. The Bildzeitung referred to the students as rioters that had carried out an attack and that were not satisfied with quarrels. “They need to see blood.” (Bild 1967e2). In a similar vein the “Morgenpost”, a local tabloid, called the students a “hysterical pack of academic teenager” and “trained communist streetfighters” (cited in Dietze 1967: 4). It demanded that they should be expelled from the city. The “Berliner Zeitung”, another boulevard paper, commented about the students “Who produces terror, has to accept rigidity” (Soukup 2007: 155). From day to day the style of the debate became more severe. On the 5th of June 1967 the Bildzeitung wrote “Students are threatening – we shoot back” (Bild 1967i).

These citations and the way they were produced show how close the tension came to hysteria. It was not just a story of the newspapers but represented a widespread feeling. The union of police officers, for instance, demanded to change the “soft” approach towards the students that were abusing their right to assemble (Dietze 1967: 3). Hundreds of law suits were started against demonstrators (Lönnendonker/Rabehl/Staadt 2002: 484), most noticeable against the member of the already mentioned Commune I Teufel. He was accused of inciting demonstrators by shouting “emergency laws”. Later he was released from prison (Becker/Schröder 2000: 145).

In the days following the Shah’s visit the mayor of West-Berlin Albertz accused the students of insulting a foreign guest, causing the death of Ohnesorg and injuries to many police officers. He explicitly appreciated the actions by the police, maintained that it acted proportionately and stated that his patience had come to an end (Höntzsch 1999: 156; FAZ 1967c). Against
the students he said “We do not let a minority terrorise us … Security and order in this city have to be maintained.” (Albertz, quoted in FAZ 1967c).

Later, however, he changed his mind and admitted that the wrong information about one dead police officer was spread (Die Welt 1967f). Political opponents in his own party used the events to force him to quit his positions. Many times he regretted to have said towards the police that the departure of the Shah from the opera shall be less chaotic than his arrival. Because of these words he felt responsible for the resulting clashes between the students and the police. For this reason he regarded the 2nd of June 1967 as “the day of God’s wrath about me” (Albertz 1984: 116) and felt “guilt for the personal failure”.

Shocked by the death of Ohnesorg and the one-sided reports in the Bildzeitung other newspapers started to draw a more balanced picture and to question the brutal force used by the police (for instance, Zimmer 1967: 1). The Munich based Abendzeitung even asked “What kind of inhabitant of Berlin appreciates authoritarian methods which he disapproves of being used beyond the wall?” (Abendzeitung, 7th of June, cited in br-online 1)

The Senate of Berlin examined all the events and founded a subcommittee that examined the protests, the actions of the police as well as of the students. Many of the first versions spread about these events were in this process falsified. It turned out that at many places there was neither violence from the protestors nor any other reason to attack them.

The most important response though came from the students. The Socialist German Student Federation SDS gathered at the same evening in order to discuss what happened. At first, they did not know that Ohnesorg was killed. They got this news by a female student Gudrun Ensslin that later came to the meeting (Soukup 2007: 150, Wehner 2007: 7). She demanded immediately to attack a police station and to arm oneself because one could in her opinion not negotiate with a fascist regime. Her demand was denied. The Socialist Student Union instead aimed to organize the protest in the whole of West-Germany (Ruetz 1980: 35).
Ensslin later realized her proposals to use violence and became part of the terrorist organisation RAF which was involved in various murders. Her response at the eve of the 2nd June 1967 showed that her ambition to use violence was present at the very beginning of the student revolution and was thus not just a later response to the disappointing results of this revolution. The latter interpretation, however, was firmly established in the public (Ensslin 1972: 1). Ensslin and some of the other terrorists referred to the death of Ohnesorg as the starting point for their foundation (Dellwo 2008: 1). One of the mayor terrorist groups called itself “movement of the second of June” before it merged with the more famous terrorist “RAF” (the Red Army Fraction). This date referred to the time the Shah visited Berlin.

The overall majority of the students pursued another way. They started a peaceful protest beginning with a funeral march in commemoration of Benno Ohnesorg. Although it was dissolved by the police the students gathered in the university to discuss the events. In many university cities like Munich, Tuebingen, Stuttgart, Bonn mourning demonstration took place to commemorate Ohnesorg (Becker/Schröder 2000: 140-143). These protests later turned into teach-ins and blockades of the university administrations. For the burial of Benno Ohnesorg over 10,000 students came to Hannover where he was originally from (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 113.). A convoy of cars with the coffin of Ohnesorg and accompanying students moved from West-Berlin to Hannover thereby passing east-German territory.

The GDR supported the protests by letting the students pass the border without control. It even did not demand the usual transit fees – which was unheard of just a few years after the construction of one of the heaviest guarded borders in Europe (Becker/Schröder 2000: 145). It sent members of the Socialist youth organization FDJ to stand at the border and to bow in front of Ohnesorg’s corpse. Moreover, it blocked the highway on the 180 km road from Berlin to the border of West-Germany in Helmstedt (Soukup 2007: 179). Thereby the GDR tried to profit from the anger and protest of
the students (Müller-Enbergs/Jabs 2009: 2). Once more this showed to which extent every detail around the 2nd of June 1967 was politicized.

Interestingly, the Shah and the Iranian government reacted as well. They demanded from the West-German government the prosecution of all students that had insulted the Shah (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 112; Becker/Schröder 2000: 145). This demand was unrealistic because of the freedom of speech and freedom of assembly guaranteed by the West-German constitution. However, the rector of the Free University of Berlin promised the mayor Albertz to prosecute all students active in the protests (Lönnendonker/Rabeil/Staadt 2002: 339). In addition, the Iranian government accused West-Germany that the economic and political ties would deteriorate because of the protests (SWF/SWR 2009: 1). As a response the German Chancellor Kiesinger wrote a letter of apology to the Shah and expressed his sorrow that the students met him with so much hostility. It added that the economic ties should stay as strong as before (Mager/Spinnarke 1968: 112). This showed once more how much German politicians at that time struggled for international recognition. They did not protest against the actions by the Persian “claqueurs”, i.e. the Iranian Secret Police, that had used violence against the students and thus severely infringed the sovereignty of the West-German government and City of Berlin. Hardly any other state would have tolerated such open actions of foreign police inside their territory.

For Iran the events in Berlin had naturally less repercussions than for Germany. The way the Shah was portrayed in the German press hardly mattered for Iranian domestic policy. Nevertheless, the events had some consequences even in Iran. Immediately after the Iranian revolution in 1979 one street in Teheran was renamed in “Benno-Ohnesorg-street” (Nirumand/-Scharbach/Schneider 1988). This showed that the theory of internationalism was not only prevalent in Berlin but in Teheran as well. Moreover, Nirumand, who supported the revolution in 1979, later stressed that the international solidarity with the opposition against the Shah played a significant
role on the Iranian revolution (Nirumand 1988). Due to these protests the authority of the Shah was undermined. Insofar, the visit of the Shah in Berlin and the protests against him had repercussions for Iran, too.

Nowadays a monument stands in front of the house where Ohnesorg was killed. Its inscription says “His death was a symbol for the beginning student and extraparliamentary movement…” (Apin 2007: 1) Nobody would have thought in advance that the political changes of this revolution were connected to the Persian Shah and a country located more than 3.500 km away from Berlin. Similarly, nobody in West-Berlin knew that there was a connection between the police officer Kurras killing Ohnesorg and the GDR for which Kurras was spying. Similarly, nobody would guess that 10 years after the visit to Berlin the Shah would lose its support from the US and be forced to exile again. If these facts would have been known then, the variety of the Shah’s images would have been ever greater.
8. Summary

The visit of the Shah Reza Pahlavi in Germany in June 1967 was a crucial event both for German and Iranian history. The Shah aimed with this visit to strengthen his position inside the Western alliance and to get financial as well as technological support for the modernization of Iran. Moreover, amidst of accusations of a despotic way of governance he was interested in international recognition in preparation for the coronation ceremony that was held a few month afterwards. The international acceptance was especially important regarding his third wife Farah Diba. She had to acquire in public the position of the divorced second wife Soraya who was very popular in Germany.

The first days of the visit went as planned. The Shah was received by the political as well as economic elite, Germany’s credits to Iran were enlarged and the reports about the Shah in the papers were friendly. Especially the yellow press was full of pictures. For West-German politics this visit had a greater significance than the glamour surrounding the Shah. It had to gain international recognition as it was at that time not even member of the UN. Both the memories about the crimes of World War II and the tension between East and West Germany hampered international recognition. After the diplomatic relations to Egypt and the Arab countries had significantly suffered, due to the war in Israel, Iran was the only mayor country in the Middle East with which West Germany had close connections. They were important for West-Germanys efforts to export goods to this region.

In West-Berlin, however, the Shah and his wife were not welcome among a considerable part of the students. Already before the visit they had become increasingly critical of the prevailing political and economic conditions in Iran and West-Germany. Exile Iranians like Bahman Nirumand had convinced them that the Shah is a dictator and runs prisons similar to the Nazi concentration camps. When the Shah and his wife came on the 2nd of June 1967 to Berlin they were greeted with slogans like “murderer” and
“welcome Mr. Dictator”. Eggs and tomatoes were thrown at them. This caused a heavy reaction from the Iranian secret service that had in front of the protestors placed the so called Persian claqueurs. These “claqueurs” started to beat the protestors after the Shah had disappeared from the scene. The German police reacted very harshly towards the protestors, too. In the evening of the 2nd of June 1967 they dispelled by force the students from the place in front of the opera because the students had in their perspective insulted a foreign statesman and caused an embarrassing turmoil.

During these clashes the student Benno Ohnesorg was killed by the police officer Kurras. This was among the students widely perceived as a change from the preexisting “latent” violence towards an open violence by the police and German politics. However, as turned out later, Kurras did not have any order to kill somebody and was a spy from East Germany. He had participated in actions against another man with the name Bernd Ohnesorge. The similarity of this name and Benno Ohnesorg as well as the readiness of Kurras to kill “betrayers” cast into doubt whether the killing of Ohnesorg had nothing to do with Kurras’ activity for the GDR.

In the media the whole visit of the Shah gained huge attention and was primary news. The papers reported even about details like the flowers the Shah would have in the hotel and the question what his wife would drink during the flight from Berlin to Hamburg. The images constructed by these reports varied strongly. Whereas in the mainstream press the Shah was portrayed as a royal, a modernizer and a representative of the high society, the critical press attacked him as dictator. The differences between these images explain, at least, in part why the population in Berlin had opposing attitudes towards the Shah. Whereas the majority of the spectators greeted him and was happy to have him and his wife in Berlin, a minority of students and oppositional Iranians criticized the event and the friendliness with which the Shah was received by German politicians.

In order to understand these differences, it is necessary to look at all factors that, according to media theory, play a role in the analysis of a message.
The most important among them are the content of the message, the character of its publisher, and its audience. In regard to the content it is worthwhile noticing that the different images did not necessarily exclude each other. Rather they stressed different aspects of the Shah. For being a royal and a modernizer does not logically exclude the character as a dictator although the overall impression of these images is strikingly different.

Another factor that played a role in the emergence of these images is the character of the media in which the various images were constructed. The yellow press journals and tabloid papers like Bildzeitung were mainly sold for entertainment. They showed pictures which the tv could not yet provide. Contrary to that the left wing paper Konkret aimed at a fundamental critique of the Western alliance to which the Shah and the West-German politicians belonged. Most importantly, however, were the differences in the audience. Whereas the student protestors had a general feeling of discomfort with the prevailing situation and were eager to become politically active, the audience of the mainstream press was neither interested in political action nor in the background of Iranian politics. It rather sought entertainment in a fairy-tale like story from Thousandandone Night. The Shah and his wife perfectly filled out the space left by the demise of the German monarchy. In this sense the Persian Shah was indeed “the last German emperor”.

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